Society & Social Justice · GS - I

“Population policy must evolve with demographic realities rather than rely on uniform fertility-control measures.” Discuss this statement in the context of India's regional demographic transition and the withdrawal of two-child restrictions in public employment.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
DAILY PRACTICE 20/11/2026	GS - I	Society & Social Justice

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
15	~250 words

Answer Hint

Demographic transition, declining fertility, replacement-level fertility, demographic dividend, ageing population, reproductive autonomy, gender equality, regional disparities, rights-based population policy.

Model Answer

Introduction

India is undergoing a significant demographic transition characterised by declining fertility rates, increasing life expectancy and regional variations in population growth. Population policies therefore need to respond to changing demographic conditions rather than rely exclusively on restrictive measures.

Why Policy Revision Is Necessary

1. **Declining fertility:** Several States have achieved fertility levels at or below replacement level, reducing the relevance of uniform population-control restrictions.
2. **Demographic ageing:** Persistently low fertility can accelerate population ageing and increase future social security and healthcare requirements.

3. **Regional diversity:** States differ considerably in fertility, migration patterns and demographic structures, requiring differentiated approaches.
4. **Gender and reproductive autonomy:** Employment-related restrictions may disproportionately affect women and influence reproductive decisions.
5. **Administrative fairness:** Withdrawal of outdated eligibility restrictions can improve access to public employment, although it does not automatically reverse earlier dismissals.

Way Forward

- **Rights-based approach:** Prioritise voluntary family planning, reproductive healthcare and informed choice.
- **Women's empowerment:** Improve female education, workforce participation and access to maternal healthcare.
- **Demographic preparedness:** Develop policies for ageing, pension security and elderly healthcare in low-fertility States.
- **Regional planning:** Tailor population and development programmes to State-specific demographic conditions.
- **Evidence-based policymaking:** Regularly assess the social and economic consequences of population-related restrictions.

Conclusion

India requires a balanced population policy that protects reproductive autonomy while addressing demographic challenges. Sustainable development depends on education, healthcare and social security rather than coercive fertility-control measures.

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