

* Not in favour of imposing family planning

- Petition in SC to introduce a population control law.

- Govt's stand -

- India signatory to the Programme of Action (POA) of the International Conference on Population & Development, 1994
 - ↳ against coercion in family planning
- Family Welfare Prog. in India is voluntary
- Already b/w 2001-2011
 - ↳ sharpest decline in decadal growth rate of Indian population in a 100 years
- International Experience shows that coercion is counterproductive & leads to demographic distortions.
- Constant decline in TFR (Total Fertility Rate)
 - ↳ Actual fertility was 2.2 as against wanted fertility of 1.8 in NFHS IV.
 - ↳ indicates couples on an avg do not want more than 2 children.

* Health data shows no need for 2-child policy

- Latest data from NFHS-V
 - uptake in use of modern contraceptives in rural & urban areas
 - decline in avg number of children borne by a woman
- Proves that population is stabilising
 - ↳ No "population explosion" happening
 - ↳ calls for 2 child policy are misguided
- Analysis by Intl. non-profit Population Council of India
 - ↳ Total Fertility Rate has ↓ in 14 of 17 states
 - ↳ TFR @ 2.1 children per woman or less
 - ↳ So, most states have attained replacement level fertility (RLF)
- TFR ⇒ no. of children born per woman
- RLF ⇒ avg no. of children born per woman at which a population exactly replaces itself from one generation to the next.

* An **unational** draft population control Bill that must go ^(Editorial)

↳ UP Govt has recently announced draft Uttar Pradesh population (control, stabilization and welfare) Bill, 2021

↳ Key feature of the draft Bill

- Two child policy norms
- decrease total fertility rate from 2.7 to 2.1 by 2026
- Increase modern contraceptive prevalence rate from 31.7% to 45% by 2026
- Penalty for the violation

↳ concerns

(i) No need of coercive policy

• India as well as UP is already on the road to population stabilisation

• At NFHS-4, UP fertility rate is 2.7 compare to 3.8 10 yr ago

• Many states have attained replacement level fertility rate of 2.1 without any coercive policy.

(ii) Impact on sex ratio

• Indian society has higher preference for male children

• UP has already worst child sex ratio of 903

(iii) against the principle of the Programme of Action of the International conference on Population and Development (1994)

to which India is signatory \Rightarrow it declares that coercion, incentives and disincentives have little role in population stabilisation.

↳ Recommendation

- population stabilisation through better delivery of health and education service

No need for a drastic population policy

-Draft legislations aimed at controlling the population have been proposed by the states of Assam and Uttar Pradesh.

-Counters to the arguments given in favour of such a policy.-

1. Stabilizing TFR:

.The stated aim of the policy is to reduce the total fertility rate in the states.

.UP will reach a replacement rate of 2.1 by 2025, and Assam by 2020. Hence there is no need for any drastic population policy.

2. Overlooking socio-economic factors:

.The proposed legislations seem to overlook the fact that the fertility rate depends on socio-economic characteristics like education, income, maternal and child health conditions, and other associated factors.

.Without measures to tackle these factors, the proposed legislation with its stated aim to bring down TFR will remain ineffective.

3 Unintended consequences:

- The population control policy of imposing a two-child norm could have other unintended consequences.
- Given the issue of preference for a male child in our patriarchal society, the two-child norm will only increase sex-selective abortions of girl children, and female infanticide, since couples will want to maintain both the two-child norm as proposed by the government as well as their preference for sons.

4. Problem of ageing:

- The proportion of people aged 60 years and above in India will increase from 13.8% in 2011 to 23.1% in 2036.
- The two-child norm would aggravate the problem of ageing in India.

5. Experience of other countries:

- The experience of countries like China with respect to regulation of the number of children in the family indicates the concerns associated with such a policy.

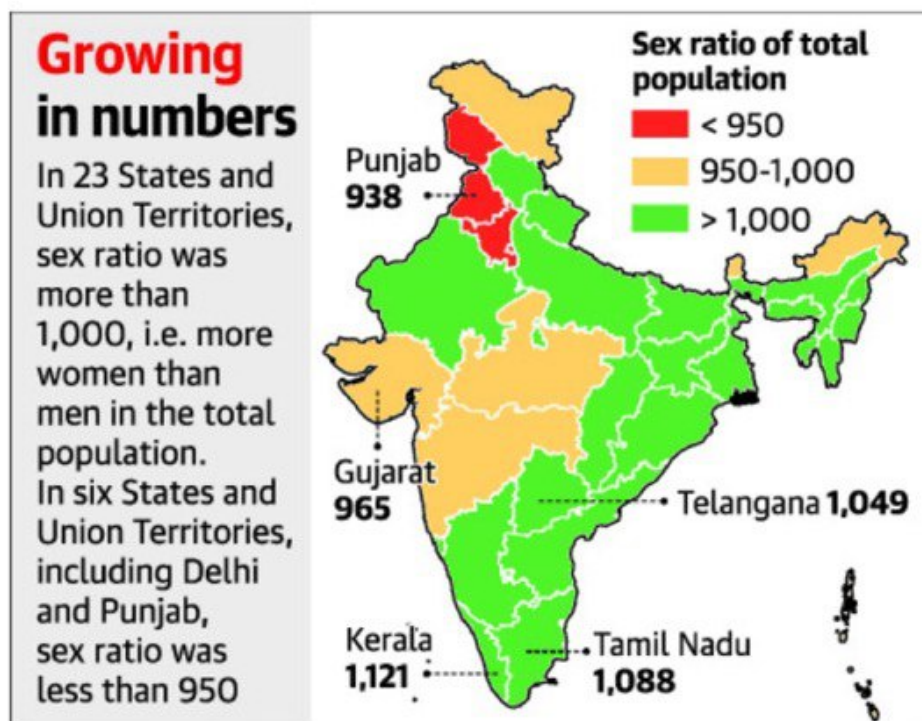
1. Improved sex ratio and child sex ratio:

For the first time since the NFHS surveys, the proportion of women exceeded men: there were **1,020 women for 1,000 men** (average value).

The NFHS-4 noted there were 991 women for every 1,000 men.

The sex ratio at birth for children born in the past five years has improved from 919 per 1,000 males in 2015-16 to 929 per 1,000.

It confirms signs of a demographic shift in India.



2. Decreasing TFR:

• India is on its way to stabilising its population, with most States and UTs having a **Total Fertility Rate (TFR) of less than two.**

• A TFR of less than 2.1 (Replacement TFR) suggests an eventual decline in population over time.

• While some states like Bihar, Meghalaya, Manipur, Jharkhand and Uttar Pradesh continue to have a TFR above two, the TFR in all these States has improved in the last five years.

3. Population levels:

• Despite the decreasing TFR, India is still poised to be the most populous country in the world.

• Current projection by the UN population division forecasting that **India's population will peak at 1.6 billion to 1.8 billion from 2040 to 2050.**

• The Union government's report projects India overtaking China as the world's most populous country around 2031.