

Population distribution

Contd. from page 5

less developed and some selected regions for the period, 1970-2000.

A close examination and consideration of the rapid increase and distribution of population as shown in the Table I 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 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 acceptable standard. This being the requirements and the task being greater, the resources and 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'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 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 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 increasing rate of urbanization, expansion of unrestricted location of industries, construction of highway 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 worsened.

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 and urban population.

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 urbanization in the world, Asia and its major Divisions, East Asia and South Asia.

TABLE-3

Average rate of growth in urban populations for world and selected region 1950-2000.

World and region	1950	1970	2000
World		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 table 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 the 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.

To be continued