Changing Demographic Profile: Faster Than Expectation

According to the **Economic Survey 2018-19**, India's population growth rate will decline faster than assumed as the fertility rate in many states has reached the replacement rate.

- The survey predicts that India will have a total fertility rate below the replacement rate in the next two years.
    - Projected values for 2021-41 suggest that TFR at the national level will continue to decline rapidly and will lie below replacement level fertility at 1.8 as early as 2021.
    - It noted that India's population in the 0-19 age bracket has "already peaked due to sharp declines in total fertility rates (TFR) across the country.
- Also the threat of managing an ageing population is very real now as some states will start transitioning to an ageing society by the 2030s.
- Nine states — Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Maharashtra, West Bengal, Punjab and Himachal Pradesh — have fertility rates well below the replacement rate.
- States known for high population growth rates (Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan and Haryana) also witnessed population decline and population is now growing below 1 per cent in the southern states as well as West Bengal, Punjab, Maharashtra, Odisha, Assam and Himachal Pradesh.

While India is already struggling with high unemployment, the changing demography will add to the challenge of fulfilling aspirations of New India.

Replacement level fertility

- It is the total fertility rate(the average number of children born per woman) at which a population exactly replaces itself from one generation to the next, without migration.
- This rate is roughly 2.1 children per woman for most countries, although it may modestly vary with mortality rates

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