

12th June DSC

Current Affairs 12th June 2025.

India Surpasses China with Population at 146.39 Crore: UNFPA

Context:

According to the 2025 edition of the *State of the World Population* report by UNFPA, India's estimated population has climbed to 146.39 crore, overtaking China and securing the top position globally in terms of population. The report also points to a continuing downward trend in India's Total Fertility Rate (TFR), now at 1.9 — beneath the replacement level of 2.1.

Relevance: GS Paper 1 (Society), GS Paper 2 (Social Issues)

Report Highlights:

- **India's estimated population (as of April 2025):** 146.39 crore
- **China's population:** 141.61 crore
- **Status:** India becomes the most populous country in the world
- **Total Fertility Rate (TFR):** 1.9 (below the population replacement threshold of 2.1)
- **Peak population forecast:** Close to 170 crore by 2065, followed by a projected decline

Demographic Transition & Fertility Trends:

- **Replacement fertility achieved:** Nationally, as per the 2021 data by the Registrar General of India
- **Understanding TFR:** Represents the average number of children a woman is expected to have during her reproductive life
- **Implication of TFR < 2.1:** Indicates population will decline in the long run if migration does not compensate

Data Constraints:

- **2021 Census:** Delayed; completion now expected by March 2027
- **Previous Census:** Conducted in 2011
- **Current population data sources:** Primarily rely on Sample Registration System (SRS) and demographic modeling

Low TFR: Boon or Bane?

Opportunities:

- Reduces pressure on environmental and natural resources
- Presents a window for short-term demographic dividend

Challenges:

- Likely issues of population ageing in the future
- Declining working-age population with increasing elderly dependence
- Growing fiscal strain on pension and healthcare services
- Uneven fertility trends — certain states still above replacement levels

Global Context:

- **Report title:** *State of the World Population 2025: The Real Fertility Crisis*
- **Global trend:** A widespread decline in fertility rates, not limited to India
- **Significance for India:** Demonstrates demographic advancement but highlights the urgency of strategic policy response

Centre Cannot Link RTE Funds to NEP: Madras HC

Context:

An outstanding amount of ₹2,151.59 crore under the Samagra Shiksha Scheme (SSS) is owed by the Centre to Tamil Nadu. Out of this, ₹200 crore is allocated specifically for reimbursements related to the Right to Education (RTE) Act. However, the release of funds is under strain due to Tamil Nadu's refusal to adopt the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020.

Relevance: GS Paper 2 (Governance, Centre-State Relations)

Key Court Directions:

- **Centre's Responsibility:** Madras High Court emphasized that the Union government should consider disbursing the RTE funds separately from the rest of the SSS allocations
- **Statutory Basis of RTE:** RTE Act, 2009 mandates shared financial responsibility between the Centre and States under Section 7
- **Not Linked to NEP:** Compliance with NEP cannot be made a precondition for releasing statutory RTE funds

Judicial Limitation:

- As the matter is already under the Supreme Court's purview, the High Court refrained from issuing mandatory directions

- It provided a recommendatory opinion urging the Centre to examine the feasibility of delinking RTE reimbursements from other components

State's Accountability:

- Tamil Nadu cannot cite the withholding of central funds to delay RTE reimbursements to private unaided schools
- The State is independently obligated under the RTE Act to ensure prompt payments

Impact on RTE Admissions:

- The decision was made in response to a Public Interest Litigation urging the government to begin the RTE admission cycle for the academic year 2025–26
- The judgment aims to protect the fundamental right to free and compulsory education for all children

Understanding 'Thirdspace': Lived Spaces of Identity and Resistance

Core Idea:

The theory of *Thirdspace*, developed by Edward Soja in *Thirdspace: Journeys to Los Angeles and Other Real-and-Imagined Places* (1996) and drawing from Henri Lefebvre's *The Production of Space* (1974), challenges the idea of space being solely physical or planned. It emphasizes space as a dynamic social construct shaped by human experience, especially those on the margins of society.

