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Plea to set up institute of demography

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PATNA: A three-day national seminar on 'Population, Health and Sustainable Development Goals: Performance and Prioritizing Policies', which was jointly organized by Patna University (PU) and the International Institute for Population Sciences (IIPS), concluded here on Saturday.

Delivering the valedictory address, health department principal secretary Sanjay Kumar observed that a national-level institute of demography was urgently required in the state as its total fertility rate (TFR) was 3.2 against the national average of 2.1. "This is mainly due to low acceptance of family planning measures by the people on account of poor awareness. Such an institute may be set up under the umbrella of PU," he said.

Kumar added, "Low age of marriage and little age gap between two children are leading to unwarranted population growth. A woman usually gives birth to three children till she attains the age of 24 and the rate of male vasectomy is almost nil in Bihar."

PU vice-chancellor Rash Bihari Prasad Singh, in his presidential remarks, highlighted the importance of demographic studies in socio-economic development of the country. He lauded the progress of the Population Research Centre attached to PU's statistics department and assured of his full cooperation in its development.

Two papers on 'Neglected Cause of Morbidity' and 'Consanguineous Marriages and Their Impact on Neonatal and Child Mortality in India' were awarded the first and second prizes on the occasion.

D A Nagdeve of IIPS proposed the vote of thanks.