

## Centre determined to stabilise population growth

J.P. Nadda

The UN's World Population Prospect report may state that India's population will equal China's in the next seven years, but the government seems determined to slow down the growth before that deadline.

"According to our figures, 24 States and Union Territories in the country have achieved the total fertility rate (TFR) of 2.1%. That accounts for a large chunk and we felt that if we came up with a micro plan for specific districts where the TFR rates have been consistently high, then we could achieve a stabilisation rate for population growth much earlier than is predicted for the country," said Union minister for Health and Family Welfare J.P. Nadda.

The TFR is defined as the total number of children born or likely to be born to a woman in her lifetime at the prevailing rate of age-specific fertility. Population stabilisation is said to be achieved at a TFR of 2.1 because a population just replaces itself at that rate.

"We have identified 146 districts across seven states — Assam, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh — that have high TFR, for this project," said Mr. Nadda.

"Among the things that are part of the plan is a range of contraceptive devices, medicines, counselling, special classes for family planning and in cases where there are social barriers, to work with institutions to dispel doubts," Mr. Nadda added.

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***Union minister for Health and Family Welfare***

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