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# **DAILY EDITORIAL ANALYSIS**

**TOPIC**

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**INDIA'S DEMOGRAPHIC  
MISSION**

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## INDIA'S DEMOGRAPHIC MISSION

### In Context

- In the Independence Day Address, 2025, the Prime Minister stated that a high-powered **Demographic Mission** would be launched to address illegal influx migration to meet **India's developing demographic challenges**.
- The announcement was made to protect border security and national integrity, and has re-opened a **broader debate such as whether India requires an isolated population-control policy or a structural demographic vision** based on inclusion, human development, and equitable regional growth.

### India at the Demographic Crossroads

- India is currently the world's most populous nation (1.44 billion), standing at a critical demographic juncture.
- India's youth bulge (65% below 35 years) offers **both opportunity and risk**, depending on how well it is converted into a **productive and skilled workforce**.
- Historically, it is seen that that population policy has **focused narrowly on fertility control**, while ignoring the **qualitative dimensions of demography** like education, health, migration, and ageing.

### What is a Demographic Mission?

- It is a proposed national initiative designed to **monitor, manage, and analyse India's demographic transformations** encompassing fertility, mortality, migration, and population distribution and also to ensure balanced growth, **national security, and sustainable development**.
- The mission also includes the establishment of a **High-Powered National Commission** which is a central authority for **demographic assessment, migration management, and population policy coherence**.
- It would use data analytics, satellite mapping, and digitised Census platforms for real-time monitoring.

### Why Does India Need a Demographic Mission?

- **Create a National Demographic Intelligence Framework:** India's last complete Census was in 2011 and accurate, real-time demographic data is crucial for policy planning, welfare targeting, and migration management.
- **Address Human Capital Inequality:** Educational and health infrastructure remains uneven across regions, causing disparities in employment and productivity. A mission could enable balanced resource distribution.
- **Manage Migration and Mobility:** Migration is both a socio-economic lifeline and a political fault line. A demographic mission must ensure mobility with dignity, integrating internal migrants into social security nets and electoral rolls.
- **To Prepare for Ageing India:** With rising longevity, the elderly population is projected to reach 300 million by 2050. Planning for healthcare, pensions, and community care must start now.
- **To Align Demography with Development:** Linking population data with economic, urban, and labour planning will ensure demographic-sensitive policymaking, moving beyond per capita averages.

### Challenges

- **Data Deficit:** In the absence of updated Census, the planning and resource allocations are difficult.
- **Regional Disparities:** Fertility, education, and healthcare outcomes vary widely between states.
- **Political Sensitivities:** Migration and population policies often intersect with issues of religion, identity, and federalism.
- **Ageing Burden:** Lack of social security systems for the elderly threatens future fiscal stability.
- **Capability Divide:** Quality education and skill development remain concentrated in few regions, limiting demographic dividends.

### Way Forward

- **Institutional Reform:** It is time to establish a National Commission on Population and Migration to guide demographic planning.
- **Integrated Data Systems:** Link Census, NFHS, Labour Bureau, and Aadhaar datasets for real-time demographic monitoring.
- **Human Capability Index:** Develop a state-wise index to measure education, health, and skill quality.
- **Rethink Social Security:** Encourage lifelong learning, pension coverage, and community-based elderly care.
- **Federal Cooperation:** Demographic challenges require coordination across central and state governments.
- **Shift the Narrative:** From population control to population empowerment — making every citizen a contributor to national growth.

### Conclusion

- India's Demographic Mission should evolve into a human-centric national project, one that studies population not as a burden, but as a foundation for future prosperity.
- As the demographic transition unfolds, India must convert its youth energy into productivity, manage migration humanely, and prepare for ageing gracefully.

Source:

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### Daily Mains Practice Question

[Q] India's Demographic Mission, 2025, should not be limited to controlling illegal infiltration but must aim at building a demographic intelligence and capability framework." Discuss.

