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FOREWORD

The collection of the worthwhile articles from different sources must be appreciated. These articles throw light on various dimensions related to the issue of population. It is rightly remarked that over population or under population is not the only impediment of prosperity. It validates the optimum theory of population, that a particular size of population is appropriate to enhance the prosperity of any country.

Albeit, development is a concatenation of different factors but population is to be benefitted through these efforts with the factors like natural resources, energy reduction and economic infrastructure also. It is true that some of the over populated countries like Germany, UK and Japan are more prosperous than so many under populated countries of Africa and Latin America, but it would be erroneous to assume that size of the population do not affect the resources of the country. India is having 2.4 per cent land area of the world, but it has 17 per cent of the population. India has been struggling to overcome the problem of food shortage. The green revolution ushered in late sixties turned the country, from food importing to food exporting position but the escalation in yield was based on more and more use of chemicals. This perpetual surge in the application of chemicals has caused number of other problems. Now the chemicals have penetrated in to air, water and soil and even in food items. The number of ailments like cancer have surfaced where the chemicals are assigned as a major cause.

The book is very informative. Apart from the importance of family planning, it has presented the

awareness about other population related problems like health and prosperity etc, along with evoking of moral values. The views expressed by *Mita Majumdar* have explained as to how the gender bias causes population explosion. Really the economic security of men is a big factor to remove this gender bias. The population control code of Vinoba Bhave and views of Swami Ramakrishana Paramhansa regarding spirituality are worth reading.

I would congratulate Dr. Inderjit kaur Ji, President, All India Pingalwara Charitable Society who has made an earnest effort to collect these articles and to compile them in the form of a book.

Dr. S.S. Chhina

Director

Institute of Social Science (North Zone)

Amritsar

Population of India 2017

Current Population of India in 2017 :

1,349,653,467 (1.34 billion) as in July 19, 2017

Total Male Population in India : 696,961,050 (69.6 crore)

Total No of Females in India : 652,692,416 (65.2 crore)

Sex Ratio : 945 females per 1,000 males

Age structure : 0 to 25 years.

50% of India's current population Currently, there are about 51 births in India in a minute.



India, with 1,349,653,467 (1.34 billion) people is the second most populous country in the world, while China is on the top with over 1,415,489,506 (1.41 billion) people. The figures show that India represents almost 17.85% of the world's population, which means one out of six people on this planet live in India. Although, the crown of the world's most populous country is on China's head for decades, India is all set to take the numero uno position by 2030. With the population growth rate at 1.2%, India is predicted to have more than 1.53 billion people by the end of 2030.

More than 50% of India's current population is below the age of 25 and over 65% below the age of 35. About 72.2% of the population lives in some 638,000 villages and the rest 27.8% in about 5,480 towns and urban agglomerations. The birth rate (child births per 1,000 people per year) is 22.22 births/1,000 population (2009 est.) while death rate (deaths per 1000 individuals per year) is 6.4 deaths/1,000 population. Fertility rate is 2.72 children born/woman (NFHS-3, 2008) and Infant mortality rate is 30.15 deaths/1,000 live births (2009 estimated). India has the largest illiterate population in the world. The literacy rate of India as per 2011 Population Census is 74.04%, with male literacy rate at 82.14% and female at 65.46%. Kerala has the highest literacy rate at 93.9%, Lakshadweep (92.3%) is on the second position and Mizoram (91.6%) is on third.

Every year, India adds more people than any other nation in the world, and in fact the individual population of some of its states is equal to the total population of many countries. For example, Population of Uttar Pradesh (state in India) almost equals to the population of Brazil. It, as per 2001 Population Census of India, has 190 million people and the growth rate is 16.16%. The population of the second most populous state Maharashtra, which has a growth rate of 9.42%, is equal to that of Mexico's population. Bihar, with 8.07%, is the third most populous state in India and its population is more than Germany's. West Bengal with 7.79% growth rate, Andhra Pradesh (7.41%) and Tamil Nadu (6.07%) are at fourth, fifth and sixth positions respectively. *The sex ratio of India stands at 940. Kerala with 1058 females per 1000 males is the state with the highest female sex ratio. Pondicherry (1001) is second,*

while Chhatisgarh (990) and Tamil Nadu (986) are at third and fourth places respectively. Haryana with 861 has the lowest female sex ratio.

