

# **Learning and Teaching Resource Package Related to the Geography of China**

## **Topic 2 Changing Population**

### **(Senior Secondary Worksheet)**

#### **Theme: Population Change**

#### **Pre-lesson task**

In this lesson, we will study the population changes in our country. Read the excerpt of an article published in the New York Times in 2023, analyse figures 2.1 and 2.2 and discuss the following questions.

#### **Knowledge box 2.1**

India is on the cusp of passing China in population, according to the latest U.N. estimates. At 1.428 billion people, India has already edged past China. With China's population declining, the margin between the two countries will only grow as India becomes the most populous country in history.

The gentle slope of the demographic curve propelling India into first place looks enviable to the many developed nations that are rapidly aging. Indians are living longer, and the number of babies being born each year has barely budged. Unlike China, which is facing the hangover of its decades under the one-child policy, India faces no steep drop-off and accompanying economic and social dangers. It has a young and expanding work force as China's grays and contracts.

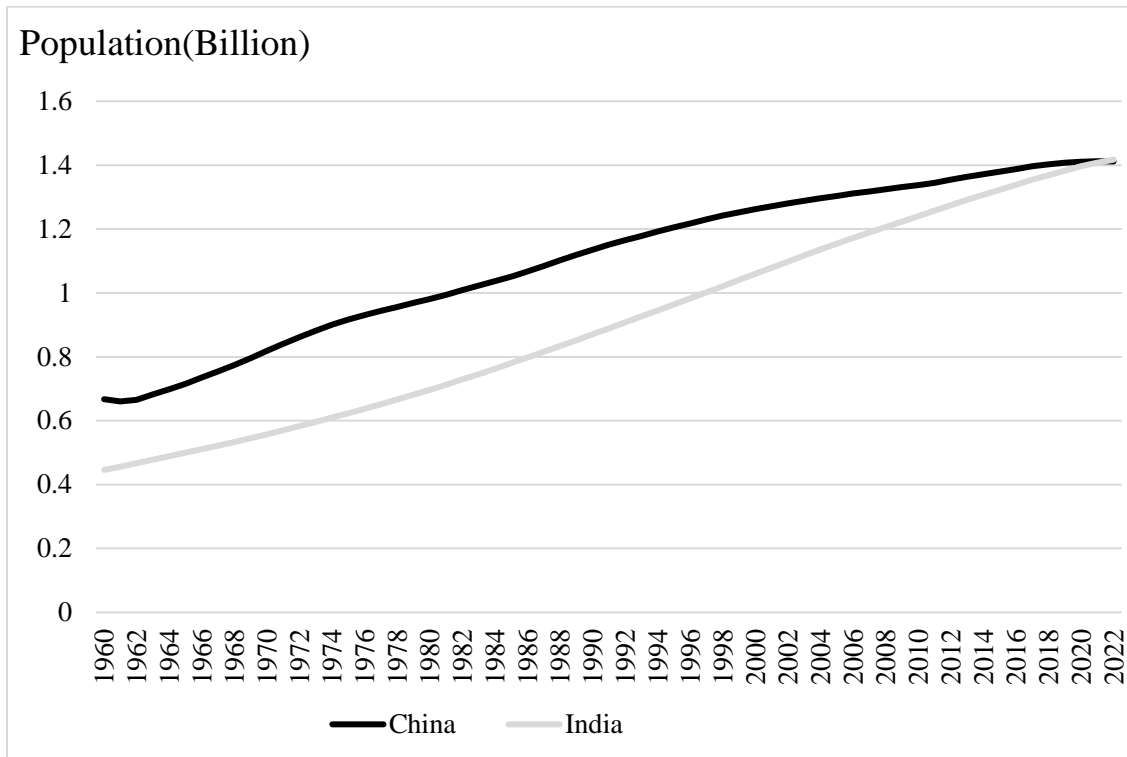
In some of India's regions, the population is still growing too fast for their economies, producing many more able-bodied young people than there are jobs to occupy them. In other parts, however – especially the better-developed south, where women have more education and family planning programs have proved successful – the population has already peaked. There, young families rarely produce more than two children.

In the early 1990s, when China accelerated market reforms, it roughly followed the template of others in East Asia – Japan and South Korea – and became a champion of export-driven manufacturing. It built an economy that today is more than five times the size of India's.

