Causes of Growth of Population In India
CHAPTER-3

CAUSES OF GROWTH OF POPULATION IN INDIA

The net change in population between two points of time expressed as percent of population at a given period of time is called growth rate. The growth rate may be negative if the population declines and positive, if it increases during the period under consideration. Births, deaths and migration cause a change in population. The population of India has increased more than four fold (330.8 percent) during the last century.

PHASES OF POPULATION GROWTH IN INDIA

The population of India was 238.40 million in 1901, which increased to 1027.02 million in 2001 (Table-3.1). Thus, 788.62 million persons were added in the last century. India's population has grown steadily since 1901 except during 1911-21 when it declined slightly. At the same time, the decadal growth rate of population has been consistently increasing till 1981. It started declining thereafter. The India demographic history can thus be divided into the following four phases:

(1) Period of stagnant growth rate (before 1921).
(2) Period of steady growth rate (1921 - 1951).


(1) Before 1921 the increase in population was sporadic, irregular and slow. After 1921 it has increased steadily. Hence the year 1921 is called demographic divide in the population study of India.

(2) During 1921-51, the population increased steadily with the development in medical facilities which reduced deaths caused by epidemics like plague. Cholera and malaria Deaths due to famines declined, sanitation and medical facilities improved. Developed means of transport were able to meet the exigencies of food shortage. The agriculture economy showed substantial improvement. Consequently crude death rate declined, but crude birth rate remained high (Table 3.1) it is called mortality induced growth.

(3) The population of India nearly doubled during 1951 to 1981. Average growth rate was about 2.2 percent per annum during this period. Such an unprecedented growth resulted from the acceleration of developmental activities and further improvement in health activities. The living condition of the people improved enormously. Death rates, however, declined faster than the birth
rates. This situation resulted in such a higher growth rate was fertility induced growth.

(4) Though high increase in population continued after 1981, the rate of growth started declining gradually. It signals the beginning of the new era in the country's demographic history.

During this period, birth rate declined rapidly, from 34 per thousand in 1981 to 26 per thousand in 1999. Declining travel of death rate continued but at a slower rate. The differences between birth and death rates narrowed to 17. This declining trend is a positive indicator of the official effort of birth control and people's own inclination of opt for smaller families.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Census year</th>
<th>Population (in million)</th>
<th>Absolute change (in million)</th>
<th>Change (%)</th>
<th>Average annual growth (%)</th>
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1 Census of India, 2001
SPATIAL DIFFERENCES IN GROWTH RATE

Inter-state Differences

The average growth of population in the country was 21.34 percent during 1991-2001. At state level, the growth varies from 9.42 percent in Kerala to 64.41 percent in Nagaland. States recording high growth (more than 2.0 percent per annum) are located in a continuous belt and cover northern half of the country. North eastern stages also recorded high growth. Contrary to these, all major states of south witnessed slow growth rate (only 0.90 percent per annum) in the country. The Southern States have high literacy rates, more urban population, and comparatively a more developed economy. The birth rate is comparatively lower in the Southern States.

Urban Rural Differences

Apart from births and deaths migration also plays a significant role in the growth of population. People from rural areas migrate to urban areas in large numbers. Hence, growth has always been lower in rural areas than in urban areas.

According to the census of 2001 there are wide regional variation in rural population growth rates. They are 1.5 percent in Delhi, 10.05 percent in Kerala, 63.37 percent in Nagaland, -2.16 percent in Goa and -5.20 percent in Tamil Nadu. This slow growth may be ascribed to out
migration from rural areas to urban centers and other states.

Growth of urban population has remained higher than that of the rural population. Dadra and Nagar Haveli presents the highest growth (330.33 percent) of urban population in the country. Among major states Arunachal Pradesh (101.29 percent) witnessed the highest growth. Contrary to it, in Andhra Pradesh (14.63 percent) and Kerala (7.64 percent), it was much lower the growth of urban boundaries, recognition of new town and influence of immigrants mainly from rural areas caused their imbalance.

Throughout most of the 2 million years of human existence, the total population has been low.