India Population (2017, 2016 and historical)

Year	Population	Yearly % Change	Density (P/Km ²)	Country's Share of World pop	World Population	India Global Rank
2017	1,349,602,637	1.2%	449	17.90%	7,464,663,275	2
2016	1,312,457,832	1.2%	446	17.85%	7,432,663,275	2
2015	1,292,836,541	1.27%	441	18.92%	7,349,472,099	2
2010	1,230,984,504	1.47%	414	18.88%	6,929,725,043	2
2005	1,144,326,293	1.67%	385	18.68%	6,519,635,850	2
2000	1,053,481,072	1.86%	354	18.37%	6,126,622,121	2

Some of the reasons for India's rapidly growing population are poverty, illiteracy, high fertility rate, rapid decline in death rates or mortality rates and immigration from Bangladesh and Nepal. Alarmed by its swelling population, India started taking measures to stem the growth rate quite early. *In fact India by launching the National Family Planning program in 1952, became the first country in the world to have a population policy.* The family planning program yielded some noticeable results, bringing down significantly the country's fertility rate. In 1965-2009, the contraceptive usage more than tripled and the fertility rate more than halved. The efforts did produce positive results, however, failed to achieve the ultimate goal and the population of India since getting independence from Britain in 1947, increased almost three times. Whereas India has missed almost all its targets to bring the rate of population growth under control, *China's 'One Child Policy' in 1978, has brought tremendous results for the*

latter. The policy claims to have prevented between 250 and 300 million births from 1978 to 2000 and 400 million births from 1979 to 2010.

Current Population of India 2017

Rank	State or union territory	Population (2017 estimates)	Density (per km ²)	Sex ratio
01	Uttar Pradesh	223,897,418	828	908
02	Maharashtra	123,174,918	365	946
03	Bihar	119,237,851	1102	916
04	West Bengal	91,347,736	1029	947
05	Andhra Pradesh	84,665,533	308	992
06	Madhya Pradesh	72,597,565	236	930
07	Tamil Nadu	79,096,413	555	995
08	Rajasthan	75,984,317	201	926
09	Karnataka	61,130,704	319	968
10	Gujarat	67,600,992	308	918
11	Odisha	45,596,577	269	978
12	Kerala	34,523,726	859	1,084
13	Telangana	35,193,978	307	800
14	Jharkhand	32,966,238	414	947
15	Assam	31,169,272	397	954
16	Punjab	30,045,949	550	893
17	Haryana	27,761,063	573	903
18	Chhattisgarh	25,540,196	189	991
19	Jammu and Kashmir	14,280,373	56	883
20	Uttarakhand	10,116,752	189	963
21	Himachal Pradesh	7,123,184	123	974

22	Tripura	3,671,032	350	961
23	Meghalaya	2,964,007	132	986
24	Manipur	2,721,756	122	987
25	Nagaland	1,980,602	119	931
26	Goa	1,457,723	394	968
27	Arunachal Pradesh	1,382,611	17	920
28	Mizoram	1,091,014	52	975
29	Sikkim	607,688	86	889
UT1	Delhi	18,686,902	9,340	866
UT2	Puducherry	1,244,464	2,598	1,038
UT3	Chandigarh	1,054,686	9,252	818
UT4	Andaman and Nicobar Islands	379,944	46	878
UT5	Dadra and Nagar Haveli	342,853	698	775
UT6	Daman and Diu	242,911	2,169	618
UT7	Lakshadweep	64,429	2,013	946
Total	India	1,210,193,422	382	940

Population of Amritsar

Current Population of Amritsar in 2016 : 1,219,478

Population of Amritsar in 2015 : 1,205,321

Sex Ratio : 879

Literacy Rate : 85.27%

Current Population of Amritsar - The golden city of Amritsar is one of the most sacred places known for its much famed Golden Temple (Harmandir Sahib) in India. The city has changed its profile after the partition of 1947 in India. From an old traditional city of Northern India post Independence, it has changed its tagline to a

modern business city of Punjab. According to Population census of India 2001, Population of Amritsar city was over 966,862. So, Population of Amritsar has increased by almost 60% in the last 10 years.

Growth of Population in Amritsar

Just like other cities of India, Amritsar too witnessed a descent growth in its population. According to 2001, Population census of India, the city population was recorded at 966,862. Population growth in Amritsar is also supported by increase in tourism activities in the city. The Golden Temple is visited by people from far and wide in large number, thus encouraging business and property developers in Amritsar to invest heavily. This further led to migration of people from various parts of state in search of employment and better standard of living.

