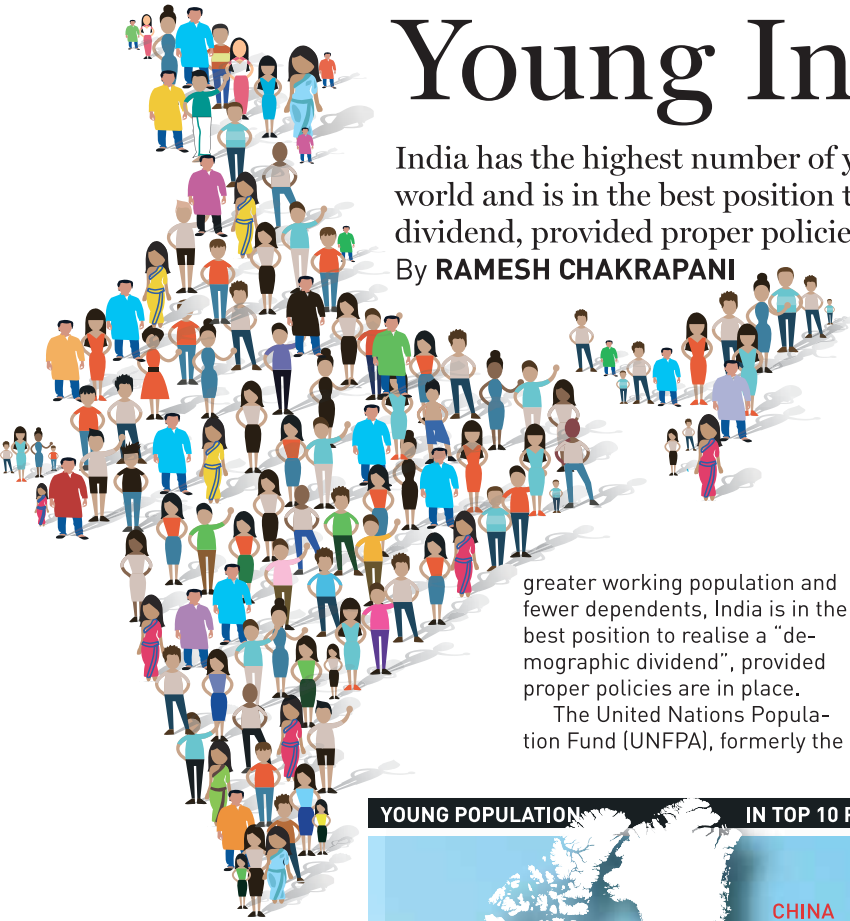


Young India

India has the highest number of young people in the world and is in the best position to realise a demographic dividend, provided proper policies are in place.

By **RAMESH CHAKRAPANI**



United Nations Fund for Population Activities, defines demographic dividend as the economic growth potential that can result from shifts in a population's age structure, as economic productivity receives a boost when there is a greater number of people in the workforce relative to the number of dependents.

