

News / India / India No. 1 in population, No. 7 in size in world, but how much land do you hold?

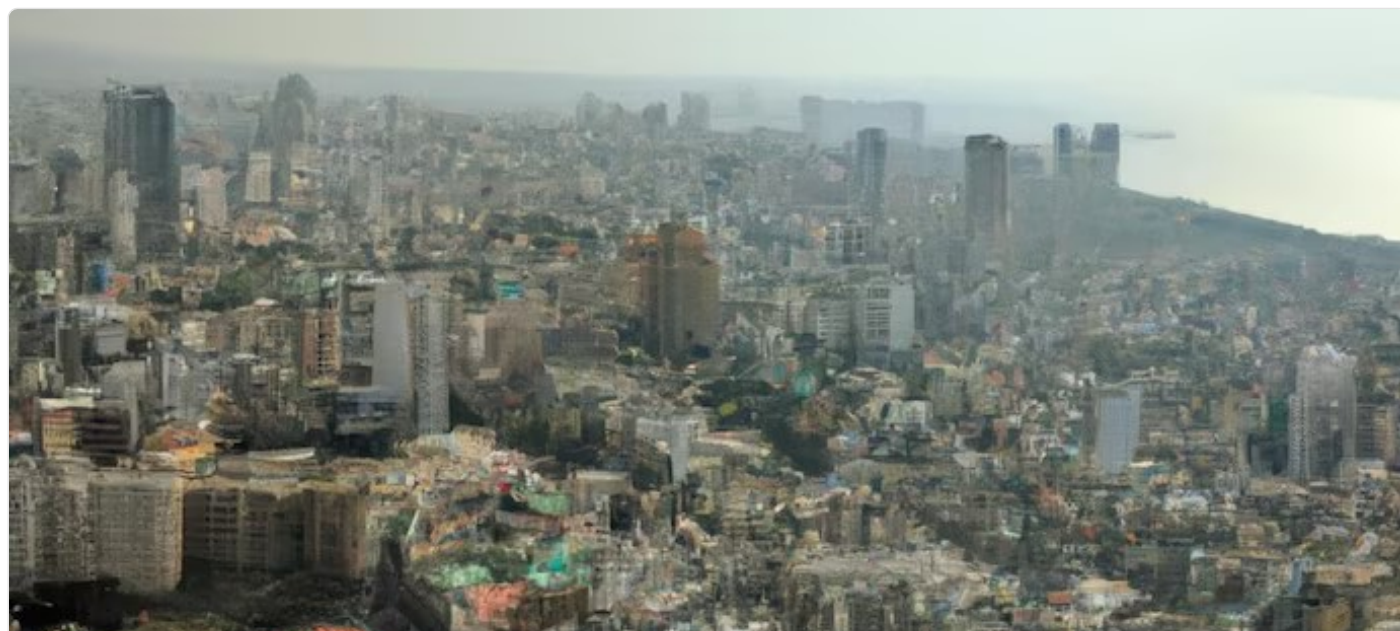
India No. 1 in population, No. 7 in size in world, but how much land do you hold?

With 142.86 crore people, India has overtaken China to become the most-populous country in the world. But how much land in terms of a cricket pitch do you hold assuming there is equitable distribution of land? And how is the per capita land share going to decrease in the next 10 years? Read on to find out.

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As the population keeps increasing, which for India is a blessing, the per capita land share will keep decreasing. (AI generated image)



Piyush Aggarwal



Yudhajit Shankar Das

New Delhi, UPDATED: Apr 20, 2023 11:27 IST

India has become [the most-populous country in the world](#), data from a UN agency showed on Wednesday. But what is the land share that you and I have now? More interestingly, what will be the individual land share of every citizen in the next 10 years, assuming the entire land area is divided equally among its citizens?

The population of a country increases, and in India's case it is a demographic dividend, but the land area remains constant. So, in a country with a steady population growth, every generation is bound to see a slide in land for every individual or what is termed the per capita land share.

