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World population reach 580cr

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The world population reached 5.8 billion in mid 1996, an increase of more than 80 million over the previous 12 months. In 1990, the increase was 87 million, says the World Health Organisation (WHO) report, 1997.

The report says that between 1980 and 1995, life expectancy at birth has increased globally by 4.6 years; 4.4 years for males and 4.9 years for females.

There are now 380 million people aged 65 years and above. By the year 2020, the over-65 population is projected to increase globally by 82 per cent, to more than 690 million.

Life expectancy at birth was 48 years in 1955; 59 years in 1975; and 65 years in 1995. In 1960, most deaths were among people under 50. Today, most are among the over-50s. By 2025, more than 60 per cent of all deaths will be among the over 65s and more than 40 per cent among over-75s.

Deaths among children under 5 years declined from 19 million in 1960 to 11 million in 1996. About 5 million babies born in developing countries in 1995 died in the first month of life. Of some 140 million births a year, about 4 million babies are born with major congenital anomalies. Coverage of children immunised against six major childhood diseases increased from 5 per cent in 1974 to 80 per cent in 1995.

Of over 52 million deaths in 1996, over 17 million were due to infectious or parasitic diseases, more than 15 million to circulatory diseases; over 6 million to cancer; and about 3 million to respiratory diseases.

Of over 52 million deaths in 1996, 40 million were in developing countries, including almost 9 million in the least developing countries.