At the beginning of the agricultural era (approximately 10,000BC), the world population was approximately 5 million. This was generally because of epidemics, famines, disease, malnutrition and wars, annual population growth rate averaged only 0.2% or (20 million annually). As a result by 1800 A.D. there were approximately 1 billion people. However, the population during the industrial Revolution (1800-1950) almost tripled to 2.8 billion. Between 1950 and 1990 world population double again, to over 5.3 billion. In the next ten years, the population increased by another 700 million.

The major reason for the recent increase in population is that the
Fig. 3a: Long-term world population growth, 1950-2050

[Graph showing world population growth from 1750 to 2050, with a bar graph and a line graph indicating population size and population increment.]
traditional factors that controlled population growth have been lessened in the 20th Century. For example, because of advances in medicine and sanitation and improved living standards, the crude death rate is now lower than at any other point in history. This has led to unprecedented increase in population growth.

**Table-3.2. Estimated and Projected Population of the World**

<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Estimated Population</th>
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<td>2000</td>
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<td>Least developed regions</td>
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<td>658</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other less developed countries</td>
<td>1508</td>
<td>4207</td>
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</table>

As the figure shows since 1950 the majority of population growth both in absolute numbers and as a percentage of growth has been in developing states. This is primarily the result of death rates declining earlier and faster than crude birth rates. As an illustration, the death rates in developed countries have fallen by as much as 50% in the past 30 years, resulting in an increase of 2.4 billion people in the developing world between 1950 - 1990.

While their average population growth rates have declined from

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2 United Nation Population Division.
3 Population Division, United Nations.
Fig. 3b: Distribution of world population 1999, and the increase in population 1999-2014
a peak 2.5 percent in 1970, population momentum created by a large youthful population pyramid. Because of high fertility, 35 percent of the population in developing countries is below 15 years of age as compared to 21 percent in developed countries.

This is the result of a demographic transition in the developing world which in contrast to previous transitions in the developed world, dramatically reduced infant mortality while the fertility rate remained high.

**Current Trends**

World population reached 6 billion in 2000 and is currently growing at an annual rate of 1.2 percent or 77 million people per year. Six countries account for half of this annual growth (India, China, Pakistan, Nigeria, Bangladesh and Indonesia).

**According to U.N Estimates**

The population of the less developed regions will rise steadily from 4.9 billion in 2000 to 8.2 billion in 2050 (medium variant). This projection assumes continuing decline in fertility; stagnant growth stage characterized by high birth rates and high death rates, through a rapid growth stage with high birth rates and low death rates, to a stable low growth stage characterized by low birth and death rates.

- Stage - I : High Stationary

[65]
Fig. 3c: Demographic transition
While the demographic transition provides a good general model for describing population growth, there are numerous factors that affect the length of each stage in the absence of such declines, the population of less developed regions would reach 11.9 billion (high variant). Particularly rapid growth is expected among the 48 least developed countries. Their population is expected to nearly triple between 2000 and 2050 going from 658 million to 1.8 billion.

The population of more developed regions, currently 1.2 billion, is anticipated to change little, during the next 50 years because fertility levels are expected to remain below replacement level. By mid-century the population of 39 countries is projected to be less than today.

These trends are no surprise to demographers. They are part of the "Demographic Transition" an analytical framework that describes the process of population changes over time.

It has been calculated that the human population is currently increasing by two percent each year. This is a much more rapid increase than has over occurred in the history of the planet. Especially high rates of population increase occur in India, China and elected African countries. It is clear that population growth must stop sometime within
Today, in the modern age the world's population is growing at a rate of 2% each year.
the foreseeable future due to various factors, factors are limited food and water supplies, limited energy and natural resources, pollution, animal and plant extinction and the contamination and scarcity of many other much needed materials.

The two elements that regulate population growth are birth and death rates. The questions then is whether a slow down in population growth will be a result of a decrease in birth or an increase in death. If the population continues to the without bound, nature will take over and the death rate will rise to solve the problem. Unfortunately, this is not the most attractive solution for us. Instead, we would rather control the number of births in order to attack the source of this world problem and save the earth from being over capacitated.

