



CA Dated on 11-04-2019

GS-1

Populaion Study:India

Why in News?

India's [population](#) grew at an average annual rate of 1.2 per cent between 2010 and 2019 to 1.36 billion, more than double the annual growth rate of China, according to a report by the United Nations Population Fund.

Important Observations:

- India's population in 2019 stood at 1.36 billion, growing from 942.2 million in 1994 and 541.5 million in 1969.
- India's population grew at average annual rate of 1.2 per cent between 2010 and 2019, the UN sexual and reproductive health agency said in the State of World Population 2019 report.

TFR:

- According to the report, in India, total fertility rate per woman was 5.6 in 1969, dropping to 3.7 in 1994 and 2.3 in 2019.
- India recorded an improvement in life expectancy at birth. The life expectancy at birth in 1969 was 47 years, growing to 60 years in 1994 and 69 years in 2019.
- Giving a snapshot of India's population composition in 2019, the report said 27 % of the country's population was in the age bracket of 0-14 years and 10-24 years each, while 67 % of the country's population was in the 15-64 age bracket.
- Six per cent of the country's population was of the age 65 and above.
- Indicative of the improvement in the quality of India's health care system, the report noted that Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR) in the country dropped from 488 deaths per 100,000 live births in 1994 to 174 deaths per 100,000 live births in 2015.

Data related to Women:

- The findings, relating to women aged between 15-49 years, were published for the first time as part of [United Nations](#) Population Fund's (UNFP) State of World Population 2019 report.
- The report includes, for the first time, data on women's ability to make decisions over three key areas: sexual intercourse with their partner, contraception use and health care.
- According to the analysis, the absence of reproductive and sexual rights has a major and negative repercussions on women's education, income and safety, leaving them "unable to shape their own futures".

Challenges faced by Women:

- Early marriage continues to present a major cultural obstacle to female empowerment and better reproductive rights, the UNFPA report said.
- Highlighting positive changes in the last half-century, the report shows that in 1969, the average number of births per woman was 4.8, compared with 2.9 in 1994, and 2.5 today.
- Looking ahead to future challenges, the UN agency highlights the threat to women's and girls' reproductive rights posed by emergencies caused by conflict or climate disasters.
- About 35 million women, girls and young people will need life-saving sexual and reproductive health services this year, as well as services to address gender-based violence, in humanitarian settings, it warns.

GS-2

National Green Tribunal (NGT)

Why in News?

The National Green Tribunal (NGT) has constituted a Central Monitoring Committee to ensure the implementation of action plan meant for reducing pollution stretches across the country.

Details:

A Bench headed by NGT Chairperson Justice Adarsh Kumar Goel said, "Having given due consideration to the serious issue and inadequacy of success

achieved so far, we find it necessary to constitute a Central Monitoring Committee to undertake a national initiative by way of preparation and enforcement of a national plan to make river stretches pollution-free.”

Members:

- Senior representatives of NITI Aayog, Secretaries of the Ministry of Water Resources, Ministry of Urban Development, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change will be a part of the committee, apart from the Chairman, Central [Pollution Control](#) Board and Director General, National Mission for Clean Ganga, the NGT said.

Function of Committee:

- The Committee has been asked to coordinate with the respective States to oversee the action plans and ensure execution of the same in a time-bound manner.
- Additionally, the Union Environment Ministry was directed to consider a policy for giving “environmental awards” to institutions and States that comply with orders and ensure reduction in pollution.

Other steps taken:

- The CPCB, along with the respective State pollution control boards and pollution control committees, was directed to launch a nationwide programme on biodiversity monitoring and indexing of the rivers to “assess the efficacy of river cleaning programmes.”
- “Further, for the safety of human health and maintaining sanctity of the rivers, regular hygienic surveys of the rivers should be carried out with reference to fecal coliform and fecal streptococci, as indicated in the primary water quality criteria for bathing water.

GS-3

Manufacturing index:

Why in News?

Manufacturing activity slowed to a six-month low of 52.6 in March due to lower levels of new orders and production, according to a private sector survey.

