

THE FOURTEENTH ASIAN PARLIAMENTARIANS' MEETING ON  
POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT

April 4-5 1998, New Delhi, India

THE ASIAN POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION  
(APDA)

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## THE FOURTEENTH ASIAN PARLIAMENTARIANS' MEETING ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT

April 4 (Saturday)

Opening Ceremony [10:30-11:40]

Vandemataram (National Song)

Welcome Address by Dr. Urmilaben Patel, M.P., Vice Chairperson, AFPPD  
Opening Address by Mr. Fukusaburo Maeda, Chairman, APDA  
Address by Dr. Taro Nakayama, M.P., Chairman, JPFP, and Chairman,  
Japan-India Parliamentarians Friendship League  
Address by Mr. Shin Sakurai, Chairman, AFPPD  
Address by Dr. Hirofumi Ando, Deputy Executive Director, UNFPA  
Address by Dr. S. S. Sisodia, Chairman, IAPPD Trust  
Address by Hon. Mr. Krishan Kant, Vice President of India  
Message H.E. Dr. K.R. Narayanan, President of India  
Vote to Thanks by Dr. P. J. Kurien, M.P.

National Anthem

Group Photo and Tea Break [11:40-12:00]

Keynote Address: [12:00-12:30]

“Population and the Sustainable Development -Asian Perspective-”  
by Mr. Y. N. Chaturvedi, Secretary, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare,  
Government of India

Session 1: ICPD and ICPPD plus 5 [12:30-13:30]

- 1) Population Trends in Asia : Present Situation of ICPD five major goals  
Chairperson: Senator Dr. Prasop Ratanakorn, Secretary General, AFPPD  
(Thailand)  
Resource Person: Mr. Wasim Zaman, UNFPA Representative, India &  
Bhutan
  
- 2) Parliamentarians Population Movement after Cairo  
Chairperson: Mr. Jaffer Sharif, Ex-Railway Minister (India)  
Resource Person : Mr. Shiv Khare, Executive Director, Asian Forum of  
Parliamentarians on Population and Development (AFPPD)

Followed by Discussion

Luncheon [13:30-14:30]

hosted by Mr. Shin Sakurai M.P., Chairman, AFPPD

Session 2: Population and Rapidly Changing Economic Situation in Asia [14:30-16:15]

1) Population and Rapidly Changing Economic Situation in Asia

Chairperson: Mr. Colin Hollis, M.P., Vice Chairman, AFPPD (Australia)

Resource Person : Dr. Kua Wongboosin, Vice President, Chulalongkorn University

2) Population and Sustainable Development in China

Resource Person : Mr. Tao Xiping, M.P., Vice Chairman of the Standing Committee of Beijing People's Congress

3) Activities of Parliamentarians of Arab-African Countries

Resource Person : Mr. Mustafa Ka, Chairman, Forum of Arab-African Parliamentarians on Population and Development (FAAPPD)

Followed by Discussion

Tea Break [16:15-16:30]

Slide Presentation: "Water is Alive - Population and Water Resource-" [16:30-17:30]

by Asian Population and Development Association (APDA)

Cultural Programme followed by Dinner [19:30 - 21:00]

hosted by Mr. Fukusaburo Maeda, Chairman, APDA

April 5 (Sunday)

Session 3: Population, Rural Development and Gender Issues [9:30-11:00]

Special Focus on Social Development in Rural Society, especially emphasis on Education of Girls and Empowerment of Women in Rural Society

1) Women's Reproductive Health should be Special Concern

Chairperson: Dr. Apenisa N. Kurisaqila, Vice Chairman, AFPPD (Fiji)

Resource Person: Ms. Margaret Alva, M.P., Ex-Union Minister for Personnel, Government of India

2) Population and Gender Issues (Special focus on education of girls and employment of women)

Resource Person: Ms. Avabai B. Wadia, President Emeritus, Family Planning Association of India, Ex-President of IPPF

Followed by Discussion

Tea Break [11:00 – 11:15]

Session 4: Food Security and Social Equity in Asia [11:15-12:45]

1) Food Security and Social Equity in Asia

Chairperson: Mr. Balram Jakhar, M.P. and Former Minister of Agriculture

Resource Person: Senator Dr. T. Marimuthu, Professor, University of Malaysia

2) Characteristic of the International Rice Market and New Equitable and Sustainable Rule for International Trade of Rice and Food

Chairperson: Senator Datuk H. Ibrahim Ali, Deputy Secretary General, AFPPD (Malaysia)

Resource Person : Dr. Hiroshi Tsujii, Professor, Graduate School of Kyoto University

3) "World Food Bank" for Food Security

Resource Person : Dr. Urmilaben Patel, M.P., Vice Chairperson , AFPPD

Followed by Discussion

Luncheon [13:00-14:00]

Hosted by Indian Association of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (IAPPD)

Panel Discussion: To Seek the New and Rational Standard on Population and Sustainable Development for the Coming Century (special focus on Food Security) [14:00-15:30]

1) Seeking New and Rational Standards for Population and Sustainable Development

Chairperson: Mr. Shin Sakurai, M.P., Chairman, AFPPD (Japan)

Resource Person: Dr. G. S. Bhalla, Prof. Emeritus, Jawahar Lal Nehru University

2) Food Security and Free Trade System

Resource Person: Dr. P. S. Vashishtha, Director, Agriculture Economics Research Centre, Delhi School of Economics, Delhi University

3) Food Security in China

Resource Person: Mme. Hao Yichun M.P., Vice Chairperson, AFPPD

Tea Break [15:30-15:45]

Report by Repporteur General of the Meeting [15:45-16:30]

Repporteur General: Dr. Sudesh Nangia, Professor and Chairperson, CSRD, Jawahar Lal Nehru University

Closing Ceremony [16:30-17:30]

Vandematram (National Song)

Closing Remarks by Dr. S. S. Sisodia, Chairman, IAPPD Trust

Address by Mr. Tsuguo Hirose, Executive Director and Secretary General, APDA

Address by Mr. Shin Sakurai, Chairman, AFPPD

Address by Hon. Sh. Suresh P. Prabhu, Union Minister of Environment and Forests

Address by Dr. Hirofumi Ando, Deputy Executive Director, UNFPA

Address by Dr. Urmilaben Patel, M.P., Vice Chairperson, AFPPD

Presentation of Mementos to the participants

National Anthem

AFPPD Executive Committee Meeting [17:30-18:30]

Farewell Dinner [19:00-21:00]

hosted by IAPPD and APDA

## Opening Ceremony

[10:30-11:40]

## Welcome Address

**Dr. Urmilaben Patel, M.P.**  
**Vice Chairperson**

**Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (AFPPD)**

Honourable Vice-President of Respectable Shri Krishnakantji,  
Honourable Chairman of AFPPD (Asian Forum of Parliamentarians for Population and Development), Shri Shin Sakurai,  
Honourable Chairman of JPFP (Japan Parliamentarians Federation for Population), Shri Dr. Taro Nakayama,  
Honourable Chairman of APDA (Asian Population and Development Association), Shri Fukusaburo Maeda,  
Executive Director of AFPPD, Shri Shiv Khare  
The Distinguished Parliamentarians,  
The Dignitaries, Ambassadors, Ministers and Respected Guests.

There is a message from the President of IAPPD Foundation Shri Ramlal Parikh, who is out of the country. He wanted to be with us and welcome you all but feels sorry that he is not able to do so in person. However, he extends his hearty welcome to our vice-president Shri Krishnakantji and Dr. Taro Nakayama, Mr. Shin Sakurai, Mr. Maeda and all the delegates.

I feel highly privileged and honored to welcome our most distinguished guest, Honourable Vice President of India Shri Krishnakantji, who has spared time to be with us for the cause of population and development from his busy schedule. We know that you are busy with the working of Rajya Sabha. I also feel honored to welcome the foreign dignitaries, Shri Shin Sakurai, Shri Dr. Taro Nakayama, Shri Fukusaburo Maeda, Shri Hirofumi Ando, the ambassadors of different nations, speakers and ministers from two countries. It is a matter of great pleasure to welcome our fellow parliamentarians, who are here with us from different foreign countries and my colleagues in the parliament. I would like to mention here that about 18 countries and 120 delegates are participating in today's conference.

India is a nation having one of the oldest civilization in the world, with hundreds of communities having different cultures, speaking different languages, having different food habits, clothing styles, social customs and traditions as well as different religions. But within all those diversities there is a strong cultural unity and a feeling of national integrity. We have a very long cultural history and hence many places of historical and religious interest to visit. It is practically impossible to give a complete picture of our nation in a few sentences. Moreover, you know that our country is highly populated with population of 95 crores, with a developing economy and problems of poverty, such as unemployment and

illiteracy, that are yet to be solved. The Asian Continent and eastern world is practically experiencing a similar types of socio-economic and socio-cultural issues.

Today we are here in this conference organized by Indian Association of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (IAPPD) in cooperation with Asian Population and Development Association of Japan to discuss the issues of population and sustainable development from an Asian perspective. A very vital theme that involves the fast growing world population having a heavy demand on sustainable development. We have environmental issues, problems to provide portable drinking water, food and shelter, simple clothing, basic education and health services to all.

We are to fight against all types of discrimination, exploitation and atrocities faced by human beings. We want to establish gender equalities and equal participation in decision-making procedures. Today, we are here to discuss these issues, find out ways and means to solve them and work out some time-bound action plan to put before the society.

I hope the deliberations will prove most fruitful and action-oriented. I welcome you and thank you all and for being with us.

Thank you.

## Opening Address

**Mr. Fukusaburo Maeda**  
**Chairman**

**The Asian Population and Development Association (APDA)**

Your Excellency Krishan Kant, Vice President of India, Excellencies, Honourable parliamentary representatives, Ladies and Gentlemen, on the occasion of the opening of the 14th Asian Parliamentarians' Meeting on Population and Development, I have the pleasure of greeting you on behalf of the Asian Population and Development Association.

India has the second largest population in the world and boasts of rich history and tradition. India is known to have been among the earliest countries of the world to address population problems. I believe India occupies a most important position as we consider population, humanity's largest problem. It is indeed most significant that the 14th Asian Parliamentarians' Meeting on Population and Development should take place in India.

This year's conference main theme is "Five Years since International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) and International Conference of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (ICPPD)". Five years since the epoch making conference for the world's population problems in 1994, the nations of the world are taking stock of the situation with regard to population and development. The Asian Population and Development Association is happy that it has contributed in a small way to the population and development related issues that considered the future of humankind. We shall be most gratified if the representatives will deliberate on the important area of food security which relates closely to both population and development and suggest future course of action.

Lastly, I would like to express my most profound gratitude and respects to Dr. Urmilaben Patel, Vice Chairperson of AFPPD, and Mr. Man Mohan Sharma, Executive Secretary of IAPPD for their enormous contributions in helping to organize and arrange the conference in their country.

It remains for me to thank each and every one of you for taking the time and trouble to participate in the 14th Asian Parliamentarians' Meeting on Population and Development.

## Address

**Dr. Taro Nakayama, M.P.**  
**Chairman**  
**Japan Parliamentarians Federation for Population (JFPF)**  
**Chairman**  
**The Japan-India Parliamentarians Friendship League**

Your Excellency Krishan Kant, Vice President of India, Excellencies, Honourable parliamentary representatives and Ladies and Gentlemen, it gives me great pleasure to give a welcome address at the opening of the 14<sup>th</sup> Asian Parliamentarians Meeting on Population and Development.

My country has long and close relationship with India where the APDA meeting takes place. The history of our relations goes back to AD 752 when India's high Buddhist monk Bodhi Sena was invited to Japan to inaugurate the statue of the great Buddha enshrined at the Todaiji temple by ceremonially opening its eyes. The ceremony took place on April 9 at the Todaiji in the ancient capitol of Nara, the most important temple in the country. I believe this is the first historical record of the Japan-India relations. Since then Japan has received much benefit from India's culture and civilization which in turn contributed to the enrichment of Japan's cultural heritage.

In the field of parliamentary activities as well, India and Japan have a long history of relationship. The Japan-India Parliamentarians Friendship League, of which I serve as its chairman, as the successor to Honourable Yoshio Sakurauchi, the former Speaker of the House of Representatives, began its activities in 1972. It has worked actively over the last twenty-five years to build a lasting friendship between our two countries.

Of all the countries in the world, India is also important in the field of population. Its population exceeds that of the whole of Africa continent that stands today at 758 million. In this sense India's population problem holds the key to the resolution of the world's population challenge.

The resolution of the population problem will require greater commitment on our part as elected representatives of the people, and of the Indian parliamentarians in particular. At the same time activities of Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (AFPPD) going beyond national commitment is essential.

In the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, the world population problem will become the major task confronting the humanity as a whole. It is also important to note that two-thirds of the world population will be living in Asia in the next century.

Industrialisation has advanced in the Asian region. Amidst such industrialisation, there will be construction of industrial parks accompanied by reduction of farmland, as well as environmental destruction resulting from depletion of energy. In addition, an extremely large number of cities with population exceeding 10 million will emerge in the Asian region. Beijing, Shanghai, Tokyo, Taipei, Seoul, Manila, Bangkok, Jakarta, Bombay, and New Delhi—all of these cities will become megalopolises having population of more than 10 million. Environmental issues and stable supply of energy in these cities will become very important aspects in securing safety in the region.

Ongoing industrialisation in the Asian region will require cooperation among the nations in food production and stable energy supply as well as in the maintenance of peace in order to cope with ever increasing population and protection of natural environment.

The main theme of the meeting is “ICPD and ICPD plus 5”, an endeavor to review developments in reproductive health and rights since the Cairo conference. Also in the light of the food shortage which is expected to become serious in the next century, we will be studying the issue of food security from all aspects including demand, production, supply and trade. We must discuss ways to prevent even a single person from dying of hunger.

I pray that the participating parliamentary colleagues will engage in a fruitful discussion and further strengthen the transnational solidarity.

Thank you for your attention.

## **Address**

**Mr. Shin Sakurai, M.P.  
Chairman**

### **Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (AFPPD)**

Your Excellency Krishan Kant, Vice President of India, Excellencies, Honourable parliamentary representatives and Ladies and Gentlemen, I wish to thank you very much for your participation at the 14<sup>th</sup> Asian Parliamentarians' Meeting on Population and Development.

I am personally very happy that the meeting takes place here in India. India today is achieving phenomenal economic development. India stands out not only for its age-old tradition and history and its culture but also for the size of its population, the second largest in the world. The course of action India decides to take will rightly attract the attention of the world. As we think of the population problems of Asia and the world it is simply not possible to solve the issue without consideration for India's population. India is known for the bold decision it took to adopt population policy at an early stage. India in many ways is the keystone to the world's population problem.

For the activities of the Asian Forum, India is the most important country. The Honourable Urmilaben Patel continues to play an important role as the vice-chairperson of AFPPD. In all our meetings, one can always be sure that Indian members of parliament are at the center of heated and constructive debate.

The theme of the meeting is Five years since the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), International Conference of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (ICPPD). We are in the fifth year since 1994 ICPD that was truly epoch making for the world's population problems. There are initiatives to assess the achievements since that time. The ICPD conference in Cairo had an extremely important meaning. The Cairo conference indicated specific measures to be adopted in the field. More importantly, as the name of the conference suggested, it was made clear that population and sustainable development were indivisible. In order to secure the future for humankind there must be comprehensive management of both.

As parliamentarians we are focused precisely on the correlation between the two. The innovative concepts such as reproductive health and empowerment of women introduced at the Cairo conference are achieving great success.

On a global scale the population explosion has somewhat slowed down and the annual growth rate is also revised downward. This does not however mean immediate stabilisation

of the population. On the contrary, enormous increase in population leads us toward greater difficulty in ensuring sufficient food production to support it. We have added population and food problems on our agenda. This is a major issue that humankind cannot put aside as it continues to inhabit the planet. Resolution of these problems require solution of related issues of poverty and gender, and social injustice. In other words, 'population and food problems' must be placed at the center of our pursuit of managing population and sustainable development. I am convinced that we need an urgent and comprehensive approach for this perspective.

The earth is becoming relatively smaller. Nations around the world have deeper interdependence. No country can solve its domestic problems without consideration for its inter-national relations. In a short time we will be crossing the threshold to the 21st century. Let us have a sincere discussion on these most basic issues for human coexistence and continue to issue propositions to the international community to ensure our common survival.

I am most happy to report that since the ICPD conference in Cairo our activities as elected representatives have become extremely active expanding on a global scale. Last year we have seen the official establishment of Forum of African and Arab Parliamentarians on Population and Development (FAAPPD) in a region where independent regional forum of parliamentarians did not exist. Countries that have participated in a series of conference on population and development have officially affiliated and this year Kyrgyzs Republic and Mongolian People's Republic are expected to become an official member of the Asian Forum. It is a matter of great joy for all of us.

We see a further increase in the significance and the expected role of the Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development. I feel most grateful that we can be together to deliberate on the future of humankind on the occasion of an important year marking the fifth year since the ICPD and ICPPD. Let us march forward hand in hand in solidarity across national borders.

Thank you for your attention.

## Address

**Dr. Hirofumi Ando**  
**Deputy Executive Director**  
**United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)**

Distinguished Mr. Vice President, Parliamentarians, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, on behalf of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), it is a great privilege for me to be here with you in the Great City of New Delhi for the 14th Asian Parliamentarians' Meeting on Population and Development, with a special focus on ICPD+5 and food security. UNFPA is honored to be part of the deliberations over the next two days, and looks forward to the Meeting's results.

Allow me first to express my sincere appreciation to the organizers of this meeting: Mr. Maeda and the Asian Population and Development Association (APDA); Mr. Sakurai and the Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (AFPPD); and Dr. Sisodia; Mr. Patel and the Indian Association of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (IAPPD). I would like to acknowledge with gratitude the presence of Dr. Taro Nakayama, President of JPPF. I would also like to thank the Vice President of India, Mr. Krishan Kant, and members of the national preparatory committee for their generous support and kind hospitality.

I am very pleased to have this opportunity to address this meeting on the subject of the process and aims of the review and appraisal of the implementation of the Programme of Action, which was adopted at the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), in Cairo, Egypt. Parliamentary organisations like APDA and AFPPD were key actors in the lead up to and at ICPD. They have also led and organized post-ICPD parliamentary initiatives on such important subjects as gender, population and food security and water. Now, on the occasion of the upcoming five-year review of ICPD, it is time for parliamentarians to redouble their efforts towards supporting and achieving the goals and objectives agreed at Cairo.

In December 1997, the United Nations General Assembly agreed to hold a three-day special session at the General Assembly in the summer of 1999, at the highest possible level of participation, as the culmination of the review process. The aim of the review is to take stock of the progress achieved and the constraints faced in the implementation of the Programme of Action, particularly at the country as well as international level. The review also seeks to identify lessons learned in ICPD implementation efforts and to help countries address constraints impeding the full implementation of ICPD Programme of Action.

The last session of the United Nations Commission on Population and Development held in New York, called on UNFPA and the Population Division of the United Nations to

collaborate closely and coordinate the preparatory activities related to the 5-year review. These activities include a series of meetings of the United Nations Regional Commissions; technical meetings and round table meetings on the major themes contained in the Programme of Action; and an International Forum on ICPD implementation in the Netherlands in February 1999.

Preparations and activities for the 5-year review are well under way. As you are aware, the first such regional review meeting, organized by ESCAP and UNFPA, was held in Bangkok last week. That meeting examined aspects central to the review: the integration of population considerations into strategies for alleviating poverty and achieving sustainable development; gender equity, equality and the empowerment of women; reproductive choice and reproductive health; and the special needs of adolescents.

As I mentioned, UNFPA is organizing an international forum, to be hosted by the Government of the Netherlands, in The Hague, next February. The aim of the Forum is to examine progress and constraints at the national and international levels in implementing the Programme of Action. The Forum will examine the lessons learned and review the activities that have taken place in critical areas of the Programme of Action. It will also provide guidance on the key future actions needed for full implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action. The Forum, therefore, will provide critical input to the overall review exercise. The results of the forum, and its agreed future actions for ICPD implementation, will be an important contribution to the report of the Secretary-General of the United Nations to the Special Session of the General Assembly in June 1999.

Recognizing the work and support of parliamentarians in the review exercise, together with other partners, is essential, we will strongly encourage Governments to include parliamentarians as part of their official delegations. It is my hope, similarly, that AFPPD will join with other colleagues in co-organizing a global meeting of parliamentarians just prior to the Forum to ensure that parliamentarians and the citizens who they represent will be heard, and that they register their collective determination to implement the ICPD Programme of Action.

Finally, let me remind you that 1999 will also mark the year when the world population reaches, and exceeds, the six billion mark. The "Day of Six Billion" will be marked in mid-June, 1999. By that time, the world population will have doubled since mid 1964. 1999 will also mark the thirtieth anniversary of UNFPA.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

In the past three decades, the world has witnessed and contributed to a remarkable success story in the field of population and development. UNFPA is proud to be part of this success story. Now, five years after ICPD, we will again take stock of our achievements and the challenges ahead. All indications point to a continued momentum and success, though a few constraints continue to confront us. Still, the good news is that we have the

collective experience and resolve to meet the ICPD goals by 2015. Political will, a relatively small financial investment, and strengthened national capacity are all well within our reach if we use the events of 1999 to refocus global attention and commitment to the far-reaching goals of ICPD.

Thank you.

## **Address**

**Dr. S.S. Sisodia**  
**Chairman**

**Indian Association of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (IAPPD)**

Respected Hon'ble Vice President of India Shri Krishan Kantji, our distinguished friends and parliamentarians, and participants,

It is a matter of great privilege for us that Hon'ble Vice President of India Shri Krishan Kantji is with us to inaugurate the Conference. His interest in the subject is very much evident from the fact that along with Shri Ram Lal Parikh when I called on him the other day with a request to inaugurate this Conference, he without hesitation accepted our request. Shri Krishan Kantji and I have worked together in the Parliament as members of Rajya Sabha (Upper House) in the 70s. I know Shri Krishan Kantji as a Gandhian and Socialist of the classical mould who firmly believes in doing things at the grass-roots level. Like all socialist thinkers, his philosophy of equitable distribution of resources and moderation in usage of non-renewable resources is completely in tune with the now universally accepted concept of sustainable development.

The 14th Conference of Parliamentarians on Population and Development comes at a time when our belief in the need for giving individual attention to the cause of sustainable development and population control through universal awareness, has become very firm. This is clearly an evident from activities of various organisations in the field.

Distinguished speakers from APDA, JPPF, AFPPD and UNFPA have just given eloquent account for the importance of the Conference and the roles that the esteemed organisations are playing in the all important fields of population and development.

The Parliamentarians are very aware and are actively working through the AFPPD, APDA, and national level associations of parliamentarians of the respective countries in the region. The theme of the Conference "ICPD and ICPPD plus 5 – Population trends in Asia" and the views of participants, will help the parliamentarians from different countries of the region gathered here to formulate plans of action.

Notwithstanding the impressive "developments" made by countries in Asia & Pacific region in the last three decades, this region essentially remains an agrarian society. There are many developing countries in the region which are grappling with population growth and environmental degradation as is manifested by problems of food security, inadequate health services, potable water supply, sanitation, illiteracy, and high pollution levels. Each and every issue here has assumed alarming proportions and it would not be exaggeration to state that countdown to the destruction of the planet has already begun. The Cairo

Conference has come as a “wake up call” to all of us. It is the most heartening to note that Parliamentarians all over the world have taken upon themselves to play a major role in creating awareness and facilitating enactment of helpful legislation on Population and Development. I hope and wish that we will be able to chalk out here, the immediate future course of action for the parliamentarians of the region.

Now, we are going to request Hon’ble Vice President to inaugurate this conference. I extend my thanks on behalf of Mr. Ramlal Parikh, who is out of the country, and wish this conference a success. I hope and wish that on the following two days we will certainly reach some conclusion which will give a message to the whole world. Thank you very much.

## Address

**Hon. Mr. Krishan Kant**  
**Vice President**  
**Republic of India**

Dr. Nakayama, Mr. Sakurai, Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen, I am extremely happy to inaugurate this Conference of the Asian Parliamentarians and Legislators on Population and Development. I welcome you to India with the belief and hope that your deliberations will help suggest new directions and orientations for the critical challenges of population and development confronting all of us today.

Your role as parliamentarians and legislators will be of very great significance in this endeavor. In free societies, legislators are not only the representatives of the people, they are also their law givers – laws which reflect the common concerns of the people and which help regulate societies' life in the present as also in the future. Your collective reflection on the issues of population and development is sure to help find solutions to a major concern of all humanity and especially of the developing countries. These solutions will determine the quality of life for vast number of people as well as of generations yet unborn. Your task is therefore cut out for you.

Let me highlight a few issues which can provide a back drop to your deliberations on this subject. First, population needs to be considered not in terms of numbers alone, but essentially in relation to the opportunities available in a society. Opportunities are a consequence of the resource base of society, like land, natural resources and employment. For example, an unemployed person is a burden on the society since someone else has to produce what is need by that individual. In contrast, a productively employed person generates more resources than she or he consumes and thereby improves the welfare of the society. The welfare aspect is linked not only to increased material prosperity but also to the social and political aspects of a population that is gainfully employed. Unemployment leads to increased social tensions and higher levels of political conflict.

Similarly, consider the availability of land per capita. Japan, South Korea and many nations of Europe are more densely populated than many of the developing nations. It is a tribute to the genius of these countries that in spite of a poor resource base they have been able to turn their populations to an advantage.

Secondly, population needs to be viewed from the point of views of the dent it makes on the world' resources. A nation which cannot produce adequate amount of resources has a population problem. Hence rich nations are those which can produce goods even if they have to import basic raw materials. But this also implies that at the global level, the difference in the consumption pattern between the rich and the poor nations and the rich

and the poor in developing countries are enormous. Often, consumption of a section of the population involves waste of natural resources which has an impact on the global environment. For instance, the per capita energy consumption of an average American is 35 times that of an average Indian. This is not to argue that Indians must ape the consumerist life style prevalent in the rich nations but only to put the concept of the sustainable development in its correct perspective, namely, its link with consumerism. Finally, historical trends regarding population growth across the world indicate the necessity of linking stabilisation of population to the voluntary actions of citizens and their realisation of the need for small families. Such changes in consciousness have been found to depend on the socio-economic progress of the country. For instance, the health and education level of women has a bearing on the number of children a family has. It also affects the spacing between children. The reduced mortality rates due to better health also have a bearing on the size of the family.

A classic example is the South Indian State of Kerala where population growth has been admirably restricted. Prof. Amartya Sen often compares Kerala with China. The Kerala route to control population was through female literacy. In contrast, the single child norm in China resulted in a very sharp increase in female infanticide. It is in this context that the means for ensuring population control are as important as the ends.

The Cairo Declaration on Population and Development has succinctly put the above points in the following words, "We support the strategy of fully integrating population issues into all development, the first issue highlighted in the Declaration is that of 'Population and Sustainable Development'".

It is now evident that high levels of economic growth can not be sustained without regulating population growth. In the past, development efforts were directed principally at attaining high economic growth rates through urbanisation and industrialisation. Little was given to the sustainability of this growth pattern in terms of its impact on environment. Happily, it is now widely appreciated that there is a need to maintain a balance between population-size, available resources, and the ability of the economy to provide basic needs within the limits imposed by environment. All this is compressed in the concept of 'sustainable development'.

Historically, the path of economic growth taken by the developed countries was accompanied by a moderate growth in the population, which was around 2% annually. The development patterns in the developing countries have followed a different path. Their population growth has been close to 2.5 to 3% per annum. Starting from a low economic base, the pattern of economic growth in these countries has resulted in a marked increase in pressure on the natural resources of the world. Therefore, it is argued by some that the population and development strategies of the developing countries will have to be different from those in the developed world. Developing countries have to learn from the mistakes already committed by the developed world and be far more conscious of the limits imposed by the biosphere on development and population than was the case with the developed

countries. Simultaneously, the developed world also has to show a consciousness of the needs of the developing world to improve the average standards of living of their citizens.

Population by itself, has an indirect link with environment through the affect it has on poverty. The poor often inhabit marginal areas that are environmentally vulnerable, lacking in modern infrastructure and with few means to counteract the adverse impact of environmental degradation, such as, water pollution, prevalence of diseases, pollution of air, etc. Unmanageable population leads to environmental degradation and environmental degradation leads to poor quality of life.

A strategy based merely on rapid growth of the Gross Domestic Product can result in economic development but it may also result in serious environmental degradation. The rapid GDP growth at the cost of environment may put at risk the poorer segments of population, who inhabit the margins of society. This might force them to react to the situation by increasing the size of their families by having more children, whom as children and adults are assumed to create additional wealth with their labour. We will therefore have to reassess the validity of the belief that wealth generation is the surest mode of economic and social progress. Given the constraints which environment places on people's ability to generate wealth, we will need to go back to the ancient Indian thinking that people are entitled to take from the environment only that, which meets their fundamental needs. Environment can no more be relied upon to support opulent lifestyles.

An example of affluent life style which UNICEF highlights may be a telling commentary on the nature of modern day society. The 1995 UNICEF report says that we need to kindle a sense of absurdity at the idea that the world cannot afford to meet the needs of all the world's children, for adequate nutrition, basic health care, primary education, clean water, and family planning.

\$ NEEDED		\$ SPENT	
Estimated extra cost of worldwide need for:		Estimates of amount meeting spent worldwide on:	
	Billions per year		Billions per year
Basic child health and nutrition	\$13	Golf	\$40
Primary education	\$6	Wine	\$85
Safe water and Sanitation	\$9	Beer	\$160
Family planning	\$6	Cigarettes	\$400
		Advertising	\$250
Total	\$34	Total (Military)	\$935 (\$800)

\$34 billion dollars is not available for providing basic child health and nutrition, primary education, safe water and sanitation as well as family planning, but \$40 billion is spent on golf. More than double that amount, \$85 billion, is spent on consumption of wine. Almost

double of that, \$160 billion is spent on consumption of beer. More than double of that, \$400 billion, is spent on consumption of cigarettes. Is this not an irony of our times that just a reduction of 40% in the spending on wine, or a reduction of 20% in the spending on beer or a mere reduction of 10% on the spending of cigarettes can ensure basic child health and nutrition, primary education, safe water and sanitation and family planning, were this saving diverted towards these programmes.

This then is the tragedy of our times that we are unable to exercise a minimum of self control to restrict our leisure so that basic social needs may be fulfilled. These basic needs have a direct bearing on the stabilisation of our population, as has been strongly emphasised in the Cairo Declaration. Date (in the table) also highlights the fact that resources may be generated for basic human needs, not only through curtailing global defense expenditure, but also through other means like curtailing luxury expenditures. Ironically, the present model of global development luxury or leisure expenditure is more than military expenditure.

We can draw some inspiration from the Doctrine of Golden Mean, so integral to the Buddhist thought and also known to the ancient Greeks. The shunning of excess is inescapable because excess will eventually destroy. Our ancients have told us 'Ati Sarvatra Varjayet' – shun excess. The need is a wholly different approach towards population and sustainable development, which should be fundamentally and inherently holistic.

If we have to solve the problem of population growth and sustainable development, we need to ask ourselves fundamental questions about the human civilization itself. We will have to re-examine our unceasing quest for unbridled acquisitiveness.

I offer you my good wishes for deep, creative and purposeful deliberations. In the past, you have reflected on several major issues of both population and development and especially those which have had a moral bearing. Your vast and varied experience, your interactions with people at all levels, and your power to legislate equip you specially to make a substantial difference to the future of peoples in the developing world. I wish you every success.

**Message from H.E. Dr. K.R. Narayanan  
President of Republic of India**

**(Read by Dr. P.J. Kurien, MP)**

I am happy to learn that the Indian Association of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (IAPPD) is organising a conference on 'Population and Development' in the first week of April in New Delhi. I also note that the conference, which aims to bring together Parliamentarians and Legislators from the Asian Region Countries, is being co-sponsored by Asian Population and Development Association (APDA) Tokyo, Japan.

Socio-cultural diversity and varying levels of economic development among member countries constitute one of the most significant characteristics of the Asian Region. They also constitute its foremost challenge.

At one end of the spectrum we have countries of South Asia, for whom population explosion is casting its shadow on every sphere of economic and social development, while at the other end are countries like Japan facing a different sort of population problem with proportionately fewer children. But even in South Asia there are signs of a declining rate of population growth. In India as a whole population growth rate has fallen from 2.3 percent to 1.9 percent. In some States like Kerala the fall has been dramatic, having attained the replacement level of population growth.

Asia is home to approximately 60 percent of the world population. It is most appropriate that the parliamentarians of the region have assembled to deliberate on this most crucial issue. I have great pleasure in extending a warm welcome to all the participants from India and abroad, and wishing them a very fruitful discussion on the themes of the conference.

K.R. Narayanan

New Delhi  
March 25, 1998

## **Vote to Thanks**

**Dr. P. J. Kurien, M.P.**  
**Member**

**Indian Association of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (IAPPD)**

I would like to thank Honourable Vice President Shri Krishna Kant, in spite of busy schedule, has found time to come and inaugurate this conference, and read a very meaningful speech on the subject which formed a very important direction for this conference. So on behalf of IAPPD and also APDA, I extend to you a hearty vote of thanks for finding time to come and inaugurate this conference. Thank you once again, sir.

I also extend my vote of thanks to Dr. Urmilaben Patel, MP, Vice President of AFPPD, Mr. Fukusaburo Maeda, Chairman of APDA, Dr. Taro Nakayama, MP, Chairman JPFP, Mr. Shin Sakurai, MP, Chairman AFPPD, Dr. Hirofumi Ando, Deputy Executive Director, UNFPA.

My thanks to all the delegates and members of the parliament for finding time to participate in this conference. Especially, I extend my thanks to UNFPA, Minister of Health and Family Welfare, the Government of India, NCY delegation, and NAFCA for their valuable assistance and contribution.

My thanks are also to all Ambassadors and Excellencies for participating in this conference. I cannot close this vote of thanks without mentioning the name of late Mr. Sat Paul Mittal, MP, who actually started this movement in India. I would like to pay my respect to his family. Once again, I thank you all.

**Keynote Address**  
**“Population and Achieve the Sustainable Development -Asian Perspective-”**

**Mr. Y. N. Chaturvedi**  
**Secretary**  
**Ministry of Health and Family Welfare**  
**Government of India**

The problem of over population is being felt acutely in many parts of the world and much more parts of the world are already thickly populated although they have acquired stability in population growth. In those parts where population is continuing to grow faster than national societies wish for, the fast growth of population is becoming a cause of strain on social and economic infrastructure. Also in India, also population is continuing to grow at a pace faster than the country would like to have. The country is adding about 17 million people every year. However it is interesting to note that the problem of population growth has come about only with the development of medical and other sciences. Before this, the problem of overpopulation or uncontrollably large growth of population was not felt in any sizeable part of the world through more than 2000 years history of human settlements. Diseases and violence claimed a large number of lives all over the world and the population was kept in check. This of course was an unhappy way of controlling population.

Development of modern medicines and a high standard of civic amenities dramatically eliminating incidence of communicable diseases during last 200 years. This led to dramatic decline in deaths and illnesses. Therefore even though the fertility rates have apparently not declined until a couple of decades ago, the net growth of population increased dramatically because the death rate came down fast. Apprehensions started to be expressed in the 19<sup>th</sup> century that if population continued to grow, it would ultimately outpace the increased production of even basic commodities like food and there would not be enough food for people. These predictions have of course fortunately not come true partly because the growth rate of population has been controlled in large parts of the world. Moreover, the same science and technology which led to the increase of population has also led to dramatic increase in production of resources which is more required for sustainability.

The net increase in the world population as a whole has already peaked. Now the annual increase in population has started to decline. Annual increase of population was 45 million in 1945, 55 million in 1955 and 65 million in 1965. It peaked at about 85 million in the '80s and fortunately it has started declining since then.

Not surprisingly, the concern about fast increase in population first led to programmes directly aimed at reducing the growth rate of population. In India, the family planning programme for reducing the growth rate of population was started in 1952. It started as a simple and straightforward programme for reducing births but within 10 years it was

realised that such a programme cannot succeed unless it is accompanied by a meaningful effort of public education and extensive work. In the '70s, the importance of emphasizing the voluntary nature of the programme, the essentiality of material health concerns, and of health of young children was accepted. Since the '80s, India has been implementing a holistic programme which involves improving the maternal health related facilities, facilities for better health and longevity of young children along with the programme for providing contraceptive and sterilisation facilities to couples.

This process has not been unique India only. The world as a whole, interplay between social sector programmes, is being emphasized for more than a decade in a very articulate manner. In this regard, the United Nations Conference on Environment, Human Rights, Social Development, and perhaps the most notably the International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo in 1994, have provided a large impetus for crystallisation of international opinion on these issues and for persuading nations to adopt a holistic approach in tackling population issues. These consultations and parallel developments in a many countries have emphasized the central role of women not only on population perspective but also on educational and social development perspective. Parliamentarians are representatives of public opinion on their countries and it was only befitting that during the International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo, the Parliamentarians were to pursue the same theme. The declaration adopted by the Parliamentarians' Forum in Cairo appropriately linked population with sustainable development and put family planning and population control in the wider context of reproductive health. Parliamentarians, as other enlightened groups, emphasized the issues of gender equity and empowerment of women as constituting the core of the larger problem. In this context it is very appropriate that Asian Parliamentarians are meeting again today here in Delhi after five years of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), for reviewing the developments that have taken place since ICPD and for strengthening the movement for seeing the population situation in a wide perspective. Indian Association on Population and Development (IAPPD), which is organising this consultation and their associates in Japan, the Asian Population and Development Association (APDA), need to be warmly complimented for organising this very welcome consultation among Parliamentarians. This consultation would certainly set the trend and will strengthen movement in Asian countries for improving the reproductive health facilities for providing a central place to women's issues and for underlining the linkage between population and sustainable development.

When we consider population situation, the question naturally arises as to what constitutes overpopulation and are the Asian countries overpopulated. While considering one must immediately accept that there is perhaps no absolute population figure for any country which when crossed will constitute overpopulation. If people are healthy, they are well fed, have easy access to housing, transportation, educational facility, and have gainful employment. If air, water, and land is not under stress due to pollution, the country or the region can be said not to be overpopulated. But if the situation is the other way around, i.e., if pollution levels are high, large sections of people have difficulty in finding gainful

employment, access to educational and health facilities is difficult, and housing and transportation are not easy to access, then perhaps one must infer that there is overpopulation. Therefore overpopulation is not an absolute situation and with a higher level of economic, environmental and social development, the same population can be brought within the limits of acceptable population. This indicates that overpopulation results only when population growth outstrips the growth in the facilities for education, health, transport, employment, etc. As far as India is concerned, it seems the situation of overpopulation already exists in large parts of the country and there is growing realisation in this regard. The Five Year Plan document which is the blueprint of national economic development for the next five years underlines the critical population situation. During the special session of the Parliament on the occasion of 50 years of independence in 1997, many Parliamentarians and national leaders stressed the critical population situation already obtained in their country and stressed the need to control the rate of population growth with the highest degree of urgency.

In India some very meaningful initiatives have been taken since the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) of 1994. India has accepted the challenge of eradicating polio from the country by the year 2000 and National Pulse Polio Immunisation Campaign has been started since 1995. There has been indeed a Universal Immunisation Programme being implemented since 1985. Pulse Polio Immunisation initiated in 1995 is much more ambitious and it covers all children below the age of five by immunizing for polio on two days separated by about six weeks during the winter season every year. Because of the large population and large diversity in all senses, the task is huge but the results have been heartening. In this Pulse Polio Immunisation, more than two million health volunteers have to be mobilised. About 130 million children are getting immunized for polio in this summer and this has already resulted in three-fold decrease in the incidence of polio which is now less than one thousand for the whole country.

Another notable initiative is the integration of several national programmes into an integrated Reproductive and Child Health Programme. This Programme seeks to incorporate all policy thrusts which emerged out of the ICPD. The integrated Reproductive and Child Health Programme was launched by the Prime Minister himself in October 1997. It has evoked a warm response from the international donor agencies who have pledged sizeable resources for making the Reproductive and Child Health Programme in India a success.

Reproductive and Child Health Programme is conceptually elegant. It answers the needs of the society. However, its successful implementation would test the capability and capacity of the national health system but it is not beyond reach. India has succeeded in creating a large infrastructure for providing health services to citizens in all parts of the country. In the government sector alone, there are about 30,000 hospitals and dispensaries and about 135,000 rural sub-centers for providing reproductive and child health services including contraceptive services to the people. However making reproductive and child health a reality would also require a change in the mindset and attitude of health functionaries.

Most of them have had an attitude for providers of health facilities. It is not their fault because that has been the mindset promoted by the environment in the country in earlier decades when government was developing itself as the provider of all facilities to citizens. However, in the reproductive and child health context, the needs and choice of citizens has the primacy. The citizen has to be encouraged by information, education and communication to make informed choice about not only contraception but also about other reproductive and child health concerns. The job of health functionaries has to change to that of a provider of services needed and desired by the citizens. This would call for a large change in attitude of health functionaries and attitudes do not change by order—they change on. Therefore the government has initiated information, education and communication for user citizens. Similar large effort for the health functionaries is to help them to appreciate the needs of the citizens and to provide services of good quality according to such needs.

While seeking to provide reproductive and child health services to people, it also needs to be realised that the progress in the health sector alone cannot succeed in achieving desired improvement in reproductive and child health. The publicly expressed support by opinion leaders, which would prominently include Parliamentarians, is essential for the success of Reproductive and Child Health Programme particularly in regard to population growth. Commitment and support of the opinion leaders has a sizeable influence on the response of the citizens. Unless the society supports the programme and comes forward to not only avail of the facilities but to ask for the facilities, creation of facilities will not suffice. Creation of the desired facilities for all citizens itself is a daunting task for countries so large as India. Even though sizeable resources are being provided by ways of public investment for extending and expanding reproductive and child health services, much more investment is necessary for these services to reach all people. This calls for a much higher priority for the reproductive and child health and population control programme, a theme which was also emphasised in the ICPD. The management efficiency of the state health systems which are the agencies that deliver the services, is obviously very important because an efficient delivery system alone can convert infrastructure into services. Here the question of accountability of health functionaries to deliver the results come up and enforcement of accountability is never easy or pleasant. Finally and perhaps the most important in the long term is the educational status of families, particularly of women. Women's status in the society and economic status of families have a strong impact on the success of population control programmes. If the economic status of families is good and the future prospects for development are good, the families will have much more willingness to look at the future consequences of their present actions. This leads them to look at the consequences of having a small or large family. If the parents, particularly women, are educated, the marriage age is higher, the spacing among children is larger, and the family size is kept small. Thus for making reproductive and child health objectives a reality, and to stabilize population early, a whole range of social sector programmes have to be attended in a coordinated manner. It is in this context that Parliamentarians occupying leadership positions have a role which few others in the society can play. A strong and

unambiguous lead by the Parliamentarians in this regard can make all the difference between success or lack of success of the programme.

I would touch upon another equally important issue and that is in regard to non-government organisations in the context of Reproductive and Child Health Programme. As a result of the legacy about the concept of government being the principal provider of all services, an undefined attitude has developed which relies on government alone seeking to achieve many goals including Reproductive and Child Health and population control. The Indian health sector outside the government is as large as within the government. Government resources are also naturally finite. The needs of Reproductive and Child Health and population control programme in the large national population are so large that government alone cannot hope to meet all these needs. There is a question about the size of the delivery system which gets unreasonable curtailed if the government alone has the responsibility to provide for all the needs. Therefore the success of the programme would depend on widening the implementation mechanism through co-opting between government sectors and non-government sectors. In the past this has not become a reality not only because of the reluctance on the part of the government functionaries but equally due to the reluctance on the part of non-government sector to own up the programme and due to lack of willingness to accept such social responsibility. Happily the situation is changing fast enough. The government has succeeded in involving a large number of non-government organisations and they are being co-opted and assisted to participate in a manner which provides full scope for flexibility and innovativeness. Recently, initiative has been taken to similarly involve the non-government medical sector in the programme and the response of the non-government sector has been enthusiastic. I would say that even if public investment does not increase dramatically, programme can still succeed if on the one hand public support from opinion leaders is forthcoming, and non-government sector joins the programme. Happily the signs are hopeful on both these fronts and that is the good news in regard to India.

Mr. Chairman, I would conclude by complementing you, the Indian Association of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (IAPPD), the Asian Population and Development Association (APDA) and the Honourable Parliamentarians assembled here for this excellent initiative for convening this meeting of Asian Parliamentarians for taking stock of progress made since ICPD, 1994. I am pledging again your support for the objectives articulated in ICPD. I am sure that with your active support and backing the objective on addressing family planning concerns in the larger context of sustainable development and looking at all these things that in such a manner gender equity and empowerment of women, are at the core will undoubtedly succeed.

Session 1  
ICPD and ICPPD plus 5

[12:30-13:30]

## **Population Trends in Asia : Present Situation of ICPD five major goals**

**Chairperson: Senator Dr. Prasop Ratanakorn  
Secretary General, AFPPD (Thailand)**

**Resource Person : Mr. Wasim Zaman,  
Country Director of UNFPA in India**

Mr. Chairman.

First of all, I would like to thank the organizers and Mr. Chairman, yourself, for giving me the opportunity to speak today at this very important conference of the Parliamentarians on Population and Development. Our colleague from the headquarters, Dr. Hirofumi Ando, the Deputy Executive Director of the United Nations Population Fund, has earlier expressed how closely and how proudly UNFPA has been able to associate with this enormously important movement of the parliamentarians.

I congratulate the Indian Association of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (IAPPD), and the Asian Population and Development Association (APDA), for the wonderful steps that have been taken to bring the honourable delegates from all over Asia, and also for bringing our distinguished guests here to hear us in this important meeting.

One of the things that I would like to mention, Mr. Chairman, is that I have been asked to talk about the population development trends in Asia in the context of the ICPD and ICPD plus five. I just happen to be the representative of the UNFPA in India, and therefore I know a little bit more in India -- actually India and Bhutan are the two countries that I represent in the UNFPA.

We can discuss later on in the conference various specific aspect of the various facades of the ICPD Conference and its follow-ups. First of all, I think it would be interesting to point out that there is a paper in your folder, which is on Population Trends in Asia, prepared by a distinguished professor, Professor Prem P. Talwar that I would certainly recommend. You probably received it this morning. I recommend that if you have a chance, please go through it, because it does bring forth particularly the demographic context that goes a little bit more than the demographic context of Asia.

As you all know, just to dwell upon the Asia part a little bit, this morning the population growth of the world and its various continents was discussed to some extent. In the part of the world' population and its population growth, Asia obviously plays an enormously important role, because Asia's population is close to 3.48 in 1996, let's say it is almost three and a half billion, the world population happens to be 5.8 billion. So Population of Asia is over 61% of the world population.

For the purposes of the United Nations Data System, the Asian countries are divided up into four areas. There are the Eastern Asia, South-Central Asia, Southeastern Asia and Western Asia. What I'm not going to do is list those countries individually. There are one or two pages at the end of Dr. Salva's paper, which actually shows what those four areas are. Let me just focus on what is happening in those regions briefly, and then maybe touch upon some of the countries.