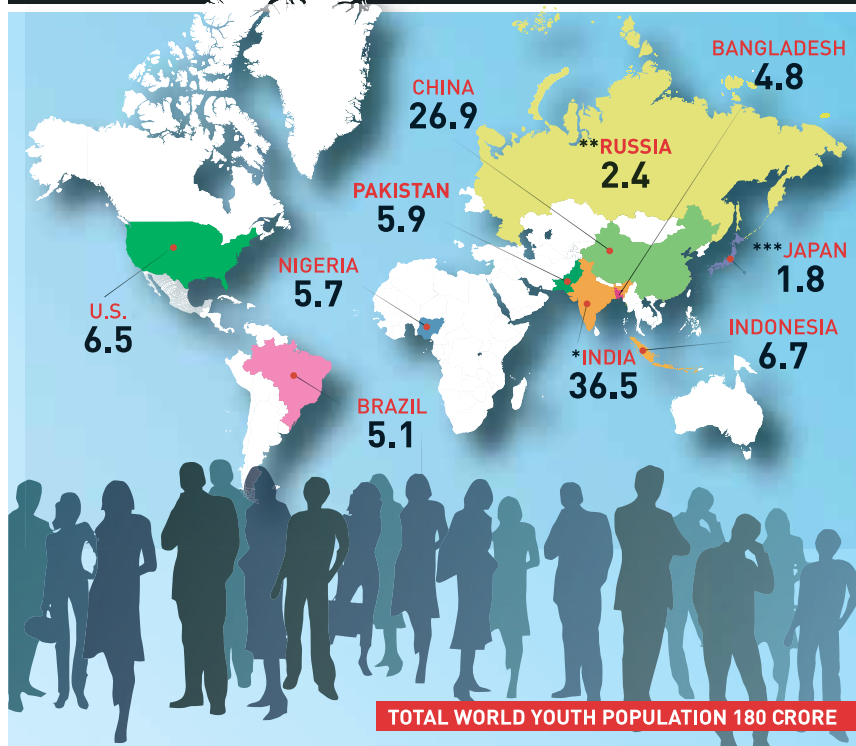
greater working population and fewer dependents, India is in the best position to realise a "demographic dividend", provided proper policies are in place.

The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), formerly the

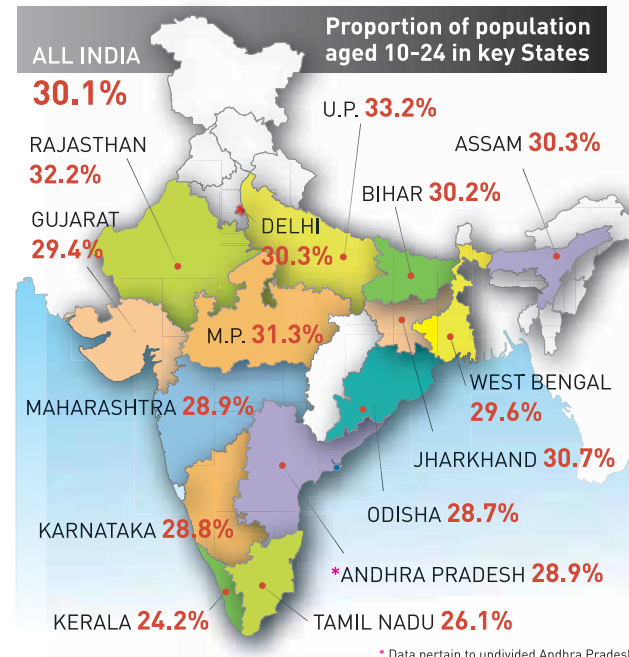
Among the world's top 10 populous nations, China is behind India, with 26.9 crore young people, close to only 20 per cent of its total population, even though its total population is much higher than India's.

Japan is at the bottom of the

YOUNG POPULATION IN TOP 10 POPULOUS NATIONS IN CRORE



*Data from Census of India 2011; **Data from Russia's Federal State Statistics Service; ***Data from Statistics Japan's May 1, 2015 estimates; Other data from United Nations Population Fund's "The State of World Population 2014"

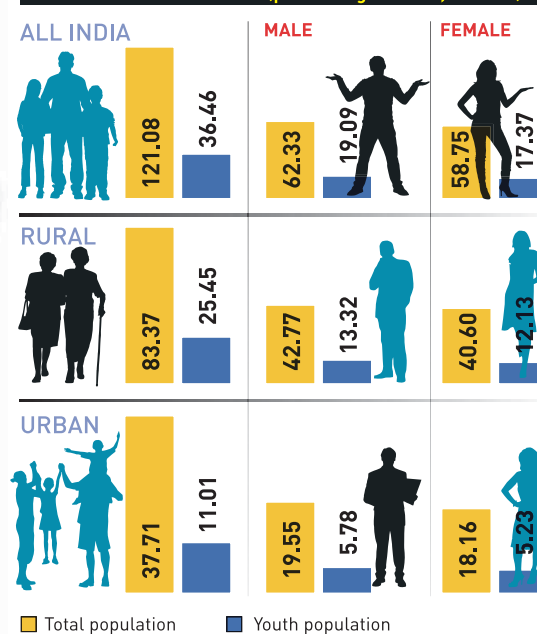


heap, with the lowest number and the lowest proportion of youth to the total population (14.2 per cent), followed by Russia (16.9 per cent). Both nations suffer from a serious demographic problem of old people vastly outnumbering the youth as a result of greater life expectancy and lower fertility rates.