The Nikkei India Manufacturing Purchasing Managers' Index came in at a lower reading in March from 54.3 in February. A reading over 50 implies expansion while one below that denotes a contraction in activity.

Improving conditions

- "Registering 52.6 in March, the Nikkei India Manufacturing Purchasing Managers' Index continued to signal improving operating conditions in the sector," the report said.
- "However, falling from 54.3 in February to a six-month low, the latest figure highlighted a loss of growth momentum."
- "Softer increases were registered for new orders, production, input buying and employment," the report added.
- The report said that the increase in new orders was the slowest in six months, with firms reporting that the effect of strong underlying demand, successful advertising, and the receipt of bulk orders was being curbed by competitive conditions and the upcoming elections.

Future Prospects:

- Although global headwinds and a general slowdown in trade present some concerns for the future health of Indian manufacturers' order books, so far companies have been able to weather the storm and secure healthy inflows of new work from abroad.
- A guarded attitude towards appointing new staff dragged job creation to an eight-month low, while buying activity growth moderated amid sufficient input stocks at some companies.

Non-performing assets:

Why in News?

There continues to be a high stock of non-performing assets (NPAs) in India, and there has been some progression. Further progress is welcome, IMF head of Monetary and Capital Markets Tobias Adrian said.

Mr. Adrian made these remarks at the release of the multilateral institution's April 2019 Global Financial Stability Report (GFSR) as part of the World Bank IMF Spring Meetings.

About GFSR:

- The GFSR provides an assessment of balance sheet vulnerabilities across financial and non-financial sectors in advanced and emerging market economies.

Recommendations:

- The level of capitalisation of some banks, particularly government-owned banks should be bolstered.
- This is also one of the recommendations of the Financial Sector Assessment Program for India that took place fairly recently.
- There were some steps taken by the authorities to boost capital buffers in banks and also governments in state-owned banks, that have had some positive impact.

Observations regarding investment:

- Portfolio flows to emerging markets are influenced by benchmark-driven investors — 70% of country allocations of investment funds are impacted by benchmark indices, the report said.
- This category of investors are more sensitive to global financial conditions and as they command increasing shares of portfolio flows, external shocks may propagate to medium-size, and frontier market economies faster than they did in the past.

Military Satellites:

Why in News?

Between now and early 2020, the space above India looks set to see an unprecedented rush of satellites meant solely or mainly for the country's military.

Starting May, the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) plans to send up at least eight earth observation (EO) satellites of varied hues and at the rate of almost one a month.

Steps taken:

- Communication satellite GSAT-32 is also in the offing next year to replace GSAT-6A, which was lost in a failed launch and was meant to mainly serve the ground forces.
- Until now, such defence-use satellites were spaced out over a few years; or were put up only once a year as in the case of the Cartosat-2 series high-resolution imaging satellites.
- Looking at the last three launches, we could even say the train has already started. HysIS, launched in November; Microsat-R in January; and the EMISAT sent into orbit on April 1 are all for what is called "strategic use".

DRDO payloads

- While traditionally, payloads for ISRO's satellites come from the Space Applications Centre, the payloads of the Microsat-R and EMISAT were from the [Defence](#) Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).
- Soon after EMISAT's launch, ISRO Chairman and Secretary, Department of Space, K.Sivan, announced that the next mission would be the radar imaging satellite RISAT-2B, followed by a high resolution mapping satellite Cartosat-3.
- Both are understood to be useful militarily and seen as overdue assets.

Objects of desire

- Cartosat-3 will have 30 cm resolution, which is at a par with the world's best, according to public information already put out by ISRO.
- It means the satellite can clearly 'see' and capture images of guns, devices, objects or human movement at that scale from space.
- There are already half-a-dozen Cartosat-2 series satellites in orbit, though these possess a lower resolution capability than the upcoming Cartosat-3.
- Radar imaging satellites like India's RISAT series can provide almost an uninterrupted view of earth, day or night, rain or shine, a handy feature for the forces to detect border infiltration.
- A number of foreign satellites that have been flown to space on the PSLV are also for earth observation, space situational awareness and ship monitoring, which again may be useful as military information.
- Often, what is useful for civil purpose can also be useful for strategic purposes.