**Cause of growth**

At the beginning of the population increase, there are many factors that caused it to grow. The rapid growth of the earth's population is not due to a rise in the birth rate; the birth rate has declined substantially since 1900. The most important reasons for this growth is that famine and diseases have been greatly reduced. As a result people are living longer. Population growth is related to values, attitude, tradition and financial status.

Most of this growth takes place in the developing world. Many
families need to be large in order to survive. The poor are not poor because they have babies; they have babies because they are poor. Children do not drain the family income, they add to it. At a very young age, they are able to earn money to support the family and help look after the elderly and the very young.

Just as poverty contributes to high birth rates, affluence contributes to low birth rates. In the developed parts of the world children are not needed to help with the family income nor are they likely to die at an early age. If birth rates are to decline in developing world, economic development must go hand in hand with advances in health care.

The most obvious cause of population growth is a high birth rate. There are many reasons for this:

1. Security, many countries have no pensions or social security system to support their older citizens. In these countries, people must depend upon their children to support them later in life. They must have many children to ensure that some will survive to support them.

2. Desire to have extra help in the agriculture as most of the farms are not mechanized, they need more children.

3. Extra family members can work as wage earners and help raise
the family's standard of living.

4. In some parts of the world religious and social pressure cause families to have many children.

5. More children lives to be adults and have families of their own. Better health care, better hygiene and better good all helped more young people survive to child bearing age.

India occupies around 2.3% of the world's geographical area but carries 16.6% of total world's most populous country with in next 25 years. The both sentences prove that India is over populated. The United Nation has warned that if India's demographic growth does not slow down, they are likely to be shortage of food and water in the nearest future. India is already experiencing it. The spiraling population hampers every measure of progress India tries to achieve. Now the Indian population explosion has become a global problem.

**Main reasons for the population growth**

**Illiteracy**

lack of proper education is the chief cause of most of the problems in the country. The country rows to achieve 100% literacy every 20 years. But it has been just a dream. Only 59.5% of the population is literate so for (male 70.2% and female 48.3%).

Most of this literate have not completed even the high school

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[69]
education. Poverty, social and economical conditions, etc. have been pulling back the country from its endeavors. Statistic show that educated people have limited families and uneducated have large. Cities have more facilities and people are more educated and have less children whereas villages form 70% of the country are still illiterate and have larger families.

**Lack of awareness**

Lack of education and awareness lead to ignorance which keeps these blind people in utter obscurity. They cannot have any plan in their life. They are unable to realize the reasons for scarcity of water, food, etc.

**Increasing poverty**

Ignorance and lack of awareness keep the people enslaved to poverty. They do not bother to get out of their wallowing. Most of the villagers live in a single-room houses which serves all their purposes of cooking, dining, living, sleeping etc. Most of them do not even think of having bathroom facilities. No wonder these on sanitary conditions invite all kinds of diseases.

**The Wide Gap**

Poor people are becoming poorer because of their inability, ignorance and exploitation by the rich. Most of the villagers are
agriculture workers and they have to depend upon the land lords who possess the land and oppress the villagers by giving them very meager wages.

Even though the government tries it best to liberate them from these bondages, the caste system, that controls everything and the political vote bank exploitation manipulate things from bad to worse. The rich are growing richer making the gap between the rich and poor wider.

**Child Labour**

To manage the situation children are compelled to do some work. These ignorant people do not think that more children are a problem. Sooner a child is capable of stand by in his feet, he is suppose to earn his breads.

There are plenty of opportunities encouraging child labour. Only in 2006 the country has come forward to take stern steps to annihilate child labour. But how for it will succeed only time will answer. The wrong money that comes from the children is spent on alcohol and other evil ways. These children who have money in their hands are tempted to spend it lavishly. They are unable to attend school or have proper growth. Child abuse is prevalent every where.

**Early Marriage**
It has been a social custom to marry the girl as soon as she attains puberty. Child marriage restraints act in 1976, raising marriageable age of the girl from 14 to 18, is still finding hard to be executed.