Excerpts from New York Times, 19 April 2023

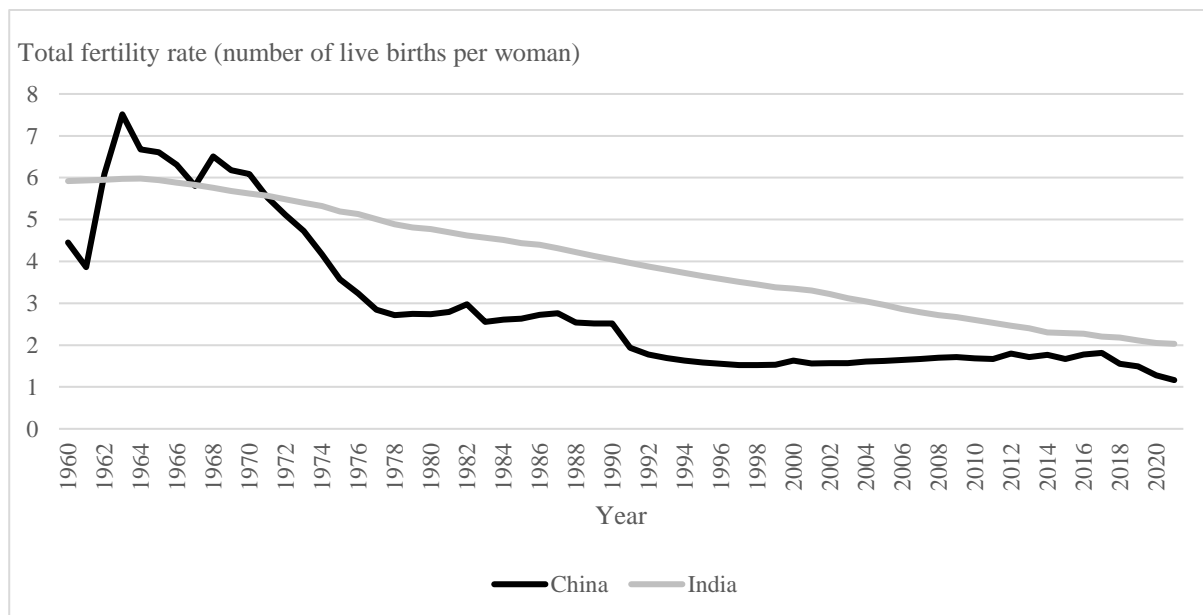
<https://cn.nytimes.com/world/20230421/india-china-population/dual/>

**Figure 2.1 Population growth of China and India**



Source: Word Bank

**Figure 2.2 Changes of total fertility rate of China and India**



Source: World Bank

Note: The total fertility rate (TFR), usually referred to as the fertility rate, reflects the total number of children a woman gives birth to in her lifetime. Due to reasons such as infant mortality and diseases, generally speaking, the total

fertility rate in developed countries must reach at least 2.1 to reach the generation replacement level and prevent the total population from declining with the replacement of generations.

(a) Select the correct answer for the following multiple-choice questions.

(a1) Which was the most populous country in the world before 2023?

A. China

B. India

(a2) Which was the most populous country in the world in 2024?

A. China

B. India

(a3) Which country had higher total fertility rate in the 1960s?

A. China

B. India

(a4) Which country had higher total fertility rate after 1970?

A. China

B. India

(b) China had long held the title of the world's most populous country, but it has now been surpassed by India. What are the reasons behind this shift in population change?

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## In-class learning and teaching

### Learning objectives:

- To understand population changes in our country.
- To understand the change in family planning policy in our country.
- To understand the importance of the population issue and appreciate that it is a major issue that our country needs to face.