In Asia itself the crude birth rate in 1996 is about 23, and the crude death rate is about 8, and the natural rate of increase happens to be about 1.5. I pick up South-Central Asia because it constitutes forty percent of Asia, and in that forty percent happens to be India, which in itself is close to a billion now. Unfortunately, it is that forty percent of South-Central Asia where total fertility rate is still very high. The infant mortality rate is about 78 for maternal mortality rate, though varying enormously, is high in many countries including India, where it is over 400 per 100,000 live births.

Yet it did set targets for life expectancy -- to reach to 65 by 2005 and 70 by 2015. It did set goals for primary education, literacy in primary education, universal access to primary education, to all primary education-age school children by the year 2015. It did raise maternal mortality rate as a major issue, and I forget the specific words, but it did say that from the present levels, by the year 2015 it should be halved in all countries, and then within another ten years or so, further halved.

I'm raising this, because we have to come back to that in the context of Asia and where we are. It also focussed on infant mortality rate, obviously, and it said that it should be reduced by the year 2000 to 50, and by the year 2015 to 35.

What I cannot do is go through all these numbers for all the four regions that I talked about. Incidentally, the four regions that I talked about does not include the Pacific countries. If you look at the Economic and Social Council for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) in their numbers, you will see that it includes the Pacific Countries. And therefore the total population goes up a little bit from about 3.4 to 3.6 and also you will begin to see the Pacific Countries data there.

But just going back to the regional context a little bit, it is worthwhile to say that Eastern Asia, which includes China, the Democratic Peoples Republic of Korea, Hong Kong, Japan, Mongolia, and the Republic of Korea. If you look at the scenario, again I would prefer that go back to this paper, and maybe we will have more data later on.

Those areas in Asia, is doing the best in terms of the demographic situation and the population and development situation. In fact, there is no target for the total fertility rate from the Cairo Conference Declaration. However, preceding the Cairo Conference there was a meeting in Bali where the Asian countries had said that the goals for a decline in the Total Fertility Rate should be 2.2 by the year 2000. For the Infant Mortality Rate, the Cairo Conference had set 50. Now Eastern Region of Asia have already met those goals, both in

terms of the Total Fertility Rate and the Infant Mortality Rate. They also get very close to meet numbers of other indicators that we have just discussed.

With the South-Central Asian Countries, forty percent of Asia, the Infant Mortality Rate continues to be high at 78, and the total fertility rate is high at 3.7 births per woman, almost 50% higher than the replacement level of fertility. The Western and the other part of the region, although they are much smaller, is also somewhat lagging in terms of the goals there.

What is important is that almost every country has started on the path to achieving the goals from the Cairo Conference. Some have met it, some are reasonably close to it, and to some, the goals are a bit unrealistic. If we take about ten to sixteen of the large countries within the Asia region, we will find that about ten of them will be able to achieve most of the ICPD goals on health and fertility indicators within a given period. I'm now talking about the large countries, which include Afghanistan and Nepal.

We had Mr. Chaturvedi, the Honourable Secretary from the Government of India, a little earlier. When we have to work at the field level, we have to find out what it is that can be done? What is realistic?

Goals are there to be achieved, but we have to be realistic. So for every nation in Asia, there has to be a differential approach in achieving the goals. That's one point. The second is I've learned the lesson, and one of the things that was not done in the previous discussions, is that we were talking largely population, largely demographic goals.

What happens to the goals that Cairo has set otherwise? I think the centrality of the Cairo document was the issue of women equality and the issue of empowerment of women. For the first time it brought it to the central aspect of the whole document. Now where are we with that? It is a difficult thing to measure, but I think almost all countries in Asia have a lot to do in that area.

I'm beginning to bring up the thematic issues that are important that the Honourable delegates here and the excellencies from various countries who have joined have a very significant role to play. We constantly talk about political commitment. There are definitely signs that political commitment is happening, but that has to be translated, not only in the halls and chambers in the capitals of the countries, but in the villages, in the urban slums of the countries.

How and what can be done in those areas? I am just submitting to you as a simple worker of the UN system, that how would you give that leadership, how can we help you with information and with programs in leading to the achievement of those leadership goals. I think that is very significant, very important.

For India, I will focus on maternal mortality situation. I have an interesting chart to show you. You will see that a good part of the maternal mortality which is about eighty percent or higher, is for avoidable pregnancy-related deaths. Why should that happen in India in 1998?

Let us challenge ourselves with that question. A lot of that is happening because of the facilities existing. The Indian Government has done remarkably well in terms of bringing up an infrastructure. But let us not forget that this is a continent with billion people, keeping up with the services and its quality, particularly attending birth with people who have been trained birth attendants or with doctors, is a major issue. It is that if you look at a country, even in Asia, where births are attended, you have lesser maternal mortality. Where births are not attended, or attended by relatives or friends who are not trained, you have a higher maternal mortality rate. That is a major women's issue.

One point to remember is that in many countries women matter as mothers, as wives, but not as women. Public health must start immediately without any delay. There is no excuse because our systems are ready to address women's health issues as a right issue. If life is a right, health is a right, and the reproductive right is, therefore, a right that has to be addressed. So again, how can we address it? There are enormous reasons to think that there are resource constraints. But within our resource constraints, there are enormous possibilities that are not being addressed.

The biggest problem in Asia is women suffer in silence. There is no effective lobby in many of the Asian countries for women to talk about their problems. There may be numbers of speeches given but when it comes to the woman in need, it is not addressed. Across the board we have female literacy that are highly questionable. Why should female literacy fall behind?

I pick up Bhutan because it is an interesting country. It is a country where, because of cultural reasons and historical reasons, women have been emancipated. They have much more participation in the economic system and certainly very different from the rest of Asia. But as you go to Bhutan, you look at the female literacy rates, it is drastically lower than the men's, and dropout rates are high. Let's question why?

I think those are the issues than one needs to address very carefully. I think that one of the things we must not forget is the context of Cairo. Cairo had clearly said that, yes, you need to achieve family planning goals too, but not with targets.

I'm glad that India has done away with methods and targets in this country. It had said what is important is addressing the issues of women, reproductive health and choices. It is not population control, it is addressing choices, the needs of men and women. How best do we address those choices is a very big issue in this context.

The Honourable Vice President of India put it in the right perspective. He talked about where the money goes, and why shouldn't it go to the causes that need to be addressed? But, most importantly, India as same as many countries in Asia leap forward from the public to the private sector.

Let me raise the question of what will happen to the social contract in this country? Who will protect the social sectors? A very important question not addressed adequately. We cannot, the leap into the private sector does not mean laissez-faire. It doesn't mean license to inequity. It doesn't. No country worth its name, no nation worth its name should submit itself to inequality a defense. So let me raise this issue with you all.

Fifty years ago, Mahatma Gandhi had a social contract which doesn't exist in India today. Let's think about it on the other context. Let's think about his thoughts. Let us bring them back in the context of Cairo, in the implementation of Cairo in our country. Only then we will succeed.

One last submission. Many of you see many United Nations agencies in each of the countries you come from. In 1998, we and my senior colleague, Dr. Hirofumi Ando, will endorse me when I say this, in each country there is only one flag of the United Nations. We work as one United Nations to support the program of the government in our best capacity. We think it is our different partnerships -- NGO's have been mentioned -- NGO's, government, UN, bilateral, and everyone. If we score against the health issues, the HIV Aids, it is a goal we are scoring for the country, for humanity. I think we should all work with that goal in mind.

Thank you very much.

## **Parliamentarians for Population Movement after Cairo**

**Chairperson: Mr. Jaffer Sharif  
Ex-Railway Minister (India)**

**Resource Person : Shiv Khare  
Executive Director  
Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development**

Hon. Chairman and friends,

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the Asian Population and Development Association (APDA) and the Indian Association of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (IAPPD) for organizing such an important meeting of parliamentarians in New Delhi.

Some of you may remember that last December in this very hall, an international gathering of parliamentarians have discussed about water resources and population. I am happy to report to you that the new government of India in its national agenda proposed the need for a "National Water Policy". This is proof of the timely programmes undertaken by AFPPD.

The AFPPD in cooperation with the Inter-American Parliamentarians Group on Population and Development (IAPG), Parliamentarians for Global Action (PGA), International Medical Parliamentarians Organisation (IMPO) and with financial support from UNFPA organized an International Conference of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (ICPPD) in Cairo. The conference was attended by more than 300 parliamentarians from around the world. These parliamentarians were part of their national delegations to the main ICPD, therefore their attendance at the parliamentarians conference gave them a information about various aspects of population and development issues and how they are related to their constituents, i.e., the people at grass root level.

The advantage of parliamentarians was evident when it came to the discussion of crucial issues. Parliamentarians representatives played an important role in motivating their delegations in favour of a pro-population policy.

### After Cairo

The ICPPD at Cairo was a milestone in mobilizing parliamentarians for population and development issues. Encouraged by the impact of the conference, the AFPPD and its partners have continued their collaboration to other UN conferences such as:

UN Social Summit at Copenhagen; the AFPPD and collaborating organisations organized an International Meeting of Parliamentarians on Population and Social Development to push population issues at the social summit.

UN Conference on Women at Beijing; prior to the Beijing conference the AFPPD and other parliamentarian group organized one of the most effective meetings of women parliamentarians. The meeting was held in Tokyo. These women parliamentarians played a significant role at the Beijing conference with highly visible results for women's reproductive rights.

The World Food Summit in Rome saw yet another opportunity for parliamentarians to raise food security and population issues. Therefore to prepare for the World Food Summit an International Meeting of Parliamentarians was convened at Geneva to discuss food security water resources and population issues.

#### Food Security and Water Resources- A Continuing Concern

Parliamentarians not only attended these International Conference but also highlighted these issues at a national level. Several National parliamentarian Seminars were organized in member of countries to highlight issues such as population and social development, food security and water resources. The AFPPD has been instrumental in bringing home the issues of water resources and population in China, Philippines, Japan, Vietnam and India.

#### National Programmes

Since Cairo the Asian Forum has two new full time offices, one in Vietnam and one in Pakistan. The AFPPD now has offices in Japan, Philippines, Vietnam, Thailand, Malaysia, India and Pakistan.

Two Pacific regional parliamentarians seminars resulted in strengthening the parliamentarians movement in the Pacific region.

#### Emergence of new Parliamentarians Group

The parliamentarians from Africa and the Arab world met in Cairo and decided to establish a Forum of African and Arab Parliamentarians on Population and Development (FAAPPD) which has now taken proper shape. The AFPPD not only provided guidance but also published their newsletter and attended their Executive Committee Meetings to provide them with continued support.

#### Canadian Association

A member of parliament from Canada, Ms. Jean Augustine attended the Geneva Parliamentarians Meeting on Food Security and Population. She was so motivated by the

meeting that she initiated a Canadian Association of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (CAPPD) which was launched in October 97. The AFPPD (International Department) has been providing support for CAPPD.

### European Initiative

In Europe, parliamentarians involvement is vital to generate the much needed resources for the population programmes. At the ICPPD in Cairo, the European and North America parliamentarians defined their own role. They said:

"As parliamentarians from developed nations, we must encourage our own population and fellow parliamentarians to understand that the issues of population and development are our issues not just those of the developing nations. We are one inter-related globe. Developing nations must be helped with our resources both financial and human.

They went on to say: "We have created great momentum from this conference and we have a lot of work to do. As parliamentarians we should continue to meet every so often to update and encourage each other".

As a result, the European region has worked to involve parliamentarians in reproductive health and other population issues. The United Kingdom, formed an All Party Parliamentarians Group on Population and Development and a similar group has been formed at the European Parliament in Brussels. The Netherlands, Germany and France also have similar groups funded with the support of either family planning associations or population foundations. A French speaking parliamentarians meeting was also convened in Paris last year.

### Latin America and Caribbean

The Inter-American Parliamentarians Group (IAPG) in close cooperation with the Planned Parenthood Federation of America's and UNFPA is working to change the attitude of parliamentarians and others about family planning and related issues. The presence of a large number parliamentarian is the example of their growing interest in population related issues. The most outstanding declaration in favour of family planning was delivered by President Fujimori of Peru. It was made possible because of the support of parliamentarians. He said that:

"If we talk about the future, we have to talk about family planning or birth control. All children are beautiful, they are the sigh of life but how painful it is to see starving, undernourished, abandoned children, living in the streets and some of them germinating as delinquents. Is there anything sadder or more dramatic than this?

It is in our hands to address the situation realistically and without fears inspired by taboos and myths. Therefore, the State promotes equal access to family planning methods for both

low income and higher income families.

It would be hypocritical to pretend not to see that different methods are used now in families from different social classes. It is equitable to spread I have said to spread, the family planning methods to all parts of the country".

"We have been and we will be a pragmatic Government with no taboos nor 'sacred cows'. Peruvian women must be the owners of the destiny!"

### Study Visit

Study visits by parliamentarians play an important motivational role for them. This could be seen during the study visit of Australian and New Zealand parliamentarians to Thailand and Vietnam, and the European Union parliamentarians visit to several Asian Countries.

The visits to grass root projects and exchange of views with fellow parliamentarians have resulted in a strong commitment for population and reproductive health programmes. Inspired by the results of these visits, a Canadian delegation will be invited by AFPPD to visit Asia.

### Grass Root Level Work

The Parliamentarians have a double role to play as policy makers and as monitors of programmes. They can also be motivating factor for the common people at the grass root level. Parliamentarians can encourage people in their constituencies to move towards having small families and using contraception, especially condoms due to the growing threat of HIV and the AIDS epidemic.

### Resource Mobilisation

The Parliamentarians can also work to raise resources for population and development programmes. They have shown their will in Japan, the Netherlands, Scandinavian Countries and Germany. We hope that even developing country parliamentarians will pursue their governments to increase their allocation for population programmes. In developing countries there is also a need to monitor the effective use of whatever resources are available.

### ICPD and ICPPD+5

In our evaluation, it has been found that since Cairo the activities of parliamentarians have increased significantly and Asia has taken the lead, the movement is also growing in Europe where resource mobilisation is important for the implementation of ICPD+5 recommendations. We hope that parliamentarians will increase their profile in population and development related fields because on this the future of our children depends.

## Session 2

# Population and Rapidly Changing Economic Situation in Asia

[14:30-16:15]

## **The Population and Rapidly Changing Economic Situation in Asia**

**Chairperson: Mr. Colin Hollis, M.P.  
Vice Chairman, AFPPD (Australia)**

**Resource Person : Dr. Kua Wongboosin  
Vice President, Chulalongkorn University**

### Introduction

Asia is a region of wide diversity in political, cultural, and historical dimensions with disparities in economic and social stages of development. However, during the two decades before the end of 1997 most of the Asian countries shared the characteristics of being in transition and dynamic in economic and demographic terms. While there were considerable changes in the growth rate, structure and distribution of population, Asia achieved such a remarkable economic performance that the term "Asia's Miracle" has dominated the topics of economic and development literatures. Some economists expected the rate of Asian economic performance to be maintained into the next century. Moreover, while the next century will be an era of globalisation, the core of growth is expected to be in Asia. Accordingly, the next Century has also been called an "Asian Era," despite the Asian currency crisis since late 1997.

Since population and development are interrelated, impacts of the rapidly changing economic situation on population in Asia are currently of major concern to demographers in the spheres of academics, practitioners, policy planners and decision-makers here and elsewhere.

This paper deals with the interrelationship of population and economic performance in Asia, including in this paper mainly East, Southeast, and South Asia based on the availability of readily comparable data. After the discussion on the current Asian economic performance and the population setting in the region, the paper elaborates on their interrelationships with particular emphasis on the case of Southeast Asia.

### The Asian Economic Setting

During the past two decades, Asian countries experienced a rapid pace of development with special progress towards industrialisation. One prominent result is manifested during the past decade when the term "Asia's miracle" was used by some economists to describe Asian economic performance.

Shunsuke Bando (1997) cites four factors contributing to such a high economic performance in Asia in general:

1. The strengthened export competitiveness of Asian products in the world market due to the prolonged appreciation of the Japanese yen after the Plaza Accord in September 1985;
2. The inflow of foreign capital which was encouraged by the deregulation of foreign investment restrictions, and the development of the domestic financial and capital markets which were conducted for the purpose of efficient utilisation of foreign capital and technologies, with Japan as its main focus;
3. Low and stable raw material prices while the Asian economies tried to industrialize themselves out of their primary goods export-oriented economy;
4. Continuous expansion of the economies of developed countries, mainly the United States, which were major export markets for Asian products.

While Asia includes industrialized, newly industrialized, and less developed economies, the term "Asian miracle" is used to refer to the most ten dynamic economies: Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and six ASEAN countries (Singapore, Brunei Darussalam, Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia, and the Philippines). Throughout the 1980s, these ten countries grew economically at an average rate of slightly over 10% per year. The rate is more than twice as high as the comparable figures for the European Union and North America. In the second half of the 1980s, besides the vigorous direct investment among them, the growth rate of their intra-trade exceeded the growth rate of their trade with other regions.

However, the present Asian currency crisis as a shock wave of economic stagnation and the collapse of the bubble economy spilling over from Thailand, has become a strong pressure here and abroad.

The Center for Pacific Business Studies (1997) cites five factors behind the present currency crisis in Asia:

1. "Asian governments linked their currencies to the US dollar in order to attract foreign investment. As the US dollar began to appreciate in 1995, those currencies appeared increasingly overvalued, and the export competitiveness of the countries concerned was adversely affected."
2. "The inadequacy of supporting industries in Asia means that Asian economies must rely on imported capital goods and parts. Over the years, this situation has brought a steady rise in current account deficits, which must be financed either by market fund-raising or overseas borrowing."

3. Because of the first factor mentioned above and the fact that domestic interest rates were maintained at substantially higher levels than US dollar interest rates, "inflows of foreign funds were even greater than current account deficits. This situation induced a real estate bubble..." and a huge bad debt problem, particularly in Thailand.

4. "Asian economies were also affected by declining exports and decelerating economic growth, due to a global semiconductor market slump in 1996, a loss of competitiveness in labor-intensive industries due to the improvement of China's export competitiveness following a 33% devaluation of the renminbi in early 1994, and the erosion of export competitiveness as a result of the yen's shift to a downward trend from 1995 onward."

5. Thailand's unstable political situation and latent potential political instability in Indonesia and the Philippines.

The current Asian financial crisis is expected to induce economic deceleration that may not recover before the turn of the century. According to the Center for Pacific Business Studies, the growth rates of the Asian economies in 1997 were lower than in 1996. The average real GDP growth rate for 12 Asian economies are estimated to have declined from 7.6% in 1996 to 6.9% and 6.1% in 1997 and 1998, respectively.

Real GDP Growth Rates of 12 Asian Economies			
	1996 (actual)	1997 (estimate)	1998 (estimate)
South Korea	7.1	5.8	3.0
Taiwan	5.7	6.5	6.7
Hong Kong	4.9	5.5	4.0
Singapore	7.0	6.9	6.6
Thailand	6.4	-1.0	0.0
Malaysia	8.2	7.5	4.7
Indonesia	7.8	6.4	3.7
Philippines	5.5	4.9	3.8
Vietnam	9.6	9.4	8.5
India*	6.8	6.5	6.8
China	9.6	9.4	8.5
Japan*	3.2	0.0	1.2

\* Based on fiscal years (April-March)

Source: Adapted from Center for Pacific Business Studies (1997)

Despite the concern about the potential economic downwave, some economics are of the opinion that the crisis is temporary. One reason is the fact that the crisis has forced Asian governments to initiate economic management strategies as a national priority. The

strategies include adjustment of policies, legal and institutional mechanisms, and industrial restructuring. Such domestic strategies are supplemented by cooperation from abroad. Other reasons are the existence of the domestic structures that supported the past high growth and the latent growth potential of the Asian economies. The Center for Pacific Business Studies expects Asian economic recovery despite the delay by disposal of bad debts.

Other studies base their optimism upon three main, long-term trends of development towards the next century:

1. Bilateral and regional cooperation for progress and development;
2. Transition to an open-door market economy with a technological base;
3. Globalisation and regionalisation with advancement of deregulation and liberalisation of trade, investment, services, capital, and labor.

One should note that the trend of trade liberalisation is not restricted to the manufacturing sector, but is also moving towards the liberalisation of agricultural trade. There is a trend towards integration of agricultural markets in APEC and ASEAN. The trend is a result of the growth and changing composition of agricultural trade in the region as a result of rapid economic growth and policy reforms and a rising food demand at the global level during the past decade (see Figures 1 and 2).

According to Figure 1, Asia mostly experienced a trade deficit in terms of agricultural trade compared with the NAFTA region in the early 1990s. A study by Cargill, Inc. (1997) reveals that Asia has lately lacked surplus food-producing resources to meet the growing global food demand while it is a major consumer of food from the US (see Figure 3).

The Provision Agenda for the Food Summit's projection for the next 30 years states that, rather than the current increase of about 20%, food supplies must increase nearly 100% in East Asia and by nearly 150% in South Asia to satisfy the increasing demand of their growing population (Cargill, Inc., 1997). In order to meet the opportunity and challenges of growing food demand at the domestic, regional and global levels, an efficient food system is therefore an urgent need in Asia.

### Population Setting

Asia is considered the largest region in the world not only in geographic but also in demographic terms, with China and India as the two demographic big brothers. Nevertheless, considerable changes have occurred in the dynamics, structure and distribution of population in Asia. Fertility rates have declined and will continue to do so throughout most of Asia.

Size, percentage distribution, annual rate of increase by sub-region,  
UN medium variant projections, 1950 to 2025

Year	East Asia	Southeast Asia	South Asia
Population (millions)			
1950	661	182	481
1970	972	287	754
1990	1313	445	1200
2010	1585	616	1789
2025	1702	726	2161
Annual increase rate (%)			
1950-1955	1.75	1.92	1.99
1965-1970	2.43	2.51	2.38
1985-1990	1.34	2.05	2.30
2000-2005	0.79	1.51	1.91
2020-2025	0.42	0.99	1.12

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Source: United Nations, 1991 in ESCAP, 1993.

The projection not only suggests continuing declining rates of population, but also a changing distribution of population in the region. The contribution to Asia of East Asia will be decreasing, while those of Southeast and South Asia will be rising.

According to ESCAP (1993), by 2025 China's contribution is expected to diminish while that of India will expand. Apart from China and India, there were four countries with populations exceeding 100 million in 1990: Indonesia, Japan, Pakistan and Bangladesh, while countries with populations between 50 and 99 million included the Philippines, Vietnam, and Thailand. By 2025, Vietnam, and the Philippines will join the 100 million population category, while the populations of Indonesia, Pakistan and Bangladesh will rise beyond the 200 million mark. Japan will remain under 130 million. The Republic of Korea and Myanmar will join the 50-99 million category, to which Thailand has belonged since 1985.

Crude birth rate and total fertility rate by sub-region  
UN medium variant projections, 1950-2025

Period	East Asia	Southeast Asia	South Asia
Crude birth rate (per 1,000)			
1950-1955	40.8	44.1	44.9
1965-1970	21.0	35.2	37.7
1985-1990	20.1	29.6	34.8
2000-2005	14.7	22.0	27.5
2020-2025	12.6	16.7	18.0
Total fertility rate (births per woman)			
1950-1955	5.72	5.99	6.11
1965-1970	2.78	4.79	5.27
1985-1990	2.36	3.68	4.70
2000-2005	2.06	2.95	4.01
2020-2025	1.80	2.10	2.16

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Source: United Nations, 1991 in ESCAP, 1993.

The total fertility rate (TFR) in Asia was around 6 children per woman during the 1950s and 1960s. A decline in the TFR has been clear since the 1970s, with a relatively steep trend in East Asia, a remarkable but relatively slower decline in Southeast Asia, and a much slower decline in South Asia. The recent decline in TFR is projected to continue during the coming decades, reaching the level of 3 children per woman on average in the period 2000-2005, and 2.02 children per woman in 2020-2025 with more of a decrease in South Asia.

Crude death rate, life expectancy at birth and infant mortality rate  
by regions, UN medium variant projections, 1950 to 2025

Period	East Asia	Southeast Asia	South Asia
Crude death rate (per 1,000)			
1950-1955	23.3	24.4	25.1
1965-1970	7.0	12.8	14.6
1985-1990	6.7	8.9	11.8
2000-2005	6.8	6.8	8.4
2020-2025	8.4	6.8	6.7
Life expectancy at birth (both sexes; years)			
1950-1955	44.9	41.1	39.1
1965-1970	67.0	54.1	51.9
1985-1990	70.4	60.9	56.8
2000-2005	73.9	67.3	63.8
2020-2025	77.2	72.8	70.5
Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)			
1950-1955	181	152	189
1965-1970	39	89	127
1985-1990	31	63	102
2000-2005	18	40	71
2020-2025	9	25	39

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Source: United Nations, 1991 in ESCAP, 1993.

During the period 1985-1990, the life expectancy at birth for the Asian region was 62 years for both sexes combined. The corresponding rates for East, Southeast and South Asia were 70.4, 60.9, and 56.8 respectively. It is projected that regional differences in mortality will narrow, as a number of countries attain very high life expectancies, after which further gains will be hard to achieve. It is also expected that all the sub-regions will have a mean life expectancy exceeding 70 years by 2020-2025.

Explanations for such Asian trends are partly the fact that Asian countries have had explicit population and family planning programs since the 1950s. The programs have been based on population growth, population distribution and population structure. The 1950s and 1960s are said as the pioneering period of family planning associations and consequent recognition by governments that rapid population growth needed to be managed through

family planning programs, despite the fact that they were launched on an experimental basis. The 1970s is considered a period of an upsurge of national family planning programs with the outcome of the population policies to contain population growth (ESCAP, 1993).

After a modest increase in population growth during 1980s, population factors are viewed as central to the process of national development planning with the recognition that human development is the overriding condition for the success of population policies. This is due to the fact that the impact of rapid fertility decline on the population of school-going and of working ages is being felt. Human resource development is becoming a major concern, along with the problems of population aging, migration and urbanisation (ESCAP, 1992).

### Impact of Economic Development on Population

According to Herrin et al. (1985), the population and development interrelationship occurs as a result of the demographic processes of fertility, mortality and migration, resulting in demographic outcomes in terms of population size, age-sex structure and spatial distribution. The demographic transition successively affects the socio-economic processes comprising, among other things, land and labor utilisation, urbanisation and population distribution, consumption of goods and services, savings and investment, public expenditure and international trade and finance. The operation of these socio-economic processes then determines the socio-economic outcomes in terms of income, employment, education, health and nutrition, old age security, human resource development, environmental quality and public utilities. In turn, these socio-economic outcomes affect the operation of the demographic processes, starting a new cycle of the interrelationship between population and development.

Based on the above notion, economic development cannot solely be measured in terms of economic growth. Since the economic growth rate is mostly measured in terms of GDP or GNP growth, it is considered to be only one aspect of economic development which must be evaluated multi-dimensionally. According to ESCAP (1992), while the process of development is seen as a series of interconnected societal transitions, one of the most significant transitions that the development process implies is the demographic transition from high to low fertility rates. Since high rates of population growth impede economic development, a sound economic policy ideally reduces not only poverty but also population growth rates. Higher economic development is also expected to increase the qualitative aspect of development of the population.

To discuss about the impacts of economic development on population, this study emphasizes on the case of ASEAN and other Southeast Asian countries. During most of the past decade, there was a big gap in economic prosperity defined in terms of GNP per capita between then-ASEAN nations and other Southeast Asian countries. The latter's GNP per capita in 1992 was below US\$250. The average annual growth rate of Myanmar's GNP

per capita was 3.2% in the period of 1965-1980 and declined to 2.4% in the period of 1980-1989. According to the Working People's Daily on April 1, 1993, an economic plan released by the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC) expected to achieve 5.8% growth by the end of 1994. The GNP per capita average annual growth rate in Laos increased from 1.7% in 1970-1980 to 2.6% in 1980-1992 and was expected to continue rising to 2.8% by 2000, according to the World Bank (1992).

Before becoming the 7th member country of ASEAN in 1995, Vietnam may be considered the only non-ASEAN country with economic success owing to its "doi moi" or reform policy. The economic growth of Vietnam rose at an annual rate of 6-7% during the past decade. These compare with the rates of growth in ASEAN member countries which ranged from 3.2% in the case of the Philippines to 8.3% in the case of Singapore during the same period (P. Wongboonsin and K. Wongboonsin, 1995).

Besides the big gap in terms of economic growth, there was a big gap in terms of human development between ASEAN and its above-mentioned neighbors. The indices of the latter for 1990 ranged from 0.186 in the case of Cambodia to 0.472 in the case of Vietnam. This compares with the ASEAN range between 0.515 in the case of the Philippines to 0.849 in the case of Singapore (P. Wongboonsin and K. Wongboonsin, 1995).

#### Human Development Index by Country in Southeast Asia: 1990

	Life expectancy at birth	Education attainment	Adjusted GDP per capita	Human Development Index
ASEAN				
Brunei	73.5	2.08	5017	0.847
Indonesia	61.5	1.88	2181	0.515
Malaysia	70.1	1.92	4901	0.790
Philippines	64.2	2.37	2303	0.603
Singapore	74.0	2.04	5043	0.849
Thailand	66.1	2.16	3987	0.715
NON-ASEAN				
Cambodia	49.7	0.58	1100	0.186
Laos	49.7	1.11	1100	0.246
Myanmar	61.3	1.74	659	0.390
Vietnam	62.7	2.09	1100	0.472

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Source: UNDP. Human Development Report 1993, pp.135-137, New York: Oxford University Press, 1993.

Singapore and Brunei Darussalam were the only two countries in Southeast Asia for which the human development indices rank slightly above the average for industrial countries (around 0.82) slightly below that of the Republic of Korea (P. Wongboonsin and K. Wongboonsin, 1995).

The big gap in economic prosperity between ASEAN and its neighbors has brought about a major flow of illegal, unskilled immigrants into ASEAN member countries, with Thailand as a major recipient and transit country. It is estimated that almost all unskilled immigrants in Thailand are illegal. They are not only from Myanmar, Laos, and Cambodia, but also from South China, Pakistan, Bangladesh and India (P. Wongboonsin, 1998).

The flows of unskilled immigrants bring not only economic but also health and social burdens to the host countries. According to an AIPO study (1997), there have been reports from the Thai borders with Myanmar and Cambodia that contagious diseases which have long been eradicated from Thailand have re-emerged. They include the "elephantiasis," resistant strains of malaria, among others. The rapid spread of HIV/AIDS in the ASEAN region and neighboring countries has also become apparent in recent years. Cross-border movement has played an important role in the process. Accordingly, the spread of contagious diseases through uncontrolled cross-border migration has become a major concern for ASEAN.

With its aim of a "Greater ASEAN" with a geopolitical span of all Southeast Asia, ASEAN is expected to narrow the socio-economic gap between long-time members and the new and prospective members, Vietnam, Laos, Myanmar and Cambodia in the next few decades. In other words, those four relatively less developed economies are expected to join the general ASEAN momentum of growth and development if there is progress in their economic reforms in terms of scope and intensity.

According to the ASEAN Secretariat (1997), based on purchasing power parity, by the year 2020, ASEAN-10 will be one of the five large economic powers in the world, after the North America Free Trade Area (NAFTA), the European Union (EU), China and Japan.

Such a prospect was considered very high given the progress in the implementation of the ASEAN Free Trade Area, in the economic reforms of the new ASEAN member countries, and in the development fund raising by ASEAN so as to minimize the existing socio-economic disparity with the new ASEAN member countries. However, the prospect is now being delayed by the Asian financial crisis, spreading from Thailand. The crisis is now aggravating the problem of low competitive human resources of the Southeast Asian region as a whole. The poor, the aging, and the vulnerable sections of the society are most negatively affected in terms of health and education/training. The vulnerable population of the region includes illegal, unskilled migrants. This group of population is considered very large. The current financial crisis is now pressuring the governments to adopt a tough policy towards illegal, unskilled immigrants. This population group will become more vulnerable when they are deported without the provision of socio-economic support back home.

Even after the crisis, it is expected to take some time to restore and to hasten the development of regional human resources necessary to carry out the ASEAN ambition of global competitiveness.

ASEAN Vision 2020 gives more weight to human resource development in terms of education and training than to the health of the Southeast Asian population. The author of this paper is of the opinion that the problem of dietary intake will be a major concern here soon. This is due to the lack of an efficient food system and the growing food demand in the region, as a result of the growing population growth, growing urbanisation, and inequitable income. Given the fact that a number of areas in Southeast Asia are still in poverty, and that there will be increasing costs for food consumption in the region, a large proportion of the population will have difficult access to healthful and safe dietary intake. The current financial crisis is now aggravating the problem in terms of both food production and consumption with potential negative impacts to the next generation.

### Conclusion and Recommendations

In the past decade, Asia shared the characteristics of being in transition and dynamic in both economic and demographic aspects. However, the gap of development still exists. The dynamics of Asian economic growth has brought about both positive and negative impacts on the population. The past economic dynamism has now come to a halt due to the financial crisis starting in July 1997 in Thailand. The crisis, which is now spreading throughout Asia, has aggravated the existing problems of its population with potential negative results to carry on to the next generation. The problem is particularly serious in terms of human resource development to attain the ambition of global competitiveness in this era of globalisation, regionalism and economic liberalisation. The case is particularly clear in Southeast Asia where the gap of socio-economic development is still wide and where a large portion of the population is still in poverty. A sound development requires a more integrated approach to planning and implementing economic and population policies at both the domestic and regional levels. Future strategies for Asian development should be geared towards the maximisation of strengths and the minimisation of weaknesses of both the economic and population factors. Human security should also receive more attention from now on.

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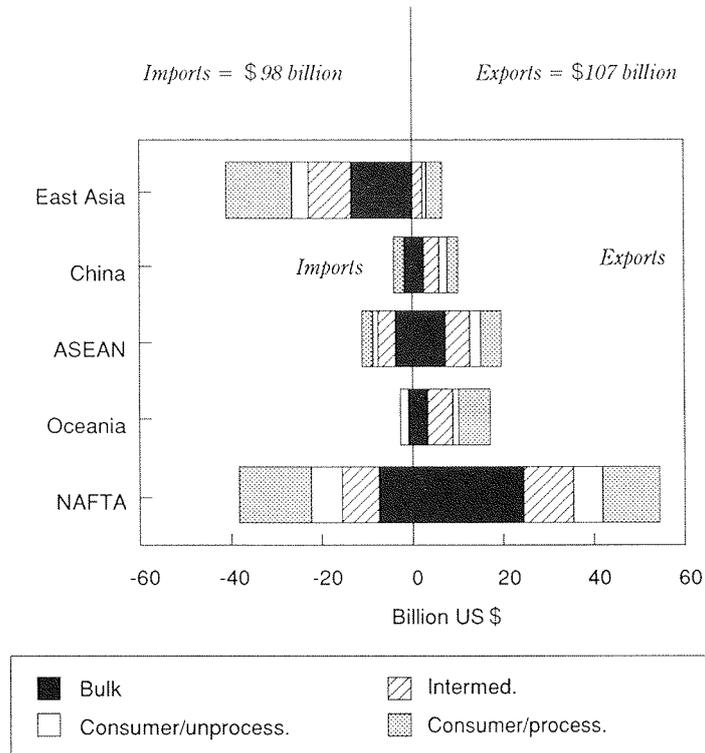
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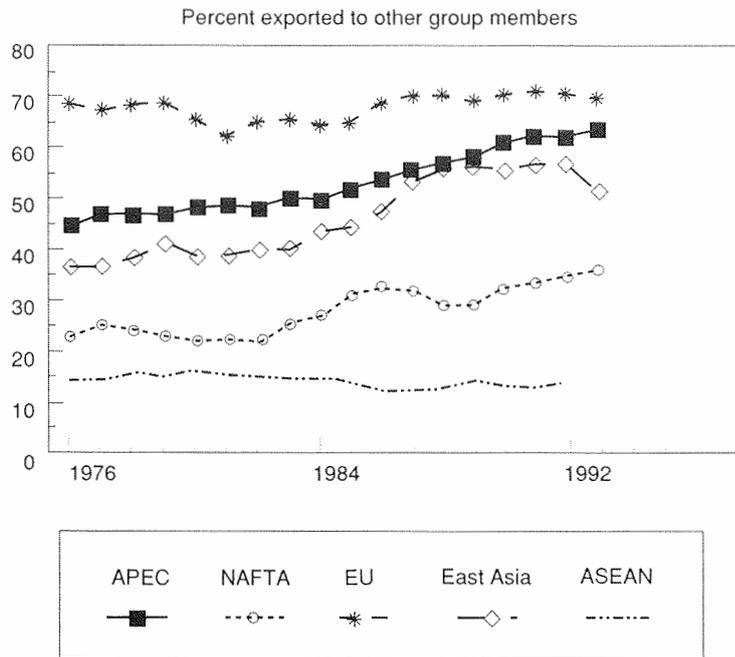
**Figure 1 Changing Composition of Trade**  
 Agricultural Trade Profiles for Major  
 Regions in APEC, 1991-93



Source: National Center for APEC (1996) , Figure 17

## Figure 2 Increased Intra-regional Trade

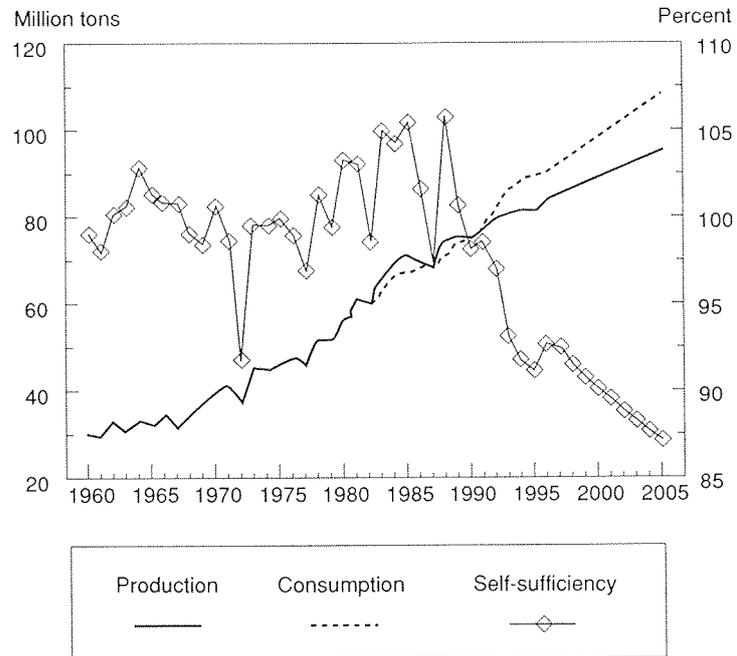
The APEC region is becoming increasingly integrated through agricultural trade



Source; National Center for APEC(1996), Figure 21

### Figure 3 Grain Outlook for ASEAN

A growing gap in ASEAN's consumption and production of wheat and coarse grain; exportable surplus of rice grows



Source; National Center for APEC(1996), Figure 15

## **Population and Sustainable Development in China**

**Resource Person : Mr. Tao Xiping, M.P.**  
**Vice Chairman of the Standing Committee of Beijing People's Congress**

Distinguished Mr. Chairman,  
Distinguished Parliamentarians, Ladies and Gentlemen:

First, on behalf of the Chinese delegation, please allow me to express our appreciation to the host of the meeting, Indian parliament and Indian people. I am deeply convinced that the meeting will achieve full success with the common efforts and participation of all deputies.

Sustainable development becomes a strategic global issue. Developments must fulfill the need of this generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own need. This thought has drawn great attention from all over the world.

Environment protection and resource conservation are universal tasks of humanity. We inhabit on a common planet. Environment and resource issues have transcended the national and regional boundaries. The solution of these problems will contribute to each country, each region as well as the whole world. It's time for us to make a decisive action for the sustainable development.

In March of this year, the ninth National People's Congress held its first session. The newly elected leadership will lead China into the 21st century. During the session, the new Chinese government reiterated its policy of sustainable development. It's pointed out that China, with large population and comparatively inadequate resources, is suffering from negative impacts of excessively scaled economy. The contradictions are becoming increasingly acute between the economic development and ecological environment. The economy can not continue to grow in the old extensive manner. The relations must be correctly handled between the economy, population, resources and environment. Natural resources need to be rationally exploited and comprehensively utilized. The environment needs to be protected and improved. Therefore, the economic increase can contribute to present generation as well as future generations.

Sustainable development in China has three basic implications—population control, resource conservation and environment protection.

Family planning and environment protection are our two basic national policies. Chinese government attaches importance to the experiences of the other countries and realizes that the exclusive pursuance of the quantitative increase of the economy was not the correct choice. The traditional development mode, "Pollution first and treatment second", can not

meet the demands of the present and future economic growth. The resources conservancy and protection have been strengthened on cultivated lands, water resources, forests, grasslands, mineral products, seas and animals. The system of compensated use of the resources has been introduced to encourage economical and rational utilisation. The speed of pollution control and treatment will be accelerated in some key areas and river basins. Those enterprises that violate the pollutant discharge standards must be suspended or closed. The indexes and data of environment quality in large cities are published periodically for supervision and further improvement.

At early 70's, the family planning policy started to be promoted according to Chinese conditions. Thanks to the efforts in the past, the birth rate has been decreased and population growth rate has been slowed down. Compared with that in 1970, the birth rate in 1997 dropped from 33.83% to 16.57% and growth rate from 23.8% down to 10.06%. Calculated according to the birth rate level of 1970, there are some 2-3 million population dropped during the past 30 years. The implementation of the policy relieves the contradictions between excessive population growth and economic and social progress. This is also conducive to the stabilisation of the world population and the sustainable development. During these years, China has made great progress in environmental protection work, rational use and exploitation of the resources, poverty relief and elimination. We have full confidence of the future.

## Activities of Parliamentarians of Arab-African Countries

**Resource Person : Mr. Mustafa Ka  
Chairman  
Forum of Arab-African Parliamentarians  
on Population and Development (FAAPPD)**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I am from Senegal, Africa, and the official language is French. I have a French message, but the translation has not been done. So I will try my best to speak English.

Mr. Chairman, I want to say that it is a pleasure and honor for me to be invited in this meeting by Asian Population and Development Association (APDA) and Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (AFPPD). Thank you also to the Government of India, and the National Assembly for this invitation. I came here on behalf of the Forum of Arab-African Parliamentarians on Population and Development (FAAPPD).

This new Forum was born in May 1997, Cape Town, South Africa. There are 31 members of seven regions including West Africa, East Africa, Central Africa, South Africa, North Africa and Arab regions. The Asian Forum participated actively in the Conference of Cape Town. We have had a pleasure to receive Mr. Sakurai MP, Chairman, and Mr. Shiv Khare, Executive Director of the AFPPD. At this important conference of Cape Town, the declaration of Cape Town was adopted.

I want to say that Lusaka in Zambia owes to your forum. I have signed the agreement with the National Assembly of Zambia in October 1997. Now we are going to nominate the Executive Director of the Forum next week. So, let me thank from the depths of my heart to the Asian Forum and the Executive Director, Mr. Shiv Khare, who helped us during the creation of a new forum. In October, we have adopted a budget and a program of activities that includes seminars and other meetings in Dakar. I want to say that since the Cairo Conference, Arab and African Parliamentarians mobilized for reproductive health. They fight against maternal death, violence, sexual discrimination, genital mutilation and poverty. We want to prepare a seminar for new laws about such matters.

So, we want to cooperate closely with the Asian Forum. The cooperation can cover many domains. Once again, I want to thank Mr. Sakurai, Chairman of AFPPD, Mr. Shiv Khare, Executive Director of AFPPD, and Mr. Hirofumi Ando, Deputy Executive Director of UNFPA, for all your supports.

Mr. Chairman, I wish you a great success on your meeting, and I hope to invite the delegation of Asian Parliamentarians in Africa or in Arabian countries in future. Thank you.

## **Discussion**

### **Chairman:**

Thank you very much, and it is natural that we, everyone here, wish the Forum of Arab-African Parliamentarians on Population and Development every success and I'm sure, sir, under your wise and experienced leadership it will achieve that success.

### **Prof. Dutta, INDIA:**

I am Professor Dutta from West Bengal, India. I would like to submit that all the policies have been formulated and done by very knowledgeable persons, and nobody doubts their desires for the well-being of the humanity. My submission is that all these pious wishes, all these formulations, are being dictated from above. The recipients have got very little to express their opinions; they do not have any scope. Even the representatives, who are coming from the grass-roots level, do not have any idea what the recipients feel. So it appears that all the people who are formulating these things, all the dictates, are taken as granted. So these are so many questions that come. My suggestion is that we should find out a mechanism where the people's representatives can voice the feeling of the recipients themselves.

My second submission is to our friend from Thailand. He has stated that the recent downward trend is transient. In 1996, the World Bank revealed that the market economy in various countries are the downward trends of the development, and the indicators are a transient phenomenon. We had problems because of Latin America. Now the so-called Asian Tigers that we used to have and eulogize and we think that we should follow are facing the same economic problem. These countries include Thailand, the Far East countries, and South Korea. Naturally, it is no use saying it is a transient one.

This is the last question. We want to get information about how can we try to equate, because we say that the population control depends upon the social justice and the universalism of the social justice. Otherwise it is of no use talking about population stabilisation and everything.

### **Delegate, INDIA:**

I would like to make three or four points in brief. I was listening to Mr. Y.N. Chaturvedi, Secretary, Government of India Health and Family Welfare. He has an opinion that the pregnancy-related deaths contribute 80 percent of total mortality. I think this problem can easily be addressed. One, there is the guidelines prepared by the Government of India who said that in tribal areas there will be one hospital for 40,000 people, and in non-tribal areas, there will be a hospital for 30,000 people.

We have China as our ideal example. We must adopt the policy of incentive and disincentive. Where in India, we promise everything but in fact nothing is given. It is only a hollow promise. People get disappointed even though they accept voluntarily this program. So incentive doesn't work, we have to make it more fruitful.

China has adopted the one-child policy. We have to follow the footsteps of China because they have been able to reduce their infant mortality rate. And it will be better if we provide some disincentives against the willful expansion of family, there must be some amendment of election law and amendment of constitution.

Take for example the state of Orissa, where we have provided that anybody who is having more than two children shall be deprived from either fighting election. If only five can win. But he/she begets a third child, he/she has to be disqualified. That disqualification provision is not there either in the election law, in the representation of the people's assembly.

Lastly I would like to say since Mr. Hassan has been embarking upon giving empowerment to women, I would have been happy if he could have given instructions to accommodate at least one woman delegate from each state. And though it has not happened this time, I would be definitely thankful to you if you consider it and ensure it from the next session onwards.

**Delegate, INDIA:**

Mr. Chairman, to put a check on a growing population, the idea for giving more and more emphasis to education and economic development, that idea has been universally accepted.

**Delegate, SINGAPORE:**

On the issue by Chinese delegation about the sustainable economic development. I agree with them that sustainable economic development has to take into consideration the population, resources, and also the environmental destruction. The point about the economic development through the stimulation of consumption will not be envisaged.