**Traditional Prejudices**

A family should have a male heir, 'A girl child is a curse to the family', the more male children stronger the family' are some of the prejudices found among people. Every family aspires for a male child. Caste system plays much in treating girl children differently than the male. There are some castes which even kill the unwanted baby girls. Female infanticide is a heartrending issue, statistics say that education to female children is so neglected that when they group up they become mere slaves of their male counterparts.

**Religious impacts**

Religious beliefs have much to do with the family planning in India. People strongly believe that children are given by God and it is sin to curtail pregnancy in anyway. More children means more blessing from God. Religions do not encourage any artificial method of family planning.

**High Fertility and low mortality rates**

The growth rate in the Indian population is estimated to be 1.44% (2004 statistics) It is higher than the death rate. In every 1000 people 22.8
births and 8.30 deaths are reported\textsuperscript{4}. The life expectancy in India is 63.99 years. Females are said to live longer. Every woman is equated with 2.85 children which is extremely high compared to other countries, mortality rate is reduced by health programs.

**Inability to achieve plans**

India was the first country in the developing nations to initiate a state-sponsored family planning program in 1952 and official figure suggests a measure of success. Since independence in 1947, the fertility rate has been cut from 6 births per woman of child bearing age to 3.5, by which the birth rate has declined from 40 per 1000 in 1960 to 28 in 1996. Needless to say the government has been taking all possible steps, but the caste system, the voting system, etc are crippling the enormous projects undertaken by it.

The India population explosion has become a global problem. At least in China due to some revolution and strength of the political hand during the previous regions the population could be controlled. But in India democracy is struggling with a slow process of curtailing the population.

Now the whole world has become one family with fast

\textsuperscript{4} Economic Survey (2006-07), New Delhi: Ministry of Finance, Govt. of India, 2007.
communication and vast media. The Indian population explosion has become a global issue.

**Cultural**

In some countries there is preference for sons to continue the family line and are seen as measure of prosperity. As an example, the Chinese believe more sons equals more wealth.

**Economic**

Children may supplement family living standards or income by working on family farms, household enterprises, or for wages outside the home. In the long run, children provide a form of social security in countries that lack state-sponsored children programs.

**Religion**

Some religions view large families as tangible proof of god's blessing and consequently discourage artificial birth control.

**Technology**

Technological advances have caused death rates to drop and life expectancy to increase.

**Youth Population**

If there is a large youth population, because of population momentum, birth rate will remain higher longer.

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8 Contemporary Public Health: Policy, Planning, Management by Prof. J.P. Gupta & Prof. A.K. Sood [74]
Previously we have discussed so many reasons of increasing growth rate but here we are mentioning main three reasons for increasing growth rate. These are – High birth rate, Low death rate, Migration.

According to BBC News, India currently faces approximately "... 33 births a minute, 2,000 an hour 48,000 a day, which amounts to nearly 12 million a year". Unfortunately, the resources do not increases the population increases. Instead the resources keep decreasing, leading to making survival for a human being more and more competitive even for the basic necessities like food, clothing and shelter. There are three main reasons responding for increasing the population.

(I) Birth Rate
(a) Poverty

India currently faces a vicious cycle of population explosion and poverty. One of the most important reasons for this population increase in India is poverty. According to geography. Com, "more than 300 million Indians earn less than US $1 everyday and about 130 million people are jobless". The people who have to struggle to make two ends meet produce more children because more children means more earning hands. Also, due to poverty, the infant mortality rate among

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5 UNDP Human Development Report, 2004. [75]
such families is higher due to lack of facilities like food and medical resources. Thus, they produce more children assuming that not all of them would be able to survive. The end result is a mounting increase in the population size of India. Due to the increase in population, the problems of lack of resources, jobs and poverty increases. Thus, the cycle continues leading to an ever-increasing population that we see today. This cycle in fact might be considered as a positive feedback, in which the increase in one results in increase of the other factors. As the poverty and population both increase, the development of the country and the society seems more for fetched.

