Women and Men in India 2023

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Why in News?

The **Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation** has released the 25th edition of report titled **Women and Men in India 2023**.

- It offers a comprehensive overview of **gender dynamics** in India, covering data on **population, education, health, economic participation**, and decision-making involvement.
- It presents data disaggregated by **gender, urban-rural divide, and geographical region** to understand existing disparities in society.
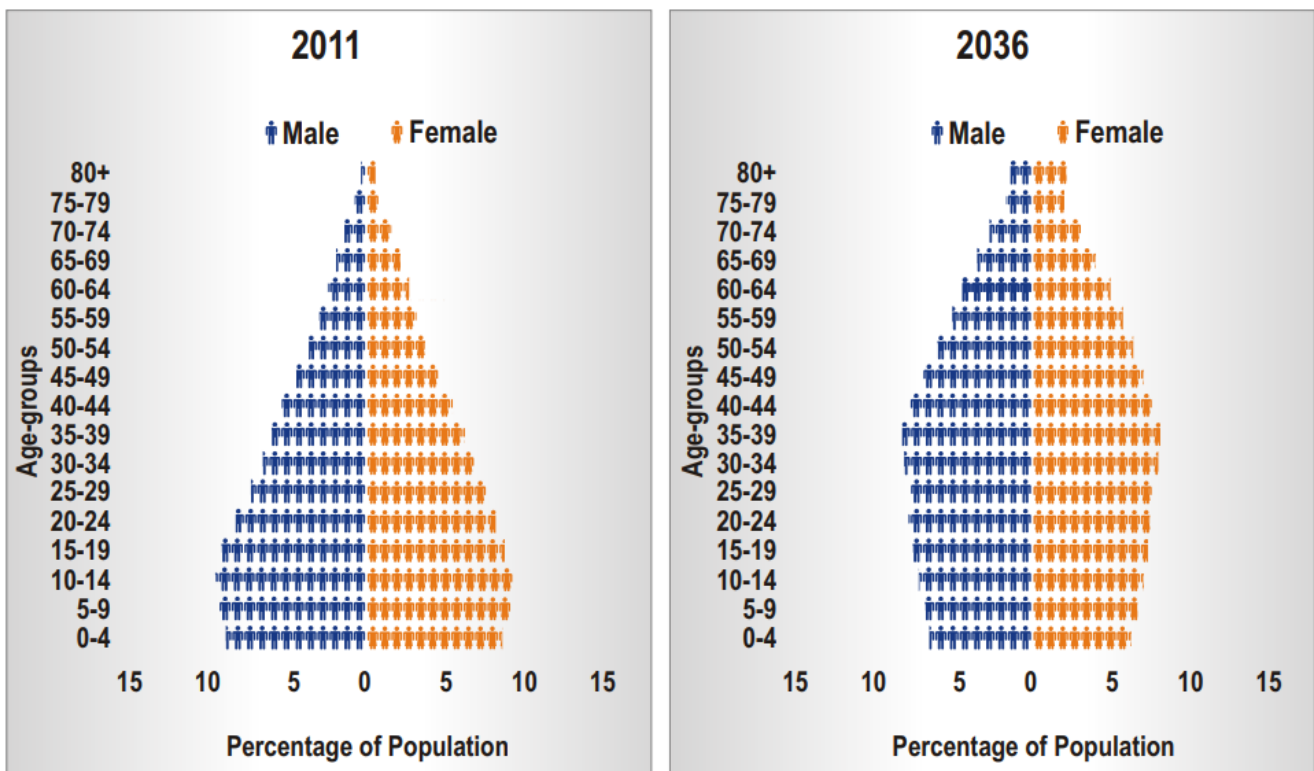
What are Key Highlights of the 2023 Report?

- **Population:** By **2036**, the **population** of India is expected to reach **152.2 Crores**.
- **Improvement in sex ratio:** **Sex ratio** in India is expected to improve to **952 women per 1000 men by 2036** from 943 in 2011.
  - **Female percentage** is expected to constitute **48.8% in 2036** compared to 48.5% in 2011. **India's population in 2036 is expected to be more feminine**.
- **Age Demography:** The **proportion** of individuals **under 15 years** is projected to **decrease** from 2011 to 2036, likely **due to declining fertility.**
  - The proportion of the population **aged 60 years and above** is anticipated to substantially **increase.**
- **Age Specific Fertility Rate (ASFR):** From 2016 to 2020, ASFR in the **age group of 20-24 and 25-29** has reduced from **135.4 and 166.0 to 113.6 and 139.6** respectively.
  - ASFR is defined as the **number of live births** in a **specific age group** of women **per thousand female** populations of that age group.
    - The ASFR for the **ages 35-39** for the above period has increased from **32.7 to 35.6** which shows that **after settling in life, women are thinking of** expanding **their family.**
  - **Adolescent Fertility Rate was 33.9** for the illiterate population whereas **11.0** for the literate in 2020.
- **Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR):** India has successfully achieved the major milestone of bringing down its MMR (97 per lakh live births in 2018-20). **(SDG target - Reduce MMR to 70 by 2030)**.

