

## POPULATION EXPLOSION

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Rapid population is one of the major concerns of world community or in other words the developed and developing nations; it threatens our natural environment and prepares government to meet escalating needs, necessities for social services as housing, education, health care, as well as to fill the needs for employment.

Since 1950, concern about population has become talk of tables as how to stabilize the world's growth. Most of this growth occurs in the developing regions of the world, and most developing country governments have adopted policies and programmes to encourage smaller families. Developed country governments have supported family planning programmes through which modern contraceptives and service-delivery systems have been transferred from industrialized to developing countries.

Indeed, this disease, the so called over population with alarming tentacles has taken its fold in almost all the developing and under-developed countries of the world. But Pakistan may be a distinct exception.

Pakistan at the time of genesis was, infact, the world's fifth largest country and its largest Muslim nation. Only China, India, the former Soviet Union and the United States of America were larger than Pakistan.

Currently, Pakistan according to the 1983 World Bank (International Bank for reconstruction and development) Atlas, was the tenth most populous country based on mid 1980 population figures, after China, India, the former USSR, the Indonesia, Brazil, Japan, Bangladesh and Nigeria. The population of Pakistan, then was 82.08 million and the average annual growth rate (1970-80) was 3.1%.

According to the National Institute of Population Studies (1990) Pakistan is the ninth most populous country and according to Eighth Five Year Plan it ranks 8th in terms of population, 3rd country in the world. Some demographers are of the opinion with this galloping growth rate and suggest that

by the year 2000, Pakistan will be the 7th most populous country. The country is moving up the demographic ladder and if the World Bank's projection of "hypothetical stationary populations" is correct Pakistan's population is likely to stabilise at 518 millions around the third quarter of the coming century, the 21st century.

At that time, it will emerge the world's largest country in terms of population size, behind India and China on the demographic ladder. Pakistan with an estimated population of 126 millions in mid 1994 is the eighth most populous country in the world, 5th in Asia and 2nd in SAARC countries.

The rapid increase reflects decrease in death rate, abysmally low literacy, low female labour force participation and low status of women.

The pressure of population is already being felt. It is visible all along the major high ways and it has already put unaffordable rain on the immature economy of the country. If the over flowing flood of population is not arrested, the country's already fragile economy and development progress will come to a halt and the impoverished nation will find itself trapped in a situation which presages nothing but the army of men at large and entirely blank and foggy scenario.

The situation in which Pakistan finds itself today looks increasingly like the other over-crowded countries, it is largely an out come of government's negligena, apathy of Asia's indifferent attitude and adhoc policies.

As already indicated, in 1947, the year of birth, Pakistan had a population of 32 million with the birth rate of 1.8% a year. According to its first population census in February 1951, it was estimated at 33.8 million. The second census in January 1962 the size of population was estimated a 43 million and the rate of growth as 2.43% a year. This census was like the proverbial "writing on the wall" that Pakistan had entered the stage of demographic transition. In September 1972, third census estimated the size of population 65.3 millions, the population in the fourth census, in March 1981, estimated it as 84.3 million. In 1985, Pakistan crossed the 100 millions mark.

At the movement the birth rate in Pakistan is 3.1%.

Broadly speaking that each minute ten babies are born and two die thus adding eight babies every minute to our already inflated population.

Pakistan's population is increasing by 3.5 millions every year. This means that two Singapore (3.4 millions in population) and two Jordans (3.5 millions population) are being added to the country every year.

It is an open secret that growth rate of population and development are co-related with each other. While a rapid growth in population retards over-all economic growth. Due to this increase in population the unben and a natural habital the forest are decreasing beyond the sustainable limits. There's a wide gap between growth and resources. The rate of growth in population has remained stubbornly high owing to a multitude number of reasons, in particular social, cultural, religious and economic factors which have prevented a drop in the rate of fertility. The rate of fertility in Pakistan is remarkably high (6.6 fertility, the number of children born per woman) that of its even her beighbouring countries i.e. India 4.2 Srilanka 2.5, China 2.3 and inspite of some subtle changes, the total rate is not declining as rapidly as in other Asian countries.

The crude data rate (C.D.R.), up to the middle of the present century remained high in today's Pakistan. In the forties, the mortality rate was estimated at 25 to 30 per thousand of the population. The significant decline was achieved as a result of two developments, better health coverage and elimination of epidemics (i.e. plague, small pox, malaria). Since 1970, C.D.R. has remained 11 per thousand (According to Pakistan Demographic Survey, CRD-9.8 per 1000 persons). There is, however, considerable improvement particularly in infant mortality. As many as one third of total death occurs among infants and one-third week of the birth, and other 20% within two to four weeks and the remaining 45% occur from within end of the first year.

According to the survey reports of the National Institute of Population Studies of Pakistan (NIPS), Pakistan loses 100 infants out of every 1000 born before they attain the age of one year. According to Pakistan Demographic Survey, 102.4

per 1000 oversons) comparatively this is high infant mortality rate, from several other developing countries (Dcs), at the same mark of income:

COUNTRY	RATE OF INFANT MOR:
Srilanka	20 per thousand
China	30 per thousand
Kenya	68 per thousand

They have not in our country have a stubbornly high rate of fertility. It seems from a multitude number of reasons. The poors with low income, malnutrition, illiteracy and poor living conditions have a high rate of fertility. Where wages are abnormally low, the gap between the children's earning and those of mother will be small. Where women labour force participation is not active, owing to social and cultural taboos.

#### LACK OF SCHOOLING

It's one of the favouring factors to high fertility rate. The education of women can grasp the disadvantage of multiplying number of pregancies and family planning are richly prevalent among then unlettered women. Unfortunately women literacy rate is estimated at 23.5% while in the rural areas the figure is a 7%.

#### THE DESIRE FOR MALE CHILDREN

This is male-dominated society. Pakistani parents may feel the need to have many children to ensure future with a few survivals. It does not sugar well that in Pakistan one out of ten children dies before reaching the age of one year. The male children are considered as a sign of promising future, rather, the kit for the long survival.

#### THE FAMILY SYSTEM

Like some other developing countries, in our country also, the family structure also aids and abets high fertility. Early marriage is the norm and the incidence of marriage is exceptionally high. Pre-mature marriage and children are eas-

ier. Newly married couples begin married life in extended house holds.

#### **POOR COMMUNICATION/LIMITED INFORMATION**

The inadequate coverage, poor performance in the field of contraception information, the rural settings are still other major reasons for high fertile rate, particular the rural settings.

In Pakistan, fewer than one-fifth of the couples of the childbearing age exhibit some knowledge of birth control practices.

#### **IMPLICATIONS OF POPULATION GROWTH**

Pakistan's annual economic growth rate in terms of Gross National Product (GNP) has been 6.3% during the period of 1980-90. The per capita GNP of Pakistan is estimated at US 400 dollars. And Pakistan is classified among the lowest income countries of the world. That why the social sector in the country remained at the fact end. If the population of poverty would be a day decreasing, the current situation in Pakistan is still more alarming. Recently the rate of economic growth has declined to equal the rate of population, dispelling all hopes of uplifting the deplorable condition of the poor people (The number of population below poverty line in 1990-91 comes to 21.9%).

On current trends, Pakistan's population will double to 230 millions in 2 decades. Carrying the campaign, along with the necessary means, services and counselling, right to the very door steps of those who proliferate the most is the splendid sound strategy.

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