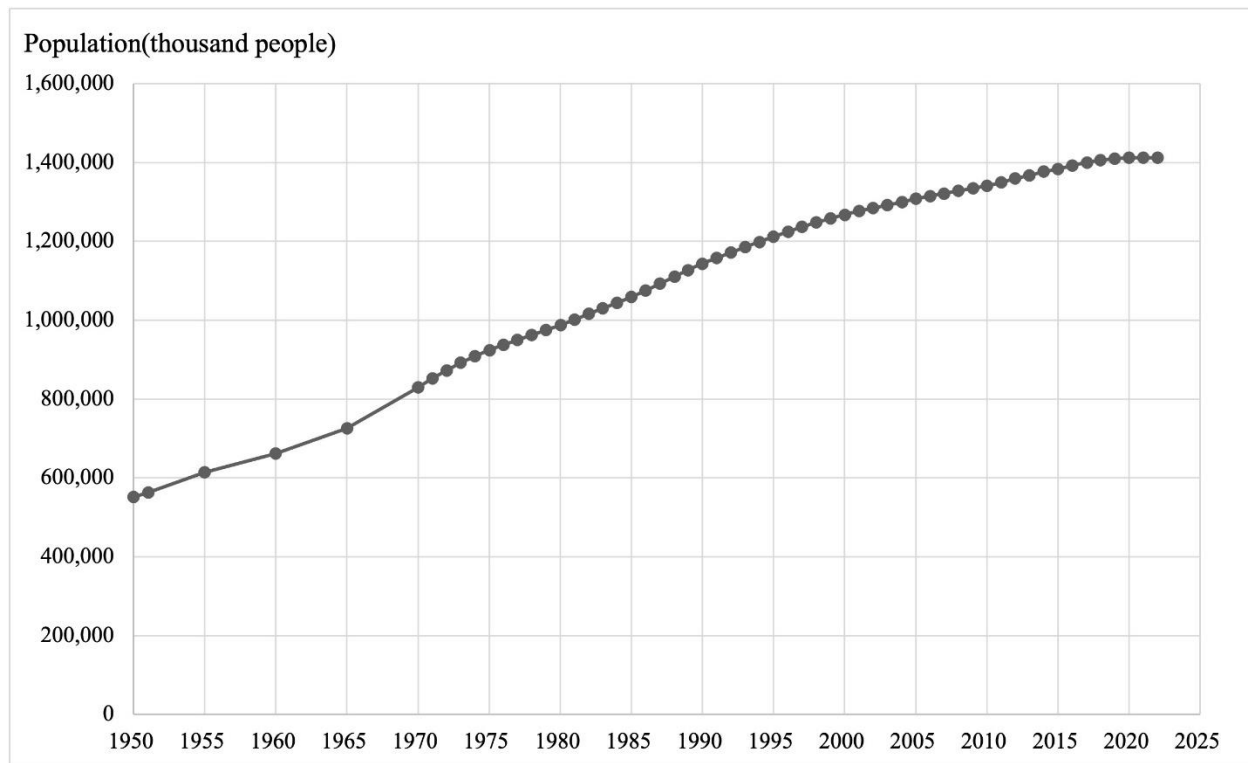
### Development 1: Changes of population growths in our country

Watch **Topic 2 Changing Population Video (Senior)**, study the figures of total population and population growth rates and discuss the following questions.

Other relevant videos (only in Chinese):