(b) Religious belief, traditions and cultural norms

India's culture runs very deep and far back in history. Due to increased population, the education facilities are very scarce. As a result, most people still strictly follow ancient beliefs. According to BBC News, the famous Indian author, Shobha De said, "God Said, 'Go forth and produce' and we just went and did exactly that".

In addition, a lot of families prefer having a son rather than a daughter. As a result, a lot of families have more children than they actually want or can afford, resulting in increasing poverty, lack of in resources and most important, an increased population.

Another one of the India's cultural norm is for a girl to get
married at an early age. In most of the rural areas and in some urban areas as well, families prefer to get their girls married at the age of 14 or 15. Although child marriage is illegal in India, the culture and the social tradition the girls in India does not allow them to oppose such decisions taken by their guardian. For many, giving a girl child in marriage is not done by choice, but rather out of compulsion. The poor economic status of tribal villagers is attributed as one of the primary factors responsible for the prevalence of child marriages in India. An example of one such incident was reported in India info.com. According to an article written by sayed Zarir Hussain on October 16th, 2000, "Forty - two-year-old Rojo Tok, a tribal peasant in Arunachal Pradesh, was all decked up in local finery to wed mepong Tok, a girl who would turn 14 that winter. Due to the young age they can have more children throughout their lifetime. This results in increase of the global fertility rate. Since these girls get married at a very early age, they do not have the opportunity to get educated. Therefore, they remain uneducated and teach the same norms to their own children and the tradition goes on from one generation to the other.

(II) Death Rate

Although poverty has increased and the development of the country continues to be hampered, the improvements in medical
facilities have been tremendous. This improvement might be considered positive, but as far as population increase is concerned, it has only been positive in terms of increasing the population further. The crude death rate in India in 1981 was approximately 12.5, and that decreased to approximately 8.7 in 1999. Also, the infant mortality rate in India decreased from 129 in 1981 to approximately 72 in 1999 (mapsindia.com, Internet). These numbers are clear indications of the improvements in the medical field. This development is good for the economy and society of India, but strictly in terms of population, this advancement has further enhanced the increase in population.

The average life expectancy of people in India has increased from 52.9 in 1975, 1980 to 62.4 in 1995. Although our near and dear ones would live longer, due to the increase in the population the resources available per person would be much less, leading to a decrease in the curvature of the slope of development instead of higher gradient. In addition, abortion is not allowed by several religions that are followed in India. In fact in Islam, one of the leading religions of India, children are considered to be gifts of God, and so the more children a woman has, the more she is respected in her family and society. As a result, although the measures to control birth are either not available or not known to the public, the facilities to increase birth through medical facilities are available.
Fig. 3e: India: Birth and Death Rates 1901-2001
(iii) Migration

In countries like the United States (U.S.), immigration plays an important role in the population increase. However, in countries like India, immigration plays a very small role in the population change. Although people from neighbouring countries like Bangladesh, Pakistan and Nepal, migrate to India; at the same time Indians migrate to other countries like U.S., Australia and U.K. During 1971 war between India and Pakistan over fast Pakistan (Bangladesh), the immigration rate increased tremendously. However, currently the migration in India is -0.08 per 1000 population and is decreasing further. This is definitely good for India. This way, the population might eventually come to close to being under control and more people may get better job opportunities and further education. For example, the students is my university from India, like myself, have better chances of job opportunities and better education outside India than we would have had in India.

Chart shows the crude birth and death rates for India during the past century from the censuses. The decline in death rate, as demographic transition theory predicts, has been faster than the fall in the birth rate, so that the population growth rate continued to side until 1981, since then the birth rate has been declining faster than the death rate.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Census Year</th>
<th>Annual % growth rate of Population</th>
<th>Birth Rate (%)</th>
<th>Death Rate (%)</th>
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<td>0.30</td>
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<td>2001</td>
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Population growth rates in developing countries fall when people are economically and socially secure. Birth control policies and limiting the number of children will not achieve reduction in birth rate. Then poverty is the cause of high population growth in the third world.

**The Crucial Role of Women**

In so many societies the world over the man is considered to be the head of the family. He still makes the final household decisions. Women who no longer feel the economic and social need to have more

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6 Population change in India (2005) by Deepak Lal.
7 State of India's Population 1998; Population foundation of India.
children are often not in the position to make the decision. A women's place in the society seen to have the most profound effect on fertility rates.