I believe that in today's open world the consumption by itself is to a great extent being stimulated by media for commercial purposes. People change their habits. This will be a consequence of stimulation in the consumption. So China is going into the open economy and the world-market manufacturing. If this is not the direction that they would like to pursue, I would like to know a little bit more to make myself wiser. It is expected of how China would like to go about their economic development in particular to consumption.

**Delegate, INDONESIA:**

I want to give just a brief information about the present situation in Indonesia after the ICPD 1994. And the ICPD program of action is linked closely with the Indonesian state policy guideline, the Population Law of 1992 and the sixth five-years development plan.

According to the law, the aims of family planning programs for people and family centered development. This is not only concerned about the contraceptive matters, it is beyond an ordinary family planning term. In the new guideline, the development of population and family information systems can give a climate conducive to public and community participation. So they can be encouraging, active and dynamic enforcement of people at all levels. That is in Indonesia after 1994.

**Chairman:**

What I found, and what my colleagues from Fiji mentioned to me at lunchtime, we always tend to come together when we come to these functions, in our own group. I mean, I come from Australia, and I always meet with my Fiji friend, or someone from Samoa or someone from New Zealand. The Indians tend to meet with the Indians. If we just, occasionally, just went over and met with some of the others, and discuss some of the issues, instead of remaining where we feel most comfortable, perhaps the issues that you are asking about, a meaningful dialogue could evolve.

But the other point, if you are not going to get a philosophical underpinning of a new world order in a two-day conference, where you have got delegates from about 20 countries, speaking different languages, coming from different systems, so what comes out of the conference is what each of us puts into it. Sir, you have got the call.

**Delegate, INDIA:**

Now when you talk of population and development, actually, what we drive at, the question is, there must be development in the world, and population is bound to grow. Now it is a miraculous thing, that the one-child policy of China, that has created a sort of miracle in the growth of population, because they have reduced to a considerable level the population of China, that is one of the biggest achievements.

In underdeveloped countries, the whole process of planning has been set at wrong. All our five-year plans, since the beginning until today, all the benefits of the plans have been nullified, because by the time we see the end of the five-year period, all the gains have been set at naught, and we go back to square number one again. This has become a fantastic problem.

I am a legislator in the Assam Legislative Assembly. So in our area, the population growth rate among the tribal people, among the backward people, is not very much. It is insignificant, it is less than the national average, whereas in India we are having a population explosion which has become a big problem. It is this Government of India together with all the NGO's and the public sector that can handle this problem. If they can handle it, fifty percent of India's other problems will also be taken care of, I believe.

We'll be governing this attempt to keeping the balance between the development and the population explosion as the constraint on natural resources, including human resources of countries, particularly of the smaller, underdeveloped countries. So how we make a balance between the explosion of population to keep it under control and at the same time to achieve economic development so that infrastructure development will increase and at least the bare minimum needs of the people are satisfied.

**Chairman:**

Thank you. I don't know if my colleagues want to comment, but I'll just make the point that the Chinese delegate, during his address, he actually did mention about the environment,

how it can't be development at all costs, he said that we've got to take concern of the environment into account. And I think that more and more countries are looking at that today. But of course you are right when you say that it's not only India, but in so many countries with an increasing population, your growth has got to be increased by an x-amount.

**Delegate, INDIA:**

The NGO's enjoy the responsibility of the social sector, and I'm glad that the things are going in the right direction. We have certain dark pockets in India, where there is death and disease, not due to overpopulation, but due to certain other factors. We have Mewat in Haryana, Palamau in Bihar, and Kalahandi in Orissa. Their starvation deaths are not due to overpopulation, or lack of healthy environment, not due to low literacy rates, environmental factors, but due to the alienation from the forests. They have been alienated from their natural habitat and brought out into the market economy and they have become wage earners. They have lost their natural habitat, entered into the civilized society, their expenses have grown up, their life-pattern has changed and their consumption pattern has also changed. And after entering the market economy as wage earners, they have been introduced into the civilized society.

The studies have proved that we are talking about development and all these things. These tribals are the victims of development itself. Because before development they were living in their natural habitat, and they were having their normal life. After coming into the civilized society, they had to dwell better habits, to equalize themselves with the civilized society, so that expenses were raised, their food habits have changed, and they are starving because they couldn't get as much wage as was needed for them. So the social engineering factor that we talk about in the development process was not slow enough.

**Delegate, INDIA:**

I can react. I'm General Jamual, legislator from J. and K. We have the problems of the forests, and the people living next to the forests. I can react to this. He is right. In many places, especially to conserve forests, many people have been deprived. But I think the governments are realizing now, and those people are now trying to be rehabilitated based on the forest produce. I think that is the only answer. We have to provide them and the areas close to the forests, whatever they are growing.

For instance, in my state we found the Siwaliks Hills have been denuded over the last thirty-fourty years, there is nothing left. Now we are trying to introduce all the herbal plants and the local medicinal plants, like the neem and other flora, which will come up in four to five years, and their whole economy can change. But in that, if the government and further agencies can help us to expedite those, in fact the money should be directed for those things, for them specifically.

**Delegate, KOREA:**

This is a question to Mr. Zaman, who addressed the Population Trends in Asia. If we see the demographic profiles of Asia by region, we can find a huge difference, particularly between Eastern Asia, such as China, Korea and Japan, and South-Central Asia, such as India. All conditions, such as Crude Birth Rate, and Crude Death Rate, or Total Fertility Rate or Infant Mortality Rate, the Eastern Asia is best, and they have achieved already the goal of ICPD set in Cairo.

**Mr. Zaman:**

I am responding because I did present that paper. I think I'll take up some of the points of the colleague, although not all of them were not necessarily part of the presentation. Let me start with the religion question that you've raised. I think, by and large, if you see demographic transition the world over, if you go through that, I think religion plays a very little role in it.

Because in the past, if you hear about Catholicism and Europe, and Europe had the first demographic transition at the beginning of the century. When the demographic transition actually took place in Europe, it was Catholic Europe, which still today says, you can't have contraception. The same thing was said about the Soviet Russia before it got split up, that it was the Muslim Russia, which has higher fertility rates. But then if you looked at Muslim Russia in those days, you would also find that those were the places which were behind in terms of education, in terms of facilities, in terms of health care, and all that.

I would say that, again I'm not an expert in Islam and fertility and population, but by and large if you see Islamic countries all over the world, including Asia, if you go to Bangladesh. One of the most successful family planning programs happens to be a country which is reasonably conservative Islamic. So I don't think that religion and family planning go in that manner at all. I think one needs to go back. If I can now go back to the substance of the other question you raised, what makes the difference? I think that if you go back, the most important thing I would say is literacy, now going out of family planning, literacy and primary education.

The difference that you talk about between China and India lies there. It is an immediate example. So I think clearly that one could lay out many of those examples. And then, I think the next thing that comes up, is the issue of how good are your services. Bangladesh, again I go back, because that is a good example, the contraceptive prevalence rate is close to fifty now. Clearly during the last five years, a wonderful decline in fertility rate, the primary education and all other factors have not really changed very much yet. So there the primary explanation given by scholars is, that happened is that you had uninterrupted services. Good quality and supported by government after government. Prime Ministers have come and gone, gone to prison, come out of it, in the meanwhile family planning program remained high and supported.

So I would say those are the factors, and if you start stacking up the countries, you would see the difference. You stack up Pakistan against Bangladesh, you stack up all these countries, you start seeing that all those things come together. I think we have to work hand in hand, basically. Good education, women's empowerment, along with good services, quality services, choices.

**Delegate, INDIA:**

Mr. Chairman, the rapidly increasing population has a direct bearing on development. The alarming rate at which population is increasing in Asia is a matter of concern for all of us. In Asia there are countries like China, which has the maximum population in the world. There were reports in the media that the people in China had been asked to follow a one child per family norm so as to check the population. In our country, we have taken certain steps to check the population, but more concerted efforts are required to be made in this direction. Keeping in view the high rate of growth of population,

**Delegate, INDIA:**

Keeping in view the high rate of growth of population, the planners are now devising ways and means to continue development in such a manner that it does not adversely affect our environment. Time has come when sustainability in development has to enter in our planning process as one of the basic and permanent objectives. There is a need to make more concerted efforts in this direction. Our resources are shrinking as people are multiplying. The demographic pressures are leading to economic pressures. There has to be an integrated effort. We cannot afford to neglect our most important natural resources. The total scenario of land use will need to be built up meticulously, which has to be backed by appropriate legislation.

**Delegate, INDIA:**

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. My name is Mrs. Sita Devi. I'm a legislator from Andhra Pradesh. I just wanted to ask one simple question, any economist can tell me this. In the changing scenario of the global market the dollar is dictating the market. If you have to achieve the sustainable development in the Asian countries, most of it will depend on the dollar. This will affect the programs of population and development. Kindly, anybody can explain, how do we achieve our goals?

**Chairman:**

Have we got an economist in the house who can answer the question? If not, we will find the economist, and get the answer to you over tea. Thank you.

## Slide Presentation

“Water is Alive - Population and Water Resource-”

[16:30-17:30]

**Slide Presentation: “Water is Alive –Population and Water Resources –”**

**Mr. Tsuguo Hirose  
Executive Director & Secretary General  
Asian Population and Development Association (APDA)**

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Since 1984 APDA has been producing slide presentations on issues concerning population and development which have been presented to the parliamentarians participating at the conference for their use in their countries. The theme of this year’s presentation is “Water is Alive - Population and Water Resources”.

I need not remind the distinguished audience here that water is an essential resource without which none of us can sustain life.

Our planet earth is often called the “planet of water”. How does this stand up in reality? Major Gagarin, the Soviet cosmonaut who was the first man to travel in space had stated what has now become a household word that the earth he saw was blue. In fact the picture of the earth photographed from the space appears to be a blue and watery celestial object suspended in the black darkness.

At the same time it is said that the abundance of water on the earth is as illusory as a desert mirage. Only 2.5 per cent of the water that exists on the earth’s surface is fresh water most of which is trapped in the Antarctic ice and in Greenland.

The water cycle available to us in the form of rain is only 8 parts to 100 million or 0.000008 % of the earth’s water.

It is the fresh water which is used for drinking, for household and agricultural use. Recyclable rain water is its main resource.

This invaluable fresh water resource is in crisis. Yellow River in China, the Colorado River in the USA and other major rivers of the world are now dried up to riverbed during dry seasons. This is an uncanny situation. From a global perspective the water resources do not increase with population. Its amount has not changed since the birth of the first man.

I recall what a parliamentarian from the Middle East had said at an international meeting some time ago. He said the Middle East has seen disputes over oil but the next war in the region will be over water. In certain regions that danger is increasing in an alarming way.

As population increases the demand for water also increases. In the future disputes over water will be as fierce or maybe more fierce than those over oil

Water is also strongly related to the health of man. Even today many infants are dying because of water borne illness. In many developing countries fetching unsanitary water is a woman's job weighing heavily on these women. Water is closely related to gender issues and reproductive health.

This slide depicting the relationship between water and man, and population and the environment was prepared keeping in mind that population increase is the major cause that invites shortage of water.

We have distributed the slides to participating parliamentarians and we hope that you will make appropriate use of them.

## Session 3

### Population, Rural Development and Gender Issues

Special Focus on Social Development in Rural Society,  
especially emphasis on  
Education of Girls and Empowerment of Women in Rural Society

[9:30-11:00]

## **Women's Reproductive Health Should Be Special Concern**

**Chairperson: Dr. Apenisa N. Kurisagila**  
**Vice Chairman, AFPPD (Fiji)**

**Resource Person: Ms. Margaret Alva, M.P.**  
**Ex-Union Minister for Personnel**  
**Government of India**

Mr. Chairman, Honourable delegates, I am honored to participate in the celebrations this morning. We have seen the reports of all that has happened yesterday. And I believe that we have now stepped into the second phase of identifying factors, which can, for the better or the worse, influence the population of any nation.

Now I will just speak about almost fifty percent of the populations of our countries, women. From the warnings of Malthus in 1798 to the ICPD Declaration of 1994, population, sustainable development and human survival have been issues that have been debated. I believe that the time has come that we have to realize that we either survive or are destroyed together.

We have come to realize that there are no big or small nations, strong or weak nations, and no developed or underdeveloped nations. The issue of population and the capacity of the Earth to sustain the population cuts across narrow national priorities on national boundaries. And therefore, after the Conference on Population in Cairo, a special advisory group was set up by UNFPA, of which I happened to be a member for when we worked for two and a half years to re-orient the policies of the United Nations Fund itself, to make the issue of population, development and the global interest part of the planning also for national governments. Then you have seen from the program that you are dealing with various issues connected with this larger question of population and human survival.

We are today talking about specific issues which influence the population of nations. I'm talking this morning particularly, as I said, of fifty percent of the population, essentially the child-bearing population within every nation, and that is the women. It is true that this happens to be the most neglected section in most developing countries. Whether it is a question of nutrition, of education, of social status or their legal rights, women have been discriminated in our societies, and they still continue to be.

Most of our societies have a pride on the son. He is the one who is supposed to carry on the name of the family. He is the one who is supposed to inherit the property of the family. He is the one, in our country under Hindu tradition, who will light the funeral pyre of his father or his parents, and will then only the parents have eternal rest or Moksa, only when a son has lit the funeral pyre. With the result, that the craze for the son is there, I think, in most of our societies, it is justified in one form or the other.

But besides that, what is even more important, is the fact that the girl child is generally at a discount. While we have brought in legislation, and done a lot of things, particularly after 1975, in the US Decade for Women, the question of the survival of the girl child in itself is a big question which we are concerned about. While legislation comes to give us certain rights, medical technology today allows the parents to determine the sex of the unborn child, and in many, many societies the female fetus is destroyed simply because they consider the girl a burden if she is born. These are some of the basic issues on which maybe on many of our policies within our governments and within our societies exist.

But what I'm trying to say today is, if population issues are to be really addressed, you cannot have success unless this fifty percent of the population within our societies is in empowered, given a voice in decision-making, and becomes a part of the policy-planning thinking processes within our societies.

It is true that in many of our countries these days that women are targeted for family planning. In our own country, the man, or rather the husband, is prepared to let his wife be sterilized, but will not submit himself to any kind of tampering with his male-hood. We have repeated cases, when experiments, when they are to be made, or new techniques that are to be targeted, are to be tried, it is the women who are targeted. And there have been protests all over the world about women becoming the targets of any experiments on population issues.

I think, ultimately, it is literacy and the capacity to decide the size of the family that decides what decisions a family makes. It is true that where there is poverty, that there is a desire to have more children. Because every child is looked upon as a source of employment, whether it is child labor, whether it is on the family farm, whether it is in the family domestic industry, or the small-scale industry, or a small business, children in our societies become a source of income. And therefore the more the children the more the security that the parents think they get. Particularly the girl child, by the time she is six or seven or eight, she is already the one who is looking after the younger children, she is the one who has to help with the cooking, she is the one in our rural societies who must carry water, tend the cattle, and do the jobs which are really not the job of a child.

But the girl-child bears the brunt and nutrition is low, compared to the example of Kerala and Rajasthan. In Kerala, where literacy is the highest for men and women, it is almost a hundred percent now, women are educated, the age of marriage is high, and the birth rate has been low. Whereas in Rajasthan, where literacy among the women is among the lowest, you will find the age of marriage also is very low, low decision-making power for the women, with the result that the birth rate is among the highest in the country. But in spite of this we have come across cases where women have been organized, mobilized as a group to accept family-planning systems or population control measures. They have been able to defy the opinion of the men in these issues, and decide that they will have some system of population planning.

Therefore, while literacy is important, I believe the social mobilizing and the organizing of women to become decision-makers within their local societies and governments are also important. We have had, in our country, the great experiment which raised the question of bringing women at the local level into decision-making bodies.

We have all over the country, what we call the panchayat, the local body, the elected body, in urban and rural area by constitutional amendment we have brought into new laws. One million women have been elected to the local bodies. They have become decision-makers, and they have become part of the political awareness, if I may say so. Unfortunately, however, there is criticism. They will say, you pick them up and they come into these local bodies, but what do these women know, why should they be there? But the point is that the very status and the decision-making processes to which they are now exposed, gives them an opportunity to become decision-makers on various local issues. And this awareness in itself is going to have a positive impact on issues of food, of nutrition, of health, of child-care, of population.

We have had the ICDS program in this country, the Integrated Child Development Service. It has been hailed by UNICEF and other agencies, and it is the largest and the most successful child development program in the world. There was a time when we were told and rather there were pressures on us from the World Bank and other sources to rename it as a Child Survival Program. I was then the Minister of Personnel and Children, and we opposed it. We said that we will not call it "child survival", because child survival is different from "child development". You give free immunisation or injections, and you know then that the child won't die. But that does not mean everything for the development of that child is guaranteed. It is a program which strengthens the pregnant mother, the nursing mother, the child in the preschool phase of his/her life, where nutrition, referral services, health, and preschool activities are built into the program. I'm not saying that it is perfect in every sense, there will be loopholes somewhere, there will be some problems of nutrition not being proper or complete.

But whatever the ICDS program has done, child survival rates have gone up and the birth rates have come down. It is because, basically, the parents know the child will survive, and the child will get the basic requirements. Then the question of giving that child the best health and preschool automatically starts building up. And therefore there are various issues that get tied up with the question of population control. Coercion and forcing couples into certain methods have never worked in this country. We have had the experience of the 1975-1977 period in our country when we accepted a population policy. We decided and agreed, and we had a resolution of parliament, that population control is the basic and the most vital factor in development in this country. The question is, how do we build a consensus and make it work in a functional way. The sterilisation rates, figures mounted, jumped.

But the result was that the emergency was over, not only did the Congress government led by Mrs. Gandhi lose the elections, essentially on the question also of forced sterilisation

and population issues, which became a big issue. But the rates, the sterilisation and population planning figures fell to their lowest immediately after that period, because the reaction of the people was such that none of them was prepared to accept anything that the government had to offer by way of population control.

And we have realized over the years that in the long run it is the willingly accepted, the awareness and the mobilisation of local populations and people to accept it as a people's program, that becomes important. And it that is to happen, there is no way in which you can ignore the most important component in the population -- the women.

Therefore I come back to the question of the status of women and their capacity to decide. I was the Minister for Personnel for five years in the Government of India. As a result of the Pay Commissions recommendations, we had earlier the decision that Government would pay and allow maternity leave only for the first two children. While we were not saying that you can't have more children, which does not mean that we were preventing them from having more children. If you had more, then you took your earned leave if you want it, and your husband or your mother-in-law who wanted you to have more children would have to bear the cost of that whole event of maternity benefit. There was a human cry from whom? From the women. I had women sitting in demonstrations outside my office calling me anti-women, calling me, you know like demonstrations go on, this and that and the other.

I had spent my whole life in the women's movement, and I had been tired of the entire sort of battle for the status of women. I was faced with the group who said, we have a right to have as many children as we want, and there is nobody to tell us in the government. And I brought them into my room, and said, we are not saying, "don't have them", all we are saying is that the taxpayer won't pay for this luxury which you demand for yourselves. But I tried to convince them and I succeeded in the end by telling them that this is something that we are trying to help you with. Because your repeated child bearing is going to take the best of your life, your health and your capacity. Here we are saying, limit your children to two, have your careers, work and see that you give the best of yourselves to your own development, to your children and your family.

Of course, in the long run, they did accept it, but it took a great deal of effort to convince an educated group of urban women, Central Government employees, to accept any limitation on the Government's part in the facilities that it would provide. And there are so many women's groups and others who are opposing any kind of limiting reform. And yet the same women will come into other meetings and seminars and talk about the status of women, better health for them, and more input to give them the freedom, and so on.

And yet, little realizing that perhaps the basic issue of the release of women from repeated child-bearing, the health issue and other things, are so much tied up with the number of children that she is supposed to bear. Very often because she has had two daughters, she must keep trying until she has a son. Whether she has five or six or seven children before, is nobody's concern. And therefore I come back to this issue of the investments that are made

on education, nutrition, the status of women, and their capacity to participate in decision-making.

Food security is another issue we talk about. In this country, if the women refuse to work in our farms and in our fields for one year, this country will starve for at least five years. Women in agriculture perform the most difficult jobs in all our Asian countries of human value, if I may say so. Whether it is transplanting, whether it is weaving, or when the machine comes, the man sits on the machine and does the job. But where human labor is involved, hours and hours we see our women in the Asian countries, standing in the rice fields with water, transplanting by hand. Every one of those plants with the fingers of a woman, standing in the rice fields with water, transplanting by hand every one of those plants with the fingers of a woman. You go into the most delicate operation in agriculture, it is women who do it, again.

And yet, what are the wages that are paid, in spite of all the legislation in all our countries? Women get paid less than the men. And where they have to avoid any kind of legislation or any kind of imposing of limitations, then they have a way by which the employers group, or they employ something else until the group is paid so much, so that, you know, the less salary for the woman is not shown when the actual accounting is made.

We see all this discrimination from the womb to the tomb, as far as women, particularly in Asia, are concerned. And no policies and programs, particularly on the population front, can succeed unless and until women decide or are encouraged or are involved in the whole question of population control and participation in decision-making about their rights to bear children or not.

Then I can give figures. Today, a world population is at 5.8 billion, which will reach about 9 billion by 2050. In India, we have seen population growth, but the point is that with health and medical care we have this intermediary stage where the death rate is also falling, and therefore the child survival and falling death rate together are going into the intermediary stage have added population at both ends, at the end of the aged, as well as of the children's survival.

But in countries like ours, particularly in Asia, say India, Thailand and the others who account for the bulk of the world population, we have the most productive work forces in the world in the sense, according to us in India, two-thirds of our population is under the age of 45. And therefore, unlike many of the developed countries, where the birth-rate is falling below sustainable limits, where the number of the aged is going to increase, they are going to have the problems of less and less of the productive work force having to maintain more and more of the aged who cannot participate in productive work as far as the country is concerned. And therefore we will see over the years the inevitability of population migration, of the problem of maintaining the living standards in the developed countries because of the lack of productive manpower, and various other issues.

Population, I believe, in the long run, like water, is going to find its own level. There are going to be more and more of migrations, as you see already happening, where population would have to move to sustain the standard of living of people in other parts of the world. And therefore, I see the future not as bleak as perhaps many would like to make it.

But we have seen what ecological degradation and the destruction of the natural resources is doing to many of our countries, particularly in Asia. There is the irresponsible, if I may say so, destruction of our forests, the efforts at changing the ecological balances, the spread of human environment into natural habitats, if I may say so, to sustain themselves, are going to have their impact on the lives of the people. But in countries like ours, where eighty percent of our population is rural-based, where illiteracy, poverty, and inevitable shortages of drinking water, and so on, are going to take their toll.

I believe that in the ultimate analysis we would have to mobilize the women, educate them, give them an opportunity to participate and help. That is why the Cairo Declaration is very clear, that population and the status of women are integrated issues, and more and more investment has to go into women's education development and their status.

There is one more issue on which perhaps attention needs to be placed, and that is the adolescent girl. Because while the actual numbers of children born for women in this country might be going down, the number of young women coming into the productive age group is going up. And therefore, in actual terms, you are having, adding more and more young mothers to the entire population, because we are a young population, who is coming into the productive stage. And this I must state without any hesitation, I've been in government, I've been in opposition, I've seen it happen. The basic issue of the political will to implement population policies in our country has suffered.

Every time you talk of population it becomes a political issue between political parties. We have now decided in Parliament by unanimous resolution that population will not be made an election issue or an issue of controversy between political parties. We have passed a unanimous resolution. Because that was the basic question about which everyone was afraid. Having agreed on that, I believe that state governments, we have a federal system, we have different parties in different states running the local government, and health and population, essentially, is back to the local administration. We need to mobilize our decision-makers in the states, our state assemblies, in our local bodies, to make population an issue that is vitally tied up with development, human survival, and the improvement in the quality of life. But very rarely do politicians in this country talk about population, talk about the need to reduce numbers, because everyone says it is a very personal matter, it is a very sensitive matter. We have religious groups who oppose it.

In our constitution, the number of seats in Parliament are determined by the population of the state. We have, every so many years, the constituencies being reorganized, depending on the population. We had in 1975, passed a resolution, that there would be no new constituencies added on the basis of population until the year 2000. And so there were no

new seats created, and no new constituencies demarcated. But 2000 is very close at hand. And look at the paradox. We come from the South. And the states of the South, which have done well in population control, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka.

You know, the southern states have really shown population decline. Unlike some of the states, particularly which we call Seven Sisters of the North, the states where the literacy of women is low, where there are other problems, where the population has been increasing really fast. Now what happens in 2000? These states which have not implemented the population control policies effectively will add seats in Parliament, while those of us in the south who have taken care to implement the policies and have brought down population, will lose seats in Parliament. Now this would be totally contrary to the national commitment that we should reduce population, because the incentive is, if you have no population motive, so why should we reduce our population?

I think by 2000 it would be very necessary for this forum of parliamentarians to demand that there should be no additional seats in 2000 as a reward to states, which have not done anything on the population front. But maybe provide some incentive to those, which have actually reduced their population and not make them loose seats in Parliament. Now these are some of the contradictions, which exist between policy and declarations of commitments to population. I can give various examples of this, but I don't want to make it all an India issue, but since this is a country which is almost reaching one thousand million, and we have had our problems. In a democracy you can't enforce things, you can't insist, you can't push things down without having your eye on the next election, or what the local M.P. feels in his constituency what is going to happen if he talks about it.

Now these are issues which dominate the population, and yet I believe that as parliamentarians from the Asian region we have a responsibility to share experiences, to learn from each others' failures, and to be able to provide those inputs, positive or negative, into policy and decision-making forums, so that where things have gone wrong, we apply corrective measures. Where things have succeeded, others are able to take that experience and say, well, why can't we do it?

A development scheme has been introduced in Tamil Nadu first, but now has become a national program. Wherever it has succeeded, it helped to reduce population figures. Why? Because the mothers get released from the full-time job when the young children are looked after in school. The older girl goes to school because she doesn't have to cook at home for the younger ones, they can get their food in school. It has taken up enrollment rates, it has improved the health status, and it has also, if you look at the figures in this country, brought down the population in those states. And therefore, there are factor within factors, we are a tradition-bound society where it takes long for us to really change and accept something new.

But I think the process is on, the media, the educational input, and essentially, the mobilisation of women by the women's movements, both in the urban and rural areas in

our country, particularly, as it is. In most of the Asian countries where we've had close association with the women's movements, I believe the first step has been taken. Consolidation and moving these policies forward, is of prime importance on the eve of the next millennium. Ultimately friends, parliamentarians of people, we have to decide whether we survive or we destroy ourselves. Because whether we live or we destroy the world, it is a decision which can no longer be of one parliament or one government. It is the human race and human survival that is the issue at stake.

Thank you very much.

## **Discussion**

### **Chairman:**

Thank you. Honourable members, I just would like to thank Ms. Alva for a very comprehensive, informative and thought-provoking comment which we just heard, and I would just like to remind the Honourable member here that there will be time for questions and comments. In as far as comments are concerned, if you can be focused, short, straight to the point, that is important. Now the floor is now open for questions and comments. We are now really come down to the basic issues, so therefore there will be some very straight and very positive comments that we expect to come from you. As I said, it is a very comprehensive and very thought-provoking comments already now on the floor, and it is up to you wonderful members to pick it up and we will enlarge on it as we go along. Yes?

### **Delegate, India:**

I'm coming from West-Bengal. In my state, the women's representation, the empowerment of women, is well-taken. But notwithstanding that, the women's representatives were still being guided by their male partners, either in the party or in the family itself. This is one point.

And the second point, that whenever we ask our people to follow something, particularly the very important issue that has been taken up here, and that is the food security. Food security actually comes from the sustainable use of the resources that we do possess in our own land. Unfortunately, there is no such documentation of the resources starting from the grass-roots level. So one of the directives from this gathering should be, that in the worst level, Panchayat, we should request those persons to identify their resources, the three types of resources: the human resources, the natural resources and the livestock. Unless they identify the resources and they plan themselves for this sustainable programs, because most that have been done, all the particular programs have not been optimized.

Because the recipients, they were asked to do something, they did not plan, and their wisdom was not being utilized by those persons who wanted to implement. Taken all these projects that are being done, the recipients are not aware of the whole situation. So my submission will be, from this august gathering should go three points: one, identification of the resources, and providing them certain technical and informative input, so that they can use those resources and meaningfully and optimally and sustainably. And then it will follow as you have very correctly pointed out, the empowerment of women, their literacy, etc.

We always take the situation of Kerala. But my submission is will be that the Kerala economic situation is entirely different from the rest of India. Kerala virtually sustains all the renegade economy, either from inside or outside. And that does not give a sustainability throughout the areas or any state. So these are the points that we should be taking into account. But my submission is, that this, the transmission of awareness, must be transparent

and must be going to the grass-roots level, where the people themselves, the recipients themselves will participate, and again have their own planning. That is my submission.

**Delegate, SINGAPORE:**

I just like to respond to the previous speaker, and at the same time take the opportunity to reiterate the point that we had made in the Singapore paper update, which we will circulate to the members soon. Basically, in terms of the education and training of the women's work force, it is one of the important aspects in our experience that it helps to control the population growth.

And in fact in Singapore it concerns our population growth has already come to a situation that we are no longer sustainable in terms of our population. And one of the reasons for that particular trend, partially due to the effective "stop-at-two" family planning program that we launched during the late sixties. And that has been very effective, and our family size has been downsized.

At the same time, we also experienced the educated of women, and bringing the women into the workforce. I think that today our workforce comprises, I think basically for the women's workforce, basically almost half of the population of the women. Actually I am involved in our productive workforce in our economy. At the same time, we have almost in the university, close to half of the university undergraduates, actually they are women. So as a result of which so the women's status in the society has been raised, and then they actively contributed in terms of economic activity.

So that resulted in a situation that women, a lot of them, the trend is increasing, remain single. Also, at the same time, the first time the child-bearing age has been increased. So as a result of which our population growth rate at the moment, has come to a situation that maybe for every couple is about 1.7, and our replacement rate should be about 2.1.

In fact that is how our situation has caused Singapore to undergo certain degrees of difficulty, because in the past twenty years or so, Singapore has registered a very rapid economic growth rate. In the seventies we had double-digit growth, and in the eighties and nineties we had about six to eight percent growth rate. So that is well exceeding the population growth rate in the past of one to two percent. So as a result of which we are facing different problems compared with the problem of population faced by many other countries in Asia.

I recall that the opening speech of the Vice-President yesterday. He mentioned about the population growth. It is not a question of the numbers that we are concerned, it is a question of how we can provide employment. If everyone of the individual populations will be able to be productive, he would consume less than what he will produce, and he would contribute to the growth of the world, and the growth of the nation. So in Singapore, at the moment, we are facing a different type of situation. Instead of our growth rate causing problems, exactly it is that the growth rate is too low that causes us trouble.

So therefore as a current trend, in terms of dealing with the population problem, we are more emphasizing things such as human resource development. We are thinking of how to upgrade the individual to make sure that they exist as an individual, will be able to face the real world, and has his real work in the society, so that he becomes not a burden to the society, but rather a contribution within the society.

**Chairman:**

Let me remind the members, the Indian politicians, that you are not the only ones in this room. We have members from other countries who would like also to be given the opportunity to express themselves on the subject. This does not happen only for India. This is for all over the world. And it is only fair to say so. So enough for India, I will now entertain any other country. Korea? I will not entertain anybody else. Korea?

**Delegate, KOREA:**

Yes, I appreciate it, Mr. Chairman, if you would please give priority to the representatives of different countries of Asia. One point I want to suggest to Ms. Alva is that women's education is very important and effective to control the population.

But in my experience, especially in our country, the woman is psychologically more committed to men, to husbands. So even if they don't want more babies, if the husband wants, it is very difficult to refuse. Especially the husband's parents ask the wife to produce more babies, especially to have a son. So I agree the women's education is important, but as long as the men have more power to determine whether or not to have a baby, in a husband and wife relationship, the man's education is more important. That's my view. I don't know whether it is true in India, but in my country the husband has a more psychological or family power to refuse or to have more babies.

**Ms. Alva:**

With the education of a woman the age of marriage automatically gets delayed. And when she is educated and has an earning capacity, then she also has some say in decision-making about the number of children. I don't say that it is 100 percent. But I think when she is educated and employed, then she does have a say in say in the family. At least she may use some system of spacing the child so that her job and career are not affected, in which the husband is more interested, than perhaps her health.

**Delegate, NEPAL:**

Even in Nepal, in the hilly regions, seventy percent of the work is being done by the women. And in the plains region, about forty to fifty percent of the labor work is being done by women.

What I think is, only to combat all these problems, we should give emphasis on the education. Education is the only thing which make a difference. In the resolution we should mention very directly, how to counter this one-way education, and we should educate the women as well as men.

**Delegate, BANGLADESH:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I agree that women must be given due status because female population in our country is almost fifty percent. If you don't give them due status in decision-making, we can't progress, we can't advance. As you know, politically also, in our country our Prime Minister is a woman. And the leader of the opposition is also a woman.

And recently we have amended a law that is reserving seats for women, 33 percent, in a council. Women are going from door to door, begging votes, and are directly elected. This has given them certain status, for a ticket. I want to stress on one thing, poverty, which is happening in my country. Because of poverty there is unemployment and the poor purchasing power of large sections of population, political unrest, giving rise to food insecurity.

We are trying to allocate property to women, by educating our people, especially women, and the girls' literacy rate has doubled in these 20 years, giving them opportunity for income generation. Women in large numbers are taking small loans, and the recovery rate is very good. Having income and having a social status, these, I think is a very important factor. Thank you.

**Delegate, INDONESIA:**

The family planning program in Indonesia is one of the most important efforts to improve reproductive health, especially among women and children. The total fertility rate declined to about 2.48 births per woman in 1995, which time the contraceptive preference rate had reached about fifty percent.

And family planning to be offered as an integral part of the offer of reproductive health care program. In the development of economic necessities, women already became the subject of the development. In general, they are in the labor force, in the political field, and as government employers, even as entrepreneurs.

**Delegate, INDIA:**

Now there is, to speak the truth, there is no definite education or primary education policy either in the Government of India, or of the governments of the States. We have twenty-five States in India. There is no universal uniform primary or other education policy. Now if there is no uniformity in primary education policy, then giving education to the women's in India, particularly in the rural areas, it has become a mirage, it has become a moon-sign.

One is the development of agriculture in the rural sector of Indonesia. The other factor is said to be universalisation of primary education. If that is so, the benefit of that Indonesian experience should be taken by the Government of India, never mind which party is in control of the government in India.

**Ms. Alva:**

If I may just respond to what you've said. Primary education is in the state list. Now the new government has announced free education for women from primary to the graduation level. How it is going to be achieved, I don't know, but that is one of the commitments of the new government which has just taken over, that there will be free education for women up to graduation.

But the question is that it is not easy for us to just change the constitutional list which has given the primary responsibility for primary education to the states.

But there is one point I want to make clear, is that every now and then the international emphasis changes. For instance, after Cairo all the governments have been told, target free population policy. Now in India for many years we worked on certain targets being set for the states for population control. But after ICPD we have been told, a target free population policy. And if I were to talk of figures in India, in the northern states, almost fifty percent dropped in sterilisation and methods used after the targets were taken away.

Therefore every few years the international organisations decide countries must change policies, and by the time you reorient them you have already lost the momentum which you have build over the past. I think that this is something which we have to be concerned about in the Asian countries.

**Population and Gender Issues**  
**(Special focus on education of girls and employment of women)**

**Resource Person: Ms. Avabai B. Wadia**  
**President Emeritus, Family Planning Association of India**  
**Ex-President of IPPF**

**ORIGINS**

The fundamental basis for promoting measures for family planning is that it is one of the most effective means to enhance the health of the mother, the care of the child and also to provide for the economic stability of the family. It is a potent means by which to avoid the deleterious effects of pregnancies occurring too frequently and too soon.

India embarked on a family planning programme from the early 1950s with this basic aim and it continues to hold good. But at the same time, it was recognised that the growth of population was a factor which would seriously hamper systematic development to eliminate poverty and raise the level of living standards. This followed the results of India's 1951 Census which revealed that population was increasing by 5 million per annum. Our response was based on the best thinking prevailing at that time, namely, that family planning could also be a major instrument for tackling the problem of population growth, for it was felt that the micro-sized unit of the family could exert a powerful effect on the macro-size of population. Thus family planning found a place in the Health chapter right from the first Five Year Plan.

**DEMOGRAPHIC TRANSITION**

Over the years, an extensive programme has been developed and has gained a measure of success. The demographic transition (that is, the achievement of replacement level, or stabilisation of population) has already been accomplished by Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Goa, and will be achieved by some other States within the next few years.

The major problem now lies in the four huge northern States of UP, Bihar, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh where nearly 40% of the country's population lives and where poverty, economic backwardness, and social stagnation are rampant, and basic human needs woefully neglected.

The achievement of a replacement level on an-all India basis has now been placed at a date of 2016 by which time the population will have increased to 1263.5 million. This means that in 20 years from 1996, the increase will be 329.3 million - nearly as much as India's population at the time of Independence.

It is obvious that India simply cannot afford this slow pace of change which is placing it in the dubious position of becoming the largest population in the world, with only about 4% of its land area, the largest number of people below the poverty line and the largest number of illiterates.

We have lagged behind other Asian countries which adopted family planning and development programmes after us and have already achieved the desired results. There is much to learn from them, as well as from our own experiences. Many of these lessons have now come together in the Programme of Action adopted at the International Conference of Population and Development (ICPD) in Cairo in 1994.

#### ICPD PROGRAMME OF ACTION

A more holistic vision has been the central feature of ICPD where "population" has been translated into "people", and an approach which respects the individual and his/her choices has been adopted. While recognising the importance of population stabilisation, the approach towards tackling it has been broadened from one of counting numbers only, to its integration with developmental issues and on the quality of life of individuals, with recognition of social, economic and gender justice as part and parcel of those issues.

Population, poverty, environment, migration, gender issues and people's human rights are being brought into a synergy with complex, dynamic, interactions within the broad framework of sustainable development. The concept of development itself has now changed from regarding economic growth as the engine of change, to one where human and social development are of equal importance. It invokes a strategy where investing in people is essential for sustainable development, and their rights to education, health, gainful work and personal security are vital to progress. In this scenario, programmes to promote reproductive health where family planning and other related measures, as also education, and job opportunities, are the backbone. Although the needs of men are no less a part of reproductive health measures, very special attention must be directed to the rights and perspectives of women throughout their life cycle.

The ICPD has provided a blueprint for future action and has received endorsement from 183 Governments including India and particularly of NGOs who, in many respects, spearheaded the new approaches.

What does it signify for us in India ?

#### NEW INDIAN INITIATIVE

The acceptance of reproductive health inclusive of family planning is the corner stone of the new programme which the Government of India enunciated a few months ago as a REPRODUCTIVE AND CHILD HEALTH (RCH) initiative. The WHO has defined Reproductive Health as a: "condition of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not just absence of disease". It goes on to state that this implies that people have "the ability to reproduce, to regulate fertility and enjoy sexual relationships; that reproduction

has successful outcomes in infant and child survival, growth and development; and implies safe motherhood, safe fertility regulation, and safe sex."

This is a large expansion of the older, narrower programme for family planning and MCH, but one which can raise the health of the nation to the desired level. Furthermore, it exhorts that "All countries should strive to make accessible through the primary health-care system, reproductive health to all individuals of appropriate ages as soon as possible and no later than the year 2015".

The new approach now being put into position by Government has a totally new focus where planning has to start at village level with the participation of people and workers in framing a locally needs-based approach, with community involvement not only in planning but in monitoring and surveillance; an integrated package of services, which includes fertility regulation, maternal and child health and reproductive health; good quality of care and educating the community in good health practices and will be implemented with gender sensitive services for women, and men. The user-friendly approach will instill a respectful, caring attitude on the part of the provider, and several other measures which will need the inculcation of a new mindset and attitude on the part of the many thousands of providers, and their re-training. This will be no easy task.

#### GENDER ISSUES - A HIGHEST PRIORITY

The time has now come when gender issues must achieve the highest priority. While sex, pregnancy and child birth are biological factors, gender is a social and cultural variable and changes from time to time and place to place. Traditional gender roles of men and of women can be altered and can become a more effective means for the enjoyment of quality living for both men and women.

The first step has been taken in the 73<sup>rd</sup> and 74<sup>th</sup> Amendments to the Constitution. That nearly one million women are now elected members of Panchayats and many of them are Sarpanchs is a feature which can lead to a sea change in the whole manner of governance. What is more, the political power thus generated will affect the economic and social norms to an unprecedented extent. The empowerment of women must now be embedded in the mainstream of development itself and help to bring in a female perspective, which will ensure sustainable development since the hitherto left-out half of the nation will now be fully active and contributory.

Three fundamental propositions must guide us - firstly that gender equality and equity are vital ends in themselves and essential on their own merit; secondly, that they are integral elements in achieving full and sustainable development (including the stabilisation of population) and thirdly, that they are the pathway to women's achievement of full reproductive and sexual health, raising the whole level of the nation's health.

Women's empowerment, therefore can enable women to reach their full potential as human beings with basic human rights, and thus nearly one-half of the total population can be fully

energised. This is manifested in women becoming their own decision makers. Where health is concerned they can seek and receive full information, counseling and a choice of methods for fertility regulation, as well as in other aspects of reproductive health. They have full opportunities for education, at least up to secondary level; and for learning skills which can help in income generation; they must have, and be able to, exercise legal rights over holding property and getting access to credit and social security. They must feel safe and free from violence or harassment. They must have complete control over their own bodies and their physical, mental and emotional integrity.

Empowerment of women, therefore, is not a battle of the sexes, but a process leading to human rights for all, based on rationality and justice through equality and equity. In fact, male involvement in this process is vital in making it a success.

However, the situation in the country leaves much to be desired. When we talk of women we must start with the female embryo in her mother's womb, and the girl child.

#### CURRENT PROBLEMS

Today in free India, we face the appalling facts of discrimination against females starting from the very womb where, thanks to medical advances, the sex of the unborn child can be ascertained and the female fetus aborted simply because it is a female. This is done in some places only where such a process is available. An Act has been passed prohibiting this practice. But parents and family members living in an anti-female world, and unscrupulous doctors, are continuing to violate the law. They make excuses, such as the girl child is a liability in terms of dowry and moving into another family on marriage.

In such a case, it is the evil of dowry and the helpless condition of the girl child that must be vigorously tackled, and not eliminating the innocent fetus. This is a vast field for political and social action by the enlightened and compassionate sections of the people.

The sex ratio in India shows that there are only 927 females to males whereas the norm is for females to exceed males. Although the female is the stronger at birth and survival than the male, in India this natural order is reversed. The girl infant gets less breast feeding, nutrition and care, so causing greater mortality of female than male children between the ages of 1 to 5. The girl child is programmed from birth to feel and act as an inferior and to have a low self-esteem. She gets less food, less health care, and although now, the number of girls in primary education is growing, the adult literacy rate among women aged 15 plus is only about 40%, that is, there are 190 million illiterate women - the largest in the world. At every step this practice of "less for females than males" continues.

Early marriage for girls is a huge handicap to their education and development. The plea made is that she is not "safe and protected" otherwise. This is again a reflection on the male attitude where girls are considered fair prey. It is, therefore, this attitude that must change and not that girls should be deprived and made to suffer.

Marriages at young ages lead to high risk pregnancies with more deaths and morbidity. A girl under 20 years of age is still not fully developed physically, especially in her reproductive functions. Fortunately, the pernicious practice of children giving birth to children is changing; but even currently, 39% of girls are married between the ages of 15 to 19 (and 21% of rural and 6% of urban girls are married before age 15). No less than 17% of all births take place in this low age group of married girls.

The low status and regard for girls and women is nowhere more demonstrated than in maternal and child care. India has an appalling level of maternal mortality. It is estimated that between 400 to 500 women out of 100,000 die in childbirth or pregnancy-related causes. In Kerala the figure is 87, but in Orissa it is a shocking 738. In Europe it is well under 10. The tragedy is that these are avoidable deaths as has been proved in the developed countries.

Only 34% of all deliveries are attended by a trained midwife or doctor, and 74% of all deliveries take place at home. Antenatal care is the time when unsafe birth or complications likely on delivery can be identified, but only 62% women get it (In Kerala it is 97%, Tamil Nadu 94%, Maharashtra more than 80%). But the average is dragged down by the northern States. The infant mortality rate in India is 74 per 1000 live births. Again, in Kerala, it is 16, and 103 in Orissa. This is linked in many ways to maternal mortality and morbidity.

It is a very significant correlation that in the States where population growth has been stabilised, the indices for the health and education of girls and women are also high. Both these transformations have moved simultaneously, and each has strongly influenced the other.

In Kerala, where the TFR of 2.1 was reached in 1988, female literacy is at a high of 81% and maternal mortality at 87 per 100,000 and infant mortality rate 16, whereas the all India figure is a low 43%. There is a demonstrable interconnectedness between the empowerment of women, and that where the girl child and women get equitable treatment in health, education and social practices, there the stabilisation of population can also be achieved.

#### THE ICPD

The ICPD has laid down certain dates (up to 20 years) by which some of these aspects must be tackled, but it is doubtful that many of the developing countries will be able to achieve them. For instance, all countries should reduce mortality and morbidity and make primary and reproductive health care universally available by 2000. They should aim to achieve by 2005 a life expectancy at birth greater than 70 years and by 2015 greater than 75, but countries with highest levels of mortality should aim for life expectancy greater than 65 years and greater than 70 years by 2015.

Countries should strive to reduce their infant and child mortality rates by one-third, or to 50 to 70 per 1000 live births (whichever is less) by 2000. By 2005, countries with intermediate levels should reduce these infant mortality rates to below 50 and an under-5

years mortality rate below 60 deaths per 1000 live births. By 2015, all countries should strive to achieve an IMR below 35 and an under-5 years rate below 45 per 1000.

ICPD calls for a reduction in maternal mortality by one half of the 1990 levels by the year 2000 and a further half by 2015. Countries with intermediate levels should aim at reducing the maternal mortality below 100 and by 2015 below 60. Countries with the highest levels of maternal mortality should strive for a rate below 125 by 2005 and below 75 by 2015. Maternal morbidity must go down to levels where they are no longer a public health problem.

These goals will need the utmost efforts. Here are vast areas of concern for parliamentarians and the people in many of our countries, and especially India.

**Session 4**

**Food Security and Social Equity in Asia**

**[11:15-12:45]**

## **Food Security and Social Equity in Asia**

**Chairperson: Mr. Balram Jakhar, M.P.**  
**Former Minister of Agriculture**

**Resource Person: Senator Dr. T. Marimuthu**  
**Professor, University of Malaysia**

Food Security is defined as the provision of an adequate supply of food for all people at all times to lead a healthy life. That is, food security is the ability of countries to meet target consumption levels. The determination of target consumption levels is dependent on the food policy of each of the countries. The essential determinants of food security are the accessibility to food, availability of food and the risks related to either access or availability.

Household food security is the ability of the household to secure enough food to ensure adequate dietary intake for all its members.

