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THE ANDHRA PRADESH GAZETTE

PART IV-A EXTRAORDINARY

PUBLISHED BY AUTHORITY

No. 9] AMARAVATI, MONDAY, 23rd FEBRUARY, 2026.

ANDHRA PRADESH BILLS
ANDHRA PRADESH LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

The following Bill was introduced in the Andhra Pradesh Legislative Assembly on 23rd February, 2026.

L. A. Bill No. 9 of 2026

**A BILL FURTHER TO AMEND THE ANDHRA PRADESH FARMERS
MANAGEMENT OF IRRIGATION SYSTEMS ACT, 1997.**

Be it enacted by the Legislature of the State of Andhra Pradesh in the Seventy-Seventh Year of the Republic of India as follows:-

1. (1) This Act may be called the Andhra Pradesh Farmers Management of Irrigation Systems (Amendment) Act, 2026.

Short title and
Commencement.

(2) It shall come into force on such date as the State Government may, by notification in the Andhra Pradesh Gazette, appoint.

2. In the Andhra Pradesh Farmers Management of Irrigation Systems Act, 1997, in sub-section 5 of section 14, along with the provisos thereunder shall be omitted.

Amendment of
section 14.

Act No.11 of
1997.

STATEMENT OF OBJECTS AND REASONS

Sub-section (5) of Section 14 of the Andhra Pradesh Farmers Management of Irrigation Systems Act, 1997 (Act No. 11 of 1997) introduced the “Two-Children Norm,” which disqualified individuals having more than two children from being selected or continuing as Chairman, Vice-Chairman, President, Vice-President, or member of the Managing Committee. The Act came into force on 9th April, 1997.

The objective of introducing the norm at that time was to address the population explosion witnessed during the 1980s and 1990s, which posed serious concerns to national food security and was linked to poverty-related issues such as malnutrition, unemployment, disease, reduced productivity, and constraints on the health, education, social and economic well-being of the nation. Several State Governments had accordingly adopted population control measures, and the State of Andhra Pradesh went a step further by introducing the “Two-Children Norm” in Farmers Management of Irrigation Systems elections.

After nearly twenty-eight years of implementation of this norm, the Government has reviewed the population policy for the State and observed the following:

According to the National Family Health Survey (NFHS-5), the Total Fertility Rate (TFR) has declined significantly—from 3.7 children in 1992-93 to 2.1 children in 2019-21 in rural areas.

This decline may be attributed to several factors, including increased awareness of family planning, improved healthcare facilities, higher literacy levels—particularly among women—and enhanced financial stability. A reduction in TFR implies a lower birth rate, which in turn will lead to an ageing population. The NFHS data further shows that the share of the under-15 population in the country declined from 28.6% in 2015-16 to 26.5% in 2019-21.

In Andhra Pradesh, the TFR is currently reported at 1.6, whereas the optimal replacement rate is estimated at 2.1. If the TFR continues

at the present level of 1.6, it will adversely affect the demographic dividend of the State in the future. Considering the importance of safeguarding the interests of future generations, and based on the feedback received from elected representatives, the Government is of the view that it is desirable to maintain the replacement rate at the optimal level of 2.1.

Further, while the original intention behind introducing the “Two-Children Norm” was to mitigate the ill effects of population explosion, its practical relevance and effectiveness now require reassessment in the light of present demographic realities. With fertility rates steadily declining and family sizes naturally shrinking, the provision’s direct impact on population control has diminished. On the contrary, it may now inadvertently exclude capable candidates from local governance, regardless of their qualifications and ability to contribute effectively.

In light of these facts, the Government has reassessed the relevance and practicality of the “Two-Children Norm.” While its intention was to address population explosion, its impact has diminished in the present context of declining fertility rates and naturally shrinking family sizes. The norm may now inadvertently disqualify otherwise capable candidates from local governance, irrespective of their merit, thereby limiting inclusivity and representation.

The Government, therefore, considers it timely and appropriate to omit sub-section (5) of Section 14 of the Act, so as to align the law with current demographic realities, democratic principles, and the objective of fostering effective local governance. This amendment will ensure that individuals having more than two (2) children are not disqualified from contesting or continuing in elections under the Act.

The Bill seeks to give effect to the above decision.

Dr. NIMMALA RAMANAIDU
Minister for Water Resources

MEMORANDUM REGARDING DELEGATED LEGISLATION

Clause 1(2) of the Bill authorizes the Government to issue notifications in respect of the matters specified therein and, in general, to carry out the purposes of the Act.

All such notifications, which are primarily procedural in nature, are required to be laid on the table of both Houses of the State Legislature and shall be subject to any modifications made by the Legislature.

The above provisions of the Bill regarding delegated legislation are of the usual type and are mainly intended to cover procedural matters.

Dr. NIMMALA RAMANAIDU

Minister for Water Resources

**MEMORANDUM UNDER RULE 95 OF THE RULES OF
PROCEDURE AND CONDUCT OF BUSINESS IN THE ANDHRA
PRADESH LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.**

The Andhra Pradesh Farmers Management of Irrigation Systems (Amendment) Bill, 2026, after it is passed by the Legislature of the State may be submitted to the Governor for his assent under Article 200 of the Constitution of India.

Dr. NIMMALA RAMANAIDU

Minister for Water Resources

PRASANNA KUMAR SURYADEVARA

Secretary-General to Legislature.