

Population Distribution Policies In Development Planning

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DISTRIBUTION of population over the earth is rather uneven both in respect of size and density. This was in the past, is in the present and perhaps will continue in the future. Three factors probably determined in large measure the pre-historic distribution of population in the world: (1) the nature of the physical environment (climate topography fertility of the soil flora and fauna of the environment etc. e.g. sparse population in the desert or mountainous regions and denser population in the coastal plains river valley in the tropical and temperant regions); (2) the technique and techniques and the tools the group had developed to make use of the resources found in its particular environment and (3) the social organisation of the group. People were at first nomadic moving from place to place for hunting fishing gathering natural vegetable products rearing flocks etc. Then with the development of agriculture settlement and civilization began to take place. Although most parts of the world must have at first been settled by the slow and ape-long penetration of small tribal of hunters gatherers fishers etc. into adjacent areas as a natural response to the need for more of the goods essential for life subsequent distribution resulted from economic commercial political religious considerations war and invasion availability of technical facilities urbanization and industrialization etc. All these factors played a significant role in determining the distribution of population. Population growth variables—fertility mortality and migration—may also cause change in population distribution. In the present day world with nation state system and increasing population on the earth's surface the opportunities for emigration and bifurcation have become progressively narrower so that societal survival and adaptation have increasingly entailed an involuntal response to growth with more intensive agricultural settlement and exploitation; in other words, urbanization.

We have only sketchy information about the size and distribution of world population before the modern period. But we think that the world population reached about one-half billion before the onset of industrial revolution. It reached about one billion in the mid-nineteenth century; almost three billion by the mid-twentieth century and four billion by 1975. In the early modern period Europe's population grew much faster than the rest of the world. But in this century Europe's population growth has been moderate while that of Asia, Africa and Latin America has been very rapid. Population changes and specially population growth subject societies social political-organisational economic and technological arrangements to new pressure and requirements and also opportunities for ordering substance and social interactions. To assure that levels of living will remain acceptable societies confronted with population growth may either expand their areas of settlement or adopt technological or social innovations to increase production with a constrained environment. In this way population growth generates distributional and social-organisational responses and adaptations. If a society is unable to provide for increased population by expanding its environment its technology its organisational abilities it will lose its potential population growth through other means. High death rates are historically the most common pattern. But a society may also prevent the increase itself by adopting means of population control and adjust growth and distribution with available resources and their best use. Different historical patterns of population growth and different societal strategies of adaptation to this growth potential have generated variations in population size, distribution and structure. As the human wants are many but the means to satisfy them are very limited (and more so

because of the population explosion of the present day world) these population factors are required to be considered along with other resources and matters while making plan for development. It is to these that we shall next turn. **IMPLICATIONS OF POPULATION GROWTH AND DISTRIBUTION.** Table I below reveals the growth and distribution of population in the world, more developed less developed and some selected regions for the period, 1970-2000:—

level will almost double. But the improvement for the less favoured not only means the just economic and social advancement at a pace corresponding to population growth; it also needs closing the gap between the present levels of living and the minimum opportunities at the command of the majority latter are insignificantly meagre both in terms of quantity and requirements of the same: Asia for example with their many acute problems related to development contains over half of the

world. By the end of the century according to projections used the population of Asia as shown in table I, will equal the total for the world in 1970. Even within the region as also the table reveals the positions between its sub-regions differs strikingly. Hence the countries of the South and South-east Asia are in more critical position than those of East Asia. Population increases rapidly whereas the land remains limited and scarce. So on the expansion and growth of cities with the steadily in-

TABLE - 1
Population estimates and projections (medium variant), world and selected regions, 1970-2000

World and region	Population (in millions)				Per cent Average annual increase				
	1970	1980	1990	2000	1970-2000	1970-75	1980-85	1990-95	1995-2000
WORLD	3,632	4,457	5,438	6,494	78.8	2.0	2.0	1.8	1.7
More developed regions	1,090	1,210	1,336	1,454	33.4	1.0	1.0	0.9	0.8
Less developed regions	2,542	3,247	4,102	5,040	98.3	2.5	2.4	2.1	2.0
EAST ASIA	929	1,095	1,265	1,424	53.3	1.7	1.5	1.3	1.1
Mainland	765	901	1,043	1,176	53.7	1.7	1.5	1.3	1.1
Japan	103	116	125	133	29.1	1.2	0.8	0.6	0.6
Other	61	79	97	115	88.5	2.4	2.4	1.8	1.6
MIDDLE-SOUTH ASIA	762	1,001	1,280	1,565	105.4	2.8	2.5	2.1	1.9
SOUTHEAST ASIA OCEANIA	287	380	492	608	118.5	2.9	2.7	2.2	2.0
Australia and New Zealand	15.3	18.8	22.7	26.2	71.2	2.0	2.0	1.5	1.4
Melanesia	2.8	3.6	4.7	6.1	117.9	2.6	2.8	2.6	2.4
Polynesia and Micronesia	1.2	1.7	2.2	2.9	141.7	3.1	3.1	2.6	2.3