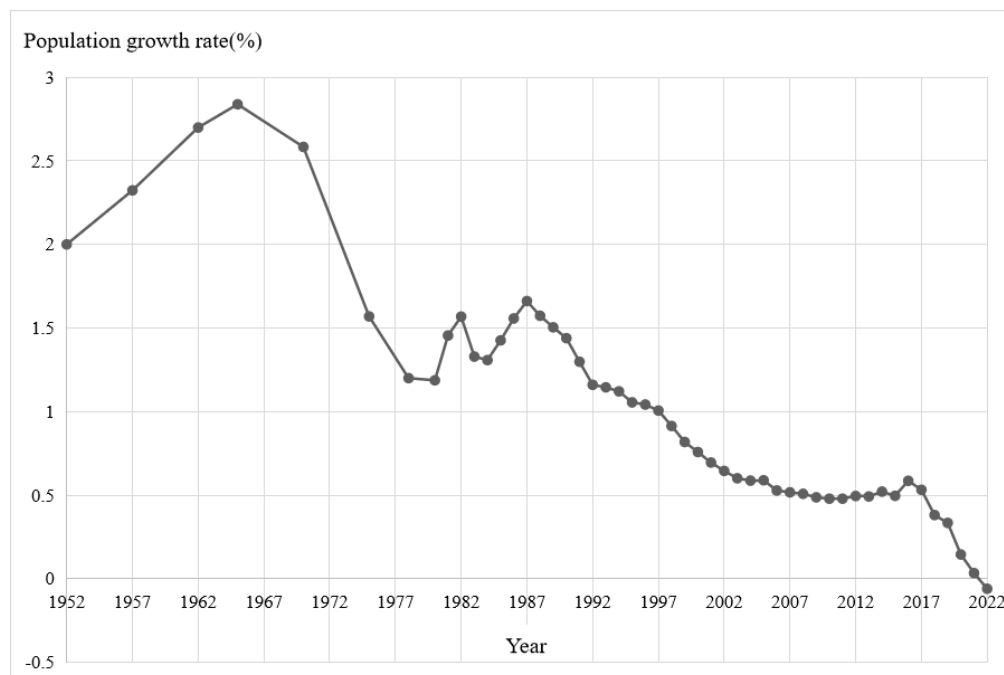
[24 hours] Census data released· Ning Jizhe, Director of the National Bureau of Statistics, responded to the slowdown in my country's population growth in the past decade ([24 小時] 人口普查數據公布・國家統計局局長 寧吉喆 回應近十年間我國人口成長放緩趨勢) 0:00-02:30	<a href="https://tv.cctv.com/2021/05/11/VIDEzgsrxClAOn8PtVHOYRnb210511.shtml?spm=C53156045404.P4yTQKr09uhz.0.0">https://tv.cctv.com/2021/05/11/VIDEzgsrxClAOn8PtVHOYRnb210511.shtml?spm=C53156045404.P4yTQKr09uhz.0.0</a>
"Population" demographic transition to the future 「人口」人口轉型向未來	<a href="https://tv.cctv.com/2019/07/09/VIDEywmoxqpYv8NzHM8RVkLA190709.shtml">https://tv.cctv.com/2019/07/09/VIDEywmoxqpYv8NzHM8RVkLA190709.shtml</a>

**Figure 2.3 Number of the total population in our country**



Source: China Statistical Yearbook

**Figure 2.4 Population growth rate in our country**



Source: China Statistical Yearbook

Note: According to the definition of the United Nations, population growth rate refers to the average annual rate of change of population size during a specified period. The formula shows as follows:

$$\text{Population growth rate} = \frac{\text{Final population (P)} - \text{Initial population (P}_0\text{)}}{\text{Initial population (P}_0\text{)}}$$

(a) What are the changes in population growth in the past over 70 years in our country?

(b) Why is our country's population growth slowing down?

## Development 2: Changes in family planning policy in our country

Family planning policies are governmental or societal strategies designed to control population growth by influencing the family size and birth rates within a population. Our country's family planning policies have undergone several revisions, including the implementation of specific birth quotas such as the one-child policy, two-child policy, and three-child policy. Read the following knowledge box and discuss the following questions.

### Knowledge box 2.2

In response to an overpopulation crisis, our country started to implement the one-child policy in 1979. Under this policy, each couple was allowed to have only one child. This policy, however, had several exceptions, such as for twins, rural families who needed more hands for farm work, and ethnic minorities. The policy was enforced through various mechanisms, including incentives for compliance, penalties for non-compliance (like fines), and in some cases, forced abortions and sterilisations.

The one-child policy had significant social and economic impacts, including an aging population, a skewed sex ratio due to a cultural preference for male children, and a shrinking workforce. In response to these issues, the Chinese government ended the one-child policy in 2015 and replaced it with a two-child policy. Under the two-child policy, couples no longer have to pay a social compensation fee if they have more than one child. The policy aimed to boost the birth rate and balance the age structure of the population. After the policy was implemented in 2016, the birth rate rose. But in the following years, the birth rate went down again. In 2018, only 15.23 million babies were born.

To combat the persistent decrease in the birth rate and the ongoing issue of an aging population, the Chinese government further relaxed its family planning policy in 2021, introducing the “three-child policy”. However, there were only 9.56 million and 9.02 new-born population in 2022 and 2023 respectively. It is too early to determine the full impact of this policy, as it would depend on the government's supporting measures and the willingness of couples to have more children in the face of rising living and educational costs.

(a) Select the correct answer for the following multiple-choice questions

(a1) What was the family planning policy before the late 1970s in our country?

- A. No family planning policy
- B. The one-child policy
- C. The two-child policy
- D. The three-child policy

(a2) What was the family planning policy from the late 1970s to 2015 in our country?

