

INDIA SET TO BEAT CHINA IN POPULATION: UN REPORT

Relevant for: International Relations | Topic: UNO and its various Agencies

India is set to surpass China as the world's most populous country in 2023, with each counting more than 1.4 billion residents this year, a United Nations report said on Monday, warning that high fertility would challenge economic growth.

The world's population, estimated to reach 8 billion by November 15 this year, could grow to 8.5 billion in 2030, and 10.4 billion in 2100, as the pace of mortality slows, said the report released on World Population Day.

India's population was 1.21 billion in 2011, according to the domestic census, which is conducted once a decade. The government had deferred the 2021 census due to the pandemic.

The world's population was growing at its slowest pace since 1950, having fallen below 1% in 2020, UN estimates showed.

In 2021, the average fertility of the world's population stood at 2.3 births per woman over a lifetime, having fallen from about 5 births in 1950.

"This is an occasion to celebrate our diversity, recognise our common humanity, and marvel at advancements in health that have extended lifespans and dramatically reduced maternal and child mortality rates," UN Secretary-General António Guterres said in a statement. Still, a growing population was a reminder of a shared responsibility of care for the planet and to "reflect on where we still fall short of our commitments to one another," he said.

The UN said more than half of the projected increase in the global population up to 2050 will be concentrated in eight countries — Congo, Egypt, Ethiopia, India, Nigeria, Pakistan, the Philippines and the United Republic of Tanzania.

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