



Jiyo Parsi Scheme

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- The **Ministry of Minority Affairs** initiated the Jiyo Parsi Scheme in **2013** to check the declining Parsi population.
- The **main objective** of the scheme was to arrest the declining trend of the Parsi population by adopting a scientific protocol and structured interventions, in order to stabilize their population and thereby increasing the population of Parsis in India.
- The scheme comprises of **three components**:
 - **Advocacy Component** that includes workshops, advertisement campaigns to create awareness, etc.,
 - **Health of the Community Component** which covers Childcare and Creche support, assistance to elderly, etc.
 - **Medical Component** includes financial assistance for the detection and treatment of infertility, fertility treatment, etc.
- The scheme also offers cash assistance to encourage Parsi couples to have children. The scheme is applicable to all couples, irrespective of their financial status.
 - This has resulted in 214 births over the last five years through **assisted reproductive techniques** (ART).
 - This is a 100% **Central Sector Scheme**.

Parsi Community

- Parsi community follow **Zoroastrianism**, which is one of the world's oldest **monotheistic religions**. It was founded by the **Prophet Zoroaster (or Zarathustra)** in ancient Iran around the 6th-7th century.
- Zoroastrians believe in one God called **Ahura Mazda (Wise Lord)** who created the world. Their holy scripture is called the **Avesta**.
- Zoroastrians worship communally in a Fire Temple or Agiary. Zoroastrians are not fire-worshippers but believe that the elements are pure and that fire represents God's light or wisdom.
- March 21, **Nowruz (also spelled as Navroz), the Iranian New Year** is celebrated in India by the Parsi community.

- Zoroastrians are split into two groups: **the Iranians and the Parsis**.
- The followers of the religion who exiled from Iran in the 7th century AD arrived in **Gujarat region of India**.
- According to the Union Ministry of Minority Affairs, the population of Parsis has declined from about 114,000 in 1941 to 57,264 in 2011.
 - While India's population more than tripled in over 60 years, the number of Parsi has reduced by almost 50% (Census 2011).
 - **Maharashtra has the highest Parsi population** in the country followed by Gujarat.
- **Infertility and late marriages** are among the main reasons for the rapid decline in the Parsi population.

According to the foundation, 30% of the Parsi population has never married.
- Zoroastrians (Parsis) are among the **six religious communities notified as minority** communities by the Union Government. The other five are: Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists, and Jains.

Source: HT