

INDIA'S ULTIMATE CHALLENGE



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FROM THE DESK OF CHAIRMAN

India has recently achieved yet another numero-uno position, i.e. as per the State of World Population 2023 published by the United Nations revealed that India's population has overtaken China's, and as such became the most populous country in the world. We knew this was coming and was only matter of time, and definitely the feat achieved earlier than expected. With the milestone, however, comes many challenges to be dealt with.

India is land of many resources. Yet to cater to over 1.35 billion population, resources are ought to be scarce and limited. Though this is a social concern, the State has a role to play.

The most important challenge is how to control the population growth. Our Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has already called for population control in his Independence Day speech a couple of years ago. State's role is seen to create conditions, which could implicitly or explicitly influence individuals' behaviour towards the desired goal of smaller families, like enhanced girl education, influencing age at which girls get married, strict implementation of laws against child marriages, incentivising small size of families, better employment opportunities for women, etc.

Another big challenge is to feed such a large population, of which big part is below poverty line. Employment generation for such a huge population, which is very young, is a daunting task and it remains to be seen how the government effectively deals with it.

On the one hand, high population growth can explain the country's poverty and low standards of living, on the other, it is touted as a demographic dividend that can spur economic growth.

Rapid population growth makes eradicating poverty, combating hunger and malnutrition, and widening the coverage of health and education systems daunting challenges.

Though there is a silver lining that India's population surge is stabilising, ultimately, challenge for India lies in how it can effectively chart a unique path in ensuring sustainable and equitable development for its billion-plus people.

Thank you all.... Always in Gratitude

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