



P.L.RAJ IAS & IPS ACADEMY

BUILDING BUREAUCRATS SINCE 2006

4. Committee On Demographic Changes – Economy

The Union Government has constituted a high-level committee to study demographic changes across India, chaired by Justice Prakash Prabhakar Naolekar.

1. This committee formation reflects government concerns about unusual population shifts, regional imbalances, and cross-border migration patterns affecting national security and social stability.
2. The committee's establishment signals recognition that demographic changes have multifaceted implications for national security, resource allocation, and social cohesion requiring systematic analysis.

1.Objectives of the Committee

Comprehensive Assessment of Demographic Changes

1. The committee will conduct a comprehensive assessment of demographic changes occurring across India, identifying regions experiencing unusual population shifts and growth patterns.
2. Analysis will examine demographic changes at the level of religious and social communities, understanding how different populations are experiencing varying growth trajectories.
3. The committee will create detailed demographic profiles across states and districts, comparing with historical trends to identify anomalies and departures from expected patterns.
4. Regional disparities in population growth, mortality rates, and migration patterns will be systematically documented and analysed.

Identification of Causative Factors

1. The committee will examine possible causes of demographic changes, including illegal cross-border migration bringing undocumented populations into India.
2. Abnormal settlement patterns indicating orchestrated or planned migration activities will be investigated for understanding underlying motivations.
3. Orchestrated migration involving coordinated movement of specific populations for political or economic purposes will be identified and analysed.
4. Economic opportunities that attract voluntary migration from within India and from neighbouring countries will be assessed.
5. Socio-environmental factors including education, healthcare availability, employment opportunities, and environmental degradation affecting migration decisions will be examined.

Population Stabilization Mechanisms

1. The committee will recommend an institutional mechanism for population stabilization and long-term demographic monitoring to manage population growth.
2. Sustainable population policies balancing development needs with demographic stability will be proposed.
3. Long-term demographic monitoring systems will enable tracking of population changes and identification of emerging challenges.

Illegal Immigration Management

1. The committee will recommend a streamlined and time-bound mechanism for identification of illegal immigrants using modern biometric and document verification technologies.

2. Detention procedures ensuring humane treatment and due process protection for identified illegal immigrants will be standardized.
3. Deportation processes balancing international law, bilateral agreements, and humanitarian considerations will be developed.

Border Management Strengthening

1. The committee will propose measures to strengthen border management through better surveillance systems using modern technology including sensors and monitoring.
2. Improved identification mechanisms distinguishing between authorized travelers and undocumented migrants will be developed.
3. Enhanced coordination among border security forces, state police, and central intelligence agencies will be promoted through institutional frameworks.

2.Demographic Trends in India

Declining Fertility Rate

1. According to the National Family Health Survey-5, India's Total Fertility Rate declined to around 2.0, falling below the replacement level of 2.1.
2. This decline indicates that India is gradually moving towards population stabilization at the national level, a significant demographic transition.
3. The replacement level of 2.1 represents the fertility rate required for a population to sustain itself without immigration.
4. Below-replacement fertility suggests that without migration, India's population will eventually decline, transforming demographic challenges.

Declining Birth Rate

1. According to the Sample Registration System Report 2024, India's birth rate declined from 21 per 1,000 population in 2014 to 18.3 in 2024.
2. This significant decline reflects changing demographic patterns as Indians adopt smaller family norms.
3. Rising urbanization increases costs of living, making large families economically unaffordable and encouraging smaller family sizes.
4. Increasing literacy, particularly female literacy, empowers women to make reproductive choices and delays marriage and childbearing.
5. Improved access to healthcare and family planning services enables couples to achieve desired family sizes through contraception and spacing.