Population of Amritsar city

Year	Population*
2001	966,862
2011	1,132,761
2012	1,152,017
2013	1,171,273
2014	1,190,940
2015	1,205,321
2016	1,219,478

Population in Amritsar District

Year	Population*
2001	15,00,000
2011	24,90,891

* Figures provided by Census of India

Most Populated Cities in India

Rank	City*	Population 2014	Population 2001
1	Delhi	24,953,000	13,850,507
2	Mumbai	20,741,000	16,434,386
3	Calcutta	14,766,000	13,205,697
4	Hyderabad	11,458,741	5,742,036
5	Bangalore	10,839,725	5,701,446
6	Chennai	9,121,477	6,560,242
7	Ahmedabad	7,368,614	4,525,013
8	Jaipur	6,612,914	1,518,200
9	Surat	5,748,238	2,811,614
10	Pune	5,571,419	3,760,636

*Refers to the urban agglomeration, which would also count the surrounding urban areas in the total.

With Thanks from Indianonlinepages.com

How Gender Bias Causes Population Explosion In India

Marginalization of women is a major cause of population explosion.

Mita Majumdar



“Man begets, but land does not beget.”

— Cecil Rhodes

With only 2.4 percent of the world’s land area and 20 percent of the world’s population, India is one of the most densely populated nations in the world. Ranked next to China in population, India has a population of more than 1.34 billion people, that is expected to grow to 1.36 billion by the end of 2017. Although the reasons cited for the rapidly growing population are poverty, illiteracy, low death rates, high fertility rates in India, as well as, immigration from neighbouring countries, gender bias significantly contributes to overpopulation.

Discrimination against women starts right from the womb and does not end till she is in her grave. Many

might wonder how gender bias and over population are linked, but a closer scrutiny shows that marginalization of women is indeed a major cause of population explosion.

Preference for Sons

In India, sons are preferred by parents as their net value is perceived to be higher than that of the daughters. Sons are believed to be the sole means of economic and social support. Sons supposedly provide old age support to parents, continue the lineage and perform karmic duties, while daughters are seen as an economic burden (because of dowry and marriage expenses). A woman is relegated to the lower position in their husband’s family and her ‘slot’ in her father’s household ceases to exist. This attitude causes the couples to continue begetting children till they fulfill their desire for a specific number of sons.

A Bengaluru study found that women who have not reached their ideal family size delay stopping childbearing till they can either get a son or until they have as many or more children than they want, and family size concerns outweigh the desire for a male child.

A study from Ahmedabad indicated the son preference was higher among illiterate women. Similarly, son preference also varied among rural and urban areas, for example, a study reported a higher preference for sons in rural (94.3%) than urban areas (80.3%) in Western regions of India. Socio-economic status, too, determined the gender preference as seen in the study results from West Bengal, where a preference for sons was significantly higher in participants with low socio-

economic status and lower level of education.

Preference for sons can influence a couple's fertility behaviour. If the first born is not a son, they are more likely to have a larger family size till the preference is met. And in this milieu to beget sons, the population of India grows alarmingly.

Rapid population growth is not the only problem with a preference for sons. Diagnostic ultrasound technology became available in India during the eighties, and this opened up the opportunity to use the new technology for prenatal sex selection. Given the fact that in most regions of India, larger families are the norm, couples will continue to have children until they have a boy. Policy restrictions of only one or two children will only cause the couples to use sex selection to ensure the birth of a son. This combination has resulted in serious sex ratio imbalances. This theory has been corroborated by the Bengaluru study which found that couples who desire to have smaller families, but have a persistent son preference (often pressured by their families), could create higher pressure to selectively abort female fetuses.

Women's Decision-Making Autonomy

Gender bias in India ranges from wage discrimination to barriers in owning land, to systemic violence against women. This discrimination prevents women from obtaining an education, health services, and legal status needed to improve their prospects.

Women, especially rural women, with no education are ignorant about sex and family planning. Studies have shown that female education is highly correlated with lower fertility rates, and lower fertility

equates lower population growth. Although recent figures do suggest lower fertility rates, this assumption does not necessarily indicate improved control over reproductive decision-making as most women have little control over their lives, let alone asserting their reproductive rights. It is always the husband who gets to decide every aspect of family planning including sterilisation of his wife.

Numerous studies have suggested that empowerment of women, including autonomy in the use of contraception, is a major factor that contributes to better demographic outcomes. Even though women emphasize on contraception, the husband's uncooperative attitude makes it almost impossible for the woman to control pregnancy. Moreover, in India societal sanction plays a very important role. A woman emphasizing the use of contraception is seen as being assertive in sex and is thus considered indecent. Government's sterilization campaigns are mainly focused on women as male sterilization is still not accepted because of socio-cultural bias. For example, men think they will lose their virility or ability to work if they are sterilized. Some men fear that they will be ridiculed if they are sterilized and the wife gets pregnant!

