

## **China decides to abolish 1-child policy, allow 2 children**

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**Beijing:** The official Xinhua News Agency says China's ruling Communist Party has decided to abolish the country's one-child policy and allow all couples to have two children.

“China abandons one-child policy,” Xinhua, China’s official news agency, announced on Twitter. The agency cited a communique issued by China’s ruling Communist Party after a four-day meeting here to chart the course of the country over the next five years.

This is the first time China has done away with its one-child policy in over three long decades. The policy was considered controversial as it forced many abortions and continued to be criticised by rights groups and activists.

China has been assessing the adjustment made to the one-child policy - allowing parents to have two children if either parent is an only child - to decide if further adjustment of birth policies are needed to address change in population growth.

The country gave the limited relaxation to the policy, adopting the policy adjustment at the end of 2013 in a major change on the family planning policy that has been blamed for the country’s looming demographic crisis.

According to United Nations estimates, China will have nearly 440 million people aged over 60 by 2050.

China introduced its family planning policy in the late 1970s to rein in population growth by limiting most urban couples to one child and most rural couples to two, allowing the birth of a second child only if the first child was a girl.

China, also the world’s second largest economy, is the most populous country with a population of over 1.3 billion people.

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