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Population Policies of India

Population Policies formulated to address the unmet needs for contraception, health care infrastructure, and health personnel, and to provide integrated service delivery for basic reproductive and child health care. The main objective is to achieve a stable population at a level consistent with the requirements of sustainable economic growth, social development, and environmental protection.

Five-Year Plans by the Government of India for population control:

First Five Year Plan:

India is the first country in the world to begin a population control programme in 1952. It emphasized the use of natural devices for family planning.

Second Five Year Plan:

Work was done in the direction of education and research and the clinical approach was encouraged.

Third Five Year Plan:

In 1965, the sterilization technique for both men and women was adopted under this plan. The technique of copper- T was also adopted. An independent department called the Family Planning Department was set up.

Fourth Five-Year Plan:

All kinds of birth control methods (conventional and modern) were encouraged.

Fifth Five Year Plan:

Under this plan the National Population Policy was announced on 16 April, 1976. In this policy, the minimum age for marriage determined by the **Sharda Act, 1929** was increased. It increased the age for boys from 18 to 21 years and for girls from 14 to 18 years. The number of MPs and MLAs was fixed till the year 2001 on the basis of the census 1971. Under this Plan, **forced sterilization** was permitted which was later on given up. In 1977, the Janata Party government changed the name of Family Planning Department to Family Welfare Department.

Sixth, Seventh and Eighth Plans:

Efforts were done to control population by determining long-term demographic aims.

Ninth Five-Year Plan: In 1993, the government had established an expert group under the chairmanship of M.S. Swaminathan for formulating national population policy. Though this group had prepared the draft of the new population policy in 1994, it was reviewed in 1999 by the Family Welfare Department and was passed by the Parliament in 2000. The Central Government formulated the 'new national population policy' in February 2000.