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WAYNE'S WORLD 2

PG-13

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PG-13

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AIDS threatens child survival rates

Census expects virus to claim more than 121 million by 2020

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Decades of improving child survival rates may be in jeopardy as AIDS threatens to take an ever higher toll of children in developing countries.

The spread of AIDS "will reverse some of the hard-won improvements in child survival that had been achieved in many countries over the last several decades," the Census Bureau reports in its biennial World Population Profile.

Projections over the next quarter century indicate that life expectancy in the most severely affected countries will be range from 9 years to 25 years less than would have been expected without AIDS, said Peter O. Way of the bureau.

The epidemic could cost 121 million lives by 2020, he said, with child and infant mortality already being affected in some countries.

"It will take major changes in behavior to radically alter the course of this epidemic," Way said.

The 1994 look at the world's people adds a

special section on the AIDS pandemic and its effects. The report also found that:

- The world's population now totals 5.6 billion, more than double the 2.6 billion who shared the planet in 1950. It's expected to reach 7.9 billion by 2020.

- More than half the people in the world live in just six countries — China, India, United States, Indonesia, Brazil and Russia.

- World population growth has slowed to about 1.5 percent per year, after peaking at near 2 percent in the 1960s. Declining fertility rates have slowed growth.

- Half the world's people are under age 25.

- India, the world leader in births, will record more births this year than the 50 sub-Saharan African countries combined.

- Around the world, 10,000 babies are born every hour.

The Census Bureau studies world population to put the United States population picture in perspective, said Judith Banister of the bureau.

This year's study is designed for use by U.S. officials attending the world population conference scheduled for Cairo in October, she said.

Though AIDS is a relatively new disease, it has spread worldwide. More than 14 million people are infected by HIV, the virus that causes AIDS, the report estimated.

Africa south of the Sahara Desert accounts

for an estimated 8 million HIV infections, according to the World Health Organization, more than half the world total.

Spread of the disease in Africa tends to be through heterosexual contact, unlike Europe and North America, where homosexual activity and drug use are the more common means of infection, the census study noted.

The report found that infant and child mortality in Zambia is 15 percent higher now than it was a decade ago.

In addition to direct impact, the survival of non-infected children may be endangered by the death of one or both parents, the report adds.

For example, statistics on orphans in Uganda indicate that adult male mortality in 1991 was higher than in 1969.

Mother-to-child spread of AIDS is a significant problem in many African countries, the report found.

Because AIDS deaths are concentrated in the childhood and middle adult ages the disease results in the loss of many years of potential life.

This impact is expected to be less in countries such as the United States where the rate of infection with HIV is relatively lower. In addition, Way noted that the impact is less on children in countries where the disease is spread by homosexual contact and drugs than where it is spread by heterosexual contact.

South Africans continue history-making vote

The Associated Press

JOHANNESBURG, South Africa — Most of South Africa stumbled to the finish of its history-making election Thursday after a titanic effort to move ballots to millions of people voting to end three centuries of white rule.

Air forced planes rushed hastily printed ballots to trouble spots in the hinterlands, and helicopters equipped with loudspeakers cir-

clled rural areas announcing where to vote.

But time ran out in some remote areas that were bedeviled by shortages of ballots, indelible ink and stickers, and the Independent Electoral Commission authorized some rural regions to continue voting Friday.

Election officials said the counting would start at 6 a.m. Saturday, and they plan to issue hourly results as the counting

progresses.

The crush of people seen at polling stations on Wednesday was not as evident Thursday, as people turned out to elect the country's first government representing blacks, who make up three-fourths of the population.

For one thing, it appeared the vast majority of first-time black voters in their enthusiasm had stormed the polls Wednesday, the first day of general voting.

All signs pointed a massive turnout among the country's 11 million voters, but there were immediate figures from election officials. The odds-on favorite to be president was African National Congress leader Nelson Mandela.

"Happy, happy. I nearly jumped out of my skin and stood next to my body," said Eddy Mula, a vegetable vendor who was one of the last voters in Soweto, outside Johannesburg.

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