The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare data reveals that 4.5 million women are sterilized every year in India. Not surprisingly, 34 percent of women sterilized were not informed that the procedure is permanent, and 68 percent were not informed about the side effects.

Statistics also show that informed consent rates are extremely low and more so among the less educated or the financially weaker sections of the society. Since

women have no reproductive choice, there is no room for them to space their children and limit family size. Result—adding to the already bulging population.

Early Marriage and Continuous childbirth

There is a clear link between early marriage and overpopulation. Although the legal age for marriage in India is 18 years for women and 21 for men, in many parts of India, girls are married off way before the legal age. For example, in Rajasthan, a girl as young as five years old is betrothed and sent off to her marital home after she starts menstruating. Within a year or two she is expected to give birth. As it turns out, younger the bride, longer the childbearing age; and more the people in this country! Early marriage is not restricted to Rajasthan alone but is prevalent in almost all regions of the country, both, urban and rural.

Religion and Overpopulation

Some religions condemn abortion and artificial contraceptives labelling them as morally illicit and evil. For example, the Catholic Church believes contraception and sex education in schools would lead to moral and social collapse, destroy family life, and bring about divine wrath. This religious condemnation causes fear among women with unwanted pregnancies and their families, leading to population growth. Women's decision-making power and women's autonomy together constitute women empowerment. Unless the women of this country have a say in the decision-making, especially with regard to sexual autonomy, we cannot expect to control the population explosion in India.

Impact of Population Explosion

The population explosion has an enormous negative impact on human values and socio-economic structure of any country. In India, the rapid increase in population has given rise not only to poverty, unemployment and shortage of employment opportunities and housing, and environmental degradation, but it seems to have created a shortage of food grains in the world as well. Supriya Sule, the MP who drafted the Two Child Norm Bill, 2014, stated, 'Recently, some countries have accused us of being the largest consumer of world's food grains and oilseeds which has resulted in a worldwide shortage of these commodities thereby giving a push to inflationary trends in the world.' This caused our government to initiate the Two Child Norm policy, which endeavours to promote and motivate married couples to opt for a small family, limiting the number to a maximum of two living children.

India was the first country in the world to adopt a population policy for stabilizing population growth and launched the National Family Planning Programme way back in 1952. During the early years of the Programme, the focus was on the health aspect of family planning. Family planning as a strategy to stabilize population growth came only after the 1971 census, which brought to the fore the alarming rate at which India's population grew.

Poverty of Population

Bhagwant Virk

The philanthropic foundation and multinational corporations of the West have for long been in the forefront of the campaign for the control of world population. The task, as they saw it, was to get the Third World nations to drastically cut their growth rates. It was only recently that the population question began to be placed in a wider perspective. High birthrates and the thoughtless waste of resources were both aspects of the same problem, the new argument went.

Unless the rich nations reduced their rate of waste, slower birthrates in the poorer countries alone would not solve the problem, it came to be recognized. This logic today is a part of the Third World credo. But the West largely continues to ignore it. This contradiction in approach was highlighted with the publication of yet another set of statistics by the Population Reference Bureau, a private organization in Washington devoted to the study of population issues.

The P. R. B. report, prepared by World Bank economist George Beier, warned that during the few years left for this century an additional 1,200 million people would jam into the already overcrowded cities and towns of the developing countries and that there would be disaster unless the local authorities took positive measures to accommodate this growth.

PLENTY OF ADVICE

Mexico City would be the world's most populous with 32 million people at the present high growth rate of 4.4 per cent a year. Sao Paulo in Brazil would follow

with 26 million. The Beier report proffered plenty of advice to the developing countries: use urban land more efficiently, improve rural conditions so that people might not migrate to the cities, and of course, step up family planning campaigns.

The report even criticized current programmes in many developing countries to rehabilitate slum-dwellers in State built housing estates. Such urban renovation plans, it said, gave poor people homes they could not afford and which, therefore, had to be subsidized.

SOCIAL FACTORS

But what is so bad about subsidized housing? It is only a part of the West's cliché that the only solution to these problems lies in our having fewer babies. The point is that we can have four babies with the resources the West wastes on one. Most Asian countries have launched vigorous family planning campaigns. From Communist States like China to Catholic nations like the Philippines all seem agreed about the importance of reducing the birthrate.