Most of the developing countries food policy deals with the problem of persistent poverty, chronic malnutrition and the short-term variability of entitlements of consumers to food. Food insecurity then arises from real income fluctuations which affect the individuals ability to obtain adequate food for consumption.

For the urban population, the major cause of food security problem is the fluctuations in staple food prices. These price fluctuations arise from the fluctuations in food production which is affected by natural disasters such as floods, droughts, earthquakes as well as wars and changes in food policies.

For the rural population, the household incomes are directly affected by the fluctuations in their own production as a result of climatic uncertainty. Poverty is the main determinant of chronic food security; the poor do not have adequate means to gain access to food in the quantities needed for a healthy life.

Generally the following strategies are considered to solve the food insecurity problem; (i) grain stockpiles; (ii) trade policies; (iii) financial approaches to alleviate the foreign-exchange constraint; (iv) consumption adjustment in the developed countries and (v) interventions in the capital market and in the pricing and distribution of food for vulnerable groups.

Others have put forward the following for policy-strategies for food security: (i) Macroeconomics policy and development strategies; (ii) Storage and trade oriented policies for stabilisation; (iii) Production oriented policies and programmes; (iv) Labour intensive public works; (v) Credit; (vi) Targeted feeding, food stamps & food subsidies; and (vii) Emergency relief programs.

The successful implementation of the above strategies will no doubt lead to the reduction of food insecurity and increase social equity amongst the population. The respective governments must play a key role in achieving food security through formulating relevant policies and monitoring their implementation and progress.

The main thrust of the countries in Asia and the Pacific is to increase the productivity of the agricultural sector thus reducing the poverty and the attendant chronic undernutrition amongst the agricultural population.

According to the FAO Regional Commission on Food Security for Asia and the Pacific, the Region is said to have made significant progress towards alleviating chronic undernutrition. In East Asia (including South East Asia) dietary energy supply (DES) per capita rose from 2050 to 2670 cal in two decades ending 1990-92. This reduced the undernourished from 41 to 16 percent of the sub-region's population. In absolute numbers from 468 to 262 million persons. This is an impressive achievement. According to FAO's projections the DES is expected to reach 3040 cal per day by the year 2010.

At this relatively high level, only five percent of the sub-regions 2.07 billion population or 105 million people would remain undernourished.

In spite of these laudable efforts FAO's projections show that there would still be 344 million persons in the Asia Pacific Region undernourished mainly in the Low Income Food Deficit Countries (LIFDC's) by the year 2010. Although the world produces enough food for all its inhabitants yet over 800 million people go to bed hungry because of income inequality and poverty. Reducing income maldistribution and poverty is therefore the key to achievement of food security for all.

But since the World Food Summit (WFS) in November 1996, comprehensive country strategies have been formulated for the eradication poverty and hunger especially in the LIFDC's. These strategies received a boost by the sustained economic growth of the Asian and the Pacific region which recorded strong GDP growth with low annual inflation rates, high gross domestic savings as well as maintaining exchange rate stability.

The massive inflow of foreign capital into the Region also improved the prospects for food security especially in China, India and Indonesia. Between 1981-86, annual foreign direct investment (FDI) in Asia was only US\$5.2 billion but in 1994 the FDI stood at US\$59 billion.

Although such foreign investments were in the non-agricultural sector but with the opening up of this sector to foreign investment, selected industries have benefited by this liberalisation. Selected industries such as livestock feed, seed and machinery in China, palm oil in Philippines; aquaculture in India; food processing in Malaysia; livestock feed and broilers in Indonesia and rice in Vietnam have been the focus of foreign investment.

Another major development that improved food security prospects was the rising labour mobility from the small farm sector to the manufacturing and service sectors with the country. This has not only improved the productivity of the farm but also has increased the

incomes of the migrants well. There are also large number of foreign migrant workers in Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand. The incomes by the these migrant workers which is repatriated to their respective families have certainly improved the food security situation and has contributed towards poverty alleviation.

Unfortunately since the economic meltdown of the East Asian countries the repatriation of income of these migrant workers has not only decreased significantly but the host countries such as Malaysia, Thailand and Singapore are sending back these foreign workers to their respective countries. This situation will further exacerbate the economic problems of these countries.

For example, Indonesia is reported to be facing acute food shortages due to an ongoing draught and deepening economic problems. A report by the UN agency said that 7.5 million people are experiencing problems of food insecurity till early next year.

Since the World Food Summit in Rome at which 186 heads of government and their representatives pledged to reduce hunger and improve food security, the situation has not changed for the better. World food security has instead deteriorated. In fact, success stories in food security have become basket cases. Natural causes and socio-economic and political factors have affected all the 3 prerequisites of food security - availability of food, accessibility to supply and stability of prices. El Niño has struck with a ferocity unknown in living memory and caused drought, crop failures, poverty and hunger. The currency turmoil in East Asia have brought so-called economic miracles to their knees, thrown millions out of work, and hence into penury and food insecurity.

It is in this grim context that we now look at food security and social equity.

Drought, forest fires and the haze which choked South East Asia last year and which is upon us once again after a short respite, has been blamed on the El Niño phenomenon. The length and severity of this phenomenon this time has been attributed by some scientists to global climate change, the result of emission of green house gases.

Six years after the Earth Summit the Developed Countries which are responsible for most of the emission have not taken satisfactory measures to change the situation. Commercial interests in the affected regions have to bear their share of the responsibility. Companies granted vast tracks of forests to turn into plantations sought the easy way out by burning. Many of the fires started went out of control and raging fires swept through pristine rainforests, the carbon sinks and repository of biodiversity of the earth. When it all started the finger was pointed out at swidden agriculturists but the truth prevailed in the end. When the effects of forests fires crossed boundaries the truth had to be told. I raise the role of big companies in this sorry business to highlight the accelerating trend to corporatisation and bigness, pushed by globalisation, and its impact on social equity.

With the borderless world brought about by market opening measures under WTO the response has been to be competitive, which means you must have economies of scale and corporatise, the family farm or business has no chance against transnational corporations.

While big corporations and their efficiencies in production have created jobs their obsession with the bottom line which up to now is purely financial, has its downside. Their very bigness means a bigger footprint, a bigger impact on communities and the environment, and therefore the need for a greater sense of responsibility and accountability, not just to their shareholders. This brings me to the need for environmental accounting, much talked about but hitherto not acted upon.

Traditional farming communities have over time a wealth of local knowledge of the environment and live in greater harmony with it and traditional forms of farming may not be so inefficient compared with so called modern farming when externalities are accounted for.

Capitalism is on the ascendant globally as never before with the demise of the Soviet Bloc. In developing world and former centrally planned economies privatisation and corporatisation is the clarion call. The positive side is the greater efficiencies and productivity seen in some cases and in concentration of wealth in groups of elites, some of it attendant on crony capitalism. In some cases privatisation has not resulted in added value but instead led to asset stripping and higher costs to the public, and more appropriately called privatisation, with attendant loss of jobs and greater food insecurity.

The capitalists I have referred to up to now include among them entrepreneurs who at least are seen to be creating wealth through manufacturing and planting. There is another group in the nebulous world of international finance the currency traders and speculators. These are the people, who with the enormous leverage of hedge funds, can move funds across borders instantaneously and have the power to bring down currency and equity values irrespective of fundamentals. The economic meltdown of the once booming economies of South East Asia and South Korea is their handiwork. In one swoop the wealth of these nations have been reduced by 30% to 70%.

International financial institutions established to regulate the world financial system and which should come to the aid of countries in trouble have been powerless and in fact are seen as tools of capitalists and countries they come from.

As Mickey Kantor, the former Commerce Secretary of the US, has said in a speech to European businessmen after the Asian crisis started the IMF can now be used as a battering ram to break into markets hitherto out of bounds to them. Structural adjustment programmes mandated by IMF on nations unfortunate enough to need IMF assistance, involving crippling interest rates, and cuts in social spending invariably bring more misery to the poor.

The call for a New International Economic Order was made over two decades ago but was unanswered. The need for this change is as urgent if not more so than when the call was first made. The Malaysian Prime Minister has called for regulation of currency trading when financial turbulence first hit the region. It was scoffed at but after the so-called contagion effect spread to the very heart of capitalism - the New York Stock Exchange the

suggestion received attention from IMF. The 'Tobin tax' - a tax on currency transactions which goes into a fund for development in poor countries, is worthy of implementation. This is particularly so since development aid from developed countries has been decreasing. The target for development aid set by the United Nations in the 70's of 1% GDP of developed countries has not been met.

Food scarcity and price escalation has been attendant on the currency turmoil. How can this be when agriculture is still a big sector of the economies affected? The sad fact is that globalisation has also led to a concentration on export of industrial commodities and westernisation of diet. When bread is the first food of the day, Coca Cola, the preferred thirst quencher and McDonald hamburgers and Kentucky Fried Chicken the food of choice of school children, the dependence on developed countries for food by developing countries is inevitable. The message of nutritionists of the healthy Asian diet compared with the Western diet is drowned in the blitz of fast food commercials.

If any good is to come out the economic turbulence in Asia it is that we have to be more self reliant in food and cannot neglect domestic food production and its means of production.

In Malaysia we have always had an open economy and have imported food from the cheapest sources, which included food produced in the developed world with heavy subsidies. The precipitous drop in the value of our currency meant a corresponding shooting up of food prices and costs of production. As always it is the poor who suffer the most, as a bigger portion of their income is spent on food. The industrialisation of food production on the Western model meant reliance on inputs of chemicals as well as equipment and machinery from the West and marginalisation of small holders.

The measures we have taken to meet the challenges of these turbulent times include changing consumption habits, promoting domestic food production to replace imports, ensuring the maintenance of natural resources of agriculture, and promoting production methods which are knowledge based. We hope these will not just benefit our balance of payments but also increase opportunities for food production in rural areas, as well as promote more environment friendly and therefore more sustainable production methods.

It is not our intention to be fully self sufficient in food - that does not guarantee food security and not in our best interest. We do feel that it can be enhanced by greater regional self-reliance in food. As a high cost producer and with limited natural resources compared with some of our neighbours it makes sense for us to source from them, rather than from half way around the world, wherever possible. The reduction of " food miles" would be a positive result.

To increase supply from our neighbours we are encouraging investment in food production in neighbouring countries in the spirit of " Prosper Thy Neighbours" advocated by our Prime Minister, Dato Seri Dr. Mahathir Mohamad, as well as helping ourselves by improving our food security. In the ASEAN countries we have also agreed to trading in our own

currencies and to Bilateral Payments Arrangements to insulate ourselves against the vagaries of fluctuating currency values. I believe what Malaysia has gone through has lessons for other countries which have not been affected by economic turbulence.

Malaysia has always been a proponent of South-South Cooperation. There is much we can learn from one another in the field of food security and poverty reduction. We have shared our development experiences through the Malaysian Technical Cooperation Programme and we have also learned from other developing countries. A fine example of the latter is the Grameen Bank model of giving credit to the poorest of the poor. To date this is the most successful method of poverty redressal through credit in Malaysia.

(Assistance rendered by Mr. Lim Heng Boon of the Ministry of Agriculture, Malaysia in the preparation of this paper is gratefully acknowledged)

## **Characteristics of the International Rice Market and the New Equitable and Sustainable Rule for International Trade of Rice and Food**

**Chairperson: Senator Datuk H. Ibrahim Ali  
Deputy Secretary General, AFPPD (Malaysia)**

**Resource Person : Dr. Hiroshi Tsujii  
Professor, Graduate School of Agriculture Kyoto University**

### **1. Introduction**

I am honored to be able to present my idea on a new equitable and sustainable international trade rule and agricultural policy of rice and agricultural products for Asian countries at this 14th Asian Parliamentarians' Meeting on Population and Development (APMPD). This new trade rule is the necessary modification of the free trade rule that has strongly influenced the recent international trade negotiations of agricultural products from the view point of Asia. As discussed yesterday, population explosion will continue until year 2020, and resource and technology constraints on food supply will become severer, food shortage problem will probably worsen and the world 800 million starved who concentrates in Asia will probably be as large in the 21st century.

For the huge 500million Asian starved and about 2 billion Asians, rice is the staple food, the necessity and the wage goods. Rice, wheat and maize are three most important cereals to the human being on the globe. Among them and among all cereals and beans, the world rice market has very special characteristics, and these characteristics influence strongly the rice policies of Asian countries and cause the need for modification of the free trade rule. I would like to show in this paper how the international rice market are different from the markets of the other cereals, and how these differences cause the need for the modification of the free trade rule.

### **2. Special Characteristics of the World Rice Market**

#### **2.1 Concentration of Rice Production and Consumption in Asia and SelfSufficiency**

Rice production and consumption are strongly concentrated in Asia in comparison with other major cereals such as wheat and maize. Fig 1-1 shows that about 90% of the world production and consumption of rice is concentrated in Asia while production and consumption of wheat and maize are globally distributed. Another important characteristics in the world rice market is the selfsufficiency in rice, i. e. the most of rice produced in Asia is consumed there as Fig 1-1 shows. As will be explained later, this characteristic holds not only at the level of Asian continent, but also at the levels of each Asian farm, village and country.

This property of self-sufficiency does not hold in the case of wheat and maize. As Fig 1-2 and 1-3 show, these two globally important cereals are produced much more than necessary in high income continents, i. e. North and Central America and Europe, and the surpluses have been exported from these continents to low income agricultural continents such as Asia, Africa and South America. An important point to make is that these surpluses are produced by high agricultural protection in America and Europe, and thus they must be exported with heavy export subsidies, resulting in unfair depression of cereal prices and farm income of low income countries.

## 2.2 The Thin, Unstable and Unreliable International Rice Trade Market

The international rice trade market is very thin. In other words, while 12-29 percent of the world's output of wheat, coarse grains and soybean are exported, this percentage for rice has been only 3-4 percent as Fig 2 shows. This is because more than 90 percent of the world rice production is concentrated in Asia, and most Asian countries, in view of the importance of rice as the staple food, necessary goods and wage goods, have tried hard to reach self-sufficiency in rice and many had succeeded it and then maintained it by many policy measures. Consequently there has been no strong mechanism in the world whereby international rice transactions can achieve sustained growth, while there were such mechanisms for wheat and maize.<sup>1)</sup>

The world rice trade price has been extraordinarily more unstable after the World War II compared with the wheat price as shown in Fig 3. The failures of monsoon (1965, 1966, 1973 and 1987) and East Asian cool weather (1980 and 1993) which have occurred almost every seven years caused severe Asia-wide droughts and East Asian cold damages, and these droughts and cold damages are reflected by peaks of the international price of rice in the Figure. Why world rice trade market is so unstable? Firstly, because it is very thin as described just above. Secondly, because of the importance of rice to Asian people the Asian countries have separated domestic and international rice markets by trade policy interventions, and they have tried hard to stabilize domestic rice price using the very thin international rice trade market as the source of rice imports when their domestic rice production decreases, and as the destination of rice export when their rice are in bumper crop. Consequently, the more domestic rice price stabilized, the more the international rice price destabilized.

## 2.3 Self-Sufficiency as an Important Market Principle and Policy Goal

As mentioned above, self-sufficiency is the basic market and policy principle not only in Asian continent but also in Asian rice importing countries, provinces, villages and farms. Japanese farmers as well as Thai and other Asian farmers produce their rice for themselves and their relatives to eat. I observed in my survey that Thai farmers in the Northeastern Region have tried to provide their increasing family members with rice by expanding their paddy fields into the forest, migrating to new branch villages for reclaiming new paddy fields from forest or increasing slowly the application of expensive chemical fertilizers to their degrading sandy paddy fields. My investigation of rice policies of Asian rice

importing countries during the post World War II years has regularly shown that the attainment of rice self-sufficiency and maintaining it after reaching it is the important policy objective of these countries. <sup>2)</sup>

Most American rice growers told me in my field surveys that they do not eat the rice they produce and thus they do not know the taste of it. They produce their rice not for them to eat but to sell. I judge from my investigation of American rice policy that the United States produce her rice for the inherent purpose of increasing her rice export.

#### 2.4 The Important National Policy Objective of Domestic Rice Price and Supply Stabilization

If retail rice price soars in Asian countries political disorder, change of government or coup d'etat results. Thus rice is called the political goods in Asia. Examples are skyrocketing of rice price in Jakarta in the middle of the sixties, in Saigon in 1974 and in the Philippines in 1995. The author personally experienced rice crisis with disappearance of rice from the shelves of retail shops in Bangkok in 1973, riots and a coup. Severe cold damage led to severe shortage of japonica rice and rice panic in Japan in early 1994 and in Korea in 1981. The most Asian countries have set stabilization of domestic rice price and supply as one of the most important national policy goals. The international rice trade market is very thin, unstable and unreliable as described above, Asian countries cannot depend on it as the major source of their rice supply in order to achieve the stabilization objective. Instead, they used the rice self-sufficiency policy. Even Thailand, the largest rice exporting country, had tried very hard to stabilize her domestic rice price against the extremely volatile international rice price utilizing rice export tax (so called rice premium) policy until early eighties. <sup>3)</sup>

#### 2.5 Mutually Enforcing Relationship between Rice Self-sufficiency Policy and Thin International Rice Trade Market

In the Asian rice economy thin international rice trade market and self-sufficiency policy enforce each other. Since the international rice trade market is thin, unstable and unreliable, Asian countries cannot depend on the international rice market for the purpose of stabilization of domestic rice price and supply and resort to the self-sufficiency policy. In turn, the international rice market cannot have a major endogenous mechanism to increase its volume of trade. Thus the market stays thin. Consequently thinness and unreliability of the world rice trade market will continue in the future.

### 3. The Need for a New Equitable and Sustainable Trade Rule from the View Point of Asian Rice

#### 3.1 The Rule of the Benefit of Free Trade

The rule of the benefit of free trade or the hypothesis of comparative cost developed by David Ricardo early 19th century postulates that each country's specializing in the production of relatively low production cost products and conducting free trade of these

products maximizes economic welfare of consumers and profit of producers in all the nations. This theory holds only if such very strong simplifying conditions as (1)existence of reliable and stable market for the products, (2)competitiveness of the market, (3)nonexistence of risk and risk aversion, (4)nonexistence of the poor and the hungry, (5)no externalities, etc. are assumed. But these assumptions do not generally holds in the real world, and especially so in the world rice market.<sup>4)</sup> This is probably the case for other staple cereals in the developing countries.

### 3.2 Non Existence of the Reliable and Relatively Stable International Rice Trade Market

As shown above the international rice trade market is very thin, unstable and unreliable. It is separated from national rice markets. When widespread droughts in tropical Asian or cold damages in East Asia occur, large amount of rice is imported by the countries hit by these natural calamities and international rice trade price skyrockets. When bumper rice crop occurs in Asian countries the international rice price plummets because of rice export increase. The continuous existence of the international rice trade market is dubious. In that thin market, japonica rice trade market has been extraordinary thin covering only about 10%(1.5 million tons) of all the rice traded. East Asian countries such as Japan and Korea that specialize in production and consumption of japonica rice imported very large amount of japonica rice after they had experienced severe cold damages. Japan imported 2.5 million tons in 1994 and Korea 2.6 million tons in 1981 that just cannot be accommodated by the extremely thin international japonica rice trade market, and the international trade price of rice more than doubled in 4 months from late 1993 to early 1994 as shown by Fig 4. In this case we can say that the international japonica trade market disappeared for some time period.

### 3.3 The Oligopolistic International Rice Trade Market

The international rice trade market is in a state of oligopoly as the rice exports by the three to six major rice exporting countries (Thailand, U.S.A., Vietnam, Myanmar, Pakistan and China) have occupied about 80% of the world total rice trade since late 19th century. The international trade theory tells us that not free trade but the optimum tariff is the first-best policy for oligopolists.<sup>5)</sup> The famous rice export tax (Rice Premium) policy of Thailand is a good example.<sup>6)</sup> These oligopolistic rice exporters tend to pursue not free trade policy but oligopolistic rice trade policies which benefit them most. A report of the GATT office identified that 54% of the total benefit of Uruguay Round agricultural agreement will be captured by the USA and Europe, while only 27% by low income countries.<sup>7)</sup>

### 3.4 The Crisis to the Huge Asian Poor and Hungry Caused by the Liberalization of Rice Trade

As mentioned above, Japan's emergency rice import from October 1993 after her severe cold damage doubled the export and wholesale prices of Thai rice within four months as Fig 4 shows. The farm gate and retail prices of Thai rice increased 33% and 7.1% respectively from August 1993 to February 1994. The retail prices of the low and medium quality rice in Indonesia started to increase sharply also from October 1993 as shown in Fig

5. The low and medium quality rice are the staple food and major energy source of the huge poor in Indonesia. Korean cold damage in 1980 and subsequent rice import caused international rice trade price to increase by 45% from 1979 to 1981.

Liberalization of national and international rice markets, that is the objective of the Uruguay Round agricultural trade agreement and of the WTO system, will result in large and increasing amount of rice import through minimum access by high production cost and high income countries such as Japan, Korea and probably by America. This rice import will raise greatly the international rice trade price and to a lesser extent the domestic rice prices in Asian developing countries. The 500 million hungry and the huge poor concentrated in Asia must suffer greatly from this rice price rise.<sup>8)</sup>

The rice import by high income countries will increase rice price instability in Asia, that is a great dis utility to the Asians who prefer strongly rice price stability as explained above. The rule of free trade does not take into account the aspect of instability or risk aspect in the case of Asian rice market.

### 3.5 Rice Trade Liberalization Reduces the Value of Externalities to the Asian People

Rice is the most important crop in all monsoon Asian countries. Probably about 2 billion people in Asia produce rice and eat rice as their staple food and engaged in marketing and other activities related to rice. In rural Asia activities related to rice production and consumption occupy dominant part of the life of rural people, and thus rice is called the grain of life. To both rural and urban people in Asia rice is the necessity and the political goods, and in low income countries in Asia it is the wage goods. Thus rice production and consumption in Asian countries have great external or non-economic benefits to the Asian people such as (1)the value of their existence such as rural scenery, rural culture and appropriate industrial structure and spatial distribution of agriculture and industry, (2)sustainable utilization of natural resources such as soil and water and maintenance of natural environment, (3)flood control and water conservation and (4)domestic rice price and supply stabilization and political stability by maintaining rice self-sufficiency policy. The rule of free trade do not take into account these externalities. If this rule is applied to rice, rice production of many Asian rice importing countries will be reduced considerably and the rice externalities will be lost.

## 4. Conclusion

Rice is the crop in Asia. About 2 billion people in Asia produce and eat rice as their staple food. About 90% of the world production and consumption of rice is concentrated in Asia. Rice is the necessity, the wage goods, the grain of life and the political goods in the developing Asian countries. In order to maintain stabilization of domestic price and supply of rice, most Asian countries have pursued the rice self-sufficiency and stabilization policy. Because of this policy there has been no endogenous mechanism to increase the size of the

international trade of rice in Asia and the world. Thus the international trade market of rice has been very thin in comparison with other major cereals.

Because the international rice trade market is very thin, it is unstable and unreliable. Thus Asian countries pursued their self-sufficiency policy. The thinness, instability and unreliability of the market and self-sufficiency policy of the Asian countries mutually enforce each other, and thus these characteristics of the international rice trade market will be maintained into the 21st century.

Because the international rice trade market is very thin, droughts in tropical Asia and cold damages in East Asia have often caused extreme variations in the world rice trade price. Thus continuous existence of the relatively stable world rice trade market is dubious, and the market sometimes disappears.

The Uruguay Round agricultural trade agreement which operates under the rule of free trade of the GATT and the WTO, will force the world and national rice markets to liberalize and will increase rice import by high production cost and high income countries such as Japan and Korea in the 21st century. The thinness of the international rice trade market will be maintained, and the international trade price of rice will increase considerably. Then the domestic rice prices in Asian countries will also increase.<sup>9)</sup> This will cause severe hardship to the huge rice eating poor and hungry concentrated in Asia. This rice import increase will raise the variability of world rice price which is a great dis utility to the Asians.

Rice economy and rice policy in Asian countries have great external benefits to the Asian people. The application of the rule of free trade under the WTO will decrease considerably or wipe out rice production in many Asian countries. This will lead to great loss of these external benefits.

The severe cereals shortage in year 2020 is forecast by the author<sup>10)</sup> based on such long run characteristics as severe constraints on natural resources and agricultural technological knowledge as reflected in the fast slowdown of the cereals yield growth shown in the Table 1, and population explosion, the shift of peoples' consumption pattern from carbohydrates to animal protein foods and fast increase in the world demand for feed. The rule of free trade is the short run hypothesis of neoclassical economics that does not take into account those long run constraints and factors.

If the past socioeconomic trend continues, Japanese self-sufficiency ratio for cereals is forecast to decline from already low 29% in 1993 to 21% in year 2020. Pursuing the short run profit and welfare maximization which is consistent with the rule of free trade, Japan has increased imports of agricultural, forestry and fishery products at much faster speed than European countries, became the largest importer of these products in the world and decreased her self-sufficiency levels for these products to the lowest level among the high income countries. Simultaneously, Japanese agricultural technology has changed from the sustainable one depending more on organic fertilizer to the modern technology depending

more on chemical fertilizer, pesticide, insecticide and agricultural machinery. This change increased agricultural production in the short run, but degraded soil, polluted soil and water and destroyed environment in the long run. The modern technology depends on fossil fuel and thus is not sustainable. The fast increase of Japan's import of primary products caused severe equity and environmental problems in foreign countries, such as rice price rise, coastal environmental destruction and tropical forest destruction. In order to mitigate these problems, Japan should restrain excessive import of agricultural, forestry and fishery products, increase self-sufficiency ratios for the primary products and shift to sustainable agricultural technology which are consistent with a new rule of sustainable and equitable trade.

The rule of the benefit of free trade holds only in the short run based on such assumptions as existence and maintenance of the market in question, perfect competition, no biased income distribution or non existence of the huge poor and the hungry, non existence of risk and risk aversion, and no externalities. But these assumptions do not hold especially in the world rice market as expressed in this paper. The thin, unstable and unreliable international rice trade market will be maintained in the 21st century because the thinness and self-sufficient policy of Asian countries will be mutually enforcing between them, and thus existence of the stable world rice trade market is dubious. When rice trade is liberalized, the world rice prices will rise considerably and the huge poor and hungry concentrated in Asia will suffer very much, the instability of international and domestic prices of rice will be increased which will reduce the welfare of risk averse Asian people and the great externalities of rice economy and rice policy in Asian countries will be lost. In the long run it is projected that severe constraints on natural resources and rice technology, population explosion and economic growth will bring about a large shortage in rice and other cereals in year 2020.<sup>11)</sup> Consequently the hypothesis of benefit of free trade does not hold in the case of rice and it must be modified to a rule of stability oriented, equitable and sustainable trade which is consistent with the rice self-sufficiency policy. For the instability in the international rice trade market an institution such as international and national buffer stock schemes must be instituted.

## Notes

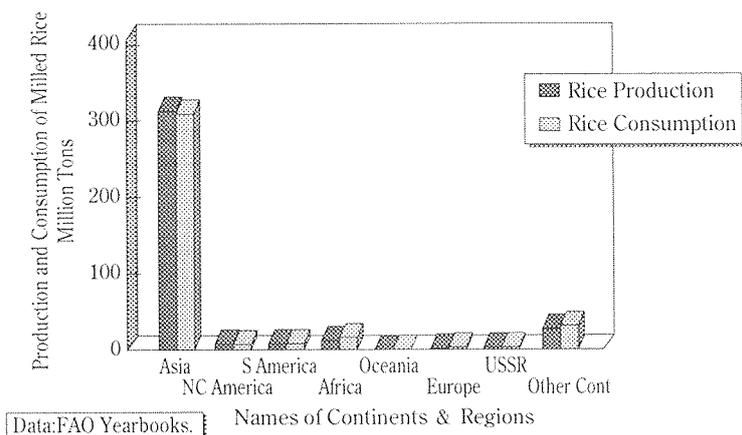
- 1) Ammar Siamwalla and D. Haykin, (1985): Structure, Performance and Conducts in the International Rice Market, Research Report No., International Food Policy Research Institute; Hiroshi Tsujii, (1988): World Rice Warfare (In Japanese), Tokyo: Ienohikari Pub. Co.
- 2) Hiroshi Tsujii, (1997): World Food Uncertainty and a Vision of Japanese Agriculture in the 21st Century (In Japanese), Tokyo: Ienohikari Pub. Co.
- 3) Hiroshi Tsujii, (June 1977): "An Economic and Institutional Analysis of the Rice Export Policy of Thailand: With Special Reference to the Rice Premium Policy," The Developing Economies, 15-2, pp.202-220.
- 4) For example, Mitiades Chacholiades, (1978): International Trade Theory and Policy, New York: McGraw-Hill.
- 5) Ibid.
- 6) Hiroshi Tsujii, "The Rice Export Policy of Thailand," The Developing Economies, 15-2, pp.202-220.
- 7) Reported in the Nikkei Newspaper.
- 8) By a simple econometric model I estimated this price rise to be about 100% during 1993-2000.
- 9) Hiroshi Tsujii, (November 1996): "Asian Food Demand and Supply in the 21st Century (in Japanese)," Sekai, Iwanami Publishing Co.
- 10) Hiroshi Tsujii, (1997): "Food Supply and Demand in the Year 2020 and Japan's Agricultural Policy," Chapter 6 of The Asian Population and Development Association (APDA), Population and Food Strategy for 21st Century-Asia and World-, Tokyo: APDA, pp.125-158.
- 11) Hiroshi Tsujii, (June,1996): "Uncertainties in the Food Demand and Supply in Asia (in Japanese)," Nogyo to Keizai, 61-9, pp.52-62; Lester Brown, (1994): Full House, New York: Norton; and The World Resources Institute, (1994): World Resources 1994-95, New York: Oxford University Press.

**Table 1 Recent Stagnation in the Annual Growth Rate in the Yield of Major Cerials in the World**

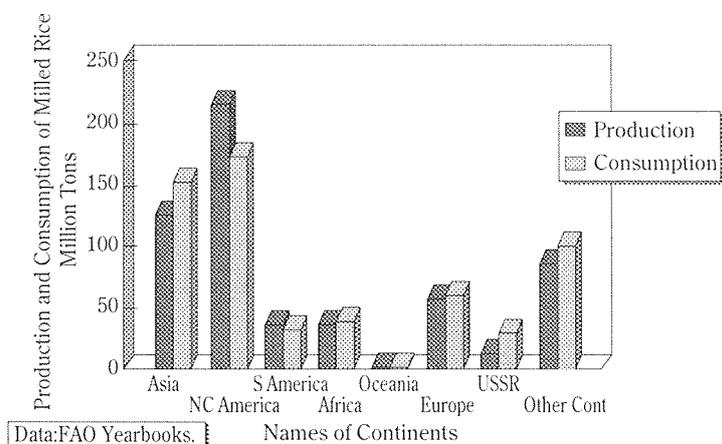
Unit: %

	All Cerials	Paddy Rice	Wheat	Maize	Barley
61/70	0.0302	0.0272	0.0361	0.0217	0.0346
70/85	0.0241	0.0213	0.0250	0.0312	0.0126
85/96	0.0120	0.0122	0.0144	0.0090	0.0063

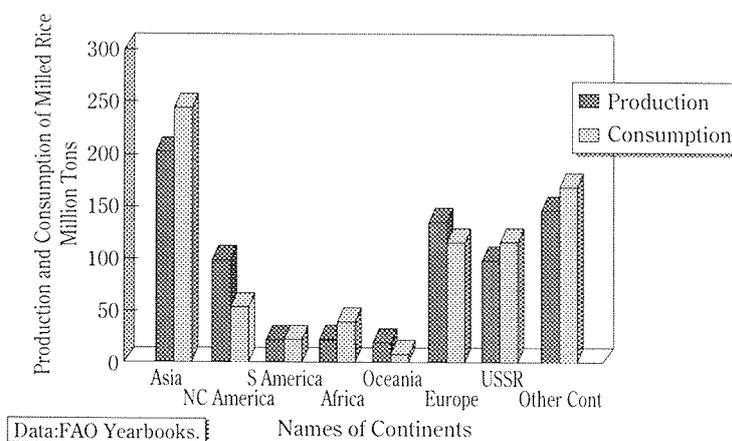
**Fig. 1-1 Concentration and Self Sufficiency of Rice in Asia**



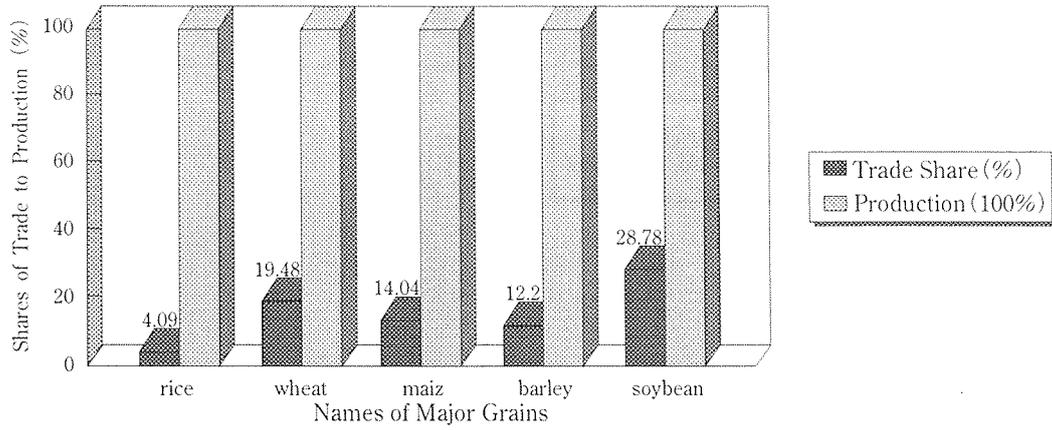
**Fig. 1-2 Maize Production & Consumption by Continent**



**Fig. 1-3 Wheat Production & Consumption by Continent**

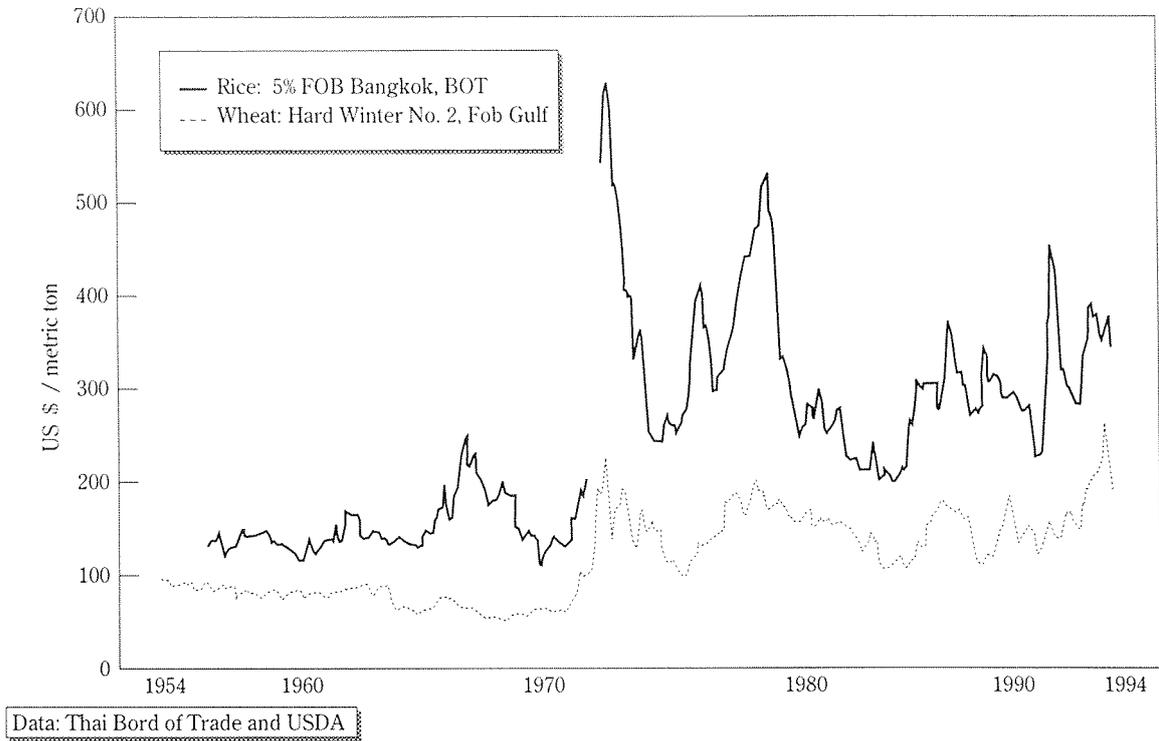


**Fig. 2 Very Thin World Rice Trade Market**

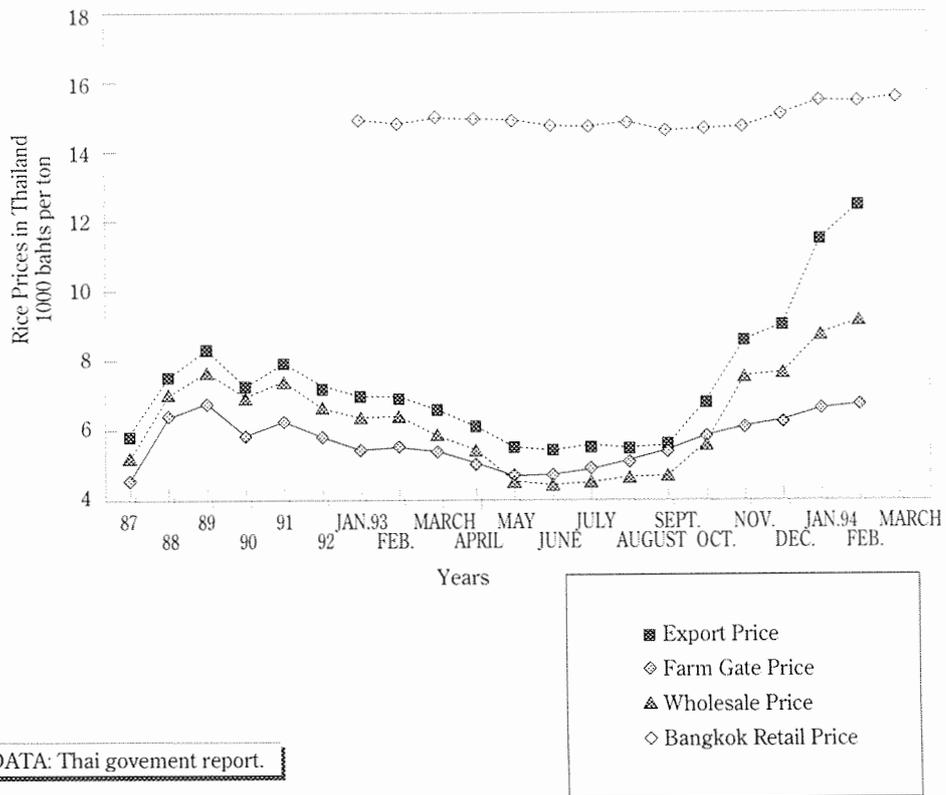


FAO, Trade Yearbook & Production Yearbook, 1987

**Fig. 3 Extremely Unstable World Rice Trade Market  
Comparing with Wheat Trade Market**

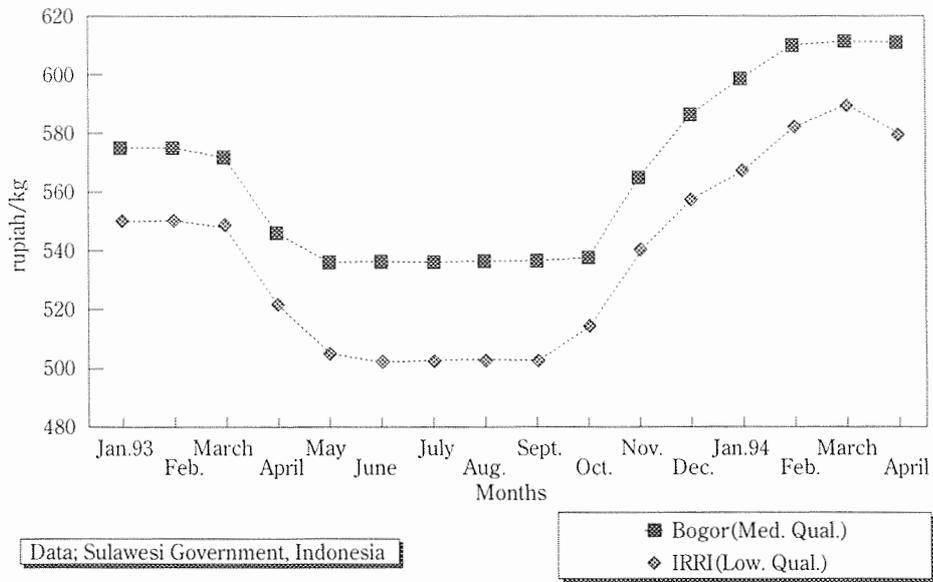


**Fig. 4 The Sharp Rise in the Thai Export Price & Other Prices**



DATA: Thai government report.

**Fig. 5 Sharp Rise in the Retail Price of the Low and Medium Quality Rice in Indonesia**



## **“World Food Bank” for Food Security**

**Resource Person : Dr. Urmilaben Patel, M.P.  
Vice Chairperson , AFPPD**

Food, water and shelter are the basic amenities of life, and it's the natural right of man to have them. It's true that bread is not only requirement of man, but one cannot live without it, is also a fact. Freedom of choice is equality important. Every individual has his preferences about choice of food.

On the one hand the world population has touched 1600 million people with a growth rate of 2.1%. Hence freedom from hunger and malnutrition has been an acute problem before us. A survey of world Nutrition scene reveals that 190 million children are underweight and 20 million children born under weight every day. Whereas 48.6% persons have a Body Mass Index of less than 18.5, the lower limit of normality.

In 1948 United Nations declared Food as a basic human right in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Here we should keep in mind that when we talk of freedom from hunger & food security, we should think in terms of Nutritive food for all. The issue of food security implies three dimensions.

One, availability of food, second, access to food and third stability of availability and access. It includes three stages of activity.

1. Production
2. Distribution/Marketing
3. Consumption/access

In short, Food Security is a problem that concerns us at family level, at National level and also at International level.

Mahatma Gandhi has shown us the path by giving the world the concept of Trusteeship. The haves are the trustees and they have to take care of the haves not. In the same spirit the communities who are surplus in food have to feed the communities that are underfed.

The concept of the World Food Bank is in a way, based on the principle of Trustship and will be an effort to establish a global food security regime. Thinking world community a unit, the issue of food security can be handled on co-operative basis. We are chewing the concepts like global village, an ideal that we envisage as a global family and global government through world federation. If the concept of World Bank can be a reality why not a World Food Bank?

- 1) The objectives of the world food bank is to provide timely, adequate food to the nations who are deficit in food requirements. The deficit may be temporary or chronic.
- 2) To provide food insurance to face food shortages due to sudden drop in production or a sudden price rise.
- 3) To act as a price stabilizer by intervening both at national market and international market level.
- 4) To maintain data base of each country's food availability and food requirements; their surplus and deficits.
- 5) To fund for agricultural researches, and experiments in food technology.
- 6) To assist and transfer agricultural technology to farmers.
- 7) To propagate the cause of food security and raise the hunger problem to the top of the world's agenda, and awareness about a balanced diet.
- 8) To curb the use of food as a political weapon and exploitation by the vested interests.
- 9) W.F.B. may consider to set up institutions like world food university and Research Center.
- 10) The world food bank will be an international food co-operative society. The nations will be encouraged to be self-reliant, as far as possible and will function on decentralised basis. The distribution and storage will be handled by the national Govt. in complete co-ordination with their indigenous systems.
- 11) The bank would encourage global-based industries at national level.

Moreover, the bank will enjoy independent status but will be functioning in co-ordination with FAO, WFP and United Nations and other sister organisations. In short, the World Food Bank will serve as a nodal agency in all food and nutritional matters.

The model discussed is a very preliminary out line, a presentation of a concept to be considered by all the nations of the world. We have many issues to be considered in details pertaining to WFB, as far as example, its structure, membership, mode of funding, rights of the member nations, location, mode of functioning, set up at national levels, availability of food, its distribution system, storage, price fixation, wastages, transportation, administrative expenses, deficits and many other issues. The most important job at this level is the acceptability of the idea, sailing of the new concept, creating awareness about its need and practicability.

I am very happy to bring to your notice that Japan Govt. has shown a deep interest in the project and set up a study group to go into its details. Now it is our turn to bring our national governments and make them convinced about the need and feasibility. I hope at the end of our discussion here we will take up the job, will apply our minds and put up concrete suggestions for the issues that are to be thought of, to make the concept a reality. I hope you all will be agreeing to the basic idea and support ourselves to make the World Food Bank a reality.

## **Discussion**

### **Chairman:**

Our thanks to Dr. Urmilaben Patel for her excellent deliberation and she's also a good timekeeper. I was told that each member from the floor have two minutes, but first, I would like to give the floor to Honourable Mr. Yatsu from Japan.

### **Mr. Yoshio Yatsu, MP, JAPAN:**

Asia is home to 3.6 billion people, which means that the region has 60% of the world population. It is said that 270 million people, which corresponds to 40% of the world's starving population, will still be facing the problem of malnutrition in Asia. This is a problem that requires sincere efforts towards its solution. In addition, agricultural production is predicted to level off in the future and will place even greater importance to the management of land and water resources. Environmental issues are also casting shadow on the potential for increasing food production. As you may know, Indonesia is confronted with food shortage as a result of bad crop caused by El Niño and skyrocketing prices of imported agricultural products. I would like to make several proposals in view of this situation we are in.

Firstly, I would like to appeal the need to maintain domestic production of rice, which is a self-sufficient crop for all of us living in Asia, and secure its self-sufficiency. Secondly, although trade rules based on the same criteria are applied to industrial products and agricultural products alike under the existing WTO Rules, only a handful of countries are currently exporting food and the situation has changed considerably since the mid-'80s when the negotiation for the existing WTO Rules began. For this reason, it is important to start taking measures towards differentiation of trade rules now, so that rules different from those applied to industrial products will be applied to agricultural products after the next revision of WTO Rules.

Lastly, I would like to stress the need for the Food Bank, which is a food reserve structure for offering food aid, as a measure against future food security issues. This is a fund proposed by Honourable Ms. Patel of India for realizing emergency food aid mainly to low-income countries in the event of food shortage. Japan's Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries is currently conducting a study towards establishment of this food bank. I think it is necessary for this conference to appeal this matter strongly as representatives of parliamentarians from Asian countries.

### **Chairman:**

Thank you Mr. Yatsu. Now I will give the floor to Bangladesh.

### **Delegate, BANGLADESH:**

Honourable Senator from Malaysia said that large number of immigrants from Bangladesh do not want to go back. It's true. Malaysia is a neighboring country and it is a friendly country. Travelling is less costly and you know, in our country, density of population is 60

per square kilometer and there is unemployment. So people of our country go abroad, including Malaysia. And Malaysia also benefits from cheap labor from Bangladesh and Sri Lanka because these unskilled laborers are used in rubber plantations.