- - **MMR** is defined as the number of **maternal deaths** during a given time period **per 100,000 live births** during a year.
  - **Infant Mortality Rate (IMR):** Both Male IMR and Female IMR were equal at the level of 28 infants per 1000 live births in 2020.
    - **IMR** is the probability of a child born in a specific year or period dying before reaching the age of one year.
  - **Under Five Mortality Rate:** It has decreased from **43 in 2015 to 32 in 2020**. The **under five mortality rate** gap between boys and girls has also reduced.
  - **Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR): Male LFPR** has gone from **75.8 to 78.5 during 2017-18 to 2022-23** and **female LFPR** has gone from **23.3 to 37** during the same period.
    - **LFPR** is defined as the section of the working population in the **age group of 16-64 i**n the economy currently employed or seeking employment.
  - **Participation in Election:** The **2014 Lok Sabha elections** marked a significant change, with **women's participation increasing to 65.6%**, and further rising to **67.2%** in the **2019** Lok Sabha elections.
  - **Women Entrepreneurship:** The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) has recognized a total of **1,17,254 start-ups** between **2016 and 2023.**
    - Among these, **55,816 start-ups are led by women**, constituting **47.6%** of the total recognized start-ups.
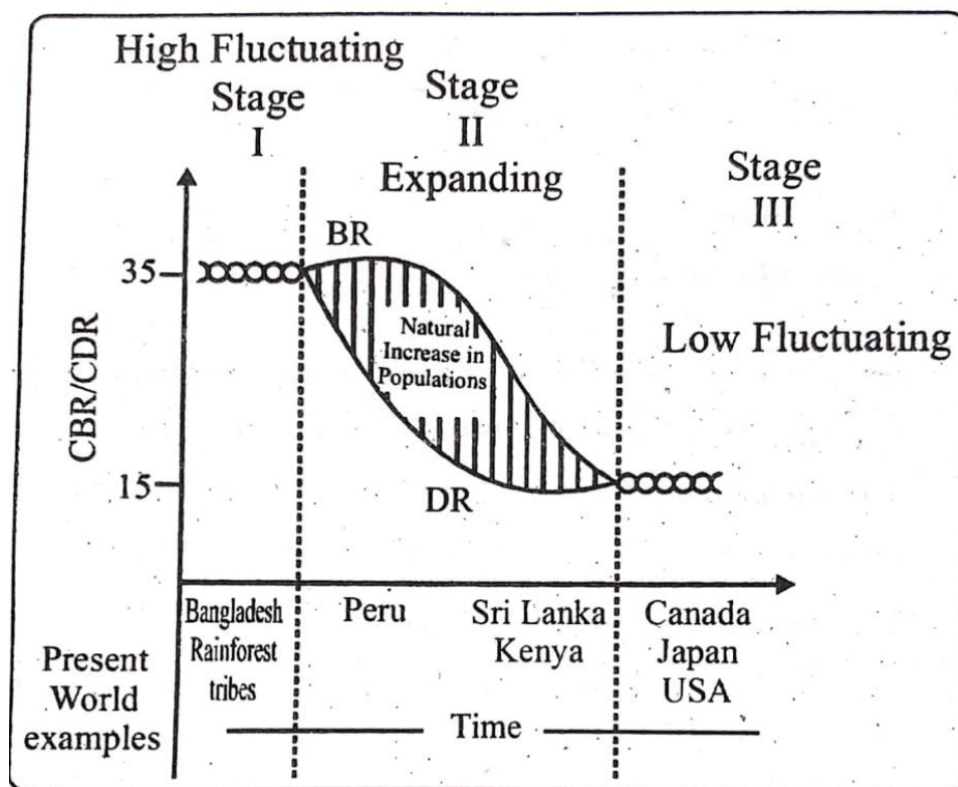
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Age-wise profile of population by sex (%)

Note:

- **Currently, Indian age pyramids exhibit a triangular shape**. As per data of MoSPI, by 2036, pyramid projected **to transition to a bell shape, tapering towards the top.**
  - A **population pyramid is a graphical representation** of the distribution of people by sex and age group.
- **Triangular Shaped Pyramids:** They have a **wide base** and are typical of **less developed countries**. These have larger populations in lower age groups due to high birth rates. E.g., **Bangladesh, Nigeria etc.**
- **Bell Shaped Tapered Towards the Top:** It shows **birth and death rates are almost equal** leading to a near constant population. E.g., Australia.

What is Demographic Transition Model?

