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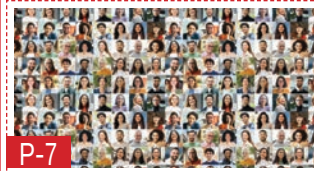
What's inside



P-4

Fizz-tory lesson

Uncover the delectable role of science behind soda's pop!



P-7

8,200,000 & counting...

Let's decode the data of our diverse population.



P-10

A dialogue on vitiligo shatters myths about the subject.

THE GT POLL

India is the world's most populous nation with a huge youth demographic. Can it turn that into global economic leadership this decade?

- A) Yes
B) No
C) Can't say

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THE GT POLL RESULT for GT Edition July 6, 2026

To beat the heat, FIFA has made hydration breaks mandatory for every World Cup match. Do you support it?

Yes, it's for players' health **71%**

25% No, it disrupts momentum

4% Can't say

Results as on July 11, 2026

Coming Next

World Chess Day

Popping-ulation

Impact Of Demographic Shifts: When Data Becomes A Slice Of Life

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World Population Day, marked every July 11, is a yearly reminder that population trends aren't just numbers in a report. They quietly shape the communities we grow up in, the jobs on offer, and even which traditions carry on or fade away. Let's look at how these shifts leave their mark on social fabrics.

Silver tsunami

As per UN data, the share of people aged 65 and above is projected to rise from 10% in 2022 to 16% by 2050. Japan, South Korea, and parts of Europe are already confronting labour shortages, rising healthcare needs, and pressure on pension systems. Old age support ratios are expected to fall significantly by 2030-2050, with Singapore likely to see 2.1 workers per elderly citizen, putting a strain on the so-called 'sandwich generation' caring for both aging parents and growing children. Yet aging is not solely an encumbrance. Multigenerational households benefit from grandparent-provided childcare. The 'silver economy' that spans healthcare, leisure, and senior-friendly products is among the fastest-growing sectors. Kerala's neighbourhood elder-care networks, combining community welfare and healthcare schemes, show how smart policies strengthen rather than weaken social bonds.

Migration wave

Newcomers often invigorate stagnant economies by filling labour shortages, opening businesses, and boosting demand for local services. Germany has increasingly relied on migrants to address workforce shortages. In Canada, immigrants account for nearly 100% of its labour force growth. However, the influx can also place immense pressure on housing, infrastructure, public services, and local identities. This has made cities adopt sustainable approaches, but they have limits too. Research remains divided on immigration's impact on native wages and employment.

Displacement dilemma

At the end of 2024, 45.8 million new displacements due to disasters were recorded globally, with 9.8 million people still displaced due to disasters. Climate-driven migration does more than relocate people as it can permanently alter communities and erase cultural heritage. As sea levels rise, coastal Odisha's fishing communities, whose rituals and livelihoods are deeply tied to their coastline, face the risk of losing their traditions. In the US, the permanent scat-

tering of cultural enclaves following Hurricane Katrina is a warning climate-threatened coasts cannot ignore. Also, the affected cities often face soaring rents and overstretched services.

Demographic dawn

Countries like India, Brazil, and Vietnam wear the badge of demographic dividend proudly. India's approximately 375 million individuals aged 28 years or younger have catalysed an entrepreneurial revolution, with over 2.23 lakh start-ups recognised and 23.36 lakh jobs created. Such demographic strength generates employment and innovation. But it is an advantage only if jobs and opportunities exist. Large numbers of unemployed or underemployed youth can increase the risk of political volatility as seen during the Arab Spring of 2011-12, which toppled long-standing dictators in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, and Yemen.

Urban ghettos

Rural depopulation along with rapid urbanisation has caused about 1.1 billion people, a quarter of the world's urban population, to reside in slums. Dharavi, at 590 acres, houses nearly a million people at a density of over 418,410/km². These are people who came to cities in pursuit of a better life and ended up in a crisis of deprivation. Only 21% of the population of the European Union lives in rural areas despite 45% of their landscape being rural. The United Nations has said

that by 2050, two-thirds of population growth is expected to be absorbed by urban areas. Internal migration management systems like China's Hukou and Russia's Propiska have largely been viewed as a failure.