**Delegate, INDONESIA:**

Talking about food security, Indonesian Government has already set up a very solid policy, but still, we have problems due to the fact that Indonesia consists of 17,000 islands. The problem is transportation. If one island has surplus in rice, they cannot transport it to the market. Maybe waiting for months for the ship to come. For remote islands, no transportation can bring the food from other islands. Because of the industrialisation, all men and young people are going to the cities from their villages to take a job in the factory. This is causing shortage of labor in rural areas and the work is only done by women and old people. The problem comes from the last condition, the monetary crisis, which has resulted in appreciation of US dollar by 400%.

Other countries may have also been affected by El Niño. I can say that in our country, the forest fire has affected agriculture. Delegates may have ideas or experience to share to cope with this problem. Thank you.

## Panel Discussion

To Seek the New and Rational Standard on Population  
and Sustainable Development for Coming Century  
(Special focus on Food Security)

[14:00-15:30]

## Seeking New and Rational Standards For Population and Sustainable Development

**Chairperson: Mr. Shin Sakurai , M.P.  
Chairman, AFPPD (Japan)**

**Resource Person: Dr. G. S. Bhalla  
Prof. Emeritus, Jawahar Lal Nehru University**

Honourable Chairman, honourable Members of Parliaments from all over Asia, distinguished participants, Ladies and Gentlemen. It's very proud privilege to talk to you this afternoon about the problems of food security which perhaps you have been discussion since morning.

Well, I would like to underline three or four main things within the limited time of ten to fifteen minutes available to me. The first point I would like to make is that food security by definition means availability of food to everybody in the community throughout the year at reasonable prices, price which he, she and poor and rich families can afford. That is how the United Nations Organisation, the FAO and other organisations have defined food security. So when we talk about food security, it is not sufficient to talk about only total demand and total supply, but also its distribution amongst the people, and distribution ultimately depends on the purchasing power of the power.

Therefore, the issue on food security cannot be de-linked from the purchasing power of people which emerges out of working in productive occupations. That work provision depends not only on what is the growth of the economy, but also on what is the nature of employment, and whether the growth itself is the jobless growth or job-full growth. That is, if growth is associated with employment and employment of the poorest or not. I think this is one important issue that has to be kept in mind when we talk about food security.

The other point I would like to make is, that food security essentially depends upon two basic considerations. Number one, population, at what rate population is growing. In Asia, and most of Asia, population growth rate during the last two to three decade has been quite rapid. Although now in East Asia as we know, the population has gone down. It has decelerated quite a bit. It has started decelerating in South Asia, also a little bit. In our own country, in India, population growth from 1981-1991, or even if you take a longer period, it works out to about 2.1 percent per annum. During the latest decade 1991 onwards, the available data indicates that population growth has decelerated to about 1.9 percent. We do expect it to go down further during the beginning of the twenty-first century, and perhaps by 2020 we will be reaching a growth rate of near one percent or 1.2 percent.

In China there has been a very perceptible deceleration in growth of population. They were growing almost as rapidly as India was, and the rest of South Asia was. But the reported

figures indicate that the population growth has decelerated quite largely. In general, I can make a statement that in East Asian and the Southeast Asian countries, there is a tendency of increase in income per capita at a very rapid rate, there is a tendency for population growth to be going down quite rapidly.

In South Asian countries, this particular region, where population is very large, the population growth is very low, from 2.2 percent, 2.3 percent to only 2 percent or 1.9 percent, only. Now that has very important implication. That means if you have that many mouths to be fed, your production, food grains production, at least must grow at a rate of 1.9 percent per annum.

But the third point I'd like to make, which is extremely important, is that the demand of food, the food habits, change according to the change of income per capita. There are two basic determinants of food demand, one is population growth, the other is per-capita income. If the income growth and the income levels are high, then there is a diversification of the food basket. People are not, in that case, eating so much food grains. They are not eating wheat, rice and cold cereals. Instead they diversify their food habits. They go in more for more nutrients, or what they call more tasteful food. In general, there is a movement towards animal husbandry diet, diet dependent on milk, meat, eggs, fish, poultry, so and so forth, piggery, sometimes beef, in a big way, not in India, but on the rest of the subcontinent.

So therefore I think the second important point has to be considered that the demand for food grains keeps on declining with rise in income. This is because the elasticity goes on going down. We have figures for all of Asia. You will notice that we used to have in rural areas, also you should remember that the demand elasticity. Economists have a very funny way of expressing things. What I mean to say is, if income increases by 1 percent, then demand for food increases by 0.3 percent in rural areas. That's what we call sometimes, by jargon known as demand elasticity. This elasticity was about 0.3 in 1991 in India for rural areas, and only 0.18 for urban areas. It has now come down, in the 1993 data, that were the 1987 figures, it has now already come down to 0.27 and 0.16. Now there is further going to be a decline.

What I mean to say is, as people's income are rising, they are eating less food grains. This is an important but it has been always ignored so far in most of the literature. It is that the demand for meat, eggs, fish and poultry also leads to very big indirect demand for food grains. Actually, you will appreciate that a cow or a buffalo in India eats much more than a human being does. And they also eat much more of food, they need lots of feed. In India our cattle are not stall-fed. They go roam about, the yields are very low, but in countries where animal husbandry has become organized, the feed requirements for animal husbandry are very large. In China, if you work out, the feed requirement may come out to be about thirty percent of the total food demand.

Therefore, although the direct food demand declines with rise in income, the total direct and indirect food demand increases at a very rapid rate. Now it's no wonder that a country like China, which claims to be always surplus in food grains but , for a very long period, its production of food grains is very much higher than India's production of food grains, suddenly has to import about twenty to twenty-five million tons of food grains, mainly wheat, or coarse grains, every year now. They are forgetting that the total demand for food grains increases at a very rapid rate, and this has happened whenever there is a very rapid rise in per-capita income.

It is only later on, when your total population growth rate becomes almost zero, as has become in Europe, when you decide not to have children at all, which, hopefully we Asians won't do for quite some time -- I hope you honourable members agree with me, right? -- well in that case I think that you can be sure that our population growth rate should come down, is going to come down, but it is not going to become stagnant. One percent, 1.2 percent, 1.3 percent, even in 2020. Now looked at that way, our total demand for food grains is going to rise at a very rapid rate. In Asia, my calculations show that the growth rate might be not just 1.9 percent or 1.5 percent with the population growth rate up to 2020, but the growth rate might be as high as 2 percent to 2.5 percent per annum.

In India, I've done some calculations, published a paper, which if the feed requirements change and our growth rate is about seven percent per annum, then by the year 2020, from 200 million tons, 198 million tons we are producing. Now our total requirements will be more than 450 million tons if we adopt certain methods of feeding for the animals. Anyway, for the whole of Asia, on the East Asia the picture is slightly different, as I told you. Actually, there the demand elasticity has become very low, sometimes negative for food grains. They are eating more of food. And their population has also come down. Japan is one example. Therefore there is no problem for demand of food per se, but the feed demand there also is going to be quite important.

Now finally, I would like to say something about the supply of food grains. Is it possible to achieve this much output as we are envisaging? I must congratulate, I think all of us should congratulate ourselves. During the seventies was a period when the whole of Asia faced very serious food security problems. There were huge shortages of food grains. You will remember, in India we used to live from ship to mouth during the sixties, and that was the story here. But we were able to break this thanks to the very great effort made by our farmers during the eighties, and by the nineties we had broken the back of our food problem. We were almost becoming self-sufficient, and some of the great economists in India, who were great dreamers, forget the Indian realities, but even talking about India's potentiality to export food grains. Now again, we are in the process of importing it.

But leaving that aside, today again there is a serious problem, from 1985 onwards. Fortunately, the problem is so much not in South Asia. Well, I shouldn't say fortunately, but India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and South Asia, have increased our output growth rate from 1985 to 1995. There is a slight acceleration. But in the rest of Asia, there is a very big

decline in the growth rate. And the total growth rate in Asia as a whole has fallen down quite considerably, from 2.2 percent per annum to only 1.6 percent per annum. And that is a very serious matter. So supply constraints are once again appearing in many parts of Asia.

And that, Mr. Chairman, brings me to your point. These supplies are being met by making use of maximum technology, the best available irrigation facilities, and so and so forth. But now the problem is going to be more serious, and the problems are also going to be environmentally more difficult. Because we might have to go to more fragile styles, to more difficult areas. Hence a very imaginative way will have to be found.

Only one thing about the solution that I have in mind. I think supply constraints in food grains is going to be a serious problem. To overcome it, the only method is, to invest once again, we stopped doing that, in a big way in agricultural infrastructure -- in irrigation, in scientific research, in extensions, and in upgrading of technology. That is the only way that we can be able, once again, to stand on our feet.

Otherwise, developing countries, in Asia especially, will be more and more dependent on borrowing and getting food, importing food from the developed world. And whatsoever the Free Trade, whatsoever the GATT, there are going to be a certain price to pay. I hope we are able not to have to pay that price, and be self-sufficient.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

## **Food Security and Free Trade System**

**Resource Person: Dr. P. S. Vashishtha**  
**Director, Agriculture Economics Research Centre**  
**Delhi School of Economics, Delhi University**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Honourable Members of Parliament, distinguished delegates and friends. I would appreciate if you can have a look at this one-page note that has been circulated.

Professor Bhalla, who has done remarkable research work in this area, has outlined the basic contours of the problem, and there is absolutely no point of disagreement on his arguments. I'll try to start from there, because if you look at the one-page sheet, that is the first question that I'm raising.

Now, when I say that, will a country with a large population like India be able to produce enough food for its large population into decades from now. And I am just quoting Professor Bhalla's own results that he has mentioned. I won't take up the details because he has already mentioned it. By the year 2020 we are going to have a very tough time, and as he mentioned, the total demand for cereals --that would include household consumption plus the feed, is going to be very large. He has all the detailed calculations. And if you look at the kind of problems that we are facing:

First, if you see the rate of growth of cereals, particularly in India, in the late 80's, or say mid-eighties to mid-nineties, it has been below the rate of growth of population. Second, the question is, at what cost this growth is being achieved?

What economists call as total factor productivity is declining, which means, you are achieving this growth of food grains, particularly cereals, by more and more intensive applications of expensive inputs. What you call as, there is more and more chemicalisation of agriculture, more fertilizers, more pesticides. That is a matter of concern. I'm now saying that if that is the kind of phenomenon that is going on, then a larger question one has to consider is at what cost are you going to have a rate of growth in cereals to meet the food grain demand? This leads me to the second question, is your system going to be sustainable?

Before we come to the question of sustainability, one is tempted to ask, that now in the days of globalisation, agricultural trade is being liberalized, could you depend on trade if you need more grains? Yes, why not import? Or if you think you are able to have enough grains, you could export. The question that I've asked, number two, that if a country with as large of a demand like India enters the world market, what happens to the price of the food grains? Because, as you mentioned right in the beginning, and Professor Bhalla outlined, it

is very important in the context of particularly poverty alleviation to supply food, to make sure that food reaches the poor and everybody else at reasonable price. And the stability of price of food grains is a very, very important phenomenon. It is not that you are able to deliver the food grains, but please make a note, that the price of the food grains must be relatively stable. If there are large fluctuations in the price of food grains, then definitely poor are going to be left behind.

Because we know through simple economics that the money incomes of poor don't rise as fast as the price of food grains if there is a great shock to the system of food grain supply and demand. So it is obvious that if food prices are not relatively stable, the poor are going to be left behind. They would not be able to afford to have the food they need. Therefore the question is, that if a country with as large a demand like India enters the world market, what happens to the food prices.

And there economists have done calculations through a very sophisticated exercise. And I am just quoting the result, that as far as wheat prices are concerned in the world market, it may not fluctuate as much. But the price of rice may have tremendous fluctuations. If India buys one million tons of rice, the price may be changing about eighteen percent, or eight percent. If the demand for import, or if you are importing five million tons of rice, the price may rise as high as seventy percent. Now the question here is, can a country with a large population of poor afford to have this kind of fluctuation in basic food grains? And the answer is obviously, no. Therefore we have to have a second thought that we cannot afford to rely heavily on imports.

And, similarly, when you are exporting, if you enter the export market, and you are dumping a lot of commodities, a lot of food grains in the world market, prices are likely to go down. So you have to be very alert on both fronts. If you are an importer, you are likely to suffer because of large fluctuations in the price of rice, and if you are an exporter, even then the prices are likely to go down in the world market. Therefore countries with large populations have to be extremely careful.

So I come back to the first point, I would be really reluctant to say that do not make every possible effort to grow as much food as possible, because the demand is going to be large. And I would be very careful in suggesting a policy that large countries with large demands can rely on international trade on food grains.

All right, now having said this, let's come he is back to the question, that if you are going to all possible efforts, and as Professor Bhalla just said, R&D in agriculture, heavy investment in the rural sectors, what is the scenario now? And we know that wherever intensification of agriculture has taken place, there is a very serious chemicalisation of agriculture, heavy doses of fertilizers and pesticides. And there is another evidence to show in India, and several other developing nations, that it is leading to (1) soil degradation, there is also a problem of (2) water pollution, (3) fresh water availability is going to be a very critical

input to agriculture, and there is also a danger to certain fragile parts of ecology, like mountains and various other areas.

Therefore, even if you are happy to say that you are by and large self-sufficient, there is no reason to be complacent, because you're already damaging the environment. And to recover from that kind of damage to the environment is going to be a costly affair. Therefore, even today, I've been talking about the question survival in about 2020. Even today you have achieved so-called self-sufficiency at great cost. The cost of that achievement is not a small one in terms of damage to the environment. Therefore, here is a warning signal.

Now if that is a kind of scenario, what kind of other observations are indeed [made]? We know, if you look at India's case, the areas which are producing large-scale food grains, not only for themselves, but for the rest of the country, if you look at the pattern of, rather than using the term biodiversity, it is a much larger term, I would use "agrodiversity". Because here we are talking of the cropping patterns. We are not talking about all kinds of species of trees and other things.

Now if you look at small and marginal farms, and look at large farms, the data daily shows that large farms are now confining to two crops, by and large, rice and wheat, in the region where we have achieved a high level of food and productivity. And if you look at small and marginal farms, in the same areas, their cropping pattern is much more diversified, including that they grow a lot of fodder and other things. Therefore here is the question that the land distribution is one of the important factors that would determine the kind of agrodiversity that is likely to emerge. And, as I said, the data already show the diversity is suffering, diversity is diminishing. So this is again from an environmental point of view, a serious question to be considered.

Now I have come to the last question that I have raised here, is it sufficient to deliver food to the hungry and poor? What is the role of human capital formation in raising their living standard on a sustained basis? Now the question is, even if you are able to grow enough food, and even if you had enough foreign exchange to buy or to import food, the question remains, because the title is, Food Security of this session, I am impressed by the subtitle, Seeking New and Rational Standard for Population and Sustainable Development. The question is, it is not just sufficient to deliver food to the poor, the larger question is, in the process of development, or if you think that this process of development is sustainable, where is the place of the poor? Are you developing their ability to earn enough, and to participate, to go one step further, remember.

It is not just a question of getting food for the poor. Number one, they should have enough purchasing power. So is the process of development giving them enough purchasing power, enough income and then employment? And the question beyond this is, are you developing their capability to participate in the process of development itself? Which means, they should be capable of fully participating in the sense that they should be able to influence the decisions. And if they are unable to influence the decisions, and if they have no say in the

process of development, then there is a good chance that they are left behind in the game. And this raises a much larger question, is it all? What is it that we are talking about, what is the meaning of New Rationale for Population Sustainable Development?

And to me the rationale you have to discover in terms of raising capability of poor for participating in the process of development so that they can influence decisions about policies. And here I would be brief, because there is not time, the Chairman has already given me a little signal, that investment in human capital is the critical thing, in terms of their education, in terms of raising their skills. That is the key to development. Otherwise, delivery of food is not just enough. And that is the way I see a new role for the population in the context of sustainable development. Thank you very much.

## Food Security in China

**Resource Person: Mme. Hao Yichun M.P.  
Vice Chairperson, AFPPD**

Vice Chairperson, AFPPD

Mr. Chairman,  
Distinguished Parliamentarians, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It's a great importance for us, the parliamentarians from different Asian countries, come together at the beautiful city New Delhi to address the food security and population issues. There is an old Chinese saying: Sufficient food makes the world peace. Food is the basic material guaranteeing the economic and social development. The effective solution of the food security issue has a far-reaching significance for the stability and development of the region and the world.

In the past decades, gratifying changes have taken place in food security in Asia. Especially Green Revolution creates a dramatic increase in the total and per capita grain output in each Asian country. But we can not be optimistic. A great number of the people in the world are still suffering from hunger and malnutrition. Food security can not be reliably guaranteed.

Mr. Chairman, China is a large agricultural country taking agriculture at a fundamental position. After the founding of the People's Republic of China, the Chinese government pays close attention to the food production. Providing enough food for its people is always given priority on the government's agenda. Now China successfully feed 22% of the world's population on about 7% of the world's cultivated land. It does not only benefit China but also contribute to Asia and the world in food security issue.

But there exist some severe problems in Chinese agriculture such as the reduction of cultivated land, fragile agriculture infrastructure and weak ability to overcome the damages of the natural disasters. All these problems can not be neglected in arriving at food security in China. But it's certain that the food will be reliably secured in the next century in China. China has the ability to feed its people and solve the problem of food supply. The theories of "Food Crises" or "Who Will Feed China in the Next Century" by some western scholars are completely groundless.

China has a potential to increase its food production. There is large amount of wasteland cultivable for agricultural purposes. Two-thirds of the existing farmland are listed as low – and medium-yielding. Per unit grain yield, multiple crop indexes and science and technology contents are low in some areas. We are tapping all potentialities by enhancing

scientific production and management. We will take full advantage of the resources to develop non-grain food as fruit bearing crops, husbandry and fishing.

The family planning is the basic national policy in China. The population growth closely relates with the rise of the food demand. Thanks to the decades of hard work, the implementation of the policy yields a good result and it will continue to be carried out in future. In rural areas, family planning links with their economic development and the rise of farmers' income links with the establishment of a civilized and happy family. These measures are popularized by farmers. The family planning policy adopted according to the national conditions is conducive to reducing population growth rate, relieving the pressure on the farmland and food demand.

Agriculture production is put in the first place in the national economic development. In the first session of the ninth National People's Congress in March of this year, the premier delivered the government's work report and reiterated that agriculture had a direct bearing on the overall situation. We should further stabilize and develop the agriculture production. Reforming the grain purchasing and marketing system is an important task of this year. Chinese economic reforms initiated from agriculture have made great success. China has taken many measures to ensure the stable expansion of the sown areas through deepening rural economic reform, increasing the input, improving the agriculture infrastructure, introducing advanced science and technology, establishing an industrial management, protecting cultivated land, reclaiming the arable wasteland and rising multiple crop indexes. If all these measures can be implemented effectively, the food supply in China will be further improved.

Mr. Chairman, it's of great importance to strengthen the cooperation among Asian countries in food security issue. Food security is no longer the issue of an individual country but the region and the globe. It needs common efforts and concerted actions from all countries. Together with all other countries, China is willing to make its contributions to ensure food security in both China and Asia.

## **Discussion**

### **Delegate, KOREA:**

Mr. Chairman, I am Dr. Ihwa Chung from Korea. As all of you may already know, the Republic of Korea has undergone dramatic demographic changes that have dazzled many population scientists and related experts. Please refer to our report, Population and Development in Korea, which was already distributed to all delegates yesterday.

Now I'd like to share with you information about food production and the food self-sufficiency rate in Korea. Food production is generally decreasing in Korea. That is, the production of rice decreased about 20 percent since 1990, during last five years. Also the production of barley decreased about 30 percent over the same period, and the production of maize decreased about 40 percent during the five years after 1990. As a result, the food self-sufficiency rate is decreasing in recent years. In 1995, the self-sufficiency rate for rice was 91.1 percent. The rate for barley was 67 percent, and the rate for wheat and maize were at a trivial level. Therefore, in the Republic of Korea, the self-sufficiency rate of all cereals include rye, decreased from 53.5 percent in 1980 to 43.8 percent in 1990 and 30 percent in 1995.

Therefore, the Korean Government has considered a counter-plan to promote the self-sufficiency rate of cereals, and particularly food security. I'd like to propose some comments on food security. It is my view that food security guarantees a safe and bright future for us. So it is important that the population control policy of each country needs to be directed to resolving the food crisis.

Weather disasters such as El Niño severely constrain our food production capacity. Thus I would like to suggest that legal systems and funds should be established to support the efforts of each country for ensuring food security. I also feel that we need to work on an alternative food grain. We also need to work on a way to facilitate food transport among Asian countries. I share the view of the Professor Tsuji, that institutions should be established to stabilize the international rice trade market.

### **Dr. Tsujii:**

I have one question to the Chinese representative. Mme. Hao Yichun mentioned that China has enough capacity or capability to produce enough food for the increasing population. My question is related to a few points. Looking at transit area of Chinese grains have been declining for the last ten years. How would you evaluate this point? The second point is, there are great regional differences about the agricultural situation in China. I visited the coastal areas last year, and I found that there are many farmers registered as farmers, but they are not farmers. In fact, there are almost no farmers around the coastal area of China. So how would you evaluate this situation? Thank you.

**Ms. Hao, CHINA:**

The food production of China increased about ten percent during the last ten years. But the birth rate dropped from 33.83 percent to 16.5 percent from 1970 to 1997. And the growth rate dropped from 25.8 percent to about 10 percent from 1970 to 1997. If calculated according to the birth rate, the birth rate level in 1970, there are some 2 to 3 million population drop during this period. So for us the increase rate of food production is rapid or we can say higher than the population increase.

**Delegate, India:**

The standing commission and five-year plans throughout these years that have gone by have never reached that goal set for themselves for food production as well as water resources. Could you comment on that?

Then another thing is that, the poorer are becoming poorer, the middle class are going into the poorer sections, the rich are becoming very rich, and I think the taxation structure of the Government of India is one of the causes for this. Can you comment?

**Dr. Vashishtha:**

Well as far as, the intensification of agriculture, basically I was trying to draw examples from the northwest, like the Punjab and Haryana situation, because it is not only producing food for itself, but also for the rest of the country, in terms of food security.

And if you look at some of these areas, the water table is going down in some of the areas where you have heavy withdrawal from ground water. There are problems with policies. And there is evidence that water pollution is also taking place. So the point that I was making, that we need to have appropriate policies to discourage this kind of degradation of natural resources. Now the problems could be slightly different in some other part of the country. But this is a very critical thing, a general hypothesis you can call it, which is a very strong hypothesis, that with intensification of agriculture, you have achieved a high level of productivity, but at what cost?

So maybe private profits are high, but if there is a degradation of natural resources, you can no more call it a kind of sustainable development. So sustainability of this kind of high rate of growth is in doubt. You need appropriate policies for that. But maybe in some other part of the country the problem may be somewhat different.

On the distribution part, like the rich become richer and all that, I'm not sure about the evidence, because whatever data are available, it doesn't necessarily show that the inequalities of income have increased. At least maybe, if at all, marginally. The evidence is that inequalities have, by and large, remained constant at all times, at least for fifteen years.

But the question remains, that it is not a question of just inequality. If the absolute number of poor is so large, you just cannot afford to ignore it. And then I would go a step further, which I didn't have time to elaborate in my talk, that even if you have a public distribution

system, all food grains, if you look at the subsidy given by the central government per person, through PDS, it is inversely related to the level of per-capita income of a state. States which are poorer, like Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, you know they are not in a position even to what we call lift the quota of their food grain allotment. And the reason is very simple. Their infrastructure is so weak, road network, storage capacity and delivery system as a whole is so poor, that even if the central government says, look, here are so many millions tons of food grains, take it and distribute it to your poor, they are not in a position to do it. So this is most disquieting, and you know, I feel very uncomfortable that the poorest of the poor, in spite of subsidies, are not able to get benefit of that situation. This is, remember, apart from the fact that there is a tremendous leakage in the distribution system.

**Mr. Yatsu, JAPAN:**

There was not enough time to discuss this but, I would like to comment on the Food Bank that was proposed by the Honourable Mrs. Patel. I think that it is necessary to create a food reserve of proper scale to prepare for emergency situations created by natural and man-made disasters. In particular, there is the problem in Indonesia, the El Niño phenomenon and financial problems. There is also the recent decline in grain reserve rate. In view of all these, it is necessary for each country to secure sufficient reserve, but this is difficult to achieve. So the proposal that was made in Mrs. Patel's speech was to create a new international framework for utilizing this reserve for food aid. I would like to know the opinion of each country with regard to this matter.

**Delegate, INDIA:**

Mr. Chairman, food security means not only the food will be made available, it should also be properly distributed. Similarly, people should have purchasing power. So in that event, as you know that most of the people are poor, in India, and especially in the Asian countries. And the rate of illiteracy among the people, which have not been able to understand how to prosper in the society. Therefore my question is, so far as this food security is concerned, is it a pious wish or is it something idle? Or will it be possible so far as this Public Distribution System you said.

The Public Distribution System throughout the country, as you know, in most of the states there is leakage, and people, especially in the adverse areas and ITDP blocks, the rice meant for them is going to the black market, and therefore it is not reaching them. So what are the measures to be taken so that it would reach them and they can avail of it? That is my question.

And another question is, Mr. Bhalla requests to give more stress on agricultural irrigation. So far as irrigation is concerned, water is also limited. And suppose we go on raising food production until we reach the saturation point. And at the same time, if the population cannot be controlled, that will pose a greater danger to the country. And at the same time, will it be possible by legislation? Suppose we can take some legislation in India. And if we take some legislation, can we have a legislation which will apply to all persons irrespective of caste, creed, community and religion? If it is not possible, then whether this set of food

security is possible? Or, at the same time, we can match it with this growing population? The growth of population, can it be checked?

**Dr. Bhalla:**

Thank you very much for your question. Let me take your last question first. Now, really speaking, it is not for me to say anything. You are the population experts here. But the experience in India is that any compulsory method used are always counterproductive. We know it during the Emergency. You use compulsion, the results are just the opposite. Therefore, to dream of legislation is not only undemocratic, it is going to be unproductive. This is my personal view, and I am convinced about it.

You want to stop population growth in a particular community, well let that community be educated. Let people be educated. I think it was very properly said by our former Prime Minister, that the best contraceptive is development. It is only when income grows to a certain level, that population growth rate starts going down. You can bring it down slightly by education, by family welfare measures, but there are limits, and those limits I think we are exploiting in India. And I will be the last person to subscribe, to any methods of Force.

Number two, your question about accessibility is extremely important. How to reach to the poor, especially when there is so much leakage. But you know, the best accessibility is if you raise the people's income. We have a very large proportion of poor in India and in South Asia.

In Southeast Asia, poverty was going down, but suddenly they are facing also some serious problems. As you know, recently with the very serious foreign exchange crisis, right from South Korea onwards, to some extent Japan, but especially in South Asia. In Southeast Asia there are very serious problems which might have some implications on poverty, I don't know. I am not an expert, they will know more about it. But then if incomes are not growing for the poor, should we sit silent or some measures should be taken? I am for direct anti-poverty measures, also. Along with growth, equity is important.

Number two is the Public Distribution System. I think in India, I was far-targeting and all that. I think in India, if the total supplies are large, the Public Distribution System ought to be a general public system. I think targeting doesn't work. Let's face it. You know, the level of poor and non-poor, the distinction is so little in a village. So therefore what is important about the Public Distribution System is, that if sufficient quantities are released at reasonable prices, general prices will come down. And if the prices of food grains are low, then in that case, the poor gain.

The poor gained quite a bit with your two-rupee a kilo program in Andhra Pradesh, although it became non-sustainable for you in your budget returns. But certainly, they gained a lot. I'm sure that they are still gaining with six rupees now, what are you charging? I think you have raised the price of rice now. But programs like that for the poor are extremely useful. And if you can't afford that, generally they become unsustainable. Given

the resources, these programs, I think, should be taken seriously. What do we do about corruption? Well, apart from decentralisation, I have no answer. You are the authority, you will find some kind of legislation. But find some type of legislation which people can't await. I can only tell a general matter, my submission will be, a decentralisation is the best chance to deal with corruption.

**Delegate, INDIA:**

Sir, I will put one submission for consideration before this august gathering. In our state, in West Bengal, we are experimenting with land recovery. Wasted land is recovered. About seventy-five percent of the land that has been recovered in India is located in West Bengal. And then there is the land distribution. That recovered land has been distributed to the marginal section of the population, marginal farmers. And if we consider these sharecroppers, then about 72 percent of the cultivable land is under the control of poor and marginal farmers.

By that we have initiated a little bit of food security, and imparted social justice, and initiated the process of participating democracy. Because the poorest of the poor feels that he has got to contribute something in that total development. And this is coupled with the erection of panchayats. Now the panchayats have go on beyond three years. It is going to be the fourth year. For every voter in a gram or panchayat, he participates in the formulation of the planning and also the distribution. I think that is one of the main measures that can be experimented by the rest of India and other fellow countries, that the decentralisation of power, the dissolution of power, the control of the existing machinery to the people themselves, and then the external control of the productive situation of the land. That has to be given to the poor. This is one of the matters by which you can achieve food security.

**Delegate, INDIA:**

Mr. Chairman, since this discussion relates to the rational standards for sustainable development for the coming century, we would like to know whether at the global level we are thinking of sustainable development and the rationalisation of producing various food, let us say wheat and rice. There may be some countries which produce more of rice, some produce more of wheat, some produce coarse grains, some oils, some fruits. Now has some exercise been done for 2020, 2040, or 2060, we are talking about the next century, so that it gives a guideline to the countries that in which direction they can proceed?

Now coming down from the domestic level, I am a legislator from Jammu and Kashmir. In my state, you can have more of fruits, rather than maize or even wheat on the 60-degree slopes. They carry all the soil, and we get it with nothing. Whereas if we concentrate on fruits, like the walnuts, or others, you can produce much more fruit, and probably give you all the nutrition the whole of the country requires. But one has to have that shift and that kind of coordination, maybe at the global level, at the Asian level, at the national level. I think that kind of message, that kind of coordination must be done at these meetings.

And finally I have a request. We were discussion about the methods used to have targets and reduce population growth. Now the Chinese delegation here, we should have listened from them how have they achieved this miraculous downward trend within two or three years. And they have all the problems like us, as Asians, religious and other problems. How exactly have they done it? They would have educated us. Thank you.

**Mme. Hao, CHINA:**

Firstly, we implemented the family planning policy to control the increase of population. And secondly, we promoted the education for all the people. Because more educated people don't want to give birth to too many children. So if you want to carry out the family planning policy, you must at the same time, promote the education for all the people, especially for the people in rural areas.

**Dr. Bhala:**

Thank you very much. I would, first of all, agree with the Chinese presentation here. In our own country, in Kerala, that is not a very rich state. Punjab's per capita income is much higher than Kerala's per capita income. It is one of the, you know it is not very low, it is not as bad as U.P. or Madhya Pradesh, or Rajasthan, but it is just above the middle. But there the population growth rate has come to almost the replacement rate, of one percent. We are talking about 1.7 percent.

The second question is with regard to the world food reserves and the world food security system. This is a very good forum where we are sitting here. In Asia, I would like to make a submission that we should think of constituting an Asian food bank. But the total reserves are nominal—only 50,000 or 1 million ton. Mind you, our production can fluctuate by 25 million ton. This is very small. We have to move in a very big way, and it will be very economical, very useful, especially for the Asian countries if we have our own food security zone. Therefore, I would like to endorse your thinking, and submit for your consideration, that we take forward this idea and your forum thinks about it.

## Closing Ceremony

[16:30-17:30]

## **Closing Remarks**

**Dr. S.S. Sisodia**  
**Chairman**

**Indian Association of Parliamentarians on  
Population and Development (IAPPD)**

Hon'ble Union Minister for Environment and Forest Shri Suresh Prabhu, my distinguished friends from APDA, AFPPD & UNFPA and all the Delegates, Observers present here. We have come to the concluding session of the 14th Parliamentarians' meeting on population and development. For this session, we have, amidst us, Shri Suresh Prabhu who has recently taken over as Minister for Environment and Forest, a subject which is most relevant for parliamentarians involved with the issue of population and development. Shri Prabhu is a distinguished banker, a cooperator of great commitment and a busy social worker. We work in close association with each other in the urban cooperative banking sector. Here, we look to him to take interest in the environmental matters of the Declaration in this meeting by assisting parliamentarians / legislators in this regard.

In the four sessions and panel discussions spread over two days, presentations were made on various subjects by experts in their respective fields, and we had very stimulating discussions on all the issues. The Hon'ble Vice President of India in his inaugural address, set the tone for deliberations by bringing out in a very forthright manner, the misplaced priorities in utilisation of resources. He illustrated his point by giving statistics about money spent on items like golf, wine, beer, cigarettes, and other items of luxury besides expenditure on military hardware, and by informing us that the expenditure on health care, water supply, population control, sanitation and education was not even a fraction of each of those expenditures. The Hon'ble President of India in his message on the occasion, reminded all of us, the Parliamentarians of Asia, of our onerous responsibilities, as 60 per cent of the entire population of the world is in Asia. It has been clearly brought out in the deliberations that propagation of attainment of the replacement level of population growth through education, improved health care, better water and forest resource management should be the principle task of all the Parliamentarian Associations in Asia. For this, the report of the Rapporteur General and the Declaration will need to be followed up by all the associations of Parliamentarians in this region.

On behalf of the IAPPD, I consider it my duty to convey our gratitude to APDA, Japan who chose to associate the IAPPD in conducting the meeting and providing opportunity for India to play Host for the meeting. Friends, I feel that, in all parliamentary democracies, efforts of parliamentarian forums constituted for different sectoral issues contribute a great deal in persuading the Governments to take appropriate action from time to time and also help in creation of public awareness. Among all such parliamentarian forums, the associations of parliamentarians on population and development, form a very important

group, having tremendous potential to influence the Government actions and to mobilise national awareness on issues which are of paramount importance. Advantage that these associations have, is that all their issues invariably cut across party interests and affiliations, and their proposals always find ready support in the parliaments / legislatures. Such a universal support also casts great deal of responsibilities on all the parliamentarians, who are members of such associations. Since all issues concerning population and development need a multi agency co-ordination, the parliamentarians have a challenging task ahead of them in actualising the agenda of action. Apart from persuading the Federal and State Governments to carry out legislative reforms and put in place policies that are required, they are also in a position to help their respective constituencies in implementation of the policies in respect of population and development by involving grass root level organisations like Cooperatives, NGOs, and self help groups. Going back from this meeting to our respective fields of activities, I am sure, all of us will focus our attention on the plan of action for following up the recommendations.

I hope our friends from different countries of the region who have come to attend the meeting have found their short stay in India, enjoyable and comfortable.

## **Closing Address**

**Mr. Tsuguo Hirose**  
**Executive Director & Secretary General**  
**Asian Population and Development Association (APDA)**

I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere gratitude to the parliamentarians and specialists who attended this meeting. Although it was held for only two days - a period that seemed extremely brief - it proved to be a rewarding meeting brimming with activity and enthusiastic debates. I believe that through this APDA meeting, we have come to clearly recognize anew that the so-called population problem is the most significant issue affecting the survival of the human race today.

The latter half of the meeting was concerned with issues related to population and food, a necessity for the survival of the human race. The food problem has existed since the birth of the human race, and has proven to be a significant dilemma that has had a multifaceted impact on the survival of the human race. Even today, as we face the dawn of the 21st century, we must confront the reality that 850 million people continue to suffer the effects of malnutrition and starvation.

What would constitute the greatest treasure for the human race? I believe that all of us - regardless of the times in which we live, and irrespective of whether we hail from the East or West - would agree that life is humanity's greatest treasure. But what do you think? Can you name any other values that should be protected through the sacrifice of human life?

In order to resolve both the population and food problems on a global scale, we must overcome the conventional approach centered on "national advantage," and instead take a human-centered approach focused on "human advantage." In other words, we must change our perspective.

Our goal should be to eradicate from this earth the expressions "misery" and "death from starvation." As has been discussed, I believe that we have arrived at the point at which we must take the additional step beyond the needs for food security and human security.

A little more than one thousand days remain until the year 2001 arrives. The footsteps of the 21st century are gradually growing louder; when the new century arrives, it will open the door to the third millennium. Nevertheless, amid the darkness at the end of the century, uncertainty remains deep, and the lack of clarity is disturbing.

I wish to state that we must not allow the century in which we live to become a century of remorse, a time of deep regret.

How, then, can we overcome the many problems that stand in the way of a solution to the immediately pressing interactive issues of population and food insecurity, such as undue influence on so called rational markets mechanism, natural phenomena beyond our control, soil deterioration, water shortages, and environmental destruction?

First, we must make an effort to determine the points of concern at the global level, break through the limits of today's international society, and find solutions. I am convinced that this is the first step on the road to rescuing the human race by ensuring "human security."

The APDA meeting opened amid hopes such as these.

Through this meeting, let us begin the "shining third millennium" in which all human beings can coexist peacefully. We can do so by taking a global transnational position that transcends the framework of interest of under the sovereignty of each nation.

Next year as well, I would like to address such food problems as they relate to population issues.

In closing, I would like to express my wishes for the good health of all in attendance while extending my most sincere thanks to the people from India whose outstanding dedication helped to ensure the success of this meeting.

## **Address**

**Mr. Shin Sakurai**  
**Chairman**

### **Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (AFPPD)**

As mentioned by Secretary General Hirose of APDA, Chairman Maeda, who could not stay until the end of this conference, sends his best regards to all of you. This conference, which was held over a two-day period at this wonderful venue, was a very fruitful gathering with active discussions. We owe this to the enormous efforts of the members of Indian Association of Parliamentarians on Population and Development who organized this conference, particularly Chairman Mr. Sisodia, Vice-Chairman Mrs. Patel, and Mr. Man Mohan Sharma who was in charge of the secretariat. I would like to express my cordial appreciation as the chairman of AFPPD and congratulate you on the success of this conference.

As a follow-up to the conference for the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), which was held in Cairo in 1994, this year's conference focused on reviewing the development that has taken place over the 5 year period. Moreover, it has committed itself to taking actions against any shortcomings and attempted to identify the most pressing issues. As we address the issue of rapidly increasing population, we cannot overlook the issue of food problem if we are to secure the safety of our livelihood. It is for this reason that we decided to choose food security as the topic of our discussion.

After the agreement on the Uruguay Round was reached 3 years ago, an international treaty named WTO was signed. Since then, conflict of interest is emerging in many areas among various countries of the world. As the decision was made to review this WTO in the year 2001, follow-up conferences are being held. The first was the OECD conference which was held on March 5 and 6, and I expect that the food issue will be discussed repeatedly at conferences that will be held in connection with this topic. In this regard, we, as those involved in the issue of population, and as representatives of parliamentarians who are responsible for the livelihood of the people, must strive to search for better solutions by maintaining keen interest in this matter. For this reason, we intend to take up this topic for the next 3 years.

Asia has 62% of the world population. In addition, India, where this conference is being held, has one of the oldest histories in the world. India and China, with their large population and long, glorious history, have played a central role in bringing forth the present scale of population to this world. In the recent years, however, it has become very rare for the way of life we have in the Asian region to be incorporated into our lives. We must dig much deeper and discuss whether we could solve all the problems on the basis that economy and profitability are the only absolute criteria. It is only after the Asian way of life and philosophy is extensively incorporated into international treaties that we can

regard such treaties to be synonymous with global standard. For this reason, we would like to actively discuss this matter with all of you in the future.

No matter what happens, each country is responsible for the securing the safety of its people's lives. In this sense, in the event the problem of famine arises, the country is responsible to take measures against it. In other words, we need to discuss whether trade can be left at the discretion of the private sector. And I think that presentations of the speakers and active discussions that followed were very meaningful. Therefore, I would like to take this opportunity to commit ourselves to work towards presenting the ideal rules for the global food security when the WTO Rules are reviewed. I would like to thank all of you for the discussion that took place at this conference in the last 2 days. I would also like to express my heartfelt gratitude to His Excellency Shri Suresh P. Prabhu for his participation in this conference despite his busy schedule. I would like to conclude my speech by thanking the chairpersons from India for their contribution to this conference.

## Address

### **Hon. Sh. Suresh P. Prabhu** **Union Minister of Environment and Forests**

Mr. Shin Sakurai, Member of Parliament, also the Chairman of AFPPD, Excellencies, Dignitaries and Friends.

Let me first of all apologize to all of you for turning out late for this program. I had to travel almost more than 1,500km by air to be in the midst of you. I think I am here, not by design, but by default, but the point is how necessary it is for all of us to control our growing population.

I wish all of you a great success in your task and I hope that you had very useful deliberations in the last two days. I don't know why this venue for this conference was selected. Probably India was the most fitting venue for this conference. Having one of the largest population in the world, it is the right venue to discuss the strategies for controlling population and the strategies for development by converting this menace which is affecting us for the last several years.

Everybody has mentioned, and it is a fact, that Asia has almost two-thirds of the world population. Definitely less than two-thirds? Let me assure you Mr. Chairman that we'll make good debt in not very far from now. So the two-thirds of the population of the world lives in Asia. And nation parliamentarians are trying to deliberate as to how to convert this. There couldn't be a better forum than the parliamentarians to decide as to how we can convert population.

One of the causes of population growth—population growth causes are many—but the one of the real causes for us not being able address this growing population, is also because we live in a structure that is totally democratic. In a demographic culture, controlling demographic growth is a very difficult task, as we are experiencing in the last so many years. It is fate that every person has the right to exploit his family to his own benefit and to his own feeling as to the size of his own family. For this reason, democracy is one of the reasons and we are to find out a structure within this democratic setup as to how to control population. I hope that the parliamentarians who are present here, and the parliamentarians who are members of their organisation but are not present here now, will take up this task, and I congratulate each one of you for indulging in such an important exercise.

I really don't know, and I think we must find out, is there any relationship between our cultural background and population growth. Asia, as we all know, is the home of very ancient cultures. Some of the oldest cultures in the world could be traced in Asia. And

Asia, again, is the land that has the largest populations in the world. Is there any relationship between our culture and growing population? If it is so, as it has been found by some social scientists, then we must also find out the solutions for population control by modifying social ethos that we have got for several years. If the social ethos are coming in the way of arresting population control, which is now probably affecting our national interest, then we have to find out how to blend our social and cultural ethos with this new necessities that a country has. The parliamentarians could be the right forum to also address the issue and probably could also find out the solutions.

As we have seen, the parliamentarians are one of the important assets of the democratic process. But there are also various other assets that have to be involved in this task. We must also have some section of the bureaucrats involved in this process of how to control population. Along with the parliamentarians framing policies, the bureaucrats must also get involved in the implementation in the same spirit in which the laws were made.

In our own country, we have laws to control population. Of course, we don't have laws which enforce population control in the sense in which it has been enforced in some other parts of the world, but we have certain laws. But unless all of these laws are implemented in their true spirit, we will not get their results and that's why there is a need to have relationship between enforcement as well as enactment.

I am also very happy to learn that we are all really committing, not only just deciding in this session—we will be carrying out these tasks in the following sessions in the years to come.

Some of you may be wondering as to why a minister of forest and environment should address himself with the task of population control. Is there relationship between population and forest? Or is there any relationship between population and environment? My friends and delegations who are present here need not be reminded as to the necessity, or the innate relationship and the organic relationship, that exists between these two functions. We in India, at the time of independence, had a population that has grown by three times or more in the last 50 years. During the same period, we lost almost two and half times the forest cover India had. I am not saying that it is completely because of the population growth, but just imagine this very simplistic theory that one can come across—had we not increased population in the type of growth that we experienced, and had we not decreased the forest, the minister of forest and environment has no role to play and there is no role for the minister of population control as well. Now we have a minister to look after the environment and forest and the minister to find out how to control population. Had we addressed this problem 50 years ago, we would not have two ministers and parliamentarians again will be complaining about the two posts they have lost. All the parliamentarians who are present here should therefore be happy that we didn't take those measures at that time. We have two more posts to aspire for in our respective parliaments and in our respective governments.

As you know, we are not really looking forward to addressing these issues from this point of view as we are really concerned with this serious matter. In India, we have decided, and let me assure you on behalf of the Government of India, that population control is going to be one of the critical parts of our national public policy. The new government that took office only about two weeks ago, has included, and has mentioned, population control as a part of national agenda. The various parties that are ruling the country today have formed a coalition and decided that population control is going to be one of the critical areas on which the national government is going to assume importance. Since that is the policy, we are meeting at the right time, because we have just assumed office only about two weeks ago. Let me assure you that the Government of India shares the same perception as you all share in this hall and let me assure you that you will have all the help that may be necessary on behalf of the Government of India.

We have some of last year's members of the parliament, Mrs. Urmilaben Patel as well as our leaders in the corporate sectors and former union minister, Dr. Sisodia, who are representing us in this very seminar. The views expressed by all of you will be aired by them towards the Government of India, which would certainly take appropriate measures and steps as would be recommended by this party. I must also, as have been mentioned by my esteemed colleagues, that if we ignore the population growth now, we are heading for a much bigger problem in food security.

This is the time, as also mentioned by the WTO, when in view of most of the countries are members of the WTO. So it is inevitable that we are coming to a stage in which we want a free movement of trade and commerce without any hindrance. Just imagine a large country having a larger population, faces a crisis of famine. And they decide to import food, there won't be a barrier, so nobody can say that "We will ban the export of food" because food will also be part of WTO and we'll have to import food. And just imagine a large country having a famine has to import food from all the parts of the world, what could be the situation. Food security is a very important issue which we all of you must address in the years to come and I am glad that you are also concerned with this issue in the right sense it should be done.

We must have a session, if it has not already been done, to find out how we could integrate our public policy on population with our public policy on environment and with our public policy on forest. If we integrate these three important ingredients of public policy into one integrated policy, then we will be able to address the issue that will be going to affect us in the years to come.

I am not trying to raise the issue that Asia is a home to the two-thirds of the population. It's not the issue of population growth which could be said to be issue of the only of the two-thirds of the world's population. The remaining one-third of the population also must realize that they need also to contribute to solve this problem, not just look at it as the problem of the two-thirds of the world. If it is taken as a global problem, we will be able to resolve this issue in the years to come in a much more significant way.

Technology is becoming so critical in combating various issues in the world. Even in the environment, now we realize that if you want to combat environmental issues, we cannot solve it by having a natural recourse which obviously be included in forest cover. We are trying to arrest environmental issues by resorting to very advanced technologies. Even in population control, we need to have access to highly sophisticated technology in medical terms and others, and for that, even the remaining one-third of the population can contribute in a very significant way and I think this conference would pave the way for heading in that direction.

Let me wish you all a very successful journey back home and I'm sure that you will be carrying back home by leaving our country, you will be bringing fine memories that you must have experienced during your stay in India.

Let me assure you one thing—if you are going to carry with you the warm hospitality and the fond memories of your stay here, you will not be charged by your customs when you go back home because you can always tell them that Indian hospitality is not dutiable. Thank you very much.

