

## **Problem of Population**

Today India is the home to over 1 billion people. By 2050 it will surpass China as the most populous country in the world. Experts think that India will reach a total of 1.8 billion before population growth begins to decrease. In contrast to China's one-child policy, family planning in India has not been consistent. In the 1970s and 80s the government tried to control population growth by forcing people to have sterilizations. Today, however, there are signs that population growth is slowing down. Contraception is becoming widely available in many areas and especially Indian women in rural areas are being more educated.

Overpopulation in India is causing even more problems. An increasing population living on the same land will quickly use up the limited resources the country has. Medical conditions are getting worse and diseases are spreading faster. More and more Indians are living below the poverty line.

However, a small minority of people see that India is not really over-populated because it is a vast country with plenty of natural resources. These resources have not been fully used as yet. They express the view that, if all the resources are fully employed, India can maintain a larger population than what it is having now and in much greater comfort.

**There is some truth in this argument. But one cannot deny the following facts:**

- (a) The population of India is very large by current standards.
- (b) The rate of increase of population is also high.
- (c) Even the existing population is not being fed, clothed and housed properly; most people are living in miserable conditions.
- (d) The modest increase in national income under planned economic development is being eaten up by the increase in population. As a result, the per capita income growth has almost reached a vanishing point.

(e) The need of controlling population is urgent and pressing so that the existing people may have an improved standard of living.