- A. No family planning policy
- B. The one-child policy
- C. The two-child policy
- D. The three-child policy

(a3) What was the family planning policy from 2016 to 2020 in our country?

- A. No family planning policy
- B. The one-child policy
- C. The two-child policy
- D. The three-child policy

(a4) What is the family planning policy after 2020 in our country?

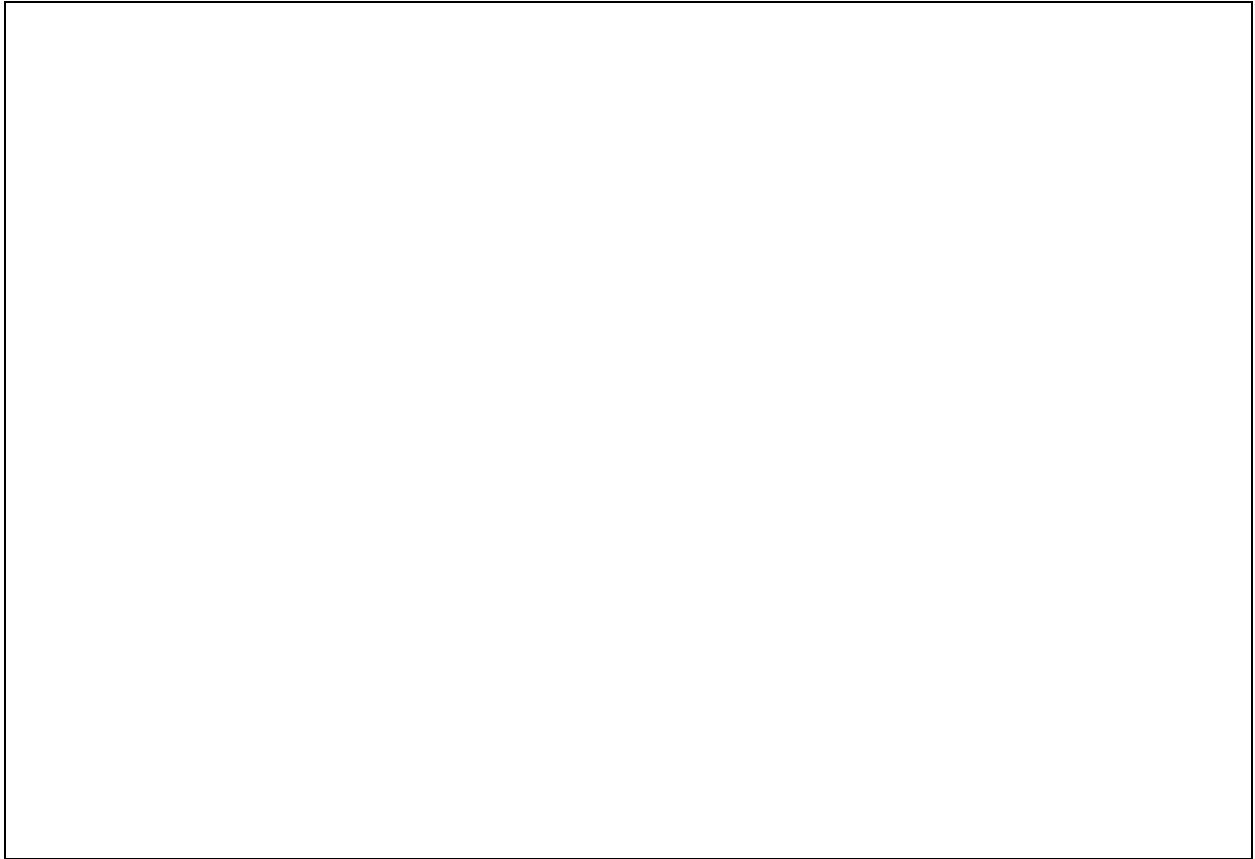
- A. No family planning policy
- B. The one-child policy
- C. The two-child policy
- D. The three-child policy

(b) Why did our country implement the family planning policy in the late 1970s?