World Population Day comes once a year, but populations shift daily. We must ensure that policies evolve fast enough for demographic changes to become an opportunity, and not a crisis, for our communities. **GT**

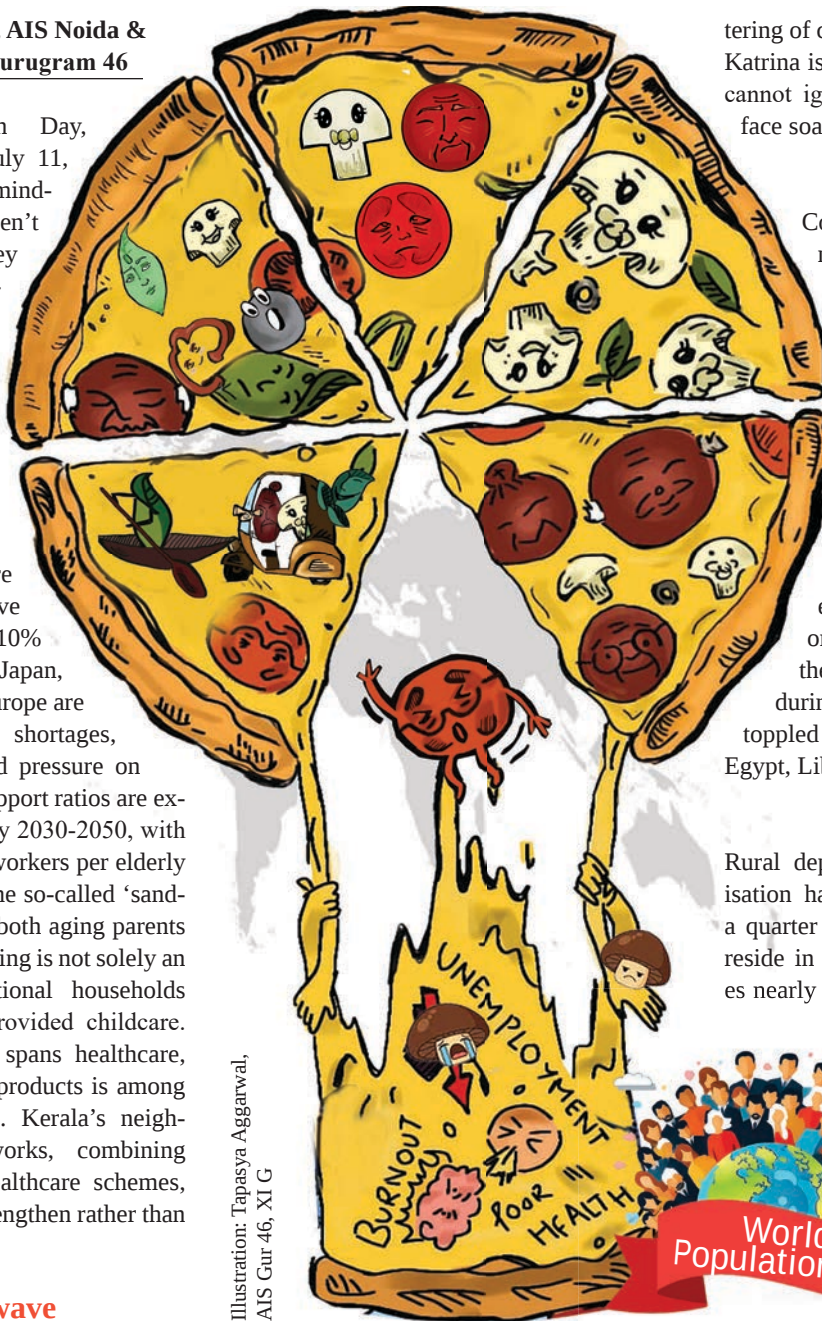


Illustration: Tapasya Aggarwal,
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