But government planners are becoming increasingly critical of the apparent Western assumption that their right to waste should not be questioned. They argue that poverty is caused not by overpopulation but by social factors, such as exploitation. Many have lately been pointing out that human resources, productively utilized, can be a source of strength to the poorer countries.

SCARE STORIES

According to one Southeast Asian sociologist, scare stories about population growth in the developing

countries should be accompanied by statistics about the use of resources in the rich countries.

The bread thrown away by diners in New York alone can feed the entire population of some Southeast Asian countries, according to one school of thought.

After all, didn't Gunnar Myrdal, the noted Swedish sociologist, say that there was no such thing as over-population, in absolute terms. Population, he added, became in excess only when the resources were not commensurate. And resources are not commensurate because some want to have plenty of bread to throw away.

(The Tribune, 20 April 1980)

Perils of Development

Family Planning Not the Answer

Sugata Dasgupta

Fewer people to feed will not necessarily mean a higher standard of living for everyone, says Sugata Dasgupta in an article that endeavours to show that the family planning programme is based on a popular and persuasive misconception. Professor Dasgupta taught social policy at the London School of Economics, New York's City University and at the University of Queensland, Australia, before becoming joint director of the Gandhian Institute of studies in Varanasi. He is now honorary director of Institute of Social Change and Social Welfare in Calcutta. The argument he advances here is that though birth control serves a social purpose, the problem of poverty can only be tackled by reducing the number of rich people and abandoning the culture of consumerism.

A spectre is haunting the rich; it is the spectre of numbers. The contention is that the increasing population of poorer nations is a threat to the welfare of the human race because unrestricted growth negates the gains of development. It eats up, for example, all the food produced by modern technology, places a strain on the health services, creates over-congestion in housing, and is mostly responsible for increasing poverty in the Third World. If numbers could somehow be curtailed, Afro-Asian poverty would be brought under control. Thus, in short, is the burden of this logic.

LUXURIES

Modern civilization has indeed procured for the affluent a new consumption basket. It is full of the good things of life—ice cream, cars, TV, air-conditioners and

many other gadgets and luxuries—that are denied to the poor. The argument is that the glittering prizes the admass consumer society would be available to all if only there were fewer people to demand a share of the total goods produced. If people only had fewer children, the number of those who are starving would dwindle, and if that happened would not the gains of development reach survivors more easily? It follows that poverty and unemployment would vanish.

The logic is crisp; it sounds like an axiom that if there were fewer mouths to feed, food would be less scarce. Treating the axiom as sacrosanct, a huge programme of birth control has been launched in the Third World which identifies the human propensity for reproduction as our enemy number one.

But even axioms can be based on false premises, and social policies depending upon wrong assumptions may well fail to deliver the goods. This is exactly what has happened in Africa, Asia and Latin America during all these years of grim struggle to abolish misery and hunger. For it can well be that the boot is on the other foot: and that poverty and unemployment are not the results of overpopulation, but of the methods and goals of development.

Following this counter logic, it could be argued that the food problem, would not be solved if there were fewer mouths to feed and enough food to go round, as also that poverty and unemployment may go on increasing even if there is a zero or minus rate of growth of population. Similarly, it can be established that the correction between production and population has no bearing on a country's poverty. Even if production of a particular variety of consumer goods such as food or milk increases, the commodity can become scarcer still;

its actual consumption by those who produce or need it may also, go down. It may then be evident that it is not the size of population, but the developmental goal we seek, that is responsible for unemployment and poverty in what is called the underdeveloped world. What should thus cause alarm to planners is not the size of population but the unrealistic development targets that we seek to achieve. In short, “development” eats up the surpluses we produce.

To create poverty is in the nature of development. In the context of the industrial world, development means a rise in prices and wages. Those whose wages rise in proportion to prices, or those who are not unemployed, may not be hard hit by development, but there are few such in the Third World.

Most others, with stagnant incomes or no income worth the name, become poorer by a process which makes some people rich. As prices rise, the poor have to spend more of their earnings to buy the same goods. In the U. K., it is said that the poor spend 85 per cent of their earnings on necessities, and 15 per cent on non-necessities, and the rich do exactly the opposite. What is more, the prices of necessities. (such as of bread) tend to rise faster than that of non-necessities like international air fares. The real income of the poor thus continuously falls as rapid development means further price increases. Even if the population remains stagnant, but the process of development proceeds undaunted, prices will rise and the sufferings of the poor will intensify.

