

## CHINA LOOKING AT A THREE CHILD POLICY



### Issue

China has endorsed a three child policy by relaxing the previous two child norm, indicating a major policy shift.

### Background

China's population growth rate is at historic low since the 1950s. The change in policy comes 5 years after the government had relaxed the one child norm.

### Details

- Former president Deng Xiaoping had imposed the one-child policy in 1980s to control the walloping growth rate in the country.
- The rapidly ageing population forced the government to rethink its strategy and a relaxation was announced in 2016.
- The proportion of young population increased after the two-child policy was announced but it did not reverse the population trend.
- People are still skeptical about the success of three child policy as families are increasingly avoiding more than one offspring due to long working hours and higher cost of living in large cities.

### Success of one child policy

- China's population was approaching 1 billion after rapid growth, forcing the regime to adopt one child policy measure. They feared that it could affect growth.

- The implementation of the policy was done through measures such as easy availability of contraceptives, sanctions against violations and also financially incentivizing families.
- The policy succeeded in urban areas. The government claims to have averted more than 40 crore birth that could have created shortage of food and water resources.
- The policy was severely criticized for its brutality. People were forced to undergo abortions and sterilization. It also violated human rights.
- Poorer sections were more affected as richer families could afford to pay fines if they violated policy. Rural areas lost new labour hands and were forced to migrate.

### Issues

- China has been using reproductive control to put off dissidence. This toll was used against Tibetan and Uighurs. This controlled numbers.
- The sex ratio became skewed towards males as families began selective abortion of female fetus due to inability to have another child.
- Due to such issues, China cannot completely make use of its population for economic growth unlike countries such as India and Indonesia.

### Way forward

- Many families have expressed no interest in having children due to high costs and also changing lifestyle. The new relaxation will hardly matter.
- The policy can be reversed but cultural shift in people's mindset cannot be changed so easily. This makes the future bleaker.

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