## Address

**Dr. Hirofumi Ando**  
**Deputy Executive Director**  
**United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)**

Honourable Union Minister, Distinguished Parliamentarians, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, first of all, I would like to congratulate the organizers of this meeting, IAPPD, Asian Forum and APDA. IAPPD, under the effective leadership of Dr. Sisodia and Dr. Patel; Asian Forum, under the leadership of Mr. Sakurai and Dr. Prasop; and APDA, under the leadership of Mr. Maeda. I would also like to congratulate their respective executive directors, Mr. Man Mohan Sharma, Mr. Shiv Khare and Mr. Hirose for executing the meeting effectively.

Above all, I would like to congratulate the participants, you all, for making this meeting meaningful and successful. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Government of India and the Parliament of India, and particularly, the vice president, Mr. Kant, for hosting this meeting. I would like to thank Mr. Kant for this thought-provoking opening speech yesterday.

We at UNFPA are very gratified to be associated with this meeting, in part to your political commitment to the implementation of ICPD Programme of Action, through your active and sometimes passionate deliberations over the two days. As you know, we know what is needed to help solve our population problems. After 40 years of experience, with the establishment of the fourth population program in India. They include political commitment, which was accepted by you over the last two days.

The second critical ingredient is resources. As Honourable Vice President Kant mentioned yesterday, we spend 800 billion dollars a year for armament, while the new reproductive health program including family planning requires only 17 billion dollars a year. As I informed you yesterday, we in UNFPA are in the process of reviewing the achievement of ICPD Program of Action. As a major step, we plan to organize an international meeting of parliamentarians on population and development in Netherlands next February. I hope to see most of you, if not all of you, in that meeting.

Before I conclude, I would like to take this opportunity to pay my personal respect and tribute to Mr. Sat Paul Mittal, who was one of the founding members of the Asian Forum, the mother organisation for parliamentary activities in Asia. He was one of the strongest supporters of UNFPA and made a significant contribution to the work of parliamentarians concerned with population and development, not only in Asia but globally. Thank you very much.

## Address

**Dr. Urmilaben Patel M.P.  
Vice Chairperson**

**Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (AFPPD)**

Shri Suresh Prabhu, Union Minister of Environment and Forests; Shri Shin Sakurai, Chairman, AFPPD, now we are at the end of the two days of deliberation.

The man has to be provided with the basic amenities of life. It is the precondition of better human life and environment essential to see a man as man within the world totally polluted with all unethical behavior and surroundings. We have to learn to create a balance. Our endeavor is to strike the perfect balance. It's time to establish a humanitarian system where everyone gets his due share in rights and his due opportunities. Our endeavor here today was to think and act in that direction on the issues of food security. We are equally worried about water availability, the availability of enough clothing, shelter, education and health services.

In the end, I am thankful to you all. My fellow parliamentarians for showing keen interest and participating in the deliberations of these two days. I am also thankful to the speakers of the respective assemblies who have shown their interest in this cause through their legislators. I am thankful to the dignitaries and experts who have given their keynote addresses and speeches, and the chairpersons of the session to lead the deliberations.

It is a great pleasure to extend our hearty gratitude to our Honourable Minister of Environment and Forest, Shri Suresh Prabhu, to grace the occasion of the closing ceremony function as a chief guest, and found the time from his busy schedule.

I would like to thank all those who helped to make this meeting a useful event. I would like to make the mention of the General Secretary and the staff of the Parliament Secretariat for extending all cooperation to us.

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## **Background Note on International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD)**

### **Indian Association of Parliamentarians on Population and Development**

In order to hold world's first discussion on population problems, the United Nations invited Governmental representatives of its Member Countries to the Romanian capital of Bucharest for World Population Conference held during August 19-30, 1974.

This conference was followed 10 years later by the International Conference on Population in 1984 in Mexico City, Mexico. 10 years after the Mexico Conference, the International Conference on Population and Development was hosted by Egypt in Cairo in 1994.

The names of these three conferences differ somewhat. **First**, the 1974 gathering was called a "World" Conference, while, those held in 1984 and 1994 were termed "International". **Second**, while the Bucharest Mexico City gathering to discussed "Population" the Cairo Conference focused on "Population and Development". In other words the most recent conference probed various population problems in the wider context of development. **Third**, the World Population Plan of Action (WPPA) which was adopted in Bucharest and refined in Mexico City was replaced at the Cairo Conference by the "Programme of Action", a more detailed set of action programmes. The greatest changes that occurred between the 1974 Bucharest Conference and 1984 Mexico City conferences were:

- The global recession of the 1970's which followed the post-war reconstruction and prosperity that shaped the world economy of the 1960.
- The second major change during this period was seen in the behaviour of some of the largest developing countries, China in particular.

The notable feature of the 1974 World Population Plan of Action was its optimistic view of the future of human kind, with its emphasis on the importance of human beings as a resource.

Only five years after Bucharest Conference, however, China embarked on a policy without historical precedent: it replaced its two-child policy with a one-child policy. Few people in developed countries and in the United Nations believed that such a drastic birthrate-regulating policy would be successful. Most other developing countries were also skeptical about the Chinese policy.

China's birthrate, however, dropped to 24.8 per 1,000 people in 1974, the year of the Bucharest conference. This was a sharp drop from the birthrate of 33.3 recorded only four years earlier; moreover, by 1979 - the year the one-child policy was launched - the birthrate had decreased to 17.8 a level usually seen in developed countries. The decline in China's birth-rate was much faster than that experienced in the developed countries of the West in their so-called demographic transition from high birth and death rates to low birth and death rates. Moreover, China's one-child policy, widely regarded as unrealistic, achieved success only five years after the Bucharest meeting. Evidently, although China had rejected the idea of population policy in its official speech at Bucharest conference, it had in effect, begun promoting family planning before that conference.

Remarkable changes also appeared in India, the world's second most populous country, after China. India was the first developing country in Asia to adopt a government-sponsored family planning programme. The Indian government, under Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, energetically assisted the family planning movement, but in Bucharest, the country attracted attention from many developing countries suffering from rapid population growth

and slow economic progress with its insistence that "development is the best contraceptive measure." In April 1976, or less than two years after the conference, India announced a new population policy. Part of this new policy, with great implications, is as follows:

"If the future of the nation is to be secured... the population problem will have to be treated as a top national priority and commitment... it is clear that simply to wait for education and economic development to bring about a drop in fertility is not a practical solution. The very increase in population makes economic development slow and more difficult for achievement. The time factor is pressing, and the population growth so formidable, that we have to get out of the vicious circle through a direct assault upon this problem as national commitment... We are of the view that a state legislature, in the exercise of its own powers, decides that the time is ripe and it is necessary to pass legislation for compulsory sterilization, it may do so."

In April 1984 10 years after the Bucharest Conference representatives of more than 150 countries gathered at Mexico City, Mexico for the International Conference on Population.

### **International Conference on Population and Development, Cairo, Egypt (ICPD)**

The purpose of the Conference was to examine the reports of the participating countries on their implementation of the World Population Plan of Action adopted at Bucharest. The only major achievement of the Mexico City Conference was the adoption of a set of recommendations for further implementing the plan of action, that, in effect, created a "refined" version of the Bucharest document.

One of the achievements was related to the World Population Plan of Action (WPPA), which, was adopted in Bucharest and reinforced in Mexico City. This "Plan of Action" was developed into the "Programme of Action" during the meeting. It is important that a majority consensus was achieved for the formulation of a detailed program that included all processes from planning to execution, and that, surprisingly, its content was agreed upon.

The second achievement of the Cairo gathering was that the conference incorporated strategic developments into its population policies. As indicated in the name of this conference, population and development cannot be separated. Marking this point, the participants discarded the old narrow concept of population polices and instead incorporated development policies as a fundamental element that indirectly affects demographic phenomena. Nonetheless, advice was only given with regard to population policy in a narrow sense, such as improvement of the death rate, and few political suggestions were made on other demographic phenomena, such as birth-rate and migration.

The third achievement was the start of a discussion in the Conference on the empowerment of women in order to redefine and reconstruct population policies. Specifically, a landmark strategy - termed "The Empowerment of Women" - was suggested.

The fourth factor that characterised the gathering at Cairo was the adoption, as proposed during the conference, of 20 years as the population limit for the Programme of Action. This was a very important suggestion. As pointed out earlier in this essay, the coming 30 years should be the most critical period for population issues, and suitable countermeasures must be worked out for this period. The 20 year limit in the Cairo suggestion can be considered to correspond to this 30 year strategy.

The fifth achievement was the participation of many non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in the conference.

### **Establishing Population Targets**

One distinctive feature of the ICPD, Cairo was the goal of current population policies established for 2015. In other words, these policies are expected to come to fruition within 20 years of 1995. Notably, the target for population improvement was presented, mainly in connection with death rates.

The targets were following;

1. To improve the death rate so that the average human life span would exceed 75 years of age by 2015.
2. To reduce the mortality rate of infants and children under five years of age to 35 or fewer per 1,000 births by 2015.
3. To bring down the death rate of expectant and nursing mothers to 60 or fewer, or 75 or fewer in countries with high death rates, per 1,000 births by 2015.
4. That all people in need should be able to enjoy reproductive health through primary health care.

The present Conference of the Parliamentarians on Population and Development seeks to deliberate upon the achievements made in respect of the goals set by the ICPD and assess their progress since ICPD on its fifth anniversary i.e. plus 5.

## **Implementing the Cairo Programme of Action**

**Jyoti Shankar Singh**  
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The International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), which was held in Cairo (Egypt) from 5 to 13 September 1994, has earned a place in history as one of the most significant global conferences ever. It radically transformed the views and perceptions of thousands of policy makers and programme managers on how population policies and programmes should be formulated and implemented in future - moving away from top-down approaches and pre-planned demographic goals to those that would seek to respond to the needs of "couples and individuals" for family planning information and services. At the same time, the unparalleled exposure it received through newspapers, radio, television and internet helped to bring issues relating to reproductive health, reproductive rights, and women's empowerment to the attention of millions of women and men around the world, and may indeed have enhanced their understanding and appreciation of these issues in a positive manner.

Cairo also set clear benchmarks to measure progress over a period of two decades (1995-2015) towards goals relating to reduction of infant, child and maternal mortality, ensuring availability of reproductive health services to all those who need them, education, particularly of young girls and women, and empowerment of women. Finally, it brought to the fore the critical role of the non-governmental sector in population activities, and firmly established the concept of "partnership" between governments and non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

Cairo began with uncertainties and tensions; it ended, in a blaze of glory, with a series of remarkable accomplishments. The appeal by some fundamentalist groups to individual countries to boycott the Conference failed almost totally. Only one country announced its decision to boycott the Conference, and another two stayed away, without specifying their reasons. In total, 179 countries sent official delegations to the Conference and another six came as observers.

Security considerations did keep away some individuals and groups from Cairo; but there were no untoward incidents during the Conference; and thanks to the vigilance of thousands of Egyptian army and security personnel and a relatively small but highly efficient corps of UN security officers, some 15,000 people who were in Cairo for two weeks in September 1994 felt well-guarded and secure. There were no problems with the arrangements, and facilities at the vast International Conference Center and the Egyptian government and people proved extremely generous and considerate hosts to the visitors. The non-governmental organizations, which sent more than 4000 representatives to Cairo, played a highly effective role at the Conference and the parallel NGO Forum and were happy to see fulsome recognition accorded to them.

The media coverage received by the Conference was exceptional. No other global conference has ever received the kind of intense media attention, scrutiny and analysis as Cairo did. And above all, Cairo succeeded against dire predictions of gloom and doom, in adopting by consensus a historic document - the ICPD Programme of Action.

In the long run, Cairo's success will be measured, by its impact on the policies and programmes of governments, NGOs and the international community. The ICPD Programme of Action includes 243 recommendations, all requiring implementation and follow-up. Most of them are addressed to governments, but, as appropriate, they are also addressed to NGOs and members of the international community. While it is too early to make a definitive assessment of the implementation of the Programme of Action, it is possible to point out some emerging trends, by looking at what actions are being taken, primarily at the country level, to implement the Cairo Programme.

## **Reorientation of Policies and Emerging Issues**

The General Assembly, in resolution 49/128, affirmed that "in the implementation of the Programme of Action, Governments should commit themselves at the highest political level to achieving its goals and objectives, which reflect a new, integrated approach to population and development, and take a lead in coordinating the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of follow-up actions. This was reiterated by the Assembly in resolution 51/176/ of 16 December 1996.

The primary emphasis is thus on the implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action at the country level. In preparing progress reports on national implementation, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) has mainly relied on the information provided by its field offices. In addition, information on changes in policies and programme priorities that are taking place is available in the country programme documents prepared for submission to the UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board. All of these documents demonstrate a clear pattern of policy changes in many countries. Here are a few illustrative cases from various geographical regions.

In the Africa region, Benin is one of those countries where some of the most remarkable policy changes have taken place since Cairo. During the ICPD process, Benin very often aligned itself with the position taken by the Holy See on reproductive health and reproductive rights issues. But in 1996, the government of Benin adopted a very comprehensive population policy, and with the technical assistance of Tunisia, is establishing a framework for provision of reproductive health services. Another African country where major initiatives have been undertaken in consonance with Cairo is South Africa. The new constitution of South Africa prohibits discrimination based on gender, sex, pregnancy, marital status or sexual orientation and guarantees the right of individuals to make reproductive decisions and to have access to reproductive health services. The framework of its population-related policies is being formulated on the basis of a "green" paper circulated in 1995 and wide-ranging consultations with NGOs and community groups.

In Latin America, Peru and Bolivia are two of the countries, which have changed or clarified their positions since Cairo. Peru, which during the ICPD process took some times rather ambiguous positions on reproductive health issues, has instituted a new policy approach which support provision of a wide range of family planning/reproductive health services, within its health care system. Bolivia has issued new rules and regulations providing women freer and easier access to maternal health and family planning services.

India is another of those countries which announced a major policy change after ICPD. It decided to move away from the system of quotas and targets to be filled by family planning service providers that had been in place for decades. In 1995-1996, at the initiative of J. C. Pant who was then the Secretary of Family Welfare in the Government of India, several districts were selected for an experiment in this regard. Having looked at the results of this experiment and after consulting with state officials, the central government announced that from April 1996 onwards, the system would be abolished all over India and that it would be replaced by a new set of indicators on access and availability of services to monitor programme performance. It is perhaps too early to say if the new policy has been fully understood and accepted by all the service providers. But I was told during my recent visit to several states in India that a full-fledged effort was being made to reorient and retrain the service providers and their supervisors, and the senior officials seemed confident that the new policy would take root.

More recently, the Philippines has announced plans for a similar policy change. The government believes that dropping the quotas and providing a full range of services, including family planning, will make them more easily accessible and available, particularly to women. Many other countries in Asia, as in Africa and Latin America have similarly begun to move away from narrowly defined

demographic goals and targets. Instead, they plan to focus on responding to individual needs for family planning and reproductive health information and services.

### **Reorientation of Population Policies**

At the international level, the broad thrust of the reorientation of population policies and programmes advocated by Cairo has received further endorsements at subsequent UN Conferences (Copenhagen, Beijing, Istanbul, Rome), but only after the vast majority of government delegates and NGO observers thwarted the attempts made in each case by a very small group of delegations to revise or water down some of the key concepts and definitions accepted at Cairo. For those organization (including NGOs and women's groups) and individuals involved in shaping the message of Cairo, it would be necessary to continue working towards broad-based understanding and acceptance of this message and to maintain and strengthen the networks and coalitions forged during the ICPD process which so effectively influenced the outcome of Cairo.

Maternal mortality has received increased attention since Cairo as an extremely important indicator of the status of women, and their access to adequate health care. But paucity and inadequacy of data continue to hamper development of reliable and up-to-date estimates. The previous estimates of 500,000 maternal deaths per year have now been increased to 590,000 maternal deaths per year. In case of Africa, maternal mortality is now estimated at 880 deaths per 100,000 live births, compared with the previous estimate of 630 deaths per 100,000 live births. UN agencies and organizations such as WHO, UNICEF and UNFPA plan to provide both technical advice and programme support to individual countries to reduce the incidence of high maternal mortality.

On the subject of international migration, there have been several activities in follow-up to Cairo. The General Assembly resolution 49/127 of 19 December 1994 requested the UN Secretary General to prepare a report on the possibility of convening a global conference on international migration. The report, which was prepared by the Population Division in 1995 and submitted to the substantive session of the Economic and Social Council in 1995, did not find a consensus in favour of convening a global conference. The discussion continued at the fiftieth session of the General Assembly, but without any results. The Commission on Population and Development devoted a major part of its 1997 session to the topic of international migration and approved plans for an international symposium on international migration in 1998.<sup>1</sup> This symposium is expected to examine various aspects of international migration and refugee movements and to suggest appropriate policy responses. Following the symposium, the proposal to hold an international conference on migration may be aired again in 1998.

So far, however, no agreement seems to be emerging on holding, in the near future, an international conference on migration. Apart from "the conference fatigue" in UN circles, there is the feeling shared among many countries that such a conference would not serve any useful purpose unless it were preceded by a set of carefully negotiated regional and sub-regional formulas and agreements on the vexing disputes and issues relating to international migration.

In the post-ICPD era, one of the most interesting developments has been the emergence of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) as a dynamic player in all the discussions on international migration issues. Though an intergovernmental organization with 61 members, IOM is not part of the UN system. However, since 1992, it has enjoyed a special status at the UN General Assembly. On 25 June 1996, IOM signed a cooperation agreement with the United Nations, and subsequently with a number of other UN organizations. It also sits on the Working Group on International Migration. IOM has close operational links with the office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), and increasingly with UNDP. With UNFPA support, it has carried out a major study on the dynamics of emigration in selected developing countries and regions. In future discussion and negotiations on international migration issues, IOM is most likely to play a significant and influential role.

## **Integration of Family Planning and Reproductive Health Services**

The integration of family planning into a wide range of reproductive health services has been accepted as an operational objective by many developing countries. For example, the government of Mexico decided, soon after Cairo, to put family planning and other reproductive health services under one common directorate, with the aim of providing integrated services. To this end, it has also established a National Committee of Reproductive Health which is chaired by the Minister of Health and includes representatives from several ministries as well as NGOs. This committee will promote and coordinate the necessary reforms in the health sector during 1995-2000. Gregorio Perez-PPalacios, Director General of Reproductive Health in Mexico, says the reform process, with additional components being added to family planning and maternal and child health services, is moving forward quite well.

Bolivia has established a new Maternity and Child Insurance Programme which provides women free access to reproductive health care, including prenatal care, delivery and post-natal care, family planning, and PAP smear tests. Also, management of complications of unsafe abortion is included in its health services.

Ghana has formulated a national reproductive policy, based on ICPD definitions and aims at improving the delivery of services, particularly in the marginal communities. Kenya has developed a new health framework with four major components: family planning, STD/HIV/AIDS control, early detection of reproductive organ cancers, and counseling on sexuality.

Integration of family planning and other reproductive health services is now a primary objective also in many Asian countries. Vira Niyomwan, Deputy Director General of the Department of Health in Thailand told me that providing integrated services including family planning, maternal and child care, prevention of sexually transmitted diseases, and prevention of HIV/AIDS was the stated goal of the Ministry of Health, even before ICPD. The ICPD Programme of Action has, however, underlined the importance of a "holistic approach," and reproductive health care as defined by the Ministry of Health now includes family planning, sexual education, sexually transmitted diseases, reproductive tract infection, post-fertility care for women, infertility treatment and abortion. Thai officials accept that many officials lack an understanding of the holistic or integrated approach. Even less understood is the notion of reproductive rights. "To women activists and staff of family planning NGOs..., the most frequent form of reproductive rights violation occurs when clients are given incomplete information about contraceptive methods" (Chamsanit, 1996: 16). Lack of understanding of the integrated approach, inadequacy of information or choices offered to women, and lack of emphasis on quality of care offered to clients, are three of the most important issues that would have to be tackled by both government and NGO officials in Thailand, as in a very large number of other developing countries.

In Indonesia, there is a growing realization that while family planning programmes have achieved a remarkable degree of success, treatment and prevention of sexually transmitted diseases, and the fight against the pandemic of HIV/AIDS require much greater attention than in the recent past. Also, reduction of maternal mortality, where Indonesia lags behind all other members of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN), is being assigned high priority. Abdullah Cholil, a senior Indonesian official, who participated in all the sessions of the ICPD Preparatory Committee and in the Cairo Conference, says that the maternal mortality rate (MMR) in Indonesia is "intolerably high". According to the 1996 Human Development Report issued by UNDP, the maternal mortality rate in Indonesia in 1993 was 650 per 100,000 live births. To drastically reduce maternal mortality, Dr. Cholil proposes a six-point programme which brings us, again to the integrated approach advocated by Cairo: advancement of the role and status of women; empowerment of pregnant women by giving them more knowledge and information; family planning for every couple in need; basic maternal care for all pregnant women; community-based

data collection and referral system; and accessible emergency obstetrical care for pregnant women at risk.

Malaysia, which already provides a wide range of reproductive health services, including modern contraception, for those who need them feels quite comfortable with the ICPD definition of reproductive health. Raj Karim, who has served as Director General of the National Population and Family Development Board of Malaysia since 1992 and was among the more active participants in the ICPD process, believes that Malaysia has acquired a great deal of experience in providing reproductive health services and says it is quite willing to offer training opportunities for programme managers from Central Asian countries. Her latest concern is how to deal with the problems faced by adolescents - something that will not come as a surprise to those who have some knowledge of the changing patterns of adolescent behaviour in many Asian countries.

Bangladesh, which has an effective family planning programme, accepts the need to establish an institutional framework and a time table for integrating this programme with other reproductive health services. A sectoral Review by the UNFPA field office in Bangladesh points out that

"[t]he family planning program has been driven by a single focus - gaining acceptors to meet demographic targets. This is not something which the program need be ashamed of at this juncture since the same motivations drove most of the world's successful family planning programs. However, to move from a target-driven, demographic approach to a client-centred reproductive health approach calls for sweeping changes. Not only do clinics need to be able to offer a wider range of services, the service providers need to change their attitudes in order to serve to a wider range of reproductive health needs not simply immediate family planning services."

I have mentioned earlier the case of India which has officially decided to give up the quota and target system, in favour of a client-centred approach. But its officials readily admit the conceptual and institutional shortcomings in implementing the new approach. They also argue that it will take some time to bring family planning and other reproductive health services together.

The cases I have cited here go to show that the ICPD definition of reproductive health is being embraced by an increasing number of countries in all parts of the world. However, we can already see that implementing it will require major reorientation and training of staff, changes in institutional and management structures, additional facilities and, of course, additional funding, based on local needs and circumstances.

At the international level, the ICPD definition of reproductive health has become the norm for WHO, UNFPA and a whole host of other intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, and is being used to reformulate and update their own programme priorities and strategies. The definition has also been sustained at all the subsequent UN conferences, though, as I have pointed out earlier, an attempt was made each time by a small group of countries to water it down. The definition remained intact in the Platform for Action adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing) as well as in the recommendations of the Social Summit (Copenhagen), Habitat II (Istanbul) and the World Food Conference (Rome).

It is interesting to note that while the Holy See does not fully endorse the ICPD language on reproductive health and reproductive rights, it has ended up supporting the inclusion of this language in the recommendations of all subsequent UN conferences, in preference to other formulations offered. While its opposition to abortion remains unwavering, it also seems to have eased its stance on modern or "artificial" contraception. A news dispatch in *The Times* (London) of 3 March 1997 says that "Catholics who admit using the Pill, the sheath or other forms of contraception should be given absolution, even if they carry out the 'sin' repeatedly, as long as each time that they confess they are penitent and make a commitment 'not to fall again into sin'." The

Church thus seems to acknowledge the reality that a vast majority of Catholics around the world are already using modern contraceptive methods.

Cairo did not delve into two delicate questions, nor did any of the other UN Conferences: what is the relationship between "the rights of individuals and couples" and their responsibilities and, if there is a disagreement between a man and a woman on the number of spacing of children, how is the disagreement to be resolved? These questions concern the most intimate and personal aspects of human relationships, and serious attempts to discuss them have led to extremely difficult ethical, moral and social dilemmas. Perhaps that is why nobody has been able so far to articulate widely acceptable answers. While a debate on these questions will no doubt continue, it can be said with some degree of confidence that Cairo has significantly changed and broadened the concept of rights and choices in the area of reproductive health for both men and women.

In the post-Cairo period, some supporters of family planning have worried aloud that family planning might be neglected or lost sight of, when advocating the broad reproductive health approach. At the other end of the spectrum, several women's groups have expressed the apprehension that the approach adopted at Cairo would not really be put into practice in many countries because of political or religious opposition, lack of political commitment or lack of resources.

A declaration issued by the Eighth International Women's Health Meeting in Rio in March 1997 takes the view that "in many countries what is occurring is a narrow interpretation of the Cairo and Beijing resolutions, the implementation of vertical models, and the renaming of pre-existing and newly-launched family planning programs as reproductive health". The countries which are attempting to change that vertical models would probably argue, with some justification, that it is impossible to change family planning programs into reproductive health programmes overnight and that, given the limitations of infrastructure and resources, they have no option but to adopt an incremental approach to integrating family planning with other reproductive health services. This would also appear to be the general approach favoured by UNFPA in case of those countries which have well-established family planning programmes. I would agree, at the same time, that it will be important for NGOs, women's groups and other actors in the civil society to keep the spotlight on how this process of integration and expansion is working or not working. This would help ensure that rhetoric is followed by real action.

Adolescent sexuality and health is another area of increasing concern to policy makers and programme managers in many countries around the world. Teenage pregnancies and the rising rates of sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS, have made them, particularly in Africa and Latin America, acutely aware of the need to provide to adolescents accurate and adequate information on sexuality and its implications and consequences, and they are willing to consider plans to provide them both information and counseling. However, provision of services and contraceptive commodities to young people runs against social and religious mores and taboos in many societies. Both advocacy and advice from international and non-governmental organizations will be needed to register steady progress towards overcoming these obstacles.

### **Empowerment of Women**

Though the recommendations of UN global conferences such as Cairo and Beijing are not legally enforceable, they set up standards, goals and benchmarks against which individual countries and the international community judge their accomplishments as well as failures. This is especially true of the recommendations concerning reproductive health, reproductive rights and empowerment of women. As public attention continues to be focussed on these recommendations and increasing support is voiced for their implementation, the policy makers are encouraged or persuaded of the urgency of the issues and of the need to act.

This happened already during the Cairo process, as various issues regarding women's empowerment were being debated at the national level and continued after the Cairo and Beijing Conferences in the context of the call to implement their recommendations. For example, in 1995, South Africa and Vietnam adopted laws prohibiting discrimination in employment on the grounds of pregnancy and marital status. Also in 1995, Brazil approved legislation prohibiting the requirement that a woman furnish as a condition of employment a certificate indicating that she had been sterilized or that she was not pregnant; Peru amended its national population law to remove the provisions that excluded sterilization as a method of family planning.

The need to protect women against sexual and domestic violence is being increasingly recognized by individual countries. *The State of World Population 1997* reports that Bolivia, Costa Rica, Ecuador and Panama have already adopted laws against domestic violence and similar measures are under consideration in many other countries.

These are encouraging examples of national action. But given deep-rooted traditional attitudes and patterns of male behaviour, the implementation of Cairo and Beijing recommendations on women's issues and rights must be regarded as a long-term endeavour on the part of enlightened policy makers and leaders of civil society organizations.

### **The Increasing Role of NGO Sector**

NGOs and other civil society organizations (parliamentarians, academic groups, youth and women's groups) continue to play an active role in disseminating information about the ICPD Programme of Action. A publication titled *The Cairo Consensus: the Right Agenda for the Right Time*, which was issued by the International Women's Health Coalition (IWHC) 1995, provides an analysis of the consensus forged at Cairo, and summary of the main points in each chapter of the ICPD Programme of Action. Organizations such as IPPF, CEDPA and the Family Health International have produced and distributed among their constituents special publications on ICPD.

Since Cairo, IPPF which with 144 national member associations is the largest international non-governmental organization in the field of voluntary family health care has organized numerous seminars and workshops at international and regional levels to focus the attention of its constituents and affiliates on the implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action. Ms. Brueggemann, who succeeded Dr. Hafdan Mahler as Secretary General of IPPF in 1995, and others in the IPPF leadership point out that Cairo goals and objective are mostly the same as those outlined in the Vision 2000 plan, which was adopted by the IPPF member assembly in 1992. Cairo thus provides a extremely valuable framework, backed up by a wide-ranging international consensus, for IPPF's own work programme.

Many other international NGOs such as the Population Council, the Population Action International, the Population Institute, the Center for Population and Development Activities, the Family Health International or regional meetings where specific aspects of the implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action were analysed in depth.

Many NGOs have also been consulted by governments on follow-up national action plans and programmes, and an increasing number are involved in population programmes at the local level. UNFPA field offices have been encouraged to set up consultative groups or committees involving NGOs. At the headquarters, UNFPA has expanded and updated its guidelines for cooperation with NGOs, and an NGO Advisory Committee constituted by UNFPA Executive Director has met annually since 1995.

Advocacy and championing by NGOs of specific causes, as we have seen in earlier chapters, have convinced diplomats and officials to take significant action, and I believe this trend will continue. Under the agenda formulated by Cairo and Beijing, there are a number of issues - reduction of

maternal mortality, adolescent health, education of young girls, and prevention of domestic abuse and violence - which are of particular concern to NGOs and which will undoubtedly receive their continuing attention.

The issue of female genital mutilation is another one of these issues, which has recently begun to receive increasing international attention, primarily through the efforts of a group of NGOs. Both Cairo and Beijing condemned the practice of female genital mutilation and called for its early eradication. It is, however, deep-rooted in the social and cultural traditions of many African and Arab countries; and an uncompromising and sustained information and educational campaign on the part of the concerned NGOs will be needed to bring about an end to this practice. All the evidence suggests that NGOs are fully committed to this task.

Internationally, organizations, such as WEDO, are involved in NGO efforts to monitor the action taken by individual countries and international organizations to implement Cairo and to keep them focussed on this task by constantly reminding them of the commitments they made at Cairo. A monitoring report covering more than 100 countries, *One Year After Cairo*, which was sponsored by the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) and WEDO, was issued in 1995 (Earth Summit Watch, 1995), and there are plans to issue such a report on a regular basis in the future.

Involvement of NGOs in programme implementation at the national and local levels is being encouraged in a number of countries. In visits to several countries in Asia in 1996-1997, I was encouraged to find that the participation of NGOs in operational programmes was indeed growing. However, in some countries NGO officials expressed the suspicion or fear that governments, in providing financial support for NGO activities, might also seek to control them. On the other side, many government officials spoke of their concerns regarding long-term sustainability of NGO operations, financial accountability, and lack of transparency in the governance of NGOs. While governments will have to allay NGO concerns, NGOs on their part will be expected to meet the usual financial and reporting requirements and to provide more information on their internal structures and planning and operational procedures.

### **Mobilization of Resources**

Since 1995, many donors, including the United States Agency for International Development (AID) and the UK Overseas Development Administration (ODA), have re-oriented many of their policies and approaches in the light of ICPD. At the international level, WHO and UNFPA have organized several workshops and seminars to clarify definitional and operational issues regarding reproductive health at international and regional levels, and various guidelines and guidance notes have been revised and updated. The process also continues at the national level, as these guidelines and notes are adapted to specific conditions and infrastructure, commodity and servicing requirements of individual countries are clearly identified. All these efforts at various levels should help to clarify operational needs and requirements and enable individual donors to focus their attention on those countries with the most urgent and pressing needs.

The Executive Director of UNFPA has also organized, since 1995, an annual consultation with multilateral and bilateral donors, coinciding with the annual sessions of the Commission on Population and Development. These meetings provide a useful opportunity to exchange information and engage in a general review of progress toward raising the funds needed to reach the ICPD goals. At the 1997 meeting, many of the donors asked UNFPA to prepare an update on global funding for population programmes. A provisional version of the report prepared in response was distributed at the UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board meeting in May 1997 and the final version at the Board meeting in September 1997.

The report indicates that the funding for population did go up in 1994 and 1995, but it seems likely that the total amount did not increase in 1996; it may be lower than in 1995. A lower rate of

exchange vis-a-vis the US dollar was partly responsible for this decrease. But there are other, more important reasons we should take note of.

Though the US administration, under President Clinton, remains firmly committed to the Cairo agenda, the majority of the US Congress (particularly in the House of Representatives) seems less sympathetic to providing more money for population assistance. The money provided by the US to population has gone down every year since 1995, and there is considerable uncertainty as to how much population assistance the US would provide in future. Japan, the biggest donor to UNFPA, is reducing its overall ODA commitments, though it is not clear what impact this would have on the population sector. Almost all of the European donors have seen the value of their contributions fall because of the soaring value of the US dollar, and some of them are also reducing their overall commitments for ODA, including those for population assistance. But there are also encouraging developments. The Netherlands, following a resolution adopted by its parliament, is committed to raising the amount devoted to population assistance to 4 percent of its ODA by the year 2000, and the United Kingdom, under the new labour government, is expected to strengthen the UK commitment to Cairo.

There are also two bright spots on the international scene, provided by the World Bank and the European Community. The World Bank has increased its support for reproductive health and population-related activities from around \$300 million in 1994 to \$448 million in 1995 and around \$600 million in 1996. It remains committed to providing even greater support, if the countries want it. The European Community also has reiterated the commitment it made in 1994 - to provide approximately \$300 million for population by the year 2000. Most recently, it has provided through UNFPA a grant of \$35 million to NGOs in Asia, and committed \$200 million to the government of India for reproductive health programmes.

The 1997 UNFPA report also points out that following ICPD the developing countries have substantially increased their investments in the population sector. The total amount of domestic resources allocated in 1995 is estimated at \$7.5 billion, including \$6.1 billion in government funds and \$1.1 billion from domestic private resources. If we add this amount to approximately \$2.0 billion provided by international sources, the total funding for population programmes in 1995 would come to \$9.5 billion. The total of 7.5 billion allocated by developing countries is not that far from the \$11.3 billion projected as their contribution toward the ICPD goals in the year 2000. In fact, they are contributing right now around 78 percent of resources, whereas Cairo agreed that their share of resources by the year 2000 should be around 67 percent.

It is, however, important to note that the amount of \$7.5 billion includes very substantial allocations by a few large countries such as China, India and Indonesia, whose programmes are financed to great extent through domestic budgets. In many other developing countries, including most of those in Sub-Saharan Africa, domestic resources can only support part of the population programme costs, and an increasing amount of external support will continue to be needed, especially if these countries are to register significant progress toward ICPD goals.

On the other side, donor assistance, after recording an impressive rate of growth during 1993-1995 has ceased to grow; it may even be declining. The amount of about \$2 billion for population assistance in 1995 shows an impressive 40 percent increase over 1994, which in turn was 40 percent more than in 1993. But, in 1996 there was probably no increase over 1995, and the prognosis for 1997 is not any better. At the current rates, donor assistance cannot be expected to rise to \$5.7 billion (the donor share of \$17.0 billion) by 2000.

The UNFPA Report paints a grim picture of the consequences of a shortfall in resources:

"the magnitude of the negative effects of failing to fully implement the ICPD Program of Action....should be sobering to all who are committed to the goals of ICPD. If the implementation

of the Program of Action were to fall short of the agreed targets and goals, many reproductive-health outcomes would suffer incrementally. Millions of individuals or couples who would have used family-planning services would not be able to do so because fewer services will be available or accessible. Many millions more unintended pregnancies would thus result over this period and millions of these pregnancies would end in abortions. Hundreds of thousands more women would die than otherwise, either in childbirth or while undergoing unsafe abortions. Several times that number of mothers would suffer life-threatening morbidities. Millions of unwanted children, born from unintended pregnancies, would die in their infancy or early childhood. While the exact estimates may change when more data become available, the order of magnitude of this grave - yet avoidable - consequences will not change."

There is clearly an urgent need to refocus international attention on the funding needs in the population field and on ways and means of meeting these needs. The United States, as the largest donor in the field, is expected by other donors and by developing countries, to find a way to reinforce and strengthen its financial commitment for the Cairo goals. A similar responsibility lies on other donors.

Funding by the private sector (including corporations, foundations, and NGOs) has gone up in the last several years, and may indeed increase further, if private donors could be persuaded to support more worthwhile projects. "Debt-swaps" may present potentially another large source of funding for population programmes. In its report, UNFPA indicates that it would like to encourage agreements between lenders and debtors at governmental and private levels under which creditors would forgive a portion of debt in exchange for an agreement on the part of the debtor countries to use equivalent local resources for reproductive health and related population programs. So far this approach has been tried in a few selected cases to obtain local funds for environmental projects. There is no reason why it could not also work for population projects.

While NGO and private channels could and should provide greater support to population programmes, those governments which provide official development assistance and several others which are in position to provide such assistance in the future, need to be reminded that for many developing countries, particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa, official development assistance will remain in the foreseeable future the major source of external financial support towards the implementation of international commitments.

I submit that a very logical and persuasive case can be made, on three grounds, for greater support to population activities in the future. First, investments in the population sector have, within a relatively short period of 25-30 years, shown impressive, in some cases even extraordinary, results, which cannot be said of investments in many other sectors of development. Second, the programme areas where investments are needed have been clearly identified. And third, the amounts needed are not mind-boggling. In fact, they are relatively small, and, with a little bit of extra effort, can be found within the current projections for ODA budgets of donor countries.

### **The Significance of Cairo**

In implementing the ICPD Programme of Action, it will be important for countries to learn from success stories, but it will be equally important for them to identify, early on, the problems and constraints that impede progress. In many countries, where family planning services have been organized vertically and run parallel to other health services, efforts at integration would require policy decisions, retraining of staff, and major changes in operational and supervisory structures. In countries like India and Bangladesh, where such efforts are under way, bureaucratic obstacles and turf problems need to be overcome. In the same part of the world, Thailand provides a good example of how integration of services can be planned and promoted. Lack of infrastructure and trained personnel and a serious shortfall of resources remain serious problems in most African countries and will slow down their efforts to realize the commitments they accepted at Cairo,

unless the international community demonstrates a clear resolve to help them overcome these constraints.

Full involvement of the NGO sector, including women's groups, in policy dialogues and consultation at all levels and increasing their participation in advocacy, information and service delivery projects is not only desirable but necessary. It should be actively sought and promoted to help ensure that the projects respond to the specific needs of individuals and the community, on a continuing and flexible basis.

Members of the international community (including, in particular, the UN organizations concerned with health and population issues) have an extremely important and crucial role to play in undertaking coordinated advocacy campaigns highlighting the messages from Cairo, providing technical advice and expertise for national action aimed at implementing the ICPD Programme, and mobilizing international resources to complement domestic resources in support of such action. Finally, regular monitoring of the implementation of the ICPD Programme at both national and international levels is a must, it will be needed to ensure that governments, NGOs and the international community keep the promises they made at Cairo.

## Population Trends in Asia

Prem P. Talwar<sup>1</sup>

### I. World Population Scenario

The current population of the world stands at 5767.8 million in 1996. It increased at an accelerated pace, particularly since the beginning of the twentieth century - from 1500 million in 1900, it increased to 2520 and 5768 in 1950 and 1996 respectively. It is projected that the world population will be 6160 million by the year 2000 AD. Another form in which one can see the pace of acceleration is by looking at the number of years it took to add successive billions to the population. It may be noticed that the last three billions in the population were added in 14, 13 and 11 years respectively.

<u>Pop. Size (Billion)</u>	<u>Year</u>
1	1804
2	1927
3	1960
4	1974
5	1987
6	1998

Most of this increase has been coming from less developed countries which form about 80% of the world population - almost 96% of the increase in population of 88 million during 1995-96 came from the less developed countries.

### II. International Conference on Population and Development: Reorientation of Population Programme

Population programs got changed orientation after the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), 1994. Instead of focussing on rate of population growth, the Conference gave it a broader base of sustainable development. Two major points of reorientation were that family planning was subsumed in the broad health measures of reproductive health and the services were emphasized to be need-based rather than goal-oriented. The emphasis on reproductive rights and health in ICPD assumes access to (i) family planning information and good quality services so that couples could decide and plan their families, and (ii) advice and services for other type of reproductive morbidity including RTI, STD and HIV/AIDS. The former assumes that the exercise of reproductive rights requires having access to good quality family planning services. Family Planning contributes both to reproductive and sexual health and to maternal and child health. Experience also shows that women with full and free choice in the matter of family size tend to have fewer children and keep them healthier and better educated. Therefore better access to reproductive health services, will affect all indicators of fertility, mortality and contraceptive practices on which quite a bit data are available. That is why, assessment of reproductive rights and health services has to be done through its indirect measures of fertility, mortality and contraceptive practices.

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Though this paper is mainly an analytical one, all comments made herein are those of the author's and in no way reflect views of any organization.

### III. The Paper

This paper addresses the population trends in Asia, keeping the overriding theme of the conference of looking at the progress of ICPD plan of action, endorsed by 180 governments in 1994, after elapse of five years. Though all efforts are made to look at various indicators recommended by ICPD but limitation of data obviously gets reflected in the analysis presented here. Since more data are available on parameters like fertility, mortality including infant and maternal mortality and contraceptive use, the analysis here utilizes them optimally to discuss population trends in the region. Limited data on other productive health indicators has been used in the last section of the paper on monitoring ICPD goals.

### IV. Asia is the Most Populous Region

Asia is the largest of the regions where about 61% of the world population lived in 1996 (Table 1). Its large size should not be surprising at all as seven of the first ten most populous countries in 1994 are located in this region. The first two most populous countries of the world, China and India, both located in Asia, alone inhabit 38% of the world population. Each of these two countries are, individually, larger than any of the five other regions of the world.

**Table 1: World Population Profile by Major Regions (1996)**

Region	Pop. Size (Million)	CBR	CDR	NI (%)	Density (Sq. km)	% Urban Pop
World	5767.8	23	9	1.4	43	45
More developed countries	1175.0 (20.4)	12	11	0.1	22	75
Less developed countries	5187 (79.6)	26	9	1.7	55	38
Africa	738.7	39	14	2.6	24	34
Asia	3488.0 (60.5)	23	8	1.4	110	35
Europe	728.8	12	12	0.0	32	74
Northern America	299.3	15	8	0.7	14	76
Oceania	286.9	18	7	1.1	3	70

CBR = Crude birth rate; CDR = Crude death rate; NI = Pop. rate of natural increase.

Source: References 1,2,3.

The natural rate of population growth in Asia is almost equal to that of the world as a whole; obviously, it added almost 61% of the increase in population in 1995-96. Though the pace of population increase in this region (Asia) is equivalent to the world as a whole, adverse consequences of this increase are obvious from the fact that this region has the highest population density and almost the largest percentage of population living in rural areas which is generally taken as an indicator of backwardness, at least in the context of Asia (Urbanization is treated as indicator of development).

### V. Population Profile of Four Regions of Asia

Asian countries have been grouped into four regions in United Nations Publications. These four regions are Eastern Asia, South Central Asia, South Eastern Asia and the Western Asia. Grouping of individual countries in these four regions is shown in the Annex.

**Table 2: Demographic Profile of Asia by Regions (1996)**

Region	Pop. Size (millions)	CBR	CDR	NI (%)	TFR	IMR	% Pop. <15	Age >65
Asia	3488	23	8	1.4	2.8	62	32	5
Eastern Asia	1434.4 (41%)	18	7	1.1	1.9	41	26	7
South Central	1392.4 (40%)	29	10	1.9	3.7	78	37	4
South Eastern	489.9 (14%)	26	8	1.8	3.2	54	34	4
Western Asia	171.5 (5%)	30	7	2.3	4.1	60	37	5

CBR = Crude birth rate; CDR = Crude death rate; NI = National rate of pop. growth; TFR = Total fertility rate; IMR = Infant mortality rate.

Source: References 1,2,3 and 4.

It may be noticed:

1. The Eastern region consisting of seven countries, includes some developed countries like Hong Kong, Japan and Republic of Korea, forms 41% of the Population of Asia. Its natural rate of population growth is 1.1% per annum. Its total fertility rate (TFR) is 1.9, below replacement level; infant mortality rate (IMR) is 41 and age distribution has started growing old because of the low levels of fertility and mortality in the region. It is fast moving towards attainment of demographic profile similar to those of the more developed countries.

2. South Central Asia consisting of 14 countries, includes India, some countries of Russian Federation, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Iran, forms 40% of the population of Asia. Its natural rate of population growth is 1.9% per annum, the infant mortality rate is as high as 78, the total fertility rate is 3.7 births per woman, almost 50% higher than the replacement level fertility. It is a younger population-37% of its population is below 15 years of age compared to 26% in South Eastern Asia-raising the dependency ratio and thus adversely affecting quality of life of the families. This region is far off the ICPD goal of IMR of 50 by 2000 AD.

3. South Eastern Asia consisting of 11 countries, includes Indonesia, Vietnam, Philippines, Thailand and Myanmar, forms only 14% population of Asia. Its demographic profile is slightly better than the South Central Asia-the natural rate of population growth is 1.8% per annum, TFR 3.2 and an infant mortality rate of 54. The percentage of population below the age of 15 has declined to 3.4. This region will achieve the ICPD goal of IMR of 50 by 2000 AD.

4. Western Asia consisting of 18 small-sized countries except, perhaps Turkey, forms only 5% of the population of Asia. Its demographic profile shows a better situation in regard to mortality but fertility is the highest of all the regions. It is growing at the rate of 2.3% per year and has total fertility rate of 4.1. The level of mortality is lower than South Central Asia-IMR is 60 and the crude death rate 7 compared to South Central Asia where these levels are 78 and 10 respectively. This region could achieve or at least be close to the ICPD goals of IMR if special efforts are made.

In other words, the Eastern region of Asia is demographically the best and South Central region the worst when, both fertility and mortality components are considered together. Fertility seems to be the highest in Western Asia where mortality is lower. The future trend of Asia's population and achievements of ICPD goals will be dependent mainly on how the South Central region behaves demographically. The pattern of population growth in the South Eastern region which forms a substantial 14% of the population of Asia, will also have an effect on Asia's population and its achievements of ICPD goals. It may be stressed that these two regions together form about 54% of the population of Asia. The Eastern region, another 41% of Asia's population has already reached

or is fast reaching demographic stabilization and therefore its contribution to the population trend will become less in the future years.

It worthwhile to look at five other characteristics on which data is available for these regions and has relevance for population trends and ICPD goal achievements there. These characteristics are density, per cent of population living in urban areas, sex ratio of the population, age specific fertility rates for adolescent girls (in the ages 15-19) and expectation of life at birth (Table 3) . The last two indicators are taken by UNFPA to monitor progress of ICPD Programme of Action. It may be noticed that the regions which are increasing rapidly are already more dense (except Western Asia) and thus are going to have further increase in their density. This is particularly so for the South Central Asia. This has implications on morbidity and mortality of the region. This is further augmented by the high risks infants and mothers are facing in this region because of relatively high age specific fertility rates (ASFR) for adolescent girls. Both these factors (higher density and higher ASFR for ages 15-19) suggest that mortality decline is going to be a slower process in the region.

