

National Population Policy 2000

[UPSC Notes]

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The National Population Policy 2000 (NPP 2000) reinforces the government's commitment to allowing residents to make voluntary, informed decisions and give their consent when using reproductive health care services.

- It also maintains the target-free approach to providing family planning services.
- In order to address the demands of India's population in terms of reproductive and child health and to attain net replacement levels (TFR) by 2010, the NPP 2000 provides a national strategy for pursuing objectives and emphasising solutions over the coming decade.
- It is based on the fact that the government, business, and the voluntary non-government sector collaborate in order to increase engagement and exposure to a comprehensive package of reproductive and pediatric health services while simultaneously promoting issues of child survival, maternal health, and contraception.

Important Features of National Population Policy

1. Taking care of the unfulfilled demands for fundamental infrastructure, supplies, and services related to reproductive and neonatal care.
2. Make schooling up to the age of 14 both free and mandatory and lower the percentage of boys and girls who drop out of primary and secondary school to under 20 percent.
3. Lower infant mortality to less than 30 deaths per 1000 live births.
4. Lower the rate of maternal deaths to under 100 per 100,000 live births.
5. Ensure that every child is immunised against every disease that can be prevented by a vaccine.
6. Encourage girls to wait until they are at least 18 years of age, preferably until their 20, before getting married.
7. Achieve 80 percent of institutional deliveries and 100 percent of trained person deliveries.
8. Achieve universal access to services for regulating fertility and contraception, as well as information counselling, with a wide range of options.
9. Achieve complete birth, death, marriage, and pregnancy registration.
10. Stop the spread of AIDS and encourage better coordination between the National AIDS Control Organisation and the management of Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STI) and Reproductive Tract Infections (RTI).
11. Prevent and manage contagious illnesses.

12. Include Indian systems of medicine (ISM) in the delivery of services related to children and reproductive health as well as in home outreach.
13. Work hard to promote the small family rule in order to raise TSR levels to replacement levels.
14. Ensure that programmes in the social sector that are relevant to family welfare or implemented in a way that puts the needs of individuals first.

Aim of National Population Policy

- Temporary goal: The provision of contraceptives was listed as a temporary objective. It also involves the hiring of healthcare practitioners and the creation of a framework for health protection.
- Midterm goal: By 2010, the total fertility rate TSR, which was the replacement level, needed to be lowered to 2.1.
- Long-term goal: The long-term objective is to balance the population by 2045.
- Our population needs to be regulated at a level that promotes and protects economic, social, and environmental growth and safety.

Population Control Programmes in India since Independence

First Five-year plan

- India established the first state funded family planning programme among developing nations in 1951.
- This was the first of its kind among developing countries. It advocated the adoption of natural family planning methods.

Second Five-Year Plan

- Family planning clinics now number much more.
- However, because these clinics were primarily located in metropolitan areas, they did not produce sufficient results.

Third Five-Year Plan

- The copper-T method was used.
- The family planning department was established as a separate division in this plan.

Fourth Five-Year Plan

The use of both traditional and contemporary birth control methods was promoted under this plan.

Fifth Five-Year Plan

In 1976, the national population policy was announced. It had the following features:

- The minimum legal age of marriage for girls and boys was raised to 18 and 21, respectively, as a part of this programme.
- Increasing female literacy rates.
- Use all available media to make family welfare programmes more well-known.
- Forced sterilisation was allowed but later prohibited.

Sixth, Seventh, and Eighth Plans

In order to regulate the population, long-term demographic goals were identified under these plans.

Ninth Five-Year Plan

- To develop a national population policy, the government organised an expert panel in 1993, with MS Swaminathan as its chairman.
- The family welfare programme was re-designated as the family planning programme in 1997.

What was the need for the New Population Policy of India?

India's population topped 100 crores on May 11, 2000, and if current patterns in population growth hold true, it would succeed China as the world's most populated nation by 2045. India's population expanded over five times during the 20th century, from 200 million, while the global population nearly tripled, from 200 million to 600 million.

It looks as if it will be challenging to keep an equilibrium to safeguard the nation's resource endowment and the environment with the present yearly population rise of 1.55 crore. For the promotion of sustainable development with more fair distribution, population stabilisation is essential. Hence there was an immediate need for a new population policy in our nation.

Problems with Population Control Policies

- Given that poor people tend to have more children than middle-class individuals, the strategy is anti-poor.
- The approach is also anti-democratic because it restricts a citizen's freedom of choice as well as his or her sexual and reproductive liberties.
- In areas with high rates of socio-economic problems like infant and child mortality, people tend to have more offspring.
- According to the National Family Health Survey (NFHS) and the Census data, India is actually not in danger of a "population explosion." The total fertility rate (TFR) has already surpassed replacement levels in most states and many urban areas.
- A problem with the two Child rule is that if the first two children are female, one of them will be in danger of dying soon after birth because their parents want male

progeny. As a result, there will be an upsurge and female infanticide in the country.

- Population control tactics deal with an older issue, but they may wind up making things more difficult in the future. Exclusionary laws won't help states and enhance the standard of living by resolving the population issue. Therefore this leads to issues down the road.
- The NHRC has already condemned the incentives/disincentives strategy when various states — namely, Haryana, Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh, and Orissa— introduced such measures in the 1990s and 2000s.
- Worldwide instances such as other nations' harsher population control policies tend to skew the sex ratio and are ultimately ineffective. For instance, China's preference for male offspring led to a substantial gender-related imbalance in the entire nation.

How to Address the Problem of Population Explosion?

1. To assure a decreased and stable fertility rate, the governments must first improve their medical systems and pay attention to socioeconomic concerns.
2. Population was emphasised at the 1994 "Cairo International Conference on Population and Development". In order to solve the complex problem of poverty and high fertility, the Cairo Consensus advocated for the strengthening of reproductive rights, women's empowerment, universal education, and maternal and infant health. The general agreement calls for an increase in the male contraceptive prevalence rate. States can begin to apply the Cairo consensus instead of unleashing population control measures.
3. Gender balance is a component of population stabilisation, which goes beyond limiting population growth. Therefore, states must encourage later marriages and parenthood while also encouraging women to enter the workforce, among other things.
4. Recognizing the population as an asset rather than a burden
5. India must care for its ageing population. The United Nations' 2015 World Population Ageing Report projects that by 2050, there will be more than 330 million individuals in India over the age of 60, up from 116.55 million in 2015. The dependence ratio will rise in the future as a result of population control initiatives. Therefore, the government must make sure that the elderly population has enough funds and insurance.