Transformation Challenges in Population Growth

Why in news?

As predicted by the Revision of World Population Prospects 2022, the human population has touched the 8 billion mark.

What is the World Population Prospects about?

- The 2022 Revision of World Population Prospects is the 27th edition that has been prepared by the **Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the UN Secretariat**.
- It has been published in a **biennial** cycle since 1951.
- It presents population estimates from 1950 to the present for 237 countries or areas, underpinned by analyses of historical demographic trends.
- For the first time, the estimates and projections are presented in one-year intervals of age and time instead of the five-year intervals used previously.
- According to the report, 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.
- The global population is growing at its slowest rate since 1950, having fallen under 1% in 2020.

To know more about the UN Population report, click here

What is the picture of India?

- **Population** - India's population stands at 1.412 billion in 2022 and is projected to overtake China as the world's most populous country in 2023.
- According to UNFPA estimates, 68% of India's population is between 15-64 years old in 2022, while people aged 65 and above comprise 7% of the population.
- At 253 million, India is also home to the world's largest adolescent population (10-19 years).
- **Demographic dividend** - India has the prospects to reap the demographic dividend as the median age of an Indian this year was 28.7 years against a global value of 30.3 years.
- According to UNFPA, India will have one of the youngest populations in the world till 2030 and the demographic window of opportunity will last till 2025.

What does this population growth signify?

- **Significance** - The growth of our population is a testament to humanity's achievements, including

    - Reduction in poverty and gender inequality
    - Advancement in health care
    - Expanded access to education
- **Impact** - These have resulted in
    - More women surviving childbirth
    - More children surviving their early years
    - Longer and healthier lifespans

What are the implications of this transformation?

- **Change in international power balance** - The global population share of combined population of India, Pakistan and Bangladesh is now 23%.
- Africa's share in the global population will rise from nearly 6% in 1900 to over 21% in 2050.
- Hence, Asia and Africa will have an important role in determining our shared future.
- **Immigration** - Declining fertility in the West has led to the rapid ageing of the population.
- Immigration remains the only option to reduce the dependency ratio imposed by the rising proportion of the elderly and declining fertility among the native-born population.
- While this gives rise to tremendous ethnic tensions, it also increases the power of minorities in the host countries.
- **Environmental impact** - Population growth has magnified the environmental impacts of economic development.
- It may result in humans consuming far more biological resources, such as forests and land, than the planet can regenerate each year.
- The overconsumption of fossil fuels, for example, leads to more carbon dioxide emissions, responsible for global warming.
- **Internal transformations** – The seat allocation based on the latest population will trigger dispute between north Indian states and southern States.
- The locals-only legislation in Andhra Pradesh and protectionist demands in Tamil Nadu reiterate the growing influx of culturally diverse migrants.

> ***Article 81*** *of the Indian Constitution mandated the allocation of Lok Sabha seats across States in proportion to their population.*
>
> *However, in 1976 the fear of overpopulation led to a constitutional amendment freezing the seat allocation based on population figures of the* ***1971 Census*** *until 2001 which was further extended to* ***2026****.*

References

1. The Hindu | Learning to live together, all eight billion of us
2. The Hindu | World Population reaches 8 billion mark today

3. The Indian Express | World's population touches 8 billion