Relevance: GS Paper 1 (Society), GS Paper 2 (Social Issues)

Soja's Spatial Triadlectics:

1. **Firstspace (Perceived):**
The physical, measurable environment — streets, infrastructure, buildings. Though seen as “neutral,” this space often reflects historical and social exclusions like slum peripheries or communal segregation.
2. **Secondspace (Conceived):**
The imagined, ideological space — designs, maps, and regulations. This reflects the worldview of dominant actors, e.g., colonial-era town planning or upper-class gentrification.
3. **Thirdspace (Lived):**
The realm of human experience, imagination, protest, and identity. This space transcends the first two by capturing how communities actually live, resist, and redefine spaces.

Identity and Thirdspace:

- Marginalized communities — including migrants, women, LGBTQ+ groups — inhabit and reshape Thirdspaces to assert rights and identity
 - Feminist scholars like Doreen Massey and Bell Hooks emphasize that spatial access and control are inherently political and gendered
 - For example, a public park might be accessible in theory but unsafe for women after dark — a classic Thirdspace concern
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Urban-Rural and Digital Relevance:

- Though rooted in urban studies, Thirdspace exists in rural markets, online spaces, and social movements
 - Example: A village square may simultaneously serve as a social gathering point (Firstspace), a ritual center (Secondspace), and a protest site (Thirdspace)
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Thirdspace vs. Non-Places:

- Marc Augé's *non-places* (like airports or malls) are impersonal and generic
 - Yet, Thirdspace shows that even sterile non-places can be imbued with meaning through community interaction and resistance
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Illustrative Examples:

- **Greenwich Village, NYC:**
 - *Firstspace*: Traditional architecture
 - *Secondspace*: Historic district planning
 - *Thirdspace*: Hub of LGBTQ+ activism and cultural movements
 - **Ethnic enclaves (e.g., Chinatowns, Afghan lanes):** Created not by urban planners but through lived community experiences
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Why It Matters:

- Encourages reimagining spaces through emotional, social, and political lenses
 - Highlights the power of communities to reshape landscapes and challenge structural inequalities
 - Offers a vital framework for understanding urban sociology, spatial justice, and inclusive development
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FSDC's Push for Cybersecurity and Streamlined Regulations

Context:

In a recent meeting chaired by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, the Financial Stability and Development Council (FSDC) discussed the need for enhanced cyber resilience in India's financial sector and evaluated ways to reduce regulatory compliance burdens.

Relevance: GS Paper 2 (Governance), GS Paper 3 (Economy, Cybersecurity)

Cybersecurity Priorities:

- FSDC analyzed:
 - Existing cybersecurity laws
 - Preparedness across financial sectors including banks, NBFCs, and securities markets
 - Objective: To improve mechanisms for real-time threat mitigation, efficient incident reporting, and institutional resilience in an increasingly digitized financial environment
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Simplifying Compliance:

- The council explored initiatives to minimize compliance complexity by:
 - Introducing unified KYC (Know Your Customer) procedures
 - Ensuring consistency across various regulators (RBI, SEBI, IRDAI)
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Issue of Unclaimed Assets:

- The council reviewed the accumulation of unclaimed deposits, dividends, and insurance payouts
 - Recommendations include:
 - Strengthening outreach to legitimate beneficiaries
 - Streamlining the process for reclaiming such assets
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Role and Focus of FSDC:

- FSDC is a top-tier body coordinating cross-sector financial regulation and monitoring macroeconomic risks
- Its membership includes the heads of major financial regulators (RBI, SEBI, IRDAI, PFRDA)
- Current focus areas:



- Digital governance and cybersecurity
 - Inter-regulatory alignment
 - Financial consumer protection
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India Needs Urgent Policy for Green Mining Vehicles

Context:

India's mining industry needs targeted policy support to promote the adoption of green Heavy Earth Moving Machinery (HEMM) that operates on cleaner fuels, according to a study by the Federation of Indian Mineral Industries (FIMI) and Deloitte.