Another relevant factor is that development ultimately means opting for a new consumption basket. What a poor man, say a landless labourer, ordinarily consumes—the food he eats, the clothes he wears and the transport he requires—is very different from the

consumption of a rich person in a developed society. As the former progresses, he necessarily discards his old consumption basket in favour of a new one. The latter costs more: it costs nine times more resources, for example, to rear a child in Israel or in Bombay's Malabar Hills than in an Indian village. This is also true of education, housing, food, drink and all other items. A middle class American consumes ten times more resources than a poor American. The situation is worse in India.

Yet, as more and more people demand the new consumption basket, it becomes costlier still because development calls for extra resources to produce more sophisticated goods. Choosing quality in place of quantity, machines in place of men, and the higher productivity of a few instead of laborious production by the masses, calls for more investment which eats up our surplus resources. Thus it is not only the nature of development, but the whole process of it, that lead to pauperization.

For even if the poor are spared the gains of development, they cannot be spared the pangs of growth. Those who spend 85 per cent of their resources on necessities will have to spend more and more on the same purchases as development takes its toll and costs rise. As a result, the number of poor people and the intensity of their poverty, increases. This will happen even if the population does not grow, or if it actually decreases.

This is exactly what is happening in many advanced countries where development is taking revenge on mankind. The Australian population is declining, prices are mounting, and so are unemployment and poverty. Though one of the world's most developed

countries, Australia today faces, along with many others, the phenomenon of absolute poverty not incomparable with conditions in underdeveloped and developing countries it is losing about 85,000 jobs a year at the altar of what Australian trade unions call technological terrorism. Its other name is development.

Poverty thus increases even if population decreases but technological advancement and industrialization proceed at breakneck speed. Australia is three times the size of the Indian subcontinent and has a population of only 14 million. Given its plight, will not unemployment and poverty persist in India even if the population is reduced to one third of Australia's?

What however is the situation in India in terms of development and poverty? It is very different from that of Australia? Phenomenal progress has taken place since Independence. We have, for example, increased food production by 60 per cent in the last 14 years whereas population has increased only by 36 per cent during this period. Life expectancy likewise rose in the order of an average 40 per cent between 1950 and 1975. This is a unique record, as never before in history has the life expectancy of a nation improved so much in such a short time. But staggering poverty continues to dog our footsteps.

Mahatma Gandhi calculated in 1931 that the income of the poorest Indian was about two annas or 12 paise in today's reckoning. In the mid-sixties Lohia maintained that the same income was reduced to 10 paise, a 20 per cent fall in terms of actual wages and a decline by several hundred per cent in terms of real wages. The level of starvation must also have gone up by many times.

Increased production was indeed eaten up by the

new consumption basket. As the FAO puts it, the food problem exists all around, not because there are too many mouths to feed, but because of what some people are eating now. Since too many people eat cakes, there is no bread left for the rest. Even if the streets of Calcutta were to be flooded with milk, it would not reach the poor for the surplus would be used for other purposes. A case in point was the Operation Flood project where the average villager who contributed to the “flood” did not have any milk to give to his children. How much damage does such an exercise do to the psyche and physique of a people whose milk production increases while consumption declines?

PANACEA

But it is not my contention that India should give up her family welfare programmes. An effort at family planning can be of great value for a number of other reasons. It may, for instance, establish the right of a couple, especially of the woman, to decide when to have a child and when not to have one, emphasizing, all the while, the right of the woman to liberty, freedom and choice. But it should also be made emphatically clear that a programme of birth control is not the panacea for economic recovery. Any drastic reduction in numbers, especially of the poor, cannot in any way mitigate national poverty or help to conserve our resources.

What can accomplish this task is a reduction in the number of the rich, developed and affluent people, and abandonment of the culture of luxury and wealth that the new consumption basket promises. Any talk of attaining a higher general standard of living simply through contraceptive measures to cut down the size of India's population is a myth that must be abjured with firmness.

Law of Family Size

Partap Singh

In justification of the newly announced national population policy, the Union Health Minister mentioned how “the population explosion, that is on, has largely diluted the fruits of our remarkable economic progress”. The country's economic growth has averaged 3½ % per annum out of which 2½ % just meets the rate of population increase and only 1½ % goes towards raising the standard of living. Such being the case, the goal of removal of poverty can hardly be expected to be achieved without population control.