India's young people are mostly concentrated in rural areas (69.8 per cent) and the male-female divide among them closely mirrors that of the total population for both urban and rural regions. However, according to the Census figures, in absolute terms the male-female ratio is better among young people, with males outnumbering females only by 1.72 crore, compared with 3.58 crore for the total population. The gap is narrower in rural areas (1.19 crore) and the lowest in urban areas (55 lakh).

Uttar Pradesh has the highest percentage of youth (33.2 per cent), while Kerala is the worst performer (24.2 per cent), followed by Tamil Nadu. Kerala is also home to the highest percentage of senior citizens, again followed by its neighbour. However, the male-female disparity is also the highest in Uttar Pradesh, where male young people outnumber females by a whopping 42.95 lakh, followed by Bihar (21.92 lakh), Maharashtra (19.82 lakh), Rajasthan (12.75 lakh), Madhya Pradesh (12.08 lakh) and Gujarat (11.56 lakh). Kerala has the lowest disparity, at just 32,953, followed by Odisha (36,766).

DISTRIBUTION OF YOUTH (persons aged 10-24, in crore)



PERCENTAGE OF POPULATION AGED 60 AND ABOVE IN KEY STATES

State	TOTAL			RURAL			URBAN		
	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE
ALL INDIA	12.6	11.8	13.3	12.6	11.8	13.4	12.4	11.8	13.0
Kerala	10.5	10.2	10.9	10.9	10.5	11.3	10.1	9.7	10.5
Tamil Nadu	10.4	10.4	10.3	10.5	10.6	10.5	8.7	8.8	8.6
Himachal	9.5	9.1	10.0	9.9	9.4	10.5	8.8	8.5	9.2
Punjab	9.3	8.8	9.7	10.3	9.7	10.9	7.9	7.6	8.2
Maharashtra	9.3	9.1	9.5	9.5	9.3	9.7	8.1	7.8	8.5
Odisha	8.8	8.3	9.4	9.5	8.9	10.2	7.2	6.9	7.5
A.P.	8.4	7.9	8.9	8.9	8.3	9.5	7.5	7.2	7.9
Karnataka	8.4	8.5	8.3	8.0	8.2	7.9	9.9	9.8	9.9
J&K	8.3	7.6	9.0	8.6	7.9	9.3	7.8	7.1	8.5
Gujarat	8.2	8.2	8.2	7.5	7.4	7.6	10.1	10.3	10.0
West Bengal	7.2	6.8	7.6	7.4	7.0	7.8	6.3	6.0	6.6
Chhattisgarh	7.2	6.6	7.9	7.2	6.6	7.9	7.4	6.7	8.0
Rajasthan	7.1	6.6	7.6	7.3	6.7	7.9	6.7	6.4	7.1
Haryana	7.1	6.8	7.4	7.2	6.9	7.5	7.0	6.7	7.3
M.P.	7.0	7.2	6.7	6.9	7.2	6.6	7.2	7.1	7.3
Bihar	6.8	6.6	7.1	6.9	6.7	7.2	6.5	6.3	6.7
Jharkhand	6.7	6.7	6.6	6.6	6.6	6.6	6.9	7.1	6.8
Assam	6.1	6.2	6.0	6.0	6.1	5.9	6.6	6.8	6.4
Delhi	5.9	5.7	6.2	5.4	5.2	5.7	6.0	5.8	6.3

DISTRIBUTION OF CHILDREN ACROSS INDIA (ages 0-9) (in crore)