A close examination and consideration of the rapid increase and distribution of population as shown in the table I above will rather reveal intricate implications in terms of demands upon resources and upon the whole system of interdependencies and interactions. As shown in the above table the inhabitants of the technically favoured 30% of the world will increase by about one-third by the end of the century whereas the 70% of the lower income

world's population in about 17% of the land area of the earth high density and high dependency ratios acute unemployment and low employment opportunities low per capita acceptable standard. This being the requirements and the task being greater, the resources and income, low man-land ratios etc. In short the prevailing conditions in the region may be described as demographically, economically and socially among the most critical in the

creasing rate of urbanization expansion of unrestricted location of industries construction of high way and also of buildings outside urban areas to accommodate the greater number of institutions required by burgeoning population and with the depletion of arable land through soil exhaustion erosion and other forms of deterioration the supply of land specially the productive land will diminish when the man-land ratio will go down further and position worsen.

We may next discuss in a global context and also in respect of selected regions as shown in table-2, the growth and the distribution of rural

TABLE-2
Average rates of growth in rural and urban population for world and selected regions 1950-2000

Area	1950-60	1960-70	1970-80	1980-90	1990-2000
URBAN POPULATION					
WORLD TOTAL	3.4	3.2	3.2	3.1	2.8
More developed regions	2.8	2.1	1.9	1.7	1.4
Less developed regions	4.3	4.6	4.5	4.2	3.7
EAST ASIA	5.5	4.1	3.8	3.4	2.9
Mainland region	6.6a	4.8	4.4	4.0	3.4
Japan	5.4	2.4	2.2	1.5	1.1
Other east Asia	3.3	4.4	4.4	3.9	3.0
SOUTH ASIA	2.8	4.4	4.5	4.2	3.6
Middle-south Asia	4.1	4.5	4.4	4.0	3.5
Southeast Asia	4.1	4.5	4.5	4.2	3.8
Southwest Asia	5.4	5.3	5.3	4.9	4.1
OCEANIA					
Australia and New Zealand	2.9	2.4	2.4	2.2	1.7
Melanesia	5.2	5.5	5.6	5.8	5.5
Polynesia and Micronesia	4.7	5.0	4.8	4.7	4.0
RURAL POPULATION					
WORLD TOTAL	1.1	1.4	1.4	1.2	0.8
More developed regions	-0.6	-0.5	-0.8	-0.9	-1.2
Less developed regions	1.6	1.8	1.7	1.5	1.0
EAST ASIA	0.9	1.0	0.7	0.2	-0.3
Mainland region	1.3	1.1	0.9	0.3	-0.2
Japan	4.0a	1.8	2.1	2.8	3.2
Other east Asia	0.6	1.2	0.5	0.0	0.9
SOUTH ASIA	1.9	2.2	2.3	2.0	1.4
Middle-south Asia	1.9	2.2	2.3	2.0	1.4
Southeast Asia	2.0	2.3	2.4	2.0	1.5
Southwest Asia	1.9	1.6	1.6	1.3	0.5
OCEANIA					
Australia and New Zealand	0.3	-0.1	-0.1	-0.3	-0.8
Melanesia	2.0	2.4	2.5	2.7	2.4
Polynesia and Micronesia	2.5	2.9	2.8	2.6	1.9

Actually migration in the present day world refers, as discussed earlier to migration within the country, mainly due to increasing urbanisation. Table 3 shows the rate of urbanisation in the world Asia and its major Division: East Asia and South Asia.

Table-3
Rate of Urbanisation i.e. percentage of population in the urban areas in the world and selected regions 1950-2000.

Table-3
Average rate of growth in urban population for world and selected region 1950-2000.

World and region	1950	1970	2000
World	16	37	50
Asia	16	25	42
East Asia	16	28.6	50
South Asia	16	21.1	33.3

It is quite clear from the comparative data of tables 2 and 3 that the urbanisation process has followed and will follow quite different paths. Moreover as the more detailed data for sub-regions and especially for the individual countries of these two areas of Asia indicate significant variations in the rates of urbanisation characterize smaller units of the continent. This strongly suggests that high priority must be given to intensive research on individual countries in order to assess the dynamics underlying the urbanization process in each and the implications for future development.

The lower panel of Table 2 presents parallel data for the rural population of Asia. These data coupled with the set on urban rates suggest why the overall pattern of growth for South Asia in numbers of people and percentage living in urban places digress so greatly in the latter part of the twentieth century. The growth rate of rural population in East Asia was already below the world average and considerably below the average of the less developed regions in 1950-60 decade. The difference was accentuated in the succeeding decades of the century so that by the last decade projections suggests that east Asia's rural population will actually decline while that of the world as a whole will continue to grow at just under one per cent and that of the less developed region at one per cent. Rural population growth in East Asia as a whole will thus closely resemble that of the more developed regions of the world by the end of the century.

By contrast, in South Asia the rural population grew at the rate of 1.9 percent during 1950-60, by 2.2% in 1960-70 by 2.3% in 1970-80 and is projected to begin to decline only in 1980-90. Yet, by the year 2000 the average growth of 1.4% per year will still be almost twice that of the world as a whole (Continued on page 6)