Relevance: GS Paper 3 (Economy & Environment)

Need for Green HEMMs:

- Green mining vehicles powered by electricity, hybrid engines, or hydrogen are crucial for reducing the carbon footprint of India's growing mining sector
 - Such vehicles align with India's net-zero emission targets
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Environmental Urgency:

- Mining activities are projected to increase considerably by 2035, resulting in elevated fuel use and greenhouse gas emissions
 - Switching to green HEMMs is essential to mitigate this environmental impact and meet India's climate commitments
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Financial Barriers:

- High capital costs of green HEMMs act as a major deterrent
 - The report suggests:
 - Capital subsidies and flexible financing
 - Rebates based on fleet composition
 - Power subsidies for charging infrastructure
 - Relaxed upfront payments for buyers
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Recommended Policy Tools:

- Develop a comprehensive policy package with:



- Technology-linked incentives
- Regulatory frameworks enforcing usage targets
- PLI schemes and infrastructure support (charging and hydrogen stations)
- Government procurement mandates to boost demand

Market Outlook:

- **2024 Revenue:** \$6.4 billion in mining equipment
- **Forecast for 2033:** Expected to reach \$11.34 billion at 6.5% CAGR
- A rise in production will necessitate thousands of new HEMMs, increasing emissions unless cleaner technologies are mainstreamed

Need for Swift Transition:

- Without immediate and targeted interventions, the mining sector may continue on a carbon-intensive trajectory
- Moving decisively toward green HEMMs is necessary to:
 - Improve environmental performance
 - Boost efficiency
 - Fulfill national climate objectives

12th June 2025: Static MCQS

1. Suppose the revenue expenditure is Rs. 80,000 crores and the revenue receipts of the government are Rs. 60,000 crores. The government budget also shows borrowings of Rs. 10,000 crores and interest payments of Rs. 6,000 crores. which of the following statement are correct?

- I. Revenue deficit is Rs. 20,000 crores.
- II. Fiscal deficit is Rs. 10,000 crores.
- III. Primary deficit is Rs. 4,000 crores.

Select the correct answer using the code given below.

- a. I and II only
- b. II and III only
- c. I and III only
- d. I, II and III

Correct Option: (d)

2. India is one of the founding members of the International North-South Transport corridor (INSTC), a multimodal transportation corridor, which will connect

- a. India to central asia to Europe via iran
- b. India to central asia via china
- c. India to south-east asia through Bangladesh and Myanmar
- d. India to Europe through Azerbaijan

Correct Option: (a)

3. Consider the following statements:

Statement I:

Of the two major ethanol producers in the world, i.e., Brazil and the United States of America, the former produces more ethanol than the latter.

Statement II:

Unlike in the united states of America where corn is the principal sugarcane is the principal feedstock for ethanol production in Brazil.

Which one of the following is correct in respect of the above statements?

- a. Both statement I and Statement II are correct and statement II explains statements I
- b. Both statement I and statement II are correct but statement II does not explain statement I
- c. Statement I is correct but statement II is not correct
- d. Statement I is not correct but statement II is correct.

Correct Option: (d)

4. The World Bank warned that India could become one of the first places where wet-bulb temperatures routinely exceed 35°C. Which of the following statements best reflects(s) the implication of the above-said report?

- I. Peninsular India will most likely suffer from flooding, tropical cyclones and droughts.
- II. The survival of animals including humans will be affected as shedding of their body heat through perspiration becomes difficult.

Select the correct answer using the code given below.

- a. I only
- b. II only
- c. Both I and II
- d. Neither I nor II

Correct Option: (c)

5. A country's fiscal deficit stands at Rs. 50,000 crores. It is receiving Rs. 10,000 crores through non-debt creating capital receipts. The country's interest liabilities are Rs. 1,500 crores. What is the gross primary deficit?

- a. 48,500 crores
- b. 51,500 crores
- c. 58,500 crores
- d. None of the above

Correct Option: (a)

