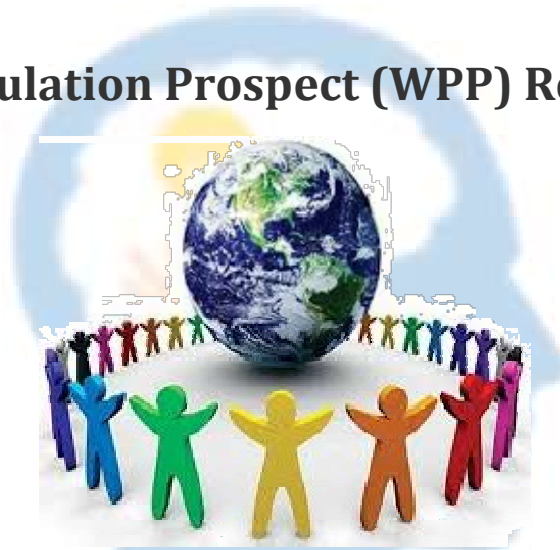




Date – 13 July 2022

World Population Prospect (WPP) Report 2022



- According to the 2022 edition of the United Nations' World Population Prospect (WPP) report, India is projected to overtake China as the world's most populous country in the year 2023.

World Population Prospects:

- The Population Division of the United Nations has been publishing the WPP biennially since 1951.
- Each revision of the WPP provides a historical time series of population indicators beginning with the year 1950.
- It does so by taking into account newly released national data to revise estimates of past trends in fertility, mortality or international migration.

Report Conclusion:

Population Growth: But Growth Rate Low

- The global population is expected to grow to around 8.5 billion in 2030, 9.7 billion in 2050 and 10.4 billion in 2100.

- For the first time since 1950, the global growth rate fell below 1% per annum in the year 2020.

Rates vary greatly across countries and regions:

- More than half of the projected growth in global population by the year 2050 will be concentrated in just eight countries:
- These are- Democratic Republic of Congo, Egypt, Ethiopia, India, Nigeria, Pakistan, Philippines and United Republic of Tanzania.
- The 46 Least Developed Countries (LDCs) are among the countries with the fastest population growth in the world.
- The population of many countries is projected to double between 2022 and 2050, facing additional pressure on resources and challenges in the achievement of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Growing elderly population:

- The share of the global population aged 65 or over is projected to increase from 10% in 2022 to 16% in 2050.

Demographic Segmentation:

- The continuing decline in fertility has led to an increase in the working age population (between 25 and 64 years), creating opportunities for accelerated economic growth per capita.
- This change in age distribution provides a time bound opportunity for accelerated economic growth.

International Migration:

- International migration is having a significant impact on the population trends of some countries.
- The contribution of international migration to population growth in high-income countries exceeded the birth-death balance between 2000 and 2020.
- Migration will be the sole driver of population growth in high-income countries over the next few decades.

Conclusions related to India:

- India's growth rate was 2.3% in the year 1972, which has now come down to less than 1%.
- The number of children every Indian woman has during her lifetime has come down from about 5.4 to less than 2.1 now.
- This means that India has achieved replacement fertility rate at which a population changes itself from one generation to the next.
- The fertility rate is declining, so the death rate has increased with advances in health care and medicine.
- Populations of 0-14 years and 15-24 years will continue to decline, while populations of 25-64 and 65+ will continue to increase in the coming decades.

- This reduction in premature mortality for successive generations, reflected in increased levels of life expectancy at birth, has been a factor in India's population growth.

Initiative:

- Countries with older populations should take steps to adapt public programs to a growing proportion of older people, including improving the stability of social security and pension systems and the establishment of universal health care and long-term care systems.
- To maximize the potential benefits of a favorable age distribution, countries need to invest in the development of their human capital by ensuring access to health care and quality education at all ages, and by promoting opportunities for productive employment and decent work.
- People already in the age group of 25-64 need skills, which is the only way to ensure that they are more productive and earn better income.
- 65+ age category is going to grow very fast and it is facing many challenges. This will increase the pressure on resources before future governments. If the elderly live within the family structure, the burden on the government can be reduced. "If we go back to our roots or traditions and live as a family (as opposed to the individualism of the Western trend), the challenges will be less.

Swadeep Kumar

Foreign Ministers of India and China meeting during the G20



- During the G20 Foreign Ministers' meeting in Indonesia's 'Bali' city, a meeting was held between the Foreign Ministers and State Counselors of India and China separately.
- In this meeting, both sides of India and China discussed to resolve the border standoff that started in April 2020.

- The meeting also discussed the issue of Indian Prime Minister wishing the Dalai Lama a happy birthday and the Enforcement Directorate (ED) searching the offices of Chinese company Vivo in India.

Important points of the meeting:

- Three reciprocal aspects: India-China relations are best expressed by **three reciprocal aspects:**
 - Mutual respect
 - Mutual sensitivity
 - Mutual interests

India-China talks:

- **Speedy resolution:** EAM called for early resolution of all remaining issues related to the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in Eastern Ladakh.
- **Complete withdrawal:** The External Affairs Minister reiterated the need to maintain the pace of 'complete disengagement' from all remaining areas to restore peace and tranquility in the border areas.
- **Regular contacts at military and diplomatic levels:** The foreign ministers of both countries agreed that they should continue regular contact in military and diplomatic meetings and meeting of senior commanders at the 'Chushul Moldo border point'. Should wait for the next 16th round.
- **No mention of LAC by China:** The Chinese statement (readout) made no mention of the 'LAC crisis', instead calling on both sides to "strengthen coordination and cooperation and to jointly strengthen more democratic international relations and a fair international relationship". Emphasized the comments made to promote the system.
- **Both sides maintained communication:** China said that the two sides have so far "maintained communication and exchanges" and "effectively managed differences".
- **Assured Support:** China has assured support for India's upcoming G20 and SCO presidency.