It is gratifying to find that, by and large, the nation is appreciative of and rapidly accepting the policy. What, however, still agitates the mind of the people is the size of the family to be aimed at. Three to two children per couple is proposed by most of the States, but it looks such a far cry from the current fertility-rate of over six children per married woman. The pity of it is that family-size has already got fixed at the lowest level, of one child per couple, by a build-up, during the last quarter of a century, from which there is no escape.

As we have already seen, the basis of the national population policy is the realization that the degree of poverty (or prosperity) is determined not by “production” alone but also by “population”. Similarly population itself is affected by production and the “standard of living”. It follows that in any attempt to deal with poverty through population control, it becomes doubly necessary to make sure of production (the master factor), nay of productivity (the capacity to produce year after year) first. An assessment of the resources available is therefore indispensable to framing any sound family

planning programme.

At Partition (say about 1950) India produced nearly 50 million tons of grains for its population of over 350 million, or just 1 ton for every 7 person, which is far below an adequate of 1 ton for 4 persons a tolerable provision of 1 ton for 5 persons or even the minimum provision of 1 ton for 6 persons. The great shortage is partly being made up by expensive imports, but has primarily been met by a stupendous development in agriculture. Last year, the country itself produced over 118 million tons of grains for its population of 600 millions, which works out to almost 1 ton for every 5 person. Even the desirable level, of 1 ton per 4 persons, is expected to be reached towards the end of the century, when India should be producing over 200 million tons of grain for a controlled population of some 800 million, growing at the rate of about 1% p.a.

In respect to the indispensable assessment required, we are concerned here, primarily, with the water-resources development. It is true that use of high-yielding varieties and fertilizers have contributed a good deal to agricultural growth, but these factors are inoperative without adequate supplies of water, which makes irrigation the basic factor. Building dams, to store water and to produce hydro-power, for canal and tube-well irrigation has been our main strategy. This has raised the country's irrigation potential from a mere 20 millions hectares at partition, to 107 million hectares (72 million of surface-water and 35 of ground water). Developing this resource at an ever-increasing rate, which at present is about 2 million hectares per annum, we are about to realize one half of this potential, and hope to realize the rest, by 1994 or at the latest by

1999 Earlier, the Fourth Plan, as also the Irrigation Commission, had recommended full realization by 1989, but that was before the recent reassessment of resources.

It may help understand quite a new aspect of the situation, we can see in this full realization an exhaustion of the very resource, that has and makes it possible for food production to keep pace with population growth till the end of the century. But beyond that, unless the population were stabilized to attain zero growth, in place of the 1% planned there would have to be a famine, causing multi-million starvation deaths annually. Clearly, any family planning programme, that is not related to available resources for production may prove futile even disastrous.

Another serious problem, pertaining to resources, is the nature of their development, which in this particular case happens to be temporary. The reservoirs we have created for storage of river-water, start silting up straightaway and get completely filled-up in course of time, reducing the created storage finally to zero. All other developments, based on stored-water, also suffer the same fate. This means, that sooner or later, irrigation would get reduced to somewhere near 20 million hectares, food production to 50 million tons and population to 350 million, which is their pre-development (1950) level.

In preparing dam projects, it was erringly assumed that the larger rivers carry an annual silt-load of 75 acre ft per 100 sq mile of their catchments, but actual measurements have shown that the silt load is far heavier. At the two extremes are rivers, Sutlej, carrying twice, and Kosi seven times but the vast majority carry about four times the assumed load, which reduces the

worked-out ages of dams to just their quarter.

Bhakra dam may live for 200 years, but Tungabhadra only 50. On the whole, it may roundly be said that the entire storage capacity, to be created by constructing some 250 dams during the latter half of the 20th century, would get silted up wholly during the 21st century.

Should silting actually prove faster or slower, later on, it makes no difference to the case that a longish period of decline is bound to follow the shorter Development period? The decline is certain; it is already taking place, though masked by faster development that ends with the century, if not earlier.

The economic decline of the 21st century is a sequence, nay a part or a price of the earlier planned temporary development, which (putting it in more tangible terms) implies a terrible Hundred Years Famine, starving crores of people annually, to bring down the population, from its pinnacle at 80 crores (may be 100 crores) to the pre-development level of 35 crores, just to keep pace with production. In terms of percentage, this reduction works to a fall of about 1% per annum at compound rate which would not make it possible for families to have any more than one child per couple, generation after generation. Excesses over this family size will all get wiped out completely. This is the inviolable, inexorable law, governing family-size, for the duration of the “decline”.