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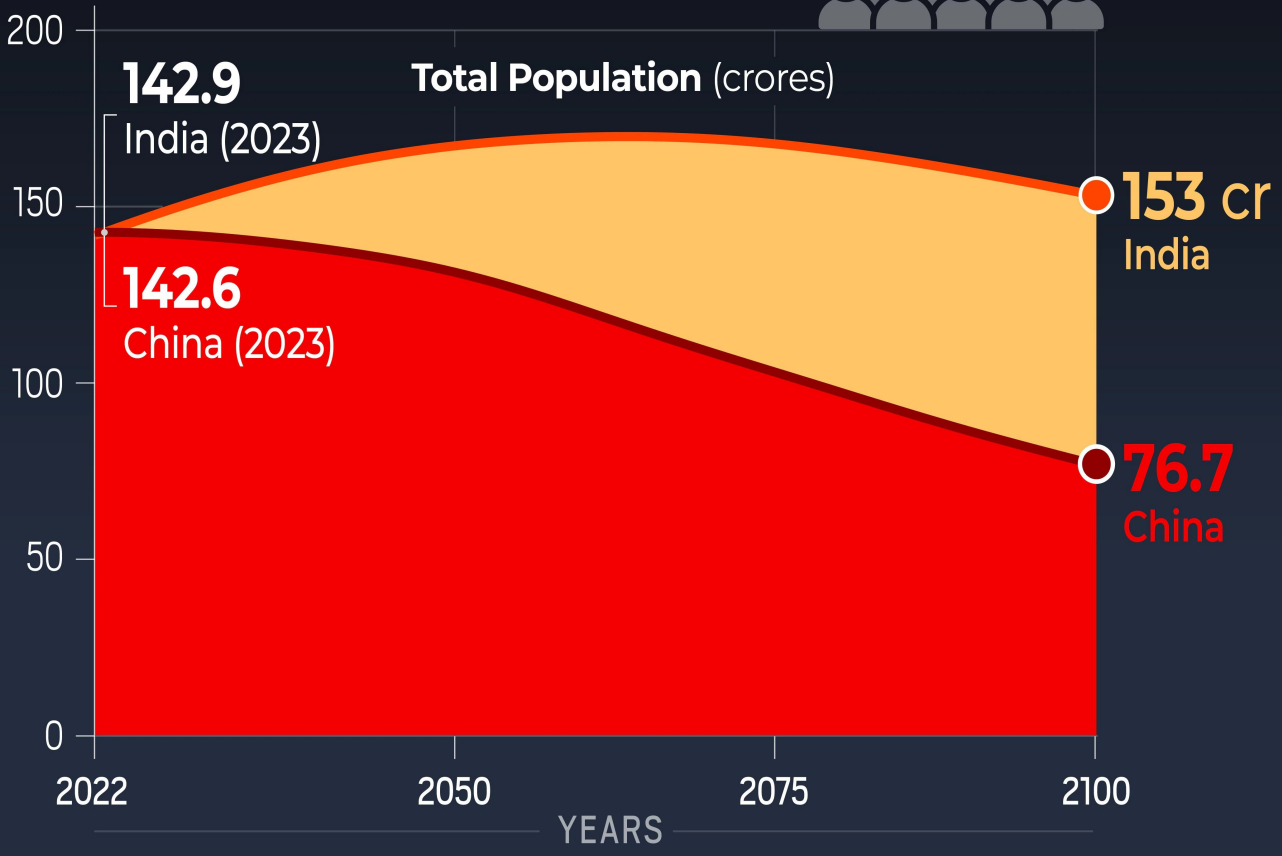
India's population in 2023 stands at 142.86 crore, according to the latest United Nations Population Fund data. India has overtaken China, which has 142.57 crore, to become the most-populous country in the world.

India Surpasses

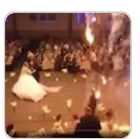
**INDIA
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China's Population

China's population may decline considerably henceforth



Note: Medium variant of population projections as on July 1
Source: Population Division of the U.N. | Graphic: Samrat Sharma, Sarfaraz



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The top five countries in terms of population in decreasing order are -- India, China, US, Indonesia and Pakistan, according to the UNFPA report.