Line of Actual Control:

- The 'Line of Actual Control (LAC)' is the demarcation, which separates the Indian controlled area from the Chinese controlled area.
- LAC is different from the 'Line of Control' (LoC) with Pakistan. The LoC derives from the 1948 ceasefire line negotiated by the United Nations (UN) after the Kashmir War.
- It was designated as LoC in 1972 after the Simla Agreement between India-Pakistan, the two countries. This line is depicted on a map signed by the 'Director Generals of Military Operations' (DGMO) of both the armies and this legal agreement has international approval.

- In contrast, 'Line of Actual Control' (LAC) is only a concept. This line is not agreed upon by both India and China, nor is it depicted on the map, nor is it demarcated on the ground.
- India considers the 'Line of Actual Control' to be 3,488 km long, while the Chinese consider it to be only around 2,000 km.

G-20 Group:

- It is an informal grouping of 19 countries and the European Union (EU), established in 1999 with representatives from the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank.
- G-20 member countries include Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, European Union, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Republic of Korea, Turkey, and United Kingdom and includes the United States.
- The G-20 group includes the world's major advanced and emerging economies, which account for about two-thirds of the world's population.
- The G20 has no permanent headquarters and the Secretariat rotates each year between the countries that host or preside over the group.
- The members are divided into five groups (India is in Group 2) along with Russia, South Africa and Turkey.
- The G-20 agenda, which still relies heavily on the guidance of finance ministers and central governors, is finalized through a prescribed system of 'sherpas', who are special envoys of G-20 leaders.
- Presently the Minister of Commerce and Industry is the current "G20 Sherpa" of India.
- Another feature of the G-20 is the 'troika' meetings, which include the countries chairing the G-20 in the previous year, the current year and the next year. Currently the troika includes Italy, Indonesia and India.

Swadeep Kumar

India's Economic Stakes in West Asia

The diplomatic fallout from the communally charged comments made by two erstwhile spokespersons of the ruling party forced the government into firefighting mode.

What is the issue?

- The provocative comments spurred criticisms and protests by several West Asian nations as well as the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC).

- In response, Indian officials asserted that the government stood by the country's traditional values and respected all religions.
- It also tasked its diplomats to reach out to individual OIC member states and reassure them on India's position of an inclusive approach to all communities.

Why is West Asia so significant for India?

- **Ties**– India's cultural, economic and trade ties with the countries of the West Asian region are deep and abiding.
- **Trade route**– The West Asian region served as a land trade bridge to early European empires and a flourishing trade in spices, cloth, silk and indigo in exchange for gold and silver is well recorded.
- **Monetary system**– The British colonial era saw the advent of a loose common monetary system with the rupee serving as legal tender in several Gulf states till the middle of the 20th century.
- **Oil exploitation**– The discovery and commercial exploitation of oil in the Gulf region during the colonial era started to alter the balance of trade flows between India and the West Asian countries.
- **Trade**- Today, the countries of the West Asian region collectively account for over a sixth of India's total bilateral merchandise trade and contribute about three fifths of India's crude oil supplies.
- **Employment**- The region is a major provider of jobs to Indian workers, professionals and entrepreneurs and houses about 89 lakh Indians.
- **Remittances**- The NRIs in West Asian countries annually send home about \$40 billion, and account for more than 55% of the country's total remittance inflows.
- **Investments**– Investments from sovereign wealth funds and other large investors from the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) have also climbed steadily in recent years.

Why is India so dependent on West Asian countries for its energy needs?

- In 2020-21, the top oil exporter to India was Iraq (more than 22%), followed by Saudi Arabia (18%).
- Domestic crude production meets less than a fifth of the country's oil requirement, forcing India to take recourse to imports to fill the gap of more than 80%.
- A large proportion of India's refineries have been predominantly configured to process the sulphur-heavy sour grades of crude that are produced in the Gulf region.
- The sweeter (low sulphur) grade of oil such as Brent proves to be comparatively costlier than the sour grades.

How reliant is India on the region for non-oil trade?

- From 2017 through 2021, Iran and the GCC member states accounted for a 15.3% share of India's cumulative two-way merchandise trade.
- Out of that, the UAE contributed the lion's share of almost 7%, followed by Saudi Arabia.

- The region is today a key market for several Indian commodities ranging from tea and basmati rice to electrical equipment, apparel, and machinery.
- India has signed a CEPA with UAE with the aim of increasing the total value of bilateral trade in goods to more than \$100 billion and getting services trade to exceed \$15 billion over the five years.
- The trade pact will provide Indian exporters preferential market access on 99% of the country's exports to the UAE in value terms, particularly from labour-intensive sectors.
- The government is actively pursuing a broader FTA (Free Trade Agreement) with the GCC as a whole.
- The region also serves as a key hub to markets in Africa.

Anshum