3.Border-Related Demographic Challenges

India-Bangladesh Border Issues

1. India shares a 4,096 km border with Bangladesh across West Bengal, Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura, and Mizoram, creating significant cross-border migration challenges.
2. The Assam Movement from 1979-1985 was a major popular movement against illegal immigrants in Assam, highlighting long-standing concerns about immigration.
3. The movement was led by the All-Assam Students Union and the All Assam Gana Sangram Parishad, demonstrating regional apprehension about demographic changes.
4. Immigration has substantially altered the demographic composition of border states, creating political tensions and identity-related conflicts.

India-Myanmar Border Challenges

1. India shares a 1,643 km border with Myanmar across Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur, and Mizoram, experiencing migration pressures from neighbouring country.
2. Political instability following the 2021 Myanmar military coup increased the inflow of Chin refugees and Rohingya migrants into Manipur and Mizoram.
3. These refugee populations face uncertain legal status and create humanitarian challenges for both refugees and host communities.

India-Pakistan Border Tensions

1. India shares a 3,323 km border with Pakistan, historically characterized by security concerns and cross-border movements.
2. In Jammu and Kashmir, cross-border infiltration from Pakistan has long been associated with terrorism, militancy, and internal security challenges.
3. Cross-border movement for security purposes requires careful management to distinguish between legitimate and illicit activities.

4. Concerns Regarding Demographic Change

National Security and Sovereignty

1. Illegal immigration may create security challenges by increasing risks of infiltration by hostile elements, organized crime operations, and border instability.
2. Undocumented migrants may be exploited by criminal networks for smuggling operations, human trafficking, or security-related activities.

Social Harmony and Community Relations

1. Demographic changes linked to religion, ethnicity, or language may increase social tensions, identity politics, and conflicts over land and employment.
2. Ethnic violence in Manipur between Kuki and Meitei communities highlighted tensions between groups over land, identity, and demographic concerns.
3. Rapid demographic changes can fuel communal tensions and political polarization affecting social cohesion.

Resource Distribution Pressures

1. Large-scale migration may increase pressure on housing, healthcare, education, welfare schemes, and employment opportunities in recipient areas.
2. Border districts in Assam and Tripura have witnessed concerns regarding land encroachment, competition for jobs, and pressure on public resources.
3. Undocumented migration strains social infrastructure without corresponding resource allocation from central government.

Indigenous and Tribal Community Protection

1. Indigenous and tribal communities, especially in the North-East region, fear loss of cultural identity, land rights, and political representation due to demographic changes.
2. Constitutional protections for scheduled tribes could be undermined if demographic changes alter community ratios and political strength.

5. Challenges in Committee Implementation

Lack of Updated Census Data

1. The last Census in India was conducted in 2011, while the next Census is scheduled for 2027, creating a significant data gap.

2. The absence of updated Census data may affect the accuracy of demographic assessments and evidence-based policymaking.
3. Reliance on five-year-old data limits understanding of rapid demographic changes occurring in border regions.

Human Rights Concerns

1. There are significant concerns regarding the possibility of discrimination, social polarization, and wrongful exclusion arising from demographic profiling.
2. Identification processes must balance security concerns with protection of constitutional rights and freedom from discrimination.

Federal and Administrative Challenges

1. Different States may have varying political, administrative, and social responses to migration-related issues affecting uniform policy implementation.
2. State governments' varying capacity and political will affect enforcement of central policies on immigration and border management.

Border Management Difficulties

1. India shares long and porous international borders with neighbouring countries requiring substantial resources for effective management.
2. Effective border management requires advanced surveillance technology, infrastructure development, and better inter-agency coordination.

6.Way Forward

1. **Strengthen Border Infrastructure** - India should improve border fencing, surveillance systems, and technological monitoring mechanisms to prevent illegal infiltration while respecting humanitarian concerns.
2. **Conduct Timely Census** - The government should ensure timely conduct of the Census and strengthen civil registration systems to enable evidence-based policymaking and accurate demographic tracking.
3. **Ensure Constitutional Safeguards** - Any action related to identification or deportation must follow due process and protect constitutional rights guaranteed to all residents.

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