A unique feature of the population profile in Asia is the sex ratio of the population which is favourable to males (Table 3). This phenomenon is different from that of the developed countries where females make up a greater percentage of the population than males. A recent analysis of United Nations on sex differentials in mortality, particularly among infants and children, has shown that unlike developed countries, female child mortality in the developing countries is higher by about nine per cent than male mortality. This is so even in China where overall child mortality is low. The situation is worse in South Central Asia. In large countries like India, Bangladesh and Nepal, girls were about 25% more likely to die between the ages of one and five than boys (5). An emphasis on reproductive health services and programs on empowerment of women in Asian countries, emphasized by the International Conference on Population and Development in 1994, may over some time bring about a sex ratio which is more in line with the biological phenomenon of lower female mortality at almost all ages.

**Table 3: Population Characteristics in Four Regions in Asia**

Region	Density (Sq. km)	% Urban	Sex Ratio (males/100 females)	ASFR for Adolescent (Ages 15-19)	Exp. of Life at Birth (F)
Asia	110	35	104.6	46	66.7
Eastern Asia	122	37	104.8	14	70.0
South Central Asia	129	29	106.1	73	60.0
South Eastern Asia	109	34	99.4	47	64.0
Western Asia	36	66	105.5	65	66.0

ASFR = Age specific fertility rate; Source: Reference 4

Note: The value of the parameters at regional level has been computed by taking only those countries into account for which data were available. Thus there may be some apparent inconsistency between values for the regions and Asia as a whole.

The ICPD has a goal of expectation of life at birth of 65 by the year 2005 A.D. Asia, as a whole, and individual regions have achieved this goal. If at all, the South central region is slightly lagging behind.

## VI. Population Trends in Four Regions of Asia

It is important to look at the post population trends in different regions of Asia. Such analysis is useful not only for understanding the current scenario but may suggest the future population trends of each country in the context of their population policies, health and sustainable development goals. This will be done in the next section of the paper.

The trend analysis has been limited to the two recent time periods of 1985-90 and 1990-95. Various parameters of population change in these four regions for these two time periods are shown in Table 4.

**Table 4: Population Trends in four Regions of Asia**

Region	Exp. Growth Rate		Crude Birth Rate		Crude Death Rate		Total Fertility Rate		IMR
	1985-90	1990-95	1985-90	1990-95	1985-90	1990-95	1985-90	1990-95	
Asia	1.9	1.5	27.7	24.0	8.8	8.0	3.4	2.8	62
Eastern Asia	1.4	1.0	20.9	18.0	6.6	7.0	2.3	1.9	41
South Central Asia	2.2	1.9	33.7	29.0	11.2	10.0	4.5	3.7	78
South Eastern Asia	2.0	1.7	30.0	26.0	9.1	8.0	3.7	3.2	54
Western Asia	2.6	2.3	33.8	30.0	8.1	7.0	4.7	4.1	60

IMR = Infant Mortality Rate

Source: Reference 4.

### Significant observations that emerge are:

1. The level of fertility has declined in the Eastern Region in the last two five-year periods, 1985-90; the level of total fertility has come down to 1.9, below replacement level. Therefore not much change is expected in fertility in this region over the future years though the level of the crude birth rate may continue to slowly decline because of changes in age distribution. The IMR has still to decline over the years as the level of 41 is quite high when compared to the level of 11 in the developed countries. The crude death rate may have a tendency to gradually increase because of changes in age distribution (the population has a tendency to grow old). Thus overall, this region will see a tendency for birth rate to slowly decline and death rate to slowly increase in future. This will reduce the current rate of population growth in this region from about 1.1% per annum to become zero ultimately. That is the population has stabilized to a zero growth rate. This region, therefore, is likely to increase at a slower pace until it achieves a population growth rate of zero.
2. The region of South Central Asia has witnessed a decline, both in fertility and mortality in the last decade but the levels of fertility and mortality, are still quite high. Therefore, this region is likely to add substantial numbers to its population in the coming years; its contribution to the population of the area is likely to increase above the 40% recorded in 1996. The only good news in regard to the population trends in this region is that the pace of decline in fertility is higher than mortality; thus, the rate of population growth, in this region, will decline from its present level of 1.9% per annum. Its pace will depend on population trends in the countries which constitute it. These large countries are India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Iran; they compose about 92% population of this region. Population trends in these countries will almost determine population in the region.
3. The South Eastern region like the South Central region, has high fertility and mortality though slightly less than the South Central region. The rate of population growth in this region is 1.7% per year compared to the South Central region where it was 1.9%. Its population trends also have the

same features as the earlier region-the population will continue to increase in next several years. The future population trends in this region will be determined by the population trends in countries of Indonesia, Vietnam, the Philippines, Thailand and Myanmar which forms about 92% of the population of this region.

4. Western Asia has the highest rate of population growth, though it has also witnessed decline in the levels of fertility and mortality in the last two time periods under study. But the overall impact of changes in this region will be limited on Asia since this region forms only five per cent of Asia's population.

## **VII. Population Trends in Large Countries in Asia**

### **China**

This country has reached a low level of fertility-its level of total fertility rate of 1.95 is below replacement level (TFR = 2.1). It has achieved ICPD goal of this indicator set for the year 2010. The level of contraceptive practice is high of 83%. Therefore, scope for further decline in fertility is negligible. But the level of crude birth rate which is high of 18 has still to decline and is expected to decline at slow pace because of the expected changes in the age distribution of the population.

This level of crude birth rate in the country is also low though infant mortality rate is still quite high compared to its level in the developed countries though its level is much lower than ICPD goal. The changing age composition may even have tendency to raise the level of crude death rate. It is therefore expected that the rate of population growth in China will decline, both by reduction in the crude birth rate and increase in the crude death rate. In this way, China is rapidly moving towards population stabilization at zero rate of population growth. The level of expectation of life at birth has also exceeded the ICPD goal.

Two other features of this country are low percentage of urban population and 38% females illiteracy. While changes in urban population will depend on the policies this country adopts, it still has to make efforts to increase the level of female literacy which got fillip by the global movement on female empowerment, emphasized by ICPD. Acceleration in decline of illiteracy may increase the pace of population stabilization in the country.

### **Democratic People's Republic of Korea**

This country has a high rate of population growth, mainly because the level of mortality including infant mortality is quite low. The level of birth rate is quite high, 24.1 births per 1000 population in 1990-95. Since data on the level contraceptive prevalence is not available, it is difficult to predict pace of its decline and consequently trend in population growth rate. One thing is sure, this country has level of fertility higher than neighboring countries and will grow faster in numbers.

This country stands very well on achievements of ICPD goals. All goals have been exceeded.

### **Republic of Korea**

This country has attained low levels, both of fertility and mortality and thus of the rate of population growth. The level of TFR is low of 1.7 births per woman during her reproductive life, much below the ICPD goals. The contraceptive practice is very high-contraceptive prevalence rate of 79%. Female literacy level is more than 90%. Therefore this country has reached the last stage of demographic transition and population will grow at a very slow pace. All forces are operating favourably to lead it to population stabilization, reaching zero rate of population growth gradually.

## **Afghanistan**

The country has very high levels of fertility and mortality by every standards. The contraceptive prevalence rate is almost zero, illiteracy is very high. The present civil war situation may not permit any policies or measures, to control adverse demographic situation. This may even be viewed as a positive phenomenon because of manpower requirement by different groups in the country. The existing socio-economic levels are not favourable to bring any changes in the demographic variables. This is because illiteracy in the country is quite high. Therefore, population trends in this country have remained and will remain uncertain in the coming years.

This country is, perhaps, worst in Asia, on ICPD goal achievements. It lags behind all the goals.

## **Bangladesh**

This country has shown substantial decline in fertility in the last five years-TFR declined from 4.8 in 1985-90 to 4.35 in 1990-95. The current contraceptive prevalence rate is 46%, better than any neighboring country. The mortality has also shown decline. The decline in crude death rate has been almost as high as in birth rate, leaving rate of population growth more or less unchanged in the last two five year periods (1985-90 and 1990-95). Though both demographic parameters are relatively high, the rate of population growth is not very high (only 1.8% per annum).

The level of infant mortality is high and so is TFR, quite far off the ICPD goals. The female illiteracy is high of 78% and only 18% population lives in urban area. New thrust to female literacy and women empowerment could be additional support to the population programme. This country is a fit case for a strong reproductive health programme, emphasized by the ICPD. It is lagging behind on all the monitoring indicators listed in Table 7.

Other two characteristics causing concern in the country are very high population density (834 persons per sq. km.) and very high dependency ratio. Both these factors have a good deal of impact on the quality of life of the people.

Another obvious feature of the demographic profile is high adolescent fertility in the country, 133 women for every 1000 women in tender ages of 15-19 give birth in a year. It leads to high morbidity and mortality of mothers and children, a contra-indication to fertility decline. This phenomenon needs special attention; either age at marriage needs to be delayed or at least age at first birth should be postponed beyond age 20. It is therefore necessary that population programme should emphasize changes in reproductive pattern.

## **India**

This country has shown reduction, both in fertility and the rate of population growth recently though at a slow pace. The level of crude death rate is quite low (9 to 10 deaths per 1000 population) though infant mortality is still quite high (IMR of 72), much more than the ICPD goals. It is therefore expected that mortality in India will continue to decline though at a slow pace. It is important that fertility decline has to be accelerated so that balance can be brought in the rate of population growth and resources of the country, an important variable in the equation of sustainable development of the country. For this purpose, there is need to harness benefits both of the effective population programme and that of the higher socio-economic development.

Female illiteracy in India is quite high; almost 66% females were found to be illiterate in 1991 Census. Almost three-fourths of the population is still living in rural areas, depending mainly on agricultural land which has started showing signs of population pressure (reduced per capita yield) despite all the modernization. The country's population programme has to have support of the socio-economic development in the country to achieve goals on population parameters.

The contraceptive prevalence rate is 41 after almost 50 years of the family planning programme in the country. This figure when compared to other countries of the region suggests need for the programme's thorough review. The programme needs high priority, serious attention, high level of political commitment and more resources. The current literature suggests that programme has been "too much of a governmental programme"; there is need to make it broad-based by involving private and voluntary sectors as effective partners.

The situation of the country is bad on all indicators taken to monitor the ICPD goals. It is clear that the reproductive health program has not taken roots.

### **Iran**

The country has very high fertility and quite low mortality, leading to high rate of population growth. The surprising feature of the data is its total fertility rate of 5.3 and contraceptive prevalence rate of 65. Based on such data from other countries, these figures look inconsistent. The only explanations are poor quality of data or very high natural fertility of the population of Iran.

Female illiteracy in the country is very high. This factor has a good deal of effect on fertility. Some efforts are needed towards female education and perhaps their empowerment. There may be a need to educate people on health and development benefits of planned family-planning by spacing and family size.

From a look at indicators taken to monitor ICPD goals, it is obvious that Iran has achieved ICPD goals related to mortality (IMR, MMR, expectation of life at birth, mortality-under-5) but is lagging far behind on fertility indicators and female literacy.

### **Nepal**

Nepal is one of the most demographically backward country of Asia. Levels of fertility and mortality rates are high and therefore the rate of population growth is not very high-only 2.2% in 1990-96. Experience of other countries suggest that mortality in the country is likely to decline fast; this will accelerate the rate of population growth, creating usual constraints in the development of the country.

The socio-economic profile of the country is not supportive of the planned family norm. Therefore, demographic changes in the country have to come mainly from strong programmes of health (of mothers and children) and fertility reduction. The reproductive health is the need but with a slightly different orientation-family planning programme needs to get thrust with a support of reproductive health services. The level of contraceptive prevalence has to increase sharply from its current low level of 23.

### **Pakistan**

The rate of population growth in Pakistan is high because of high level of fertility and relatively low level of mortality; the total fertility rate in 1996 is 5.5 births to woman during her reproductive life. The level of mortality is low though infant mortality is still quite high. The contraceptive prevalence rate is only 12%.

The socio-economic profile of the country is not conducive to rapid changes in population parameters; therefore most of the demographic changes have to come from a strong and effective reproductive health programme. High levels of infant and maternal mortality and low practice of family planning methods suggests need for an effective reproductive health programme in the country.

Except for expectation of life at birth, the country will be able to achieve the ICPD goals. The indicator values for monitoring ICPD goals are poor.

### **Sri Lanka**

The country has low levels of mortality; the level of fertility rate is also very low though above the replacement level. The practice of family planning methods is high of 66%. The socio-economic profile of the country is favourable to decline in fertility and therefore this country will be able to achieve its desired goal of fertility, mortality and population growth goals set by ICPD by continuing its present policies.

### **Uzbekistan**

Limited data suggests that the level of mortality including infant mortality in the country is low; it has achieved ICPD goals on mortality indicators. The total fertility rate is still quite high-3.9 births during reproductive life of a woman.

The rate of population growth is quite high. Depending on the population policy, this country needs emphasis to curb higher level of fertility.

### **Indonesia**

Indonesia is one of those countries which are often cited for a fairly effective population programme. In spite of the fact that mortality including infant mortality rate in the country has remained high, its level of fertility has declined substantially. The current level of TFR is 2.9, crude birth rate of 25 and the rate of population growth rate of 1.5% per annum. This achievement can mainly be attributed to a successful programme. The contraceptive prevalence rate has come to the level of 55%. The socio-economic profile is not good enough to have made its contribution to fertility decline as 32% of women are illiterate and most of the population lives in rural areas.

It is expected that the level of mortality will continue to decline as infant mortality rate is 48 and crude death rate of 8.0. There is substantial scope for fertility to decline further as TFR is still 2.9. The increase in CPR (contraceptive prevalence rate) is expected to be slow as ready-group of acceptors has already accepted contraceptives; now it is those who are hesitant need to be brought into the programme, and that is a slow process. It is therefore likely that the rate of population growth in Indonesia will go down slowly.

The country shows favourable values of ICPD monitoring indicators of IMR, mortality-under-5 and expectation of life at birth. The situation in regard to other indicators is pretty bad (Table 7); they require special efforts.

### **Malaysia**

It is one of those countries where level of mortality has declined-almost to the level of any developed country. The infant mortality rate is 11, equal to the level of the developed countries. It is the level of fertility which is quite high in this country; the TFR is 3.6, crude birth rate is 29 and the contraceptive rate is only 48%.

Since the Government has shown interest in reducing fertility and the rate of population growth, it is expected that a push to the programme may be able to accelerate the rate of contraceptive acceptance and consequent decline in fertility rate. Except for the recent economic problems, the country has had a good success on economic front. There is further scope to accelerate increase in contraceptive practice by reducing female literacy which currently is as high as 30%. It is only on this ICPD monitoring indicator that this country has shows poor performance.

## **Myanmar**

This is one of those countries where levels of fertility and mortality are still quite high. This, no doubt, has kept the rate of population growth low. On the basis of experience of other countries, Myanmar may witness faster decline in mortality, which will accelerate population growth rate unless there are concrete steps to bring about decline in fertility as well. It is fortunate that female literacy level of the country is not a constraint for its rapid decline in fertility if country's policies so need.

The country has shown very favourable value on female literacy. None of the other indicators have shown reasonable performance. There is need to strengthen implementation of ICPD plan of action.

## **Philippines**

The level of mortality in the country is quite low-crude death rate is 6.0 and infant mortality rate is 35. But the level of fertility is quite high-a total fertility rate of 3.9, crude birth rate of 31 and contraceptive prevalence of 40. The Government has expressed desire to control both, fertility and the rate of population growth (6). Since female literacy is favourable, it should not be very difficult to accelerate decline in fertility by giving necessary impetus to the population programme, particularly to family planning and reproductive health program.

Forty seven per cent deliveries are still conducted by untrained attendants. The level of MMR is also quite high.

## **Thailand**

Thailand has been able to reduce both fertility and mortality though the level of infant mortality rate is still high of 34. Though the level of mortality may further decline, the level of crude death rate may hover around 6 for some time because of the balancing of mortality decline and changes in age composition contributing to increase in crude death rate. Any way, the country is on its way to achieve population stabilization. Its achievements of ICPD goals have been very good.

## **Vietnam**

The demographic scenario of Vietnam suggests that country has high levels of fertility and mortality. The TFR is 3.4, crude death rate of 8 and infant mortality rate of 37. The strange feature of the data is high levels both of fertility (TFR of 3.4) and high contraceptive prevalence (of 65%).

The country has to make efforts to reduce both mortality and fertility. The level of female literacy is quite high. Thus it should not be very difficult to achieve goals the country might have set for herself provided population programme gets necessary thrust.

The country shows very good values on all indicators taken to monitor ICPD goals.

## **VIII. Achievements of ICPD Goal**

The United Nations Population Fund attempts to collect data on some indicators as part of their effort to monitor achievements of the ICPD goals. These indicators fall in four broad categories: Mortality, Education, Reproductive Health and Other Health Indicators. There are sub-indicators in each of these broad categories (3). All efforts are made to collect data on each of these indicators every year in order to assess trends in them as a measure of progress of the ICPD recommended activities in individual countries. But success in this effort is limited because of limitations of data, variations in the quality of data available and time periods to which data relates. Even a cursory look at the indicator values would suggest that they do not and can not serve the

purpose of monitoring progress of ICPD plan of action except some broad indications; there are inconsistencies among them and even over time.

One consolation is that some information on indicators related to education, health and population may be available for most of the countries as part of monitoring their own programmes. Since such systems may be operational for some time, information available through them could be relatively reliable. Of course, it will be difficult to know its quality. But their level could be taken to indicate broad status of the country on that specific indicator. Table 7 attempts to list those indicator values for 16 large Asian countries and could be indicative of progress on ICPD goals. Based on these values, one may be able to comment on ICPD goal achievements. The paras below make attempt to review progress of ICPD achievements on each indicator for sixteen large countries of Asia (Uzbekistan has been excluded because of lack of information on most of the indicators).

### **Infant Mortality Rate**

The ICPD has defined goal of IMR as "50 per 1000 or a reduction by one-third the 1990 level, whichever is less" by the year 2000. It has gone further and recommended that the level of IMR should be 35 or less by the year 2015. In reference to these goals, Eastern region of Asia has already (1996) achieved the ICPD goal for the year 2000 and it will achieve the goal set for the year 2015. The South Eastern Asia is almost close to that level (54 in 1996). The Western Asia needs special efforts since its 1996 level is 60 and it has to reduce IMR by 10 points in the next four years which may not be impossible. The South Central Asian region is too far from the goal and thus will not be able to achieve it.

Coming to individual countries in Asia, 11 of the 16 large countries of Asia, under discussion in this paper, have achieved ICPD goals for the year 2000 AD (The name list is shown in Table 7). Six countries which are not likely or at least less likely to achieve the goals are Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Myanmar. The US Bureau of Census has projected infant mortality rates of most of the Asian countries for the year 2015 (1). As per their projections, these six countries will still not be able to achieve the ICPD set goals of IMR of 35 by 2015 though India, Nepal and Myanmar will be quite close to the goals; their levels will be about 39,42 and 43 respectively.

### **Mortality-Under-5**

The mortality-under-5 reduction goals specified in the Cairo discussions were 70 per 1000 live births by the year 2000 and 45 by the year 2015. Viewed on this yardstick, six countries out of the 16 listed in Table 4 will not be able to achieve ICPD set goal of mortality-under-5 for the year 2000. These six countries are Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Myanmar. Two countries, Iran and Indonesia are in the category of uncertainty; their levels in 1996 are 81 and 82 respectively. If strong efforts are made, these countries may either be able to achieve the goals or could reach very close to it.

### **Life Expectancy at Birth**

The ICPD reaffirmed the goals earlier stated in the Alma Ata declaration, of raising life expectancy at birth to 65 years by the year 2005 and to 70 years by the year 2015. It is expected that except Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Nepal all the 16 large countries in Asia will be able to achieve ICPD goals. The case of Myanmar will be a borderline one.

### **Total Fertility Rate**

In preparation for the ICPD, the nations of Asia and Pacific agreed in the Fourth Asian and Pacific Conference in 1992 in Bali that countries of the region should seek to attain replacement level

fertility (TFR of 2.2) by 2010. The US Bureau of Census attempted to project the existing trends of TFR in Asian countries (1) and found that Afghanistan, Nepal, Pakistan, Myanmar, Philippines, Malaysia and Iran of the sixteen countries listed in Table 3 will not be able to achieve the goals to which they had committed. India, Bangladesh and Indonesia will have TFR levels between 2.2 and 2.5. In other words, serious efforts on the part of these three countries can fulfil the commitments they had made in Bali.

### **Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR)**

The levels of MMR are very high in most of the Asian countries. Only three countries out of the 16 listed in Table 7, namely, China, Democratic Peoples' Republic of Korea and Malaysia have MMR of less than 100, that is, 100 mothers die per 100,000 live births. Most of the countries have very high levels of MMR. Though the programmes of "Safe Motherhood" have been started in most of the Asian countries but they are of recent origin and thus have not started showing results in the reduction of maternal mortality. Much more efforts are needed to deal with this serious problem.

### **Per cent Births with Trained Attendants**

There are six countries where less than 50% of births are attended by trained birth attendants; that is, more than 50% births are attended by untrained persons (Table 7). These are the same countries which are backward on other indicators discussed above. On the other extreme, there are six countries where 90% or more births are attended by trained birth attendants (desirable situation).

### **Age Specific Fertility Rates for Women Ages 15-19**

Three countries (Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Nepal) are such that 10% of women in ages 15-19 there give birth in a year. There are five other countries where five to ten per cent women give birth at tender ages of 15-19. There are high risk births, both for mothers and the child they bear. High infant and maternal mortality in these population groups are partly explained by such high risk births. There is need for serious births to minimize such births.

### **Per cent Females Illiterate**

Illiteracy in Asian countries is still high-six countries have more than 50% illiterate. Since this is one variable which empowers women and make them capable to make decisions for their reproductive life and other aspects of their life. It is necessary that illiteracy should be wiped put in a time bound fashion. It is fortunate that most of the Asian countries are awakened to this fact and have taken measures to ameliorate the situation. The results are still awaited.

## **IX. To Sum Up**

The study of 16 large cities forming about 90% population of Asia suggests 10 of them will be able to achieve most of the ICPD set goals on health and fertility indicators. There are two countries, Afghanistan and Nepal, far off the goals. Other four countries, namely Bangladesh, India, Indonesia and Pakistan will be borderline cases on most of the indicators. Serious efforts on their part can lead to achievement of goals.

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**Table 5: Population Trends in Large Asian Countries**

Country	Pop. Growth Rate		Crude Birth Rate		Crude Death Rate		Total Fert. Rate	
	1985-90	1990-95	1985-90	1990-95	1985-90	1990-95	1985-90	1990-95
China	1.5	1.1	22.2	18.5	6.7	7.2	2.4	1.95
DPR	1.8	1.8	24.5	24.1	5.4	5.3	2.5	2.4
Rep. Of Korea	1.0	1.1	16.5	16.4	6.1	6.2	1.7	1.7
Afghanistan	0.7	5.5	47.5	50.2	22.8	21.8	6.9	6.9
Bangladesh	1.8	1.8	36.9	35.5	13.6	11.7	4.8	4.35
India	2.0	1.7	31.3	29.1	11.2	10.0	4.1	3.75
Iran	3.7	2.9	41.4	35.5	8.1	6.7	6.0	5.3
Nepal	2.5	2.2	39.9	39.2	14.7	13.3	5.9	5.4
Pakistan	3.5	2.3	44.4	40.9	10.8	9.3	6.75	6.2
Sri Lanka	1.3	0.9	22.5	20.7	5.9	5.8	2.7	2.5
Uzbekistan	2.4	2.1	31.9	28.8	5.6	5.1	4.0	3.6
Indonesia	1.8	1.5	28.4	24.7	9.4	8.4	3.3	2.9
Malaysia	2.6	2.3	31.9	28.8	5.6	5.1	4.0	3.6
Myanmar	2.2	1.6	34.0	32.5	12.5	11.1	4.5	4.2
Philippines	2.1	2.2	32.8	30.4	7.2	6.4	4.3	3.9
Thailand	1.7	0.9	23.1	19.4	6.4	6.1	2.6	2.1
Vietnam	2.2	2.0	31.8	30.7	9.5	8.0	4.2	3.9

DPR = Democratic Peoples' Republic of Korea.

Source: Reference 4.

**Table 6: Demographic Parameters in Large Asian Countries, 1996**

Country	Pop. Size (million)	CBR	CDR	TFR	% Urban	Dep. Ratio %	CPR
China	1232.1	18	7	1.9	30	49	83
DPR	22.5	22	5	2.1	61	49	--
Rep. Of Korea	45.3	16	6	1.6	81	45	79
Afghanistan	20.9	50	22	6.9	20	87	2
Bangladesh	120.1	27	11	3.4	18	82	46
India	944.6	27	10	3.4	27	68	41
Iran	70.0	38	7	5.3	59	94	65
Nepal	22.0	40	13	5.4	14	86	23
Pakistan	140.0	39	9	5.5	35	89	12
Sri Lanka	18.1	19	6	2.2	22	62	66
Uzbekistan	23.2	31	7	3.8	--	82	--
Indonesia	200.5	25	8	2.9	35	65	55
Malaysia	20.6	29	5	3.6	54	72	48
Myanmar	45.9	29	11	3.6	26	72	17
Philippines	69.3	31	6	4.0	54	75	40
Thailand	58.7	18	6	1.9	20	57	66
Vietnam	75.2	29	8	3.4	21	77	65

DPR = Democratic Peoples' Republic of Korea; CBR = Crude Birth Rate; CDR = Crude Death Rate; TFR = Total Fertility Rate; CPR = Contraceptive Prevalence Rate.

Source: Reference 1,2,3,4.

**Table 7: Monitoring ICPD Goals—Selected Indicators**

Country	IMR	Under 5 Mortality	Life Exp. at Birth	MMR	% Births with Trd. Attendants	ASFR (age 15-19)	% Illiterate (F)
China	38	40	68	95	94	15	38
DPR	22	26	71	70	100	12	--
Rep. Of Korea	9	13	71	130	89	6	7
Afghanistan	154	230	43	1700	9	153	86
Bangladesh	96	132	56	850	10	133	86
India	72	108	60	570	33	64	66
Iran	30	81	67	120	70	90	57
Nepal	86	145	55	1500	6	104	87
Pakistan	74	129	62	340	35	64	79
Sri Lanka	15	19	72	140	94	33	17
Indonesia	48	82	63	650	36	64	32
Malaysia	11	14	71	80	87	29	30
Myanmar	72	91	58	580	57	32	28
Philippines	35	44	66	280	53	28	11
Thailand	34	38	69	200	71	53	10
Vietnam	37	38	65	160	95	18	16

DPR = Democratic Peoples' Republic of Korea; IMR = Infant Mortality Rate; MMR = Maternal Mortality Ratio; ASFR = Specific Fertility Rate.

Source: Reference 1,3.

### Annex

#### Classification of Countries of Asia in Four Regions of Asia

Eastern Asia (7)	South Central Asia (14)	South Eastern (11)	Western Asia (18)
China	Afghanistan	Brunei	Armenia
Dem. Peoples' Rep.	Bangladesh	Cambodia	Azerbaijan
Hong Kong	Bhutan	East Timor	Behrain
Japan	India	Indonesia	Cyprus
Macao	Iran	Laos	Gaza Strip
Mongolia	Kazakhstan	Malaysia	Georgia
Rep. Of Korea	Kyrgyzstan	Myanmar	Iraq
	Maldives	Philippines	Israel
	Nepal	Singapore	Jordan
	Pakistan	Thailand	Kuwait
	Sri Lanka	Vietnam	Lebanon
	Tajiksistan		Oman
	Turkmenistan		Qatar
	Uzbekistan		Saudi Arabia
			Syria
			Turky
			United Arab Emirates

## **National Efforts to Contain Population Problem in Bangladesh: After ICPD**

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### **Introduction:**

Ever since the birth of Bangladesh in 1971 the Government of Bangladesh pursued a strong Population Policy. Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the Father of the nation, laid emphasis on the expansion and consolidation of Family Planning activities in the country as early as in 1972. Despite his heavy preoccupation with the post-war reconstruction of a war-torn-country, he never lost sight of the population problem. The nation's absolute commitment to contain the population continued during the successive development plans of the country with the definite demographic goals and targets.

In order to ensure sustained improvement in the quality of life, Bangladesh has adopted a new health and population sector strategy (HPSS) to focus on the reduction of infant, child and maternal mortality, universal access to education particularly of girls, and to a full range of reproductive health care and family planning services. These were the broad range of areas in which we have made our conscious commitment and we need to fulfill our commitments through our actions.

Bangladesh has been proactive in the field of MCH and Family Planning Programme. A "Plan for Action" to meet the future challenges in the Bangladesh National FP-MCH Programme was formulated in June 1994, Prior to the ICPD Conference. The plan of action identified nine immediate priority action areas and they are:

- Improving quality of care and increasing the use of clinical methods.
- Identifying Programme efforts in low performing areas of the country.
- Focusing on critical under-served groups.
- Implementing Family Planning Services in the Health Directorate.
- Improving performance reporting and follow-up.
- Strengthening IEC and community mobilization.
- Carrying-out critical training.
- Enhancing collaboration between Government and NGOs.
- Improving MCH and reproductive health.

To complement the on-going activities of the working groups several other actions undertaken as a follow-up of the ICPD Programme of Action.

As a follow-up action to our commitment the Government of Bangladesh constituted a "National Committee for the Implementation of the Recommendations adopted at the ICPD '94 under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare in 1995. A task force was formed by the National Committee and assignments were given to the experts - researchers, high level policy makers and implementers to prepare in-depth country papers on the specific broad themes in accordance with the logical frame presented in the ICPD documents.

In preparation of formulating, a strategy for the future health and Population Programme, the MOHFW has constituted five working groups on;

- The basic service package.
- Organization and management.
- Decentralization and community participation.

- Financial sustainability, and
- NGO/Private sector involvement.

The membership of these working groups include GOB, NGO, Donors, Civil Society and other Stakeholders representatives. The present Democratic Government has a strong political commitment and continuous support to MCH-FP programme exists in the country.

A sense of urgency to contain population has been very clear for Bangladesh since the mid-70s when Bangladesh adopted a National Population Policy for the country. Bangladesh plans to achieve 2 - child family by the year 2005.

At the national level, creation of a National Population Council headed by the Head of the Government, the Prime Minister, clearly demonstrates the highest possible commitment to the Population Programme. The council declared population growth as the "number one" problem in the country.

The mechanisms of the National Council, National Advisory Committee, Working Groups and Task Force structures have laid the foundation to facilitate dialogue among government, donors, NGOs, private sectors, civil society, women's groups etc.

By the guidance of the democratic government, Bangladesh made significant success in the use of FP-MCH services, in spite of an average density of 850 persons per square kilometer, small and increasingly fragmented land-holdings, low literacy levels, pervasive poverty, lack of appropriate health care and low rates of economic growth. All this indicates a hard journey that lies ahead of us. The democratic government has sought to make development people-oriented.

The Bangladesh Population Programme, despite very unfavourable socio-economic circumstances, attained a level of success that earned worldwide recognition. In the early 70s when the program efforts began the average number of children that a woman had during her life time was 6.4 (TFR) in 1975. It has been brought down to 3.3 in 1996 -97. The maternal mortality rate and infant mortality rate are reported to be 4.2 and 78 per thousand live births respectively. Life expectancy at birth has increased up to 58.1 for men and 57.6 for women. The Contraceptive Prevalence Rate (CPR) was only 7.7 % in 1975. Through the Family Planning Programme efforts the CPR has increased seven fold reaching 49.2% by 1996-97. Recent findings show a current birth rate of 24 per thousand and a death rate of 8 per thousand population resulting in a population growth rate of 1.6 per year. This resulted in a population of 123.8 million currently. The current population growth rate of 1.6 percent has increased the doubling time to 44 years in 1998 from a level of 28 years in 1975. This will have a major impact on all social services, living conditions and economic and social development.

Some development factors also contributed to the success of the Population Programme by creating a favourable environment in which couples were motivated to adopt family planning. For example female literacy almost doubled and female employment more than quadrupled over the past 22 years.

In a nut shell, all development factors have worked together to improve the quality of life to a level that would not have been possible without the Population Programme with a strong political commitment.

#### **New Program Direction:**

For meeting the future challenges government, donors and other stakeholders, as stated earlier, have adopted a Health and Population Sector Strategy (HPSS). The critical focus of this sectoral programme is to achieve disability free productive life. It will contribute to the process of

development intersectorally which will further accelerate the development process in the health and population sector.

### **Main Objectives of HPSS:**

- Maintenance of the momentum of efforts to lower fertility and mortality.
- Reduction of infant and maternal mortality and morbidity.
- Reduction in the burden of communicable epidemic diseases.

### **Key Features of HPSS:**

- Essential Services Package (ESP) - high quality, client centered, customer focused effective and efficient services.
- Respond to customer preferences for one-stop shopping.
- Range of services available in one place.
- Focus on results-outcomes, outputs and use of monitorable indicators.
- Emphasis on community involvement.
- Cost effectiveness and efficiency.
- Long-term sustainability of the program.
- Decentralized delivery with increased involvement of NGOs and private sectors.
- Increased attention to institutional development.
- Harmonize systems of "Health" and "Family Planning" to promote efficiency.

### **Essential Services Package (ESP)**

Reproductive Health:

- Family Planning, Clinical and Non-clinical.
- Antenatal Care.
- Post Natal Care.
- Safe delivery.
- TT
- RTI/STD
- HIV/AIDs information.
- Post abortion complication management and contraception.
- Infertility.
- Maternal Nutrition.

### **Communicable Diseases Prevention Control:**

- Tuberculosis
- Malaria
- Leprosy
- Kala azar

### **Child Health:**

- Immunization for childhood diseases.
- ARI prevention and control.
- Diarrhoea disease prevention and control.
- Vitamin "A" supplementation.
- Measles prevention, control and management.
- Malnutrition prevention and control.
- Iodine supplementation.
- Integrated management of childhood illness.

### **Limited Curative Care:**

Conjunctivitis, scabies, ringworm, helminthiasis, ARI, uncomplicated TB and malaria, and first aid on burns, accidents, bites, near drowning, poisoning.

### **Behavioural Change Communication (BCC) / Information Education Communication (IEC)**

### **Future Population Projection:**

Bangladesh still has a very broad young age structure. More than 40% percent of the population are below 15 years of age. Given the momentum for population growth inherent in the young age structure of Bangladesh population, increasingly a large number of women will be reaching reproductive age in the coming years. Family planning efforts will need to increase not only to maintain the current performance levels but also to increase the Contraceptive Prevalence Rate (CPR) of over 70 percent by 2005 to achieve a replacement level of fertility. In such a context, we consider family planning as an indispensable component of our development strategy. The plan envisages to reduce the rapid population growth through a strong integrated reproductive health care based family planning program. The operational implications of the above demographic goal in terms of changes in demographic and program parameters during the Fifth Plan period are as follows:

**Some selected base sectoral parameters and their projected changes, 1996 – 2010.**

Parameters	1996	2002	2005	2010
Population (million)	122.0	132.5	137.5	146.4
CBR per 1000 Population	27.0	21.0	21.0	20.8
CDR per 1000 Population	9.0	7.8	7.8	7.7
Growth rate (%)	1.8	1.32	1.32	1.31
TFR per woman	3.4	2.6	2.2	2.2
IMR per 100 live births	78.0	55.0	5.0	35.0
NRR per woman	1.5	1.3	1.0	0.93
Life expectancy at Birth (in yrs.) for				
Male	58.1	60.0	62.0	64.0
Female	57.6	59.0	69.4	64.0
Male per 100 female	105.0	104.8	104.4	104.2
Dependency Ratio	79	62	46	40
Woman at Reproductive Age (19-49 yrs.) (In million)	27.5	32.6	39.2	43.1
Number of Eligible couples (in million)	24.75	29.34	35.32	38.79
Contraceptive Prevalence Rate (%)	48.0	60.0	68.0	72.0

### **Conclusion:**

The government of Bangladesh will seriously pursue the program goals and strategies, set forth under the new Health and Population Program – 5 (HAPP-5). The overall success, however largely depends on the collaborative efforts of the government, development partners and other stakeholders those will participate in the implementation.

### Demographic Scenario of Bangladesh

Indicators	Number/Rates/Ratio
Country Area (in Square Kilometer)	147,570
Total Population (as on January '96)	123.8 million
Male	64.4 million
Female	59.4 million
Population density (per sq. km.)	838 persons
Average family size	5.2
Sex Ratio (Male per 100 female)	105
Population Growth Rate	1.6 percent
Crude Birth Rate (CBR)	24.0 per 1000 live births
Crude Death Rate (CDR)	8.0 per 1000 Pop.
Total Fertility Rate (TFR)	3.3 per 1000 live births
Maternal Mortality Rate (MMR)	4.2 per 1000 live births
Infant Mortality Rate (IMR)	78 per 1000 live births
Neonatal Mortality Rate	65 per 1000 live births
Number of Eligible Couples	24.75 million
No. of Women in Reproductive Age group (15-49)	27.5 million
Average age at First Marriage	
Male	25.4 years
Female	18.3 years
Contraceptive Prevalence Rate (CPR)	49.2 percent
Life Expectancy at Birth	58.0 years
Male	58.1 years
Female	57.6 years
Total number of family planning users	11.5 million

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## Water Resources and Sustainable Development in China

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It has been recognized that water is an important but limited resource. Currently, many Asian countries and regions are suffering from water shortages to various degrees. It is important for us to come together to exchange our views on water resources and sustainable development.

China is poor in terms of water resources. Although it has 2810 billion cubic meters of water resources the per capita quantity is only 2300 cubic meters, representing merely one-fourth of the world's average and ranking 108th in the world. According to the survey in 1993, the national water consumption level in China reached 525.5 billion cubic meters, accounting for 19.1% of the total national volume. Due to uneven distribution, inconsistency with the population growth and serious pollution in some areas, these make the situation more complicated. There are three major regions in China, South, North and Northwest, with distinctive differences in water and population distribution and the imbalance between water supply and demand.

1) 80.4% of national water resources are concentrated in region south of the Yangtze River. But the population there accounts for 53.5% of the total, the farmland for 35.2%. Therefore, this region with a large population and less farmland is the most highly developed in its economy. In 1993, the per capita water use reached 450 cubic meters, representing 12.7% of the per capita water resources at the national level. It can be seen that the potentiality in the development of water resources is great. Due to the rapid pace of urbanization, the construction of urban water supply facilities has lagged behind. With loose control in the wastewater discharge in the region, the surface and ground water resources around some cities have become seriously polluted. This causes a rapid decrease in water quality and the imbalance between water supply and demand in some large and medium - sized cities.

2) The large area north of the Yangtze River shares 44.4% of the national population, 59.2% of the national farmland but only 14.7% of the national water resources. The population, farmland and water resources concentrate in the basins of the Yellow, Huaihe and Hai-luan rivers, accounting for 34.8%, 39.1% and 7.7% respectively. The per capita water resources are about 500 cubic meters. Due to the difficulties in using flood water in summer and overuse of the ground water, the resources there are declining year by year. Some rivers and lakes have dried up and the ecology and environment is deteriorating.

3) The northwest inland region has extensive land and a sparse population, accounting for 5.6% and 2.1% respectively. The water quantity in the interior rivers is recharged by the snow, ice and rain in the surrounding mountainous areas. The water resources there represent only 4.8% of the national level. Most lands are arid with a fragile environment and will consume very large quantities of water if the areas are cultivated as the oasis for agricultural utilization. How to rationally develop the water resources needs to be answered. The State has launched key programs for the research and exploitation of the water resources in this area.

China is faced with challenges for sustainable development in the next century. At present, the population exceeds 1.2 billion and is expected to reach 1.6 billion by 2040. Although the advanced water saving measures of high and new technologies have been introduced and applied to solve the water shortage in some areas, particularly in the northern China. It's difficult to coordinate the distribution of the population and water resources due to the complicated topography, huge population and the impacts of monsoons. Water shortage will inevitably occur in the future. Sustainable development is a greater challenge to China than to any other country in the 21st century.

The Chinese Government attaches great importance to protecting, utilizing and developing its water resources. Since 1949, the Government has implemented a large number of projects for water storage, including diversion and pumping to provide with more water resources for agricultural irrigation, industrial and domestic usage. It has also improved its water transportation facilities and enhanced the effective use of the water resources. The development of water conservancy projects have been regarded as social welfare undertakings for a long perspective. It has been realized that to properly protect, manage and utilize water resources will ensure the food security and sustained economic growth. The Chinese Government has insisted on the principles of giving equal attention to economizing the use of water, tapping new resources and integrating prevention with treatment. The effective measures have been adopted:

- 1) To strengthen the treatment of soil erosion and water pollution. Soil erosion and water pollution resulting from economic construction and human activities should be mitigated to maintain a good water environment. In the construction of agricultural infrastructure, irrigation works have been consistently emphasized. In future, the modern technologies for saving water, such as dripping and sprinkling irrigation have been adopted and will be popularized. Eco-farming technology will be given more emphasize.
- 2) To adjust the industrial and agricultural structure and coordinate the distribution of urban centers in water areas. Some industrial enterprises that consume great amount of water or bring about severe pollution must be suspended or closed. Meanwhile, the agricultural structure will be adjusted and high water-consuming crops in certain areas will be limited. The location of cities and towns will be suited with available water resources. The expansion of mega-cities will be rationally restrained. The development of medium- and small-sized cities will be encouraged.
- 3) To explore new sources of water. A number of the projects to divert the water from south to the central and from coastal areas to arid inland areas. In some areas, equipment is required to dig for irrigation so as to ease the problem. China has a very long coastline in the east. People there can substantially make use of seawater in industries. Currently, some cities as Qingdao and Dalian obtained rich experiences in this field. So, other coastal cities are following them to solve their problems on water shortages by replacing fresh water with seawater.
- 4) To recycle the wastewater. With booming economic development, the sewage discharge will substantially increase. It is necessary to expand new sources to address water shortages in rural and urban areas. The water pollution will be controlled if waste water is treated to meet the discharge standards for reuse.
- 5) To improve the laws and regulations on water resources protection and management. In recent years, China has done a lot in the legislature work and formulated a set of major laws and regulations on water resources protection and management. In 1984 and 1991, the Standing Committee of National People's Congress has promulgated Law on the Prevention and Treatment of Water Pollution and Law of the Protection of Water and Land Resources respectively. In 1996, the former one was revised to stress the prevention and control of the pollution in river valleys, the introduction of the centralized sewage treatment system in urban areas and reinforcement of the prevention from pollution in drinking sources.

Thanks to more than 40 years' endeavors, remarkable achievements have been attained in developing and utilizing water resources. For instance, several large rivers, such as the Yangtze River and Yellow River, have been exploited and basically ensured the water supply for industrial production and people's livelihood. It has also laid a foundation for sustained agricultural development and played a key role in supplying enough food for 22% of the world's population. But China has a long way to go. Only through effective management, rational utilization and protection of the limited water resources can the sustainable development of water resources be realized in China.

## **Brief Summary of Post-ICPD Initiative in The Pacific Region**

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**Parliament of Fiji**

Most Pacific Island countries have responded positively to ICPD/POA. Population committees have been established in eight Pacific Island countries (PICs). With the assistance of UNFPA/CST, population seminars for parliamentarians and decision makers were conducted in five Pacific Island countries. Also, assistance was provided to Tonga, Vanuatu, and Palau to initiate formulation of national population policies. The existing population policies in Solomon Islands, Kiribati and Tuvalu are being revised. In FSM, a draft national policy for women has been drafted. In Marshall Islands, the National Population Policy and two separate national policies (one for youth and another for women) have been formulated. In addition, the National Population Council has drafted a five-year National Plan of Action based on the National Population Policy approved by the Cabinet in December 1995.

A "Back from Cairo Committee" established in Fiji was responsible for forming a new association called, "The Reproductive and Family Health Association of Fiji". The Association's Logo is "Achieving Reproductive Health for All". It aims to promote RH and reproductive rights of women and the health of children and family. Fiji is preparing a preliminary report to the Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). In Palau, a National Committee for Population and Children (CoPopChi) has been established to study issues related to population and children and make recommendations to the Executive and Legislative Offices.

The post-ICPD momentum in the area of RH/FP/SH was maintained. Noteworthy achievements in terms of institutional strengthening included the extension of the OXFAM Clinic in Fiji which is now in operation in the delivery of RH services to the wider community; re-furbishment of the RH clinic at the main hospital and the establishment of an Adolescent Clinic with the Youth to Youth in Health (a major NGO) in the Marshall Islands. Another recent initiative was the curriculum review of the Fiji School of Nursing which services a majority of Pacific Island countries. Courses in human sexuality and midwife was incorporated in the curriculum.

Proactive promotion of the ICPD/POA has been a major undertaking in the region. Advocacy activities were designed at regional and at country level to secure national commitment. Public information on the centrality of population to development targeted audience ranging from media personnel and decision makers to programme implementers, politicians and NGOs. Moreover, an Advocacy Strategy Formulation Retreat attended by key IEC personnel from the Pacific regional developed a framework for a comprehensive population advocacy and IEC strategy.

Other recent advocacy activities included The Pacific First Ladies Conference aimed at forging advocacy (at the highest level) for gender equity, equality and the enhancement of the status of Pacific women. The Pacific Parliamentarian Consultative Meeting on Population and Development brought together twenty-six parliamentarians from 11 Pacific Island countries. As a result, the Pacific Parliamentary Assembly for Population and Development (PPAPD) was established. Moreover, a Regional Media Seminar engaged media personnel in debate of the key tenets of ICPD. It also sought the perception of the media on partnership building for population advocacy. In addition, population-related information was disseminated through bi-monthly articles in regional magazines. A video production which highlighted the population and development situation in the Pacific, was disseminated. With a view to enhancing understanding of ICPD POA, selected chapters have been translated into local languages in seven countries.

Selected Chapters of the ICPD POA have been translated into the local language in seven countries. Given the need to disseminate the ICPD POA to the widest possible audience, this initiative has

received the full support of UNFPA. The translations will be printed and distributed to priority countries, religious groups and NGOs for wider dissemination and understanding of ICPD POA.

Overall, ICPD POA initiatives in the Pacific Region have made an impact towards reducing fertility in the sub-region and to a modest increase in contraceptive prevalence rate. Through a wide range of training provided to health professionals. The delivery and expansion of quality RH/FP services has improved.

However, there are several issues that need attention, plans of actions and further commitment by PICs:

Firstly, due to economic constraints and reform programmes, PICs in general are yet to allocate adequate funding for the implementation of key ICPD recommendations. For example, universal access to reproductive health, particularly in the context of PICs geographic set-up and shortage of skilled personnel, require considerable financial input for outreach and skills development purposes. And yet, most of the PICs are not currently in a position to deliver their share / commitment agreed upon in CAIRO.

Secondly, the shift from MCH / FP to include the broader aspect for RH means a comprehensive quality health programme which again is contingent on resources and adequately trained personnel.

Thirdly, the issue of adolescent RH needs remains unmet and PICs are making efforts on how best to address them within their own traditional and cultural context.

