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State of the World Population 2025 Report

11 June 2025

Source: **United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) & The Hindu**

Context

India's population is estimated to have reached 146.39 crore by April, says a new UN demographic report, which adds that the country's total fertility rate (TFR) has declined to 1.9, **falling below the replacement level of 2.1**.

Key Highlights:

- **Global Population Trends:**
 - World population reached **8.2 billion** in 2025.
 - While **population growth is slowing**, significant **disparities persist** between high-income and low-income countries.
- **Fertility Crisis Reframed:**
 - The real concern is **unmet fertility goals**—not overpopulation or underpopulation.
 - Many individuals are **unable to achieve desired family size** due to lack of access to reproductive choices.
- **Reproductive Rights and Agency:**
 - Focus on **autonomy in reproductive decisions**—when, how many, and whether to have children.
 - Emphasizes **access to contraception, healthcare**, and education as foundational rights.
- **Demographic Dividend Window:**
 - Over **60% of global population** is aged **15–64**, presenting a **historic productivity opportunity**.
 - Potential for **economic growth**, especially in LMICs, if supported by education and job creation.
- **Ageing Population Challenge:**
 - Rapid rise in the **65+ age group** globally.
 - Urgent need for **healthcare systems, pension reforms**, and social safety nets to support the elderly.
- **Youth Bulge in LMICs:**
 - Countries like **India, Nigeria** have a **high concentration of youth**, posing both **challenges and opportunities**.
 - Investing in **skill development, health, and employment** is crucial to harness this potential.
- **Gender Gaps in Fertility and Healthcare:**
 - **Women's education, autonomy**, and access to services **directly influence fertility patterns**.
 - Persistent **inequalities in contraception, maternal care, and family planning**.

India's Position

India's Current Population Status (2025):

- Estimated population: **146.39 crore (April 2025)**
- India is now the **world's most populous nation**, overtaking China (141.61 crore)

Fertility Trends:

- **Total Fertility Rate (TFR):** Declined to **1.9**, below the **replacement level of 2.1**
- TFR in 2021 (SRS data): **2.0** – replacement level "attained" nationally

"Your only competition is yesterday's version of you."

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- Replacement level TFR: Average number of children per woman required to maintain population level
- The report emphasizes **reproductive agency** – ensuring individuals have **informed and free choices** in reproductive matters

Population Growth Projection:

- India's population expected to **peak at 170 crore** in the next **~40 years**
- Post-peak, a gradual **decline** is anticipated due to sustained low fertility

Youth and Working-Age Demographics:

- **0–14 years:** 24%
- **10–19 years:** 17%
- **10–24 years:** 26%
- **Working age (15–64 years):** 68% – reflects **demographic dividend** opportunity

Elderly Population and Life Expectancy:

- **Aged 65+:** 7% of total population in 2025
- Expected to rise significantly in future decades
- **Life expectancy at birth (2025):**
 - **Men:** 71 years
 - **Women:** 74 years

Census and Official Estimates:

- Last Census conducted in **2011**
- The delayed **2021 Census** now scheduled for **completion by March 2027**
- India's internal population projection (2019): 141.10 crore by 2025

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