



The UN World Population Report Has Flagged An Alarming Concern on India's Population Growth. In This Context, Mention the Trends of India's Population Growth. What Do You Suggest As Measures To Contain Population Growth ? (250 Words / 15 M) (GS-1 Population)

Approach:

1. Introduction
2. Discuss the trends seen in population growth.
3. Delineate the suggested measures.
4. Mention if coercive control should be used.
5. Conclusion.

According to the **27th edition** of the **UN World Population Prospects Report 2022**, **India** is projected to **surpass China** as the world's most populous country in **2023**. At present, India's population is **1.412 billion** compared to China's 1.426 billion.

Trends :

The **fertility rate** in India has **fallen substantially** – from **5.7 births/woman** in **1950** to just **2 births/woman** today. As per **National Family Health Survey-5**, all states (except Mizoram) have seen an **increase in family planning methods**. Goa (42%) and Bihar (32%) have seen the highest increase in the use of family planning methods.

Consequently, most states have seen a **decrease in the total fertility rate (TFR)**. However, some large States like **Bihar (3.2)** and **UP (2.4)** still have **TFR much above the Replacement Rate**. This is concerning as both States already have large population base. So, they can be the driving force behind India's population rise in the coming decades. All other **medium and large states** have a **TFR below the replacement level** rate of **2.1**.

Due to a large proportion of younger population, India's population will continue to rise for the next 3 decades before **stabilizing in the 2060s**. India is projected to have a population of **1.688 billion** in **2050**, much ahead of China's 1.317 billion.

Ways to Manage Population Rise:

Social Measures :

- Evidence shows that **improvement in women's status** through education and economic participation reduces TFR.
- **Educated women** are **health conscious** and **avoid frequent pregnancies**, thus lowering birth rate.
- Fertility depends on the age of marriage. So the **minimum age of marriage** should be



raised to 21 years.

- **Change the outlook** of people by raising awareness about **importance of family planning** and **birth control**
- Raising awareness about family planning, birth control methods, access to **contraceptive** methods can help in controlling population.
- Some experts argue that the Government can **incentivize adoption of birth control measures**. **Monetary incentives** and other facilities like leave and promotion can be extended to the working class who adopts small family norms.

Economic Measures:

- If agriculture and industry are properly developed, a large number of people will get employment. When their **income increases** they would **improve** their **standard of living** and adopt **small family**
- TFR in urban and rural areas is **6** and **2.1** respectively (NFHS-5). **Migration** and **urbanization** tends to **lower the birth rate**. Hence, **more employment** opportunities and **urbanization** will help in reducing population growth rate.

Should Coercive control be used: Such measures were adopted in the **1970s** like forced **sterilization**, which had resulted in widespread disaffection. Hence coercive population control measures may **not achieve desired results** and can cause unintended consequences.

To maximize the potential benefits of a favourable age distribution, India must invest in the further development of its **human capital**. There is a need to ensure access to health care and quality education at all ages and promote opportunities for productive employment and decent work.