President of India launches National Campaign on Birth Certificates

List of Books, CDs and Data Sheets on Housing, Household Amenities and Assets – 2001 Census

National Campaign on Birth Certificates

It is the right of every child born in the country to have its birth registered and provided with a birth certificate free of charge. It is compulsory to register all births and deaths under the provisions of the Registration of Births and Deaths Act, 1969. However, only about 38,000 out of the estimates 70,000 births that occur in the country everyday are entered into the birth registers maintained by the Registrar of Births and Deaths. Unfortunately only in small proportion of such cases the birth certificates are issued as per the provision of the Act. There is tremendous scope of improvement in this service of delivery of birth certificate to every child born in India.

India is a signatory to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child that has recognized birth registration as one of the first rights of the child. However, today India has the largest number of unregistered children in the world. Birth Registration is considered as the first step in providing an identity to the child both as an individual and as a member of the society as the birth register is the first legal document in which the name of the child gets entered along with the parentage.

The Office of the Registrar General, India with the support of the State Governments is organizing a National Campaign on Birth Certificates throughout the country to issue birth certificates to all children born during the last 10 years. The campaign would be taken up in three phases. The first phase would cover the children whose births have been registered and are living in the villages and towns where they were born. In the second phase, those children

REGISTRATION OF BIRTH IS A RIGHT OF EVERY CHILD. IT IS THE FIRST LEGAL DOCUMENT CONFIRMING IDENTITY OF EVERY INDIVIDUAL.
whose births have been registered but are living at places other the place of birth would be taken up. The third phase would cover those children whose births have not been registered. The first phase of the campaign is expected to cover about 100 million (or 10 crore) children and is being launched across the country during the Child Rights Week from 14th to 20 November 2003 and is planned to be completed by 8th March 2004, the International Women’s Day.

Launching the campaign on 14th November 2003 at Rashtrapati Bhawan, New Delhi by distributing Birth Certificates to a handful of selected children from Delhi and Uttar Pradesh Dr Abdul Kalam said:

“I am delighted to participate in the launch programme of registration of birth by the Registrar General and Census Commissioner. I congratulate the efforts of this organization for making intensive efforts for promoting the registration process.

Children are our greatest wealth. Every child born in the nation should be allowed to blossom. This is the responsibility of the state. To enable us to fulfill this responsibility the first action is identification of the child soon after its birth. This should be correlated to the nutritional programme, immunization programme, pre-education programme, educational programme, healthcare programme leading to the development of an enlightened citizen who will become an asset for national development. Child is a creation of God.

The macro-data on birth provides a medium for preparing demographic profile, population imbalances between different regions, effect of certain governmental decisions on the population profile, overall manpower planning for the nation and the effective functioning of the electoral process.

I am happy that the national campaign on Birth Certificates is starting today and I would urge the organizers the campaign is carried out in big metros as well as in rural areas. Emphasis in rural areas is essential to enable equitable distribution of national amenities to our rural masses. The support from Panchayat level institutions and non-governmental organizations is essential for success of this campaign.”

A complete birth and death registration system is the only way to generate reliable information on various demographic indicators like Birth and Death Rates, Infant Mortality Rate, Maternal Mortality rate, Sex Ratio at Birth, etc., at district and sub-district level. Such data are required for formulating, implementing and monitoring various programmes relating to health of the mother and child including immunization and nutrition and universal education for children, etc. In the backdrop of the evidence of deteriorating sex ratio and the legal steps and the awareness campaign that have been taken to ensure protection of the girl child, it is necessary to have reliable data on sex ratio at birth at every district and sub-district level to monitor the impact of the campaign and to take further corrective action wherever necessary. Registration of all births particularly of the girls is absolutely necessary for this purpose.

Following the launching of the National Campaign state government and union territory administrations have initiated the campaign in their respective territory. As indicated above in the first phase birth certificates are distributed to children in the age group 0 to 9 years who have
already been registered but not issued birth certificates. For this the local administration in charge of issuing birth certificates have been advised to prepare list of children in the age group 0 to 9 years who have not been issued birth certificates and deliver the same to them if presently residing in the area of their jurisdiction. An alternate model has also been suggested in which the administration would be requesting the local schools in the area to send list of students up to 9 years who have not obtained the birth certificates. After verifying if they had been registered previously birth certificates are sent for distribution through the same route. In view of the fact that the enrolment of children in this age group is very high presently it is likely that it will be possible to identify and issue birth certificates to children whose birth has already been registered quickly. It is estimated that about 100 million certificates will be issued to children in this age group in the first phase alone.

**Five New Sister Census Sites**

The Census organisation in India now has the privilege of hosting Census of India websites providing latest data pertaining to the state alone. The State Census website hosted on the net include those pertaining to Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Kerala, Orissa and West Bengal. The sister census sites provides latest census data as well as maps on various census themes.

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http://www.apcensus.gov.in/

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- Highlights (Workers)
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## West Bengal Census Website

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