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## Chinese women have highest life expectancy in Malaysia

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PUTRAJAYA: Chinese women live the longest in the country, with an average life expectancy of 79.8 years, says the Department of Statistics Malaysia, based on its records of last year.

Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Tan Sri Nor Mohamed Yakcop said Indian women were in second place at 76.2 years, followed by Malay women (75.3), Chinese men (74.4), Malay men (70.5) and Indian men (68). According to the statistics, in general, women in the country had a higher life expectancy of 77 years compared with men at 71.9, and that was an improvement from the 74.7 years for women and 70 for men in 2000, he said yesterday when announcing the population distribution according to local councils and districts for last year. Nor Mohamed said the fertility rate among women, however, registered a drop from 3.0 in 2000 to 2.2 last year.

"Malaysia is expected to reach a maximum population of 57 million by 2090.

"Such statistics are important because they are related to the domestic needs that remain an important aspect in ensuring the economy of the country."

He said 475,816 births were registered last year, excluding stillborn babies, while there were 129,327 deaths, resulting in an addition of 346,489 people to the population.

He also denied that Malaysia was an ageing society because 67.5 per cent of the population were in the 15-64 year group.