Expert see the answer to high birth rates in the less developed countries as being related to the educational level of women. Women bear almost the full responsibility for agriculture work, getting water, preparing meals, gathering firewood and raising children. They marry at a young age and change from being chattels (property) of their fathers to being chattels of their husbands. Lacking in status their only source of prestige is the production of children, especially sons.

The status of women has the greatest impact on fertility rates. Providing equal access to education and assuring women the basic right of self-determination are key requirements in countries now facing rapid population growth.

- When you talk about total population of India, today the Muslim population is on increase at a rapid speed as each Muslims can keeps 4, 5 or 6 views and thus can produce as many children every year.

- The Bigamy act is only for Hindus. The government is not in opposition to restrict this as every political party wants capitalize
Muslim vote bank.

- In earlier years, say about 30 years back, there was no proper sex education and birth control measures known to people.

- The cost of living in those days was minimal unlike these days and they did not have problems bringing up their children.

Family structure apart from rural India where marriages of teenagers are not uncommon, the average age of marriage in urban India is also in early to mid twenties. Also India has among the lowest divorce rates in the world. There is a stronger joint family culture where up to four generations can easily be found living in the same house. Having two or three kids is normal to carry the family tradition forward. Being part of a larger family ensures little strain on parents themselves.

Lower income group Muslims have traditionally made up for most of the uneducated skilled labour in India. Across urban and rural India most craftsmen, tailors, sculptors, barbers will be Muslims. It is their belief that a greater number of children will add to the income of the family, since most of them pick up the family craft even before reaching their teens. Secondly, they are under greater influence of local religious chiefs who prohibit use of contraceptives saying that children

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8 Reason for the large population by Rohit Gupta.
are gift of Allah. Lastly they have always felt insecure in a Hindu dominated country. They believe their safety comes in numbers. The number of kids in such families is between five and ten.

The financial cost of planning, birth and bringing up of a child in India is very low. Right from medical bills to clothing and everything else is relatively cheaper here, I'm not saying people deliberately have more kids because it not too expensive; rather they would have been reluctant had it been more expensive. Governments in efficiently birth control measures started in India in the eighties, but their has not made very widespread. The impact measures continue to this day but are unsuccessful in penetrating the larger part of the country's masses. Increasing life expectancy better and more affordable medical facilities are now available across the length and breadth of the country. The ratio of people reaching their sixties and seventies has been improving continuously which means the death rate is lowering.

Thirty years ago, there was higher child mortality rate due to the availability of medical facilities beyond the premises big cities were very poor. Also information and awareness levels were low. The resulting higher mortality rate among children prompted parents to have more kids. While there has been substantial improvement in the mortality rate the mindset has not changed at the same pace. The desire
for male child is very high, the percentage of pe-

male child is always very low.

Even today most of rural India is poorly
everything goes wrong. Almost everything listed above has the worst affect on this segment of the population unfortunately they also consist of the largest chunk of the 'Country's Population'.

CONCLUSION

Population, if continues to increase at the present rate will destroy the country. Lack of initiative by the government together with socially unconscious people of India are responsible for this destructive problem. People are not realizing the problem. In very near future there will be riots and fighting over food and water India will be the largest slum creator. All cities will be like fish markets with people everywhere. Traffic will move at snails pace. Everybody will scream shout but nobody will listen. There will be chaos all around.

I think after 20 years, India will not be the place to live. I sincerely pray god to save this country. The people of India will be mere spectors of there destructive future. They agitate over increase in prices of commodities and government policies etc but the biggest problem which is the root cause of all this and will ruin them one day does not draw their attention.
In my opinion government of India should enact legislation allowing only one child and religion following. Strengthen basic education system. Educate especially rural people about demerits of large family. Lastly a strict dedicated political will to curb this fast approaching disaster by ensuring enforcement of laws in vogue.

Vivekanand's saying – "Awake, arise and do not take rest till the goal is achieved".