- The **Demographic Transition Model (Population Cycle)** shows changes in population growth rates and the effect on population.
  - It was developed by the American demographer **Warren Thompson in 1929**.
- **This can be divided into four stages:**
  - **Stage 1:** The first stage has **high fertility and high mortality** because people reproduce more to compensate for the deaths due to **epidemics and variable food supply**.
    - The population growth is slow and most of the people are engaged in **agriculture** where large families are an asset.
    - Life expectancy is low, people are **mostly illiterate** and have low levels of technology.
    - Two hundred years ago all the countries of the world were in this stage.
  - **Stage 2: Fertility** remains **high** in the beginning of the second stage but it declines with time. This is accompanied by a reduced mortality rate.
    - Improvements in **sanitation and health conditions** lead to decline in mortality. Because of this gap the net addition to population is high.
  - **Stage 3 :** Both **fertility and mortality decline** considerably. The population is either stable or grows slowly.
    - The population becomes **urbanised, literate and has high technical knowhow** and deliberately controls the family size.
    - This shows that human beings are extremely flexible and are able to adjust their fertility.

What are the Challenges Associated with India's Demographic Profile?

- **Son Meta Preference:** India has been facing a **skewed sex ratio** at birth for many years, which has been a cause for concern.
  - **Sons are expected to continue the family name** and **support parents** financially, while **daughters** are viewed as a **liability** due to dowry costs and leaving the family after

marriage.

- **Aging Population:** While India has the highest number of young people, aging is **rapidly progressing**. The current **elderly population** of 153 million (aged 60 and above) is **expected to reach a staggering 347 million by 2050.**
- **Disparity in Health Outcomes:** In the northeastern states, **Assam** has the **highest infant mortality rate**, followed by Meghalaya and Arunachal Pradesh.
  - There is still a **wide disparity** in health outcomes for children between rural and urban India.
- **Barrier to Women's LFPR: Deep rooted patriarchal norms and traditional gender roles often limit women's access to education and employment opportunities.**

  - Societal expectations may prioritise women's roles as caregivers and homemakers, discouraging their active participation in the labor force.

- **Absence of Informed Choice in Elections:** Lack of education among the masses to make **informed choices** while voting. Voters also get swayed on the basis of their c**aste and religious identity**.
- **Informal Women Entrepreneurship:** Women led enterprises are primarily **rural, small-scale, and informal**. They operate mostly from home-based setups which includes **textiles, garments, handicrafts, food processing** etc.
  - They lack formal funding and social security benefits.

What are Initiatives Related to Overall Demographic Development in India?

- Beti Bachao Beti Padhao Scheme

- Rashtriya Uchhattar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA)

- Aayushmaan Bharat Yojana

- Digital Health Mission

- Mission Indradhanush (MI)

- Stand-Up India Scheme

Way Forward

- **Balanced Sex Ratio:** Periodical meetings with **proprietors** of scan centres need to be organised for enforcement of Pre conception and Pre Natal Diagnostic technique Act,1994. Ensure legal action on quacks who indulge in **illegal abortions.**
  - To prevent unwanted pregnencies the use of contraceptives like **Oral pills, injectables** and intrauterine devices can be encouraged.
- **Handling Aging Population:** India needs to provide **specialised healthcare** for seniors, foster **intergenerational bonding** to enrich society, and use technology to make healthcare and social services accessible and affordable for the elderly. It will give boost to the **silver economy**.
  - **Silver economy includes all those economic activities,** products and services designed to meet the needs of people over 50.
- **Boosting Women's LFPR: Child-care subsidies** free up **mothers' time to enter the labour force** and have had significant implications in impacting female employment.
- **Supporting Women Entrepreneurship**: Formalisation of women enterprises, **institutional finance** and skilling can ensure greater participation and equity for women entrepreneurs.

UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Question (PYQ)

Prelims:

Q. To obtain full benefits of demographic dividend, what should India do? (2013)

(a) Promoting skill development

(b) Introducing more social security schemes

(c) Reducing infant mortality rate

(d) Privatization of higher education

Ans: (a)

Q. India is regarded as a country with "Demographic Dividend". This is due to (2011)

(a) Its high population in the age group below 15 years

(b) Its high population in the age group of 15-64 years

(c) Its high population in the age group above 65 years

(d) Its high total population

Ans: (b)

Q. Despite being a high saving economy, capital formation may not result in significant increase in output due to (2018)

(a) weak administrative machinery

(b) illiteracy

(c) high population density

(d) high capital-output ratio

Ans: (d)

Q. As per India's National Population Policy, 2000, by which one of the following years is it our long-term objective to achieve population stabilization? (2008)

(a) 2025

(b) 2035

(c) 2045

(d) 2055

Ans: (c)

Mains:

Q. Examine the role of 'Gig Economy' in the process of empowerment of women in India **(2021)**

Q. Discuss the main objectives of Population Education and point out the measures to achieve them in India in detail.

Q.Critically examine whether growing population is the cause of poverty OR poverty is the main cause of population increase in India. **(2015)**

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