## **Population and Development in Korea**

### **Republic of Korea**

#### **I. Introduction**

The Republic of Korea has undergone demographic changes at a pace that has dazzled many population scientists and related experts. The nation's Total Fertility Rate (TFR) has been 1.6-1.7 since 1987, which is far below the replacement level (2.1). With the level of socio-economic and health developments, and the high rate of contraceptive practice in Korea, the maternal and infant mortality rates have fallen sharply over the last three decades. The infant mortality rate was markedly reduced from 565 per one thousand live births in 1960 to 9.9 in 1993, while life expectancy at birth rose from 55.3 years to 72.9 during the 1960 to 1995 period. The reduction in infant mortality has contributed to the decline of the fertility rate through the formation of a small family norm. This improvement is attributed to the national health insurance programme, which has covered the entire population since 1989. Concerted government's population control policies and programmes played a major role in achieving this momentous demographic transition.

Nevertheless, Korea faced a set of problems as the results of a rapidly decreased fertility rate. Some of the unfavorable consequences of rapid fertility decline in Korea were an imbalance in the sex ratio at birth, a shrinking of the labour force, an increase in the proportion of the elderly population, and a high prevalence of induced abortions. In order to deal with these new problems, Korea had to redirect its population policy towards one that reflects the changing socio-economic and demographic trends and forecast for the immediate future.

For this very purpose, the Government established a Population Policy Deliberation Committee in December 1994. Its purpose was to review and analyse the 1994 ICPD Recommendations and Programme of Action, and to set up guiding principles for action appropriate within the broader context of Korea's development strategies by focusing on its past accomplishments and its future prospects, as well as the related socio-economic problems, in an effort to realize the new population policy directions and measures for the 21st century. In 1996, the government officially adopted and announced the new population policy, which had been prepared and suggested by the committee, with an emphasis on the population's quality of life and welfare for the people.

The main objectives of the new population policy were: to maintain a proper population size and structure in the context of sustainable socio-economic development in the 21st century; to contribute to the advancement of the quality of life through the development of welfare-oriented strategies focused on qualitative population goals; and to incorporate major objectives of the ICPD Recommendations and Programme of Action into the new population policy. This includes broadening the family planning programme to incorporate reproductive rights and reproductive health, STD/HIV prevention, avoidance of unwanted pregnancies, infant and child health, women's health and safe-motherhood, gender equality, the empowerment of women, population distribution, urbanization, migration and family welfare.

Nevertheless, Korea needs to solve several demographic problems since the decrease of population growth in a short period of time significantly affects population structure such as the rapid decrease of youth population, the shortage of labor force, and the rapid increase of the aged population. Moreover, socio-economic development is bringing about a transformation in the lives of women. In particular, whereas married women used to spend the opportunity to expand their activities in society, by pursuing their own work.

Now, the population policy of Korea should not only emphasize on the maintenance of the current low level of fertility but also focus on improving the quality of population through the development of human resources and improvement of public health.

The present report explains the new population policy adopted by the Government. This volume will clarify the emerging issues and possible future directions and policy options for Korea, and will represent a major step forward in addressing the issues that will be faced by the low fertility countries of Asia.

## II. Accomplishment of Population Policy in 1990s

### 1. Family Planning Programme

The control of population growth was the starting point of the population policy in Korea, in which the Family Planning Programme was adopted by the Korean Government as a priority Government project over the three decades. It was perceived that over population was the main cause of the vicious poverty circle. Therefore, the Family Planning Programme to control fertility was implemented as one of the economic development programs and was guided by the government.

With the successful implementation of the population policy couched strictly as an anti-natalist policy, the total fertility rate in Korea decreased to replacement level (TFR-2.1) in 1984 and to 1.6 in 1987, and thereafter has remained at the level. But with the rapid demographic transition, Korea was confronted with various socio-economic problems. Therefore, there existed a need to direct the population policy away from the narrow approach of fertility reduction towards the enhancement of quality of life and welfare services for the people.

**Table 1. Trends of Age Specific Fertility Rate (ASFR) and Total Fertility Rate (TFR):  
1990-1996**

(Unit: Persons per 1,000 women)

Age Group	1990	1993	1996
ASFR			
15-19	3	3	3
20-24	62	71	62
25-29	188	195	181
30-34	50	64	83
35-39	7	15	10
40-44	1	1	4
45-49	-	-	-
TFR (persons per one woman)	1.6	1.75	1.71

Source: KIHASA, National Fertility & Family Health Survey, 1991, 1994, 1997.

In spite of the shift of the population policy from control to quality and welfare in 1996, Total Fertility Rate per one woman continuously decreased from 1.75 in 1994 to 1.71 in 1997, while the contraceptive practice rate of married women increased from 77.4% to 80.5% during the same period. In addition, there has been significant progress in reduction of induced abortion and improvement of the imbalance in the sex ratio at birth (see Table 1-2).

**Table 2. Trends of Contraceptive Practice Rate: 1991-1997**

(Unit: %)

	1991	1994	1997
Total Practice	79.4	77.4	80.5
Method			
Oral Pill	3.0	1.8	1.8
Condom	10.2	14.3	15.1
IUD	9.0	10.5	13.2
Tubectomy	35.3	28.6	24.1
Vasectomy	12.0	11.6	12.7
Others	9.9	10.6	13.6

Source: KIHASA, National Fertility &amp; Family Health Survey, 1991, 1994, 1997.

In the context of future programme development, existing family planning programmes have been expanded to cover broader issues of reproductive health. Issues such as maternal and child health, family welfare, the national health promotion programmes have been implemented from 1996 by the National Health Promotion Law. To stimulate people's awareness and value of their own health these issues have been integrated into the RH/FP programmes. Subsequently, these programmes have promoted reproductive health concerns including FP services to enhance the quality of life. In addition, the Government has promoted self-reliance in contraceptive services through medical insurance schemes and private commercial networks. At the same time, the Government supports continuously the provision of contraceptive services for special groups, such as the low-income and disadvantaged.

### III. Population Growth and Distribution

According to the population census figures, the population growth rate has slightly decreased from 0.99% in 1990 to 0.95% in 1995. The 1995 population of 45.1 million is expected to increase by 4.8 percent and reach 47.3 million by 2000. When the current level of fertility is maintained, zero population growth is expected in 2028. It is estimated that population of 52.8 million, as a maximum number, would be reached by that year. With these demographic changes, the population structure of Korea is expected to be entering the last stage of population transition of late stationary stage. Table 3 shows the major population indicators in Korea between 1990 to 2020.

**Table 3. Major Population Indicators: 1990-2020**

	Unit	1990	1995	2000	2010	2020
Total Population	1,000	42,869	45,093	47,275	50,618	52,358
Pop. Growth Rate	%	0.99	0.95	0.77	0.42	0.13
Population Density	per km <sup>2</sup>	432	454	476	510	527
Crude Birth Rate	per 1,000	1.63	15.6	14.2	11.8	10.8
Crude Death Rate	per 1,000	5.5	5.5	5.9	7.1	8.9
Natural Increase Rate	per 1,000	10.8	10.1	8.3	4.7	1.9
Life Expectancy						
Male	Yrs.	67.7	69.6	71.0	73.3	74.5
Female	Yrs.	75.7	77.4	78.6	80.7	81.7

Source: NSO, Population Projection, 1996.

In conjunction with the process of accelerated economic development, in Korea there has been a rapid growth in urban settlements, which has resulted in an uneven spatial distribution of the population. During 1960-95, the population distribution policies in Korea were continuously implemented to solve the problem of heavy population concentration, but the outcome of the

policies were not assessed as successful. The ratio of urban to rural population was 74:26 in 1990 and 79:21 in 1995, indicating that the trend of rapid concentration in urban area was continuous.

The proportion of population in Seoul decreased from 24.4% in 1990 to 22.9% in 1995. Nevertheless, the current status of population concentration in the Seoul Metropolitan Area, which accounts for only 12 percent of the land area, shows that while 42.8% of total population was residing in Seoul Metropolitan Area in 1990, the proportion increased to 45.3% in 1995. This phenomena reveals the failure in the implementation of the population distribution policies.

**Table 4. Population Distribution by Regions to Total Population: 1990-1995**

	1990	1995
The proportion of Urban Population	74.4	78.5
The proportion of Population in Seoul	24.4	22.9
The proportion of Population in Seoul Metropolitan Areas	42.8	45.3

(Unit: %)

Source: NSO, Population and Housing Census Report, Each years.

At the same time, there has also been a rapid withdrawal of young adults (mainly males) from rural areas, leading to social strains within the larger family unit that stay behind in the rural area. One consequence of rapid development in Korea is that patterns of movement among the population have become much more complex. There is an increasing tendency of people to commute to and from work. Planners and policy makers need to take account of not only long-term migratory flows but also short-term periodic movements of the population.

As a result of the adoption of the large-city-based-development strategy, regional imbalance has occurred such as over population in large cities and under population in rural areas.

#### **IV. Population Changes and Their Policy Implications**

##### **1. Change in Age Structure**

In Korea, the implementation of family planning program, the improvement of female education, the rapid urbanization, and the improvement of quality of life have contributed to the rapid declining of fertility. Related with these factors, the development of health and medical technology and introduction of new medicines have contributed to the declining of mortality. With this declining fertility and mortality, the population structure dramatically changed.

The number and proportion of the youth population has decreased; at the same time, the number and proportion of the aged population has substantially increased. The percentage of the population under 14 years old to total population is 23.4% in 1995; it is expected to be 21.7% in 2000, 19.9 in 2010, and 17.2 in 2020. The percentage of the aged population (65 years old and over) to total population was 5.9% in 1995; it is expected to increase to 7.1% in 2000, 10.0% in 2010, and 13.2% in 2020 (see table 5).

Similar trends have been observed and are expected to continue concerning the old age dependency ratio, the index of aging, and the mean age of Korean people. The increased dependency burden of the elderly would more than offset the reduction in the young age dependency ratio. Therefore, with the trend of the nuclear family and the small family norm, the aging of population will be one of the most serious social problems in Korea. The formulation of policies for the welfare of the aged is strongly required.

**Table 5. Age Structure, Dependency Ratio, and Index of Aging: 1990-2020**

	Unit	1990	1995	2000	2010	2020
Structure of Population						
0-14	%	25.6	23.4	21.7	19.9	17.2
15-64	%	69.3	70.7	71.2	70.1	69.6
65+	%	5.1	5.9	7.1	10.0	13.2
Dependency Ratio	%	44.3	41.3	40.4	42.6	43.6
Youth Age <sup>1)</sup>	%	36.9	33.0	30.4	28.4	24.7
Old Age <sup>2)</sup>	%	7.4	8.3	10.0	14.2	18.9
Index of Aging <sup>3)</sup>	%	20.0	25.2	32.9	50.0	76.5

Note: 1) Youth Dependency Ratio = (Pop. under 14 Years Old / Pop. from 15 to 64 Years Old) × 100

2) Old Age Dependency Ratio = (Pop. 65 Years Old and Over / Pop. from 15 to 64 Years Old) × 100

3) Index of Aging = (Pop. 65 Years Old and Over / Pop. under 14 Years Old) × 100

Source: NSO, Population Projection, 1996.

## 2. Change in Household and Family Structure

Traditionally, the family plays a very important and central role in the social life of Korean people. Its norms and values govern social behavior, attitudes, and relations of people.

Along with the demographic change due to the fertility decline, industrialization and modernization, the Korean family is being transformed. The typical family that is emerging tends to be nuclear and small. Nowadays, couples are getting married later, and even when couples have children, they bear children later and have fewer children than in the past. The nuclearization of the family is likely to continue and it may put greater pressure on the stability of the twin institutions of marriage and family with demographic and socio-economic changes.

**Table 6. Numbers of Household Members and Structure of Household: 1990,1995**

(Unit: %)

	1990	1995
Number of Household Members		
1 person	9.0	12.7
2 persons	13.8	17.3
3-4 persons	48.6	52.1
5+ persons	28.6	17.9
Average (persons)	3.7	3.3
Household Types		
1 generation	12.0	15.1
2 generations	74.1	73.1
3+ generations	13.9	11.8

Source: NSO, Population and Housing Census Report, each year.

NSO, Social Indicators in Korea, 1996.

The average number of household members recorded an overall decline from 3.7 persons in 1990 to 3.3 persons in 1995. This trend is mainly the result of the decline in the average number of births per woman. One person households significantly increased from 9.0% to 12.7% in 1995. Also, two persons households increased from 13.8% in 1990 to 17.3% in 1995. However, three persons and over households have been decreasing continually in Korea.

### 3. Imbalance of Sex Ratio

Although the fertility rate has decreased, Koreans continue to have a strong preference for sons. The sex ratio at birth was normal up until 1982 in Korea, but increased thereafter to 116.7 in 1990. Even with the slight decrease of ratio in 1995, it is still abnormal. It is alarming that over the years high sex ratios by parity of births. For example, sex ratios at parity 2 were 117 in 1990 and 112 in 1995, while at parity 3, it was 191 in 1990 and 179 in 1995 (see table 7).

Furthermore, at the current low levels of fertility, the existence of a strongly rooted son preference and access of technologies for sex selection is leading the nation towards a serious distortion in realized sex ratios at birth.

**Table 7. Sex Ratio at Birth by Birth Order in Korea: 1990,1995**

(Unit: Number of boys per 100 girls)

Year	Total	Birth Order			
		1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>
1990	116.7	108.6	117.2	191.2	221.2
1995	113.4	105.9	111.8	179.4	216.0

Source: NSO, Annual Report of Vital Statistics, 1980-1996

The son preference has resulted in an increased number of sex-selective abortions. Since the mid 1980s, the prevalence of sex-selective induced abortion has resulted in an imbalance in the sex ratio at birth. Sex-selective abortions have become a grave social, demographic, and ethical issue, and future trends in the sex-ratio at birth will need careful monitoring.

### 4. Empowerment of Women

Korean women have become more involved in economic activities. The labor force participation rate among married women showed an increase from 41.9% in 1985 to 50.5% in 1996. This increase is greater among married women than unmarried women (see table 8). There are numerous problems to be solved such as sexual discrimination in the labor market due to restrictive recruitment practices, gender wage gaps, limited opportunities for promotion, low wages, long working hours, lack of job security, lack of child care facilities, and hazardous working conditions, etc.

**Table 8. Labor Force Participation Rate by Marital Status: 1985-1996**

(Unit: %)

Marital Status	1985	1990	1996
Married women	41.9	46.8	50.5
Unmarried women	39.5	45.6	46.0

Source: NSO, Annual Report on the Economically Active Population Survey, 1985-1996.

The Equal Employment Opportunity Act was established in 1988. It guarantees equality between men and women in employment. Special provisions were made for women's absence due to pregnancy, such as a 60-day paid maternity leave and one-year child care leave. The act also mandates the provision of child care facilities by employers. However, employers have not abandoned many of their discriminatory practices.

Women's participation in public affairs is essential to their empowerment and integration into society. However, Korean women's level of participation in politics and decision-making has not changed significantly over the past decade (see table 9).

**Table 9. Women in Public Affairs: 1985-1996**

Status	1985	1990	1995
% of Women among General Government Employees	23.2	25.6	27.3
% of Women among the Higher Levels of 5th Grade and above Government Employees <sup>1)</sup>	0.5	1.9	2.8
% of Women Legislators in National Assembly	2.9	1.3	3.0
% of Women on Government Committees	2.2	5.5	7.7 ('96)

Note: 1) Government employees are classified from 9th grade to 1st grade. The rate of female is dramatically reduced from 5th grade and above.

Therefore, the former President's special Commission on the Globalization of Korea announced its recommendation of ten medium and long-term policy priorities for women. Also, the new Government established the Special Commission for Women under the President. The Government is in the process of making detailed plans to implement the basic plan. This would be in accordance with guidelines suggested by the United Nations, which promotes the development of women's capacity, the utilization of women as a human resource and a more healthy family life.

#### 5. Welfare Services for the Elderly

The aging of the population is another area of concern. It is estimated that the proportion of 65 years old and over will increase from 5.9% of the population in 1995 to 13.2% by 2020. Korea is on the verge of becoming an aging society, and the speed of aging rate is very fast. Since 1993, the Government put much effort in developing the elderly welfare policy for health and security of the elderly. The Government's major efforts for the elderly include; expansion of welfare service facilities, provision of old age allowance and pension, provision of free health examination, increasing benefit days covered by medical insurance reimbursement, expansion of long-term care health centers for the elderly patients, and support for nationwide elderly schools and leisure centers.

## VI. Conclusion

Korea has completed the whole process of what is called "demographic transition" with her successful implementation of the family planning program that started in 1962, and this has occurred simultaneously with rapid socio-economic development. Nevertheless, no sooner were one set of problems overcome than new challenges of a totally below-replacement level of fertility in Korea.

The new problems being faced include an imbalance in the sex ratio, a shrinking of the labor force, an increase in the proportion of the elderly population, a high prevalence of induced abortions, an increase of married women's labor force participation and an increase in the sex-related problems of the youth and adolescents. In order to deal with these new problems, it became apparent that Korea would have to shift its population policy directions in a way that best reflects the changing socio-economic and demographic conditions currently being witnessed and forecast for the 21st century.

These demographic changes and other new concerns led the government to adopt a new population policy in 1996, one which emphasizes population quality and family welfare. In order to overcome various problems associated with reproductive health, family welfare and family planning program, as well as the many challenges stemming from below replacement fertility, the importance of the current family planning program should not be underestimated simply although demographic goals have been met.

The Republic of Korea will continue to pursue its population and development goals in accordance with the ICPD programme of action and recommendations. However, some of the problems faced by the low fertility and high longevity countries of East and Southeast Asia are similar to those encountered by the countries of Europe and North America. The latter countries over the years have experimented with various measures and policies to overcome the problems created by these conditions. The Asian countries can learn a lot from these experiences. Therefore, there is a need to start dialogues between countries to improve our knowledge and learn from the experiences of developed countries so that we may not repeat the same errors. Besides, Korea's experience in redesigning its population policies and programmes is in many ways unique and can provide a useful paradigm and framework for countries going through the similar rapid demographic transition.

The Republic of Korea has been and is willing to exchange her experience and knowledge on the population and development programmes with other countries. Korea will continue to actively participate in multilateral cooperation with the UN agencies and other organizations involved in population and development.

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## **Post International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) in Nepal**

**Dr. Dhruba Prasad Sharma, M.P.**

As per ICPD POA spirit HMG/N, established a separate Ministry for Population and Environment (MOPE) in 1995. A number of policies and programs formulated and adopted on population and health sector by His Majesty's Government of Nepal has reflected in response to the ICPD recommendation. The MOPE is entrusted with the task of formulating appropriate population policy, devising necessary measures for suitable programs, conducting research and making studies and above all, coordinating population, family planning and related activities with different governmental and non-governmental organizations and to act as a national and international focal point on population activities. The scope of work charted for MOPE reflects what ICPD's main policy thrust is. A separate Ministry for Women and Social Welfare was also established in 1995. The primary objective of the Ministry is to fully integrate and enhance women's participation in the overall development effort.

The empowerment of women as prioritized by the principles of ICPD Nepal responded with the creation of the Ministry of Women and Social Welfare and establishment of women development cells within many ministries. The economic upliftment and empowerment of women has been an integral part of Nepal's development thrust which corresponds to the contents and spirit of chapter four of POA that deals with gender equality, equity and the empowerment of women. Nepal's development policy fully recognizes the role and potentiality that women can contribute to the national development both as a contributing factor and beneficiaries.

The focus is on RH/FP as a life cycle approach with due considerations to the recommendations of the ICPD, 1994. The following are the major health programme objectives:

1. Make health services accessible to all by 2000.
2. Increase the effectiveness and reach of RH/FP programmes by working with related agencies to:
  - Improve service quality.
  - Handle increasing demand for FP services and supplies.
  - Increase access to quality services and supplies.
  - Improve training of services providers.
  - Improve quality of life parameters including the status of women.

In Nepal, three major health programs i.e. Family Planning, Child Survival and Nutrition & Maternal Health were in existence and the other two health programs namely, Safe Motherhood and STDs, HIV/AIDS were started fairly recently. Several non-governmental organization such as Family Planning Association of Nepal (FPAN), Nepal Red Cross Society, Nepal. Contraceptive Retail Sales (CRS) company and a number of NGOs and INGOs also have been carrying out the health and population programs in different parts of the kingdom. Family Planning Services including mass communication, inter personal communication and counseling, contraceptive supplies remain at the core of RH care. Besides, HIV/AIDS prevention, providing care during pregnancy delivery and postpartum, gender sensitive education and counseling on sexuality, taking care of people's concerns over sexually transmitted diseases and infertility and special attention to the girl child and her nutrition are also seems important additional elements of RH. However the health providers have to be well equipped with knowledge and skills in different aspects of RH and should have good interpersonal communication and counseling skills and clients should break down their inhibitions in seeking health care and trust the care they receive from the providers to improve the client provider interaction.

Along with various chapters of ICPD POA, HNG/N has responded well to chapter seven on reproductive rights and Reproductive Health through the Ministry of Health in various mother and child health services, freedom of choice of mixed contraception, provision of family planning and primary health care, STD and HIV prevention programmes and safe motherhood programmes in collaboration with other ministries. Chapter eight of the ICPD POA on health, morbidity and mortality also has been responded to by the Ministry of Health through child survival measures, such as immunization programmes, primary health care, maternal care services and many other related services.

After ICPD, the family planning programmes in Nepal were not directed towards only population control. However such programmes are on the line to judge the reproductive needs of the people which are not easily seen, but hidden behind the socio-economic curtains. To convince the people with benefits of small family norms, which is against their traditional beliefs is not an easy task. Our major task is to explain social, religious and traditional dogmas that only one son or daughter is enough either to flow the wealth or to sustain the blood and pay tribute to our ancestors. Thus we are focusing on population management.

Due to the existing age structure of the country, an increasingly larger number of boys and girls will enter the reproductive age group every year for a long time to come. It is therefore essential to consider adolescent Reproductive Health as burning issue. Many adolescents get involved in reproductive behavior without proper knowledge and understanding leading to unwanted pregnancy, reproductive tract infection, sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS, higher risk of maternal mortality and morbidity, low birth weight and possible premature birth. In order to guide the young population to live a healthy reproductive life it is imperative now to inform and educate them on reproductive health. For this purpose the National RH/FP IEC strategy has rightly focused on this group as a prime segment. Adolescents are can be the victims of sexual abuse and may practice unsafe sex and therefore messages for them are related to education of RH/FP strategy of physical and mental development, rumor and misconceptions, safe sex (STD, HIV and AIDS), delayed marriage, postponement of first birth etc.

The Population and Social Committee, one of the seven committees of the House of Representatives, Nepal, among others is responsible for population and health issues of the country. One of the functions of the committee is to provide policy guidelines to the government. This committee is now very active and paying attention to population and health issues seriously.

I am pleased to say that population & Social Committee is organizing a meeting of SAARC Parliamentarians in Kathmandu on Reproductive Health & HIV/AIDS. The objective of the meeting is to discuss the possibility of establishing an SAARC Parliamentary Forum on Reproductive Health & HIV/AIDS. This is one of the important steps taken by the Parliamentary Committee in health issues after ICPD, 1994.

## Singapore's Population Progress Since 1994

Singapore was a small settlement with population of about 150 when Stamford Raffles established trading facilities on the island in 1819. Today, Singapore has evolved into a cosmopolitan and industrialised city-state with a total population of some 3.7 million people. Nation building began in earnest after Singapore gained independence in 1965. Since then, it has experienced high economic growth which enabled Singaporeans to enjoy rapid increases in living standards. By 1997, its per capita GNP reached \$39,500 and more than 90% of the population owned their homes.

Being one of Asia's most densely populated nations, Singapore was one of the first countries in Asia to incorporate population control programme as part of its overall development strategy. The early post-independence years were marked by serious economic and social problems. Having just separated from Malaysia, Singapore was trying hard to establish a firm economic base. The British military withdrawal a few years later further aggravated the economic uncertainty. Given the economic conditions, the need to curb population growth was imperative, and population control was viewed as critical in balancing the people's demand for limited land and economic resources.

The success of Singapore's National Family Planning and Population Programme launched in 1966 is well known. Within a span of twenty years, Singapore's fertility fell by almost 70%; the fertility rate dropped from 4.7 in 1965 to 1.4 in 1986, after falling below the replacement level in 1975. The fertility rate, now fluctuating at around 1.7, has remained below the replacement rate of 2.1. After twenty-two years of below replacement fertility, Singapore can truly be characterised as a "low-fertility" society.

However, as Singapore progressed, it became clear that the expanding economy could support a larger population base. The persistent labour shortage in recent years has raised two concerns among planners:

- Whether Singapore should increase its population at a faster pace to facilitate economic growth, and
- Whether the recent cohort sizes are too small to provide the critical mass of people needed to man a diversified economy.

The long-term implications of persistent below-replacement fertility have been widely discussed. The aging of the workforce, the increasing welfare and healthcare burden, the shortage of younger workers, and the reduced dynamism of the country are recognised as major challenges confronting Singapore.

Realizing the adverse macro implications of continued fertility decline, the government decided in 1987 to revise its population control policy. The New Population Policy, which provides generous incentives for larger family sizes, has halted the fertility decline. The low rate of indigenous population growth coupled with the prospect of increasing competition from international communities also prompted the government to look abroad for talents.

This paper reviews the inter-relationships of population and development planning in Singapore in the context of the issues identified during the International Conference on Population and Development held in Cairo in 1994. This paper comprises four parts. Part I traces Singapore's socio-economic development in relation to its impact on fertility trends. Part II examines the reasons for the change in population policy and recent population trends. Part III describes the emerging issues arising from these recent trends. Part IV gives some concluding remarks.

## I SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Singapore's success in the post-independence years and major improvements in the quality of life can be assessed by way of its social and economic achievements. Its per capita GNP registered a 25-fold increase from \$1,600 in 1965 to \$39,500 in 1997. A firm economic base has now been established with manufacturing, financial services, and commerce as major economic sectors. The unemployment rate is very low, falling from 9% in the mid-1960s to about 2% today. In the area of health, infant mortality rate has fallen from 26 to 3 per thousand live-births between 1965 and 1997. Similarly, the population/doctor ratio has improved from 2,050 to 700 persons per doctor. Literacy rates have risen from 72% to 92% in tandem with the upgrading of the educational system.

Parallel to the economic and social changes occurring in Singapore since the post-war years, there have been significant changes in the population. From the period of high fertility in the 1950s and 1960s, Singapore has experienced an unprecedented, rapid decline in its fertility level. Since 1975, it has registered persistent below-replacement fertility. The fertility rate declined further to reach a historic low of 1.4 in 1986. However, there has been a rebound in the number of births and fertility since 1987, the year when Singapore's new population policy was effected. The fertility rate has risen to fluctuate at around the 1.7 level. Correspondingly, the birth cohort size has increased from about 40,000 in the mid-1980s to hover around 50,000.

The transition from very high to low fertility rates within a short span of about twenty years is probably unique because of Singapore's circumstances. The rapid fertility decline was a result of increased urbanisation, the success of the national family planning programme, and the social and economic changes resulting from Singapore's development programme. The following are of particular importance:

### 1. Female Employment

A striking feature of Singapore's social and economic development has been the substantial expansion of women's economic activities. The female labour force participation rate has risen significantly from 30% in 1970 to 52% in 1996. The increased labour force participation has resulted in a delay of marriage thus limiting their childbearing period. Women also plan for smaller family as they divide their time between career and family.

### 2. Education

The general improvements of education attainment among Singaporeans have had a significant impact on changing attitudes towards family planning and fertility regulation. The proportion of women with secondary or higher qualifications has increased from 19% in 1980 to 48% in 1996. Education makes women more aware of the advantages of a small family and more receptive towards family planning. The trends towards continuing proportion of women who remained single at age 30 - 34 has also increased significantly, from 4% in 1957 to 21% in 1996, and for men, from 17% to 33%. The postponement of marriage and childbearing has resulted in a smaller than desired family size in Singapore. Completed family size for those aged 35 - 39 years dropped from 5.4 in 1970 to about 2.1 in 1996.

### 3. Public Housing

The wide availability of the government built high-rise apartments and easy terms under public home ownership schemes have resulted in a trend towards nuclearisation of the family. One-family-nucleus households now form about 85% of all resident households. Many young couples have opted to move away from their parents to form independent households. This reduces their dependence on grandparents as a source of childcare, thus effectively promoting small families.

#### 4. Reproductive Health Services

The demographic impact of health services on the population, particularly that on fertility decline, is greatest at government medical and health institutions through which the implementation and promotion of family planning have been carried out effectively. Since 1969, induced abortion has been legalised in Singapore to complement the conventional contraceptive methods. In addition, voluntary sterilisation has also been legalised as a complement to family planning for women who have completed family formation. Today, almost half of the attendance of women at maternal and child health clinics are for family planning reasons and one fifth is for antenatal visits.

The outcome of the combination of these socio-economic changes is a shift towards late marriage and consequently, the late onset of childbearing. The median age at first marriage of brides has risen from 23.1 years in 1970 to 25.8 years in 1996. A similar increase of about five years is also observed in the median age of first time mothers, from 23.5 years in 1970 to 28.4 years in 1996. The proportion of women who remained single at age 30-34 has also increased significantly, from 4% in 1957 to 21% in 1996, and for men, from 17% to 33%. The postponement of marriage and childbearing has resulted in a smaller than desired family size in Singapore. Completed family size for those aged 35-39 years dropped from 5.4 in 1970 to about 2.1 in 1996.

## II POPULATION PLANNING IN SINGAPORE

Singapore's first family planning and population control programme was initiated in 1966, soon after independence. Ambitious family planning target were set for each of three 5-year plans (1966-1970, 1970-1975, and 1976-1980) and social disincentives were introduced which worked as economic penalties on large families. Easy access to abortion and sterilisation services was made available to the population and the 2-child family norm was actively promoted by the government. The concerted family planning and population control efforts, coupled with the quickening pace of industrialisation and economic development, contributed to the rapid fertility decline and the attainment of replacement level fertility some ten years later in 1975.

Since 1975, Singapore's fertility has been below replacement level. Population projections show that if the trend of below-replacement fertility were to continue, the population would experience negative growth within the next 30-50 years. In response to this prospect of population decline, the government announced in 1987 the reversal of its population control programme.

The thrust of the New Population Policy is to change the 2-child family norm inculcated among Singaporeans in the past. The new policy encourages families to have three and more children, with the qualification that those who can afford to have more children should do so. Through the encouragement of more births, the government hopes to raise fertility to at least the replacement level. Also, by allowing a larger population base, the new policy aims to stabilise the population structure with a more even age distribution thereby moderating the inevitable aging process.

Generous incentives are given under the New Population Policy. The incentives are meant to lower the financial cost of birth delivery and childbearing, provide tangible monetary and social incentives for new births, and to educate the public on the seriousness of the declining fertility problem and the desirability of a 3-child family norm. A brief summary of the incentives is provided in Annex A.

After the implementation of the New Population Policy, fertility has shown encouraging improvements. The number of births average at about 50,000 per year in the 1990s, compared with an average of about 40,000 births in the mid 1980s. With the announcement of the tax incentives, third and higher order births have increased rapidly, from 7,637 in 1986 to 11,254 in 1996. As a proportion of total births, third and higher order births comprised 23.2% in 1996, up from 19.9% ten years ago.

Besides encouraging more births and higher indigenous population growth, efforts are being made to allow skilled and talented persons to settle in Singapore. Relaxation of immigration controls presents an added dimension to Singapore's population planning in the 1990s. Greater inflow of immigrants would provide a larger population base for Singapore, creating many more opportunities for Singapore to grow and develop economically and socially. It will provide the critical mass of capable and talented people needed to develop and run future economic and social activities.

### III EMERGING POPULATION TRENDS AND ISSUES

In its current population and development plans, the government has accorded high emphasis on two major concerns: the low fertility trend and the shortage of workers to sustain Singapore's economic growth. Not only do these concerns constitute important planning parameters, but their socio-economic implications on manpower supply and human resource development will also determine the future success of Singapore.

#### Continuing Low Fertility

Current fertility has continued to remain below replacement level even after the implementation of the New Population Policy. The economic and social conditions that brought about the past rapid fertility decline would continue to prevail in Singapore. For many women, work and career are now desired options along with marriage and procreation. The traditional desire to have a larger family has been replaced by a small family size norm. To the extent that a small family size is rationally compatible with the demands of a modern society, efforts to promote larger family size may continue to bring only modest results. Population projections have shown that if the below-replacement fertility trend were to continue, the population will start declining as early as the year 2020, and population aging would be rapid.

The continuing low fertility has implications for Singapore's manpower situation. There would be a clear shortage of job entrants for further economic expansion based on births of the indigenous population. In order to augment the indigenous labour supply, efforts are continuing to increase female workforce participation further, through encouragement of more childcare facilities at affordable prices and the encouragement of women to work at home. With the aging of the population, the government has also made efforts in encouraging employers to retain their older workers through measures such as raising retirement age, reduction of provident fund contribution rate of older workers and provision of part-time work for retired workers.

#### Foreign Talents

The shrinking birth cohorts in Singapore coupled with increases in manpower demand have continued to result in persistent labour shortages. Singapore has therefore found it necessary to look abroad for talents to support our growing economy. After two decades of population growth mainly from natural increase, immigration has become important again in Singapore's demographic changes. The growth rate of the total population has become consistently higher than the resident population since 1990, reflecting the larger inflows of foreigners. In 1980, while the resident population grew at 1.3% annually, the total population grew at 1.5%. In 1997, the total population has grown at a much faster rate of 3.5% compared with the growth rate of 1.9% for the resident population.

There are two main streams of foreigners entering Singapore. The first group comprises those who are granted permanent residence in Singapore and become part of our resident population. The number of new PRs has increased from 21,000 in 1990 to about 32,000 in 1996. The increased inflow is due to the relaxation in our immigration policy, which serves two purposes - firstly, to supplement the resident population growth and secondly, to enlarge our local talent pool by taking in professional and skilled migrants.

The second group of foreigners comprises skilled and unskilled workers as well as dependents and students who are allowed temporary stay in Singapore. Economic linkages with the world and the establishment of multi-national corporations have led to a growing number of expatriate managers and professionals working in Singapore. Large numbers of foreign workers on work permits have also been entering Singapore on a revolving, short-term basis to meet persistent labour shortages in certain critical sectors of the economy. With the increased inflow of the expatriates, foreign workers and other foreigners on short-term visit passes, our foreign population has doubled during the last 7 years. From a total of 311,300 in 1990, the foreign population has increased to 633,200 as at June 1997.

### Population Aging

The aging of the population has been identified as a major challenge that will confront the country in the future. If fertility rate does not increase, the aged population of 9% today is expected to reach 25% in 40 years time. Correspondingly, the median age of the population is likely to increase from 30 years in 1990 to 40 years in 2030. By then, Singapore would be an "aged" society. The effects of an older population profile would be felt, especially in the economic, social welfare and public health sectors. The aging of the labour force and the inadequacy of labour supply to sustain a modern industrialised economy in the future could hamper Singapore's development.

Recognising the implications of population aging, the government has made some policy changes in an attempt to alleviate the effects of aging process - such as raising the retirement age of workers from 55 to 60, lowering of provident fund contribution rate for older workers, the setting up of a National Advisory Council to effectively plan and coordinate policies and programmes for the elderly, and expanding public education programmes on the elderly.

### Educational and Skills Upgrading

In Singapore's economic and population development plans, top priority is accorded to education and training. This is to ensure that the nation's efforts to upgrade manpower for high value-added and knowledge-intensive activities will not be hampered. Manpower development strategies include the development of more creative and flexible skills through broad-based education; stressing the need for continuous training and re-training; and providing skilled manpower at internationally competitive cost.

Since 1991, a new educational policy has been implemented, whereby most pupils will have at least ten years' general education up to the secondary level. This involves a revamp of primary school system and fine-tuning of the secondary school system to include a technical course. The streaming of academically less-inclined students for progression to vocational training continues at the post-secondary levels, ensuring minimum attrition and wastage of scarce human resources. At the tertiary level, the emphasis has been the expansion of educational facilities to produce manpower with specialised skills to enhance Singapore's technological capability.

The success of Singapore lies not only in producing an increasing inflow of skilled entrants into the workforce but also in nurturing and training the existing workforce to upgrade their skills and adapt to rapid technological and structural changes in the economy. Training programmes designed to raise worker productivity include courses on labour-management relations, management skills and workers' core skills for effectiveness and change. Various continuing education programmes for workers have also been launched. These include the MOST (Modular Skills Training) programme for workers who have completed primary education, the TIME (Training Initiative for Matured Employees) programme for older workers above 40 years old who do not have formal educational qualification, and the FAST FORWARD programme which is a home-based worker education programme for workers without secondary education.

#### **IV SOME CONCLUDING REMARKS**

Singapore has come a long way in achieving remarkable success in her social and economic progress, and has in recent decades undergone a swift transformation. The national population control programme has been effective in reducing fertility from the past high levels of the 1950s. The programme has been so successful to the extent that Singapore has experienced persistent below-replacement for the past two decades.

Singapore is now faced with a new challenge of bringing its low fertility rates back to replacement level. The New Population Policy, which encourages families to have three or more children, marks the beginning of another era in its demographic history.

How to motivate parents to have more children is a question that has received increasing attention. However, given the negative influence of prevalent socio-economic factors on marriage and fertility patterns, below-replacement fertility is likely to persist. Immigration policy, then, has become critical in recent years as an integral part of population planning and development. The policy of attracting talented people to come to Singapore has become a necessary one to augment Singapore's population size and growth.

The population planning model of Singapore could serve as a useful model for the region. Planners and policymakers should not focus only on magnitude and speed of fertility decline. Age structure balance must be given due consideration. It might be advantageous to reduce the intense family planning efforts to allow for a more gradual decline in fertility in tandem with socio-economic changes. Indeed, had Singapore eased its population control programme in the late 1970s when labour shortages started to occur, its current efforts in revising its population policy might have been much easier.

New Population Policy Measures

1. Medisave for Third Child (Effective 1 Mar 87)

The Medisave scheme can be used in both government and private hospitals for the delivery and hospital charges incurred for the first, second and third child.

2. Childcare Subsidy (Effective 1 Apr 87)

A childcare subsidy of \$150 and \$75 for full day care and half day care respectively is given for the first four children under the age of 6, of a working mother.

3. Tax Rebates (Effective 1 Jan 87)

Parents with a third and fourth child born after 1 Jan 87 and 1 Jan 88 respectively, are eligible to claim a \$20,000 Special Tax Rebate. A graduated tax rebate is granted for a newborn second child born on or after 1 Jan 90. Further tax rebates claimable against the mother's earned income are given in lieu of maternity leave for the third and fourth child.

4. Priority Housing Allocation (Effective 1 Jan 87)

Priority is given to families with their third child born after 1 Jan 87, to upgrade to bigger flats.

5. Special Childcare Leave Provision (Effective Apr 87)

Special childcare leave schemes were introduced for married female officers in the Civil Service and Statutory Boards.

6. Sterilisation Counseling (Effective 1 Apr 87)

Pre-sterilisation counseling is given to women with less than 3 children.

7. Abortion Counseling (Effective 1 Oct 87)

Pre-abortion counseling is mandatory for married women who have at least secondary education and less than three living children. These women are thought to be more able to afford 3 or more children. Post-abortion counseling is mandatory for all women who have undergone abortion.

8. Activities for Singles (SDU set up Jan 84, SDS set up Nov 85)

The Social Development Unit and Social Development Section were formed to organise activities and programmes, so as to provide opportunities for social interaction among singles.

## **Implementation of the Plan of Action(POA) of ICPD + 5**

### **Vietnamese Association of Parliamentarians on Population and Development**

#### **I. The implementation of targets of POA of ICPD**

##### Target Group on Reproductive Health:

Vietnam has achieved significant progress on many social indicators. These include:

- 90% of the population now having access to health services.
- The life expectancy rate has reached about 66 years.
- The literacy rate has increased to 90%.
- The infant mortality rate (IMR) for infants under 1 year is now 43/1000.
- The maternal mortality rate (MMR) now stands at 1.1/1000
- A crude birth rate of 22,8/1000 in 1996 and 21,5/1000 in 1997 (estimated)

(Vietnam may achieve the replacement level for fertility 5 to 10 years earlier than the target set out in the Population and Family Planning strategy set up in 1993.)

Since the 1960s, in the area of Reproductive Health, the Vietnamese Government has concentrated on maternal and child health care and improving living standards, etc. This policy is similar to the targets of ICPD. However, to avoid rapid population growth, the Vietnamese Government had to set goals on reducing fertility. Today it is shifting the population policies from a quantity to a quality goal.

However, there are many areas related to Reproductive Health, such as sex education, adolescent health, sexual health, abortion, etc., that Vietnam has not yet paid enough attention to.

##### On the Target of Gender

Through socialist policies, Vietnam has achieved many of ICPD's targets, including 50% of the labour force being women and 26% of Parliamentarians being female. However, the market economy has had a negative affect on gender equity, especially income, job opportunity and education.

With the new period of development, family and inter-generation-relationships have been affected. Divorce has increased, particularly amongst the young.

##### On Population and Development:

The policy on migration in Vietnam has attained many successes over recent decades. However, following the Renovation Policy, domestic migration increased with many people moving from rural to urban areas, and from rural to rural areas. Vietnam's Migration Policy allows freedom of residence and employment in all parts of the country. This policy has been in existence for many years and is enshrined in the Constitution as well as in ICPD's Plan of Action. However, spontaneous domestic migration makes it difficult for local authorities to manage and provide social services and occasionally affects social stability.

Vietnam also has a policy for supporting elderly and disabled persons in all areas, with priority given to the provision of healthcare services for the elderly. Presently, there are clubs for the elderly such as the "Open Air Health Club" and "Cultural Club for the Elderly" run by the Association for the Elderly. These groups are becoming effective in many areas. Although, due to

many socio-economic difficulties, the quality of life for the elderly is still at low level, and the elderly are largely dependent on family members for their livelihood.

## **II. What has the Parliamentary Committee for Social Affairs done after ICPD?**

The Vietnamese Parliamentary Committee for Social Affairs (PCSA) has conducted many activities and proposed the following bills and drafts to the Parliament:

- 1) Requesting the Government to set up a National Committee for the Advancement of Women in 1995. The Committee's function is to integrate gender issues into socio-economic policy.
- 2) Presenting the draft for the Labour Code. This draft was passed by the Parliament in 1995. It contains many articles concerning women and child labour and maternal leave.
- 3) Recommending the allocation of more national financial resources for population programs. Funding for population programs increased 8-9 times during the period of 1992-1997. There were important reasons for this increase in the domestic budget for population programs (more than 80% as the POA was being launched). Thanks to adequate funding for population programs, fertility rates dropped dramatically from 31/1000 in 1989 to 22.8/1000 in 1996. The total fertility rate also fell from 3.8 children to 2.4 children per woman, and the Contraception Participation Rate (CPR) also increased from 53% to 65%. Demographic experts have estimated that Vietnam will reach the replacement fertility level 10 years earlier than the goal set by the Government in its Strategy on Population and Family Planning (1993).
- 4) Recommending the Parliament set up the National Program on Poverty Eradication and Job Creation. As a result, more than ten million USD is being invested annually. The number of households living below the poverty line declined from more than 25% to below 20% between 1990 and 1997.
- 5) Requesting the Government pass the National Strategy for Healthcare by the year 2000 by investing more resources for health institutions and setting up national healthcare programs.
- 6) Requesting the Parliament to pass a special resolution to allow more funding for the reforestation of more than 5 million hectares. With the implementation of this resolution it is predicted that the forest coverage rate will increase from 27% to 43% by the year 2003.
- 7) Presenting the draft for Ordinance on HIV/AIDS Prevention. Parliament approved this in 1995. A request was also made in the same year to set up the National Committee for HIV/AIDS Prevention.
- 8) Preparing the draft for the Ordinance on Disabled People and the Ordinance on Elderly to be presented to the Parliament in June 1998.
- 9) Presenting to the Parliament for approval the draft for the Law on Marriage and Family (amended version) in May 1998.
- 10) Requesting preparation of the draft on the Ordinance of Migration which will ensure the basic right of people to freedom of residence and employment throughout the country.
- 11) Conducting regional population policy research with support from the International Development Research Center of Canada in 1995. The result of this study shows that the emphasis of the Population Policy in Vietnam should be changed from "family planning" to "population and development with focus on quality of life."
- 12) Conducting research on aging population in 1997. The results of this study show that Vietnam has an aging population. The number of people aged 60 and over increased from 7.2% in 1989 to more than 9% in 1997. It was particularly high in some provinces (such as Thai Binh Province) that had achieved greater success in family planning programs. The relationship between the young and older generation has changed especially in the urban areas. More than 80% of elderly live by depending on support from family members. The Government should therefore offer material and other support for these people.

With support from AFPPD, APDA and UNFPA, the Parliamentary Committee for Social Affairs conducted many regional and national seminars of parliamentarians after ICPD. These include:

- The Indochinese Seminar of the Status of Women and Reproductive Health.  
Held in Ho Chi Minh City, June 1995. More than 20 members of Parliament from Thailand, China, Lao, Cambodia, Indonesia and the Philippines attended the seminar.
- The National Seminar on Population and Food Security.  
Held in Ho Chi Minh City, 1996, to prepare for the World Food Summit in Rome.
- The National Seminar on Population and Safe Water  
Held in Hanoi in June 1997.
- The National Seminar on Policy for Disabled People  
This seminar was held in Hanoi in August 1998 with support from USAID.
- The National Seminar on Population and Sustainable Development, ICPD + 5.  
Held in Hanoi 4-5 March 1998. This was the first National seminar on ICPD + 5 in the South-east Asia hosted by Parliament.
- In collaboration with the Canadian Parliament Center many training courses were organised, for female parliamentarians on the integration of gender issues into the making of socio-economic policy.
- More than 10 workshop were organised for female elected officials about building capacity to making and monitoring social policy.

However, Vietnam is currently facing many challenges regarding the implementation of ICPD's POA.

- 1) Limited financial resources to deal with a population structure which is still young; more than million women enter into reproductive age each year.
- 2) The rate of induced abortion in Vietnam is amongst the highest level in the world (the ratio is 1:1). Also 50% of women suffer from gynecological diseases.
- 3) The orientation policy of improving the population quality has not been completely achieved.
- 4) A big gap still exists between different regions with regard to socio-economic development and fertility rates. More funds need to be invested for the development of the people living in remote and mountainous regions and ethnic minority groups.
- 5) The effect of modernisation and industrialisation on the health and lifestyle of young people, such as; changing traditional family values, erosion of traditional morality and a lesser role of the family in the education of children. These are the most important reasons for the increase in drug use and smoking.

#### Recommendation:

- Experience on making and monitoring social policy should be exchanged among Parliamentarians.
- After the International Conference, AFPPD and APDA and UNPFA should help the Parliament Group in raising public awareness on the subject of International Conference.
- It is necessary to integrate different social programs including primary healthcare, family planning, poverty eradication and HIV/AIDS prevention to save funds and increase their effectiveness.