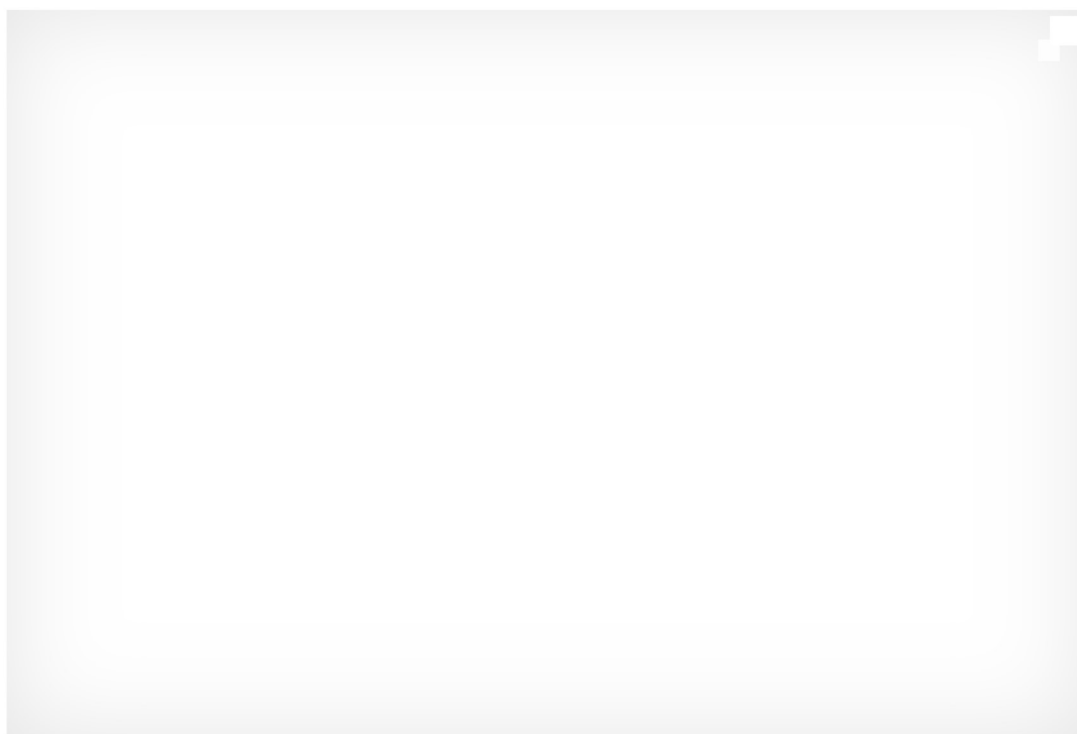
In terms of area, China is the third largest country and India is the seventh largest in the world.

HOW MANY CRICKET PITCHES DO YOU OWN?

India's land area is 29.7 lakh square kilometres.

As of today, India's population density is 480.5 people per square kilometre. It is more than three times higher than China's population density of 151.3 per square km.

Neighbour Pakistan, which is fifth among the most-populous nations, has a population density of 312 per sq km.



What is the land area that an Indian citizen, assuming there is equitable distribution of land, can claim as her/his own?

The answer is 0.0021 sq km, or 2,081 sq metre, as of today. That is the per capita land share of an individual Indian.

For a better understanding of the per capita land share of an individual in India, consider this. A cricket pitch is 61.4 square metre. So, an individual Indian owns land area of nearly 34 cricket pitches.

The per capita land share of a Chinese citizen is 0.0066 square km and that of an American citizen is 0.0269 square km. The per capita land share in neighbouring Pakistan is 0.00321 square km. This is as per the land area [data provided by the World Bank](#).

1.4 BILLION OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

And as the population keeps increasing, which for India is a blessing, the per capita land share will keep decreasing.

"India's 1.4 billion people must be seen as 1.4 billion opportunities. As the country with the largest youth cohort -- its 254 million youth (15-24 years) -- can be a source of innovation, new thinking and lasting solutions," Andrea Wojnar, the representative for United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) India and the country director for Bhutan.

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But the decreasing per capita land holding has its own impact, especially on agriculture. With an increase in population, the land holdings will become smaller, also because land is likely to be diverted for non-farming purposes.

The Department of Agriculture, Co-operation and Farmers Welfare conducts an agricultural census every five years, including the size of agricultural land holdings in India. The average size of operational holdings has decreased from 2.28 hectares in 1970-71 to 1.08 hectares in 2015-16, according to the latest information from the agricultural census.

Considering the declining trends observed in the size of agricultural holdings in the past and the prospective increase in population over time, the fragmentation of holdings is likely to continue and the average size of operational holdings is expected to further decrease in India, according to the Ministry of Agriculture.

HOW MANY CRICKET PITCHES WILL YOU HOLD IN 10 YEARS?

India's population is set to hit 154.8 crore in 10 years, according to the UN's 'World Population Prospects' report of 2022.

Going by this projection, the population density will be 520.5 per square km.

Again, assuming that there is equitable distribution of land, an Indian will have 0.00192 sq km (or 1,921 sq metre) as his own in 2033. This area is equivalent to nearly 31 cricket pitches. This is a reduction in the area of almost three cricket pitches in the next 10 years.

Edited By: Yudhajit

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India overtakes China in population: Demographic boon or bane?