Although the “decline” is a must, it need not necessarily be a Hundred Year Famine provided the decline, in so far as it relates to population, is not left to nature, but is brought about deliberately through a family-planning programme that reduces the current

2½ % per annum population growth to an actual decline of 1% per annum by the end of the century, and then maintains this decline, all through the 21st century. The exact programme will, of course, be worked out by demographers and planners but for all practical purposes, it has to be norm of one child per couple, right from now. The time available is short; barely two decades to achieve the required population decline, for we have to keep well ahead of the physical economic decline, not only to provide against possible mishaps to production, but also to achieve an ever-rising standard of living.

All that remains to be emphasized is that there is no scope for laxity or delay of any kind. A crushing penalty awaits every failure. Should you achieve only 1% rate of annual population growth (as planned), or even zero growth, by the end of the century, instead of the new target of 1% per annum of actual decline, then there would be much over a crore of starvation deaths annually. And any couple that somehow evades family-planning now would have the extra number starved to death in the 21st century. Under these circumstances, the family-planning programme has got to be compulsory, for people to undergo for Government to arrange. In its successful implementation lies a glorious victory, not only over the dreadful Hundred Year Famine but also over the hideous poverty that has defied attempt at its removal for ages.

In addition, it will help solve all problems connected with renewable resources in soil, water, forests and wide-life. Your destiny is entirely in your own hands.

The Only Way Out

S. Arokiam

Advocating the application of science and technology to the control of population, the Indian demographer, Dr. S. Chandrasekhar, writes:

“Once upon a time high birth rates were cancelled by high death rates, but with the help of science we have brought down our high death rate successfully. The birth rate has been left untouched. Hence the extraordinary multiplication of population. It is obvious that we should now apply science and technology to the control of the birth rate.” (Vivekananda Kendra Patrika Vol. 7. No. 2)



An artist's view of the Population that will soon overtake the World.

With this in view, political leaders and planners in the field of population control in India not only sought

the help of science and technology to bring down the birth rate but also, in their misguided enthusiasm, based the entire programme of population control mainly on enticement, bribery and coercion.

Naturally, the whole family planning programme failed to bear the promised results and culminated in large-scale forcible sterilization during the Emergency. Consequently, it also led to loss of confidence in the government and proved counterproductive.

No one can deny the fact that the application of science and technology has brought down the high death rate by increasing medical services, improving child-care and eradicating epidemics such as malaria, small-pox, plague and cholera.

According to the development economist W. A. Leurie, a fall in the birth rate is more due to a change in attitudes towards child-bearing than to new techniques of birth control. He quotes the example of France and other European nations where birth rates began falling from the middle of the nineteenth century even before the new techniques of birth control were brought into use.

Thus both example and our past experience point to the fact that any attempt to control population with the aid of modern techniques without first creating the proper climate for it is sure to prove a wild goose chase.

Therefore, it will be wiser to analyse and understand the factors contributing to high birth rate and then adopt suitable measures which will change the attitude of people towards childbearing rather than blindly seek the aid of new techniques of birth control.

Adult and infant mortality being still high in

many urban slums and remote villages of India, because of unhygienic living conditions and absence of health services, many families are forced to have more children so that a few at least may survive.

Another factor contributing to the high birth rate is early marriage imposed on many a youth because of the custom or the need to have somebody to work in the fields or cook for the family.

The belief prevalent among many families in the countryside that the greater the number of children, the stronger and richer they become is another cause of the high birth rate. Also, families with only girls or only boys, keep trying to have a baby of the other sex.

In addition to these factors there are the minority communities in every town and village which want to increase their number with a view to gain numerical superiority over other communities as a measure of self-protection.

The only way out of this problem of population can be nothing but revolution in the social and economic fields which will change the attitude of the masses towards childbearing and reduce the need to have many children.

Such a revolution may be brought about by free medical service to slum-dwellers and villagers, social security measures for the aged, provision of employment for all men and women, provision of tiled houses in the place of thatched huts and full protection to minority communities.

If a government cannot provide social and economic security to every citizen, it can never control the growth of population.

(Sunday Standard, 28 January 1979)

Effects of Toxaemia

Bharatnanda

Let us be under no illusion—the universal obsession with sex has at its base the not less universal need to discharge the products of nutritional toxaemia—excess of waste matter and the toxins it creates. The common sex, sex for its own sake, is akin to the other excremental needs of the body, defecation and urination, in its overwhelming urgency; the difference lies in its not being a normal outlet for mucous matter. Only when in excess, it overflows into the wrong channels. When a body is given what it needs and is not poisoned in any way it will not give rise to a sort of chronic genital catarrh alleviated by copious