Society & Social Justice · GS - II

“Declining fertility rates and population ageing are creating significant social and economic challenges in several developed countries.” Discuss with reference to Japan and examine the lessons India can learn from this demographic transition.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
DAILY PRACTICE 16/10/2026	GS - II	Society & Social Justice

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
10	~150 words

Answer Hint

Demographic transition, low fertility rate, ageing population, shrinking workforce, dependency ratio, pension burden, healthcare expenditure, work–life balance, childcare support, women’s workforce participation, healthy ageing, productivity growth, India’s demographic dividend, regional demographic differences, sustainable population policy.

Model Answer

Introduction

Demographic transition refers to changes in birth rates, death rates and population structure as societies develop. Japan is experiencing low fertility and rapid population ageing, creating long-term economic and social challenges.

Major Challenges

1. Economic Impact: A shrinking working-age population can cause labour shortages, slow economic growth and increase pressure on productivity.

2. Social Security: An ageing population raises expenditure on pensions, healthcare and elderly care, increasing the dependency burden on workers.

3. Family and Society: High living costs, job insecurity, delayed marriage and work–life pressures can discourage people from having children.

Lessons for India

India should strengthen affordable childcare, parental leave, women's workforce participation and employment opportunities. It must invest in skill development, healthcare and elderly care while ensuring that its demographic dividend translates into productive employment. Regional differences in fertility and ageing also require state-specific policies.

Conclusion

Japan demonstrates that population challenges require long-term planning. India should balance family welfare, employment generation and healthy ageing to achieve inclusive and sustainable development.

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