

Population Policy

Seventy three years after independence India is still looking for a viable policy to control population growth.

Although it was the first country to adopt a family planning programme in 1952, the country is still growing by 15.5 million people each year and if this trend continues, India may overtake China in 2045 by reaching a population of 1.5 billion.

As Indians contemplate becoming a population billionaire the Ministry of Health has just announced an ambitious new national population policy. The national population policy 2000 aims to bring the Total fertility rate to replacement level by 2010 and to achieve a stable population by 2045 at a level consistent with sustainable economic growth, social development and environmental protection.

Although these objectives are higher and time frame to achieve them is shorter than with past programs, it envisages

achieving replacement level TFR through promotional and motivational measures that emphasize quality of life rather than through numerical targets for the use of specific contraceptive methods, which plagued previous programs. The proposed policy talks of better management of public health, education and sanitation and focuses on women employment.

Five-year plans by the GOI for population control.

- First five year plan - India is the first country in the world to begin a population control program in 1952. It emphasized the use of natural devices for family planning.
- Second five year plan - Here clinical approach was encouraged.
- Third five year plan - 1965 sterilization technique for both men and women was adopted under this plan.
- Fourth five year plan - All kinds of birth control methods were encouraged.
- Fifth five year plan - National population policy was announced on April 1976. In this policy the minimum age for marriage determined by Sharda Act

1929 was increased. The Janta party govt changed the name of family planning dept of family welfare department.

- * Sixth, seventh and eighth Plans - Here efforts were done to control population by determining long-term demographic aims.
- * Ninth Five-year plans - Govt had established an expert group under the chairmanship of M.S Swaminathan for formulating national population policy. This policy came in 2000. It has three main objectives
 - i) Population stabilization by 2045 is to be achieved.
 - ii) TFR has to bring down to replacement level of 2.1 by 2010.
 - iii) Easy supply of birth control measures.
 - Other objectives:
 - i) TFR to be reduced to 2.1
 - ii) IMR to be reduced by 30%
 - iii) MMR to be reduced to below 100 per one lakh.
 - iv) The late marriage of girls had to be encouraged.

A high level 100 membered national population commission has set up under the chairmanship of PM on May 2000 to supervise and implement national policy.