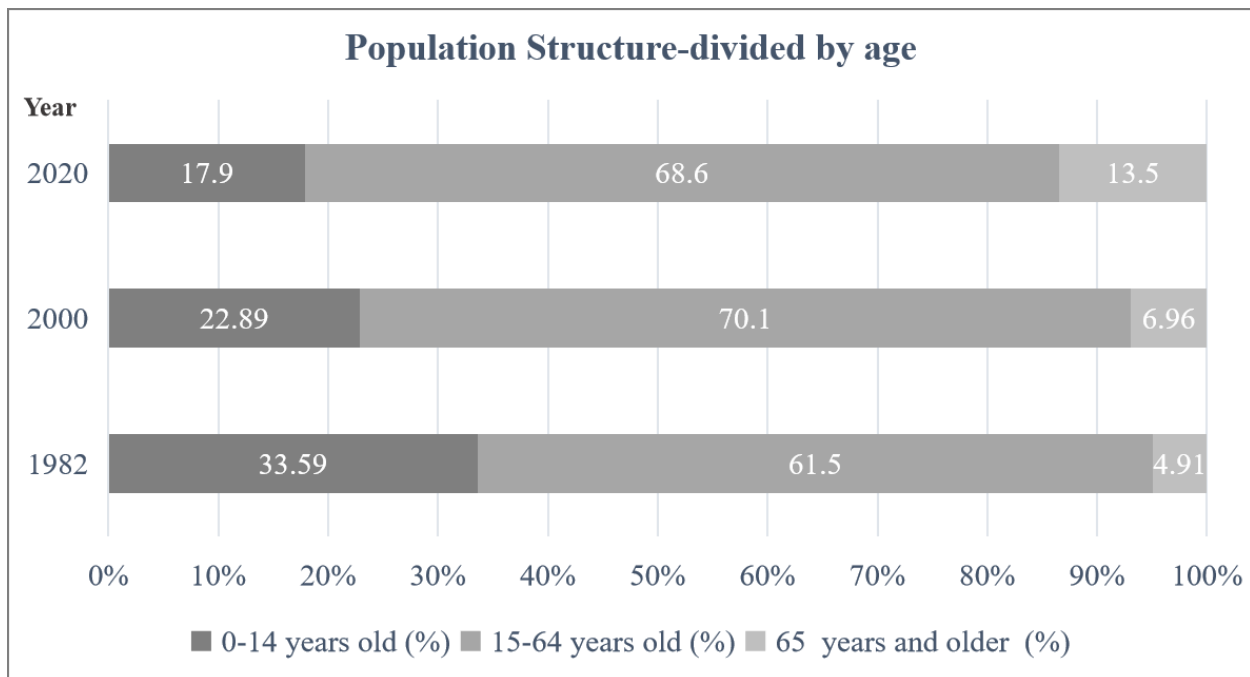
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- (c) Read the Figure 2.5 of age structure in 1982, 2000, and 2020. What are the impacts of the family planning policy on population age structure in our country?



**Figure 2.5 Population age structure in 1982, 2000, and 2020**



Source: National Bureau of Statistics of China

(d) Why has our country started to change the family planning policy since 2016?

## Post-lesson task

Read the following excerpt of transcript of the press conference of the National Health Commission of China in January 20, 2022 and discuss the following questions.

### Knowledge box 2.3

The decline in the size of the birth population has been influenced by several factors. One of these factors is also related to the COVID-19 pandemic, and our preliminary judgment is that the epidemic mainly has direct and indirect impacts. For example, increased insecurity and uncertainty about the future makes families potentially hesitant to have children in the future and also reduces people's willingness to have children. The fact that the COVID-19 pandemic outbreak may directly or indirectly lower household members' incomes increases the influence of childcare costs. There are many enterprises, especially small and micro-enterprise units, that are struggling during the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic, which not only affects the income of family members but also increases work-family conflicts in the household and increases the fear or trepidation of childbearing. Of course, some people will worry that maternal and child health care, pregnancy and childbirth check-ups, and other such routine services will be affected during the epidemic. All these factors may prompt the public to choose to postpone or even cancel their childbearing plans.

Since last year, there have been several international studies focusing on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on mortality and fertility rates, and Chinese scholars have also been paying attention to the impact in this regard. Most studies so far indicate that the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on births is negative.

Excerpt of transcript of the press conference of the National Health Commission of China in January 20, 2022

- (a) Fertility preferences refer to an individual's or a couple's desire or intentions about having children. How does Covid-19 pandemic affect fertility preferences in our country?

(b) What are the impacts of Covid-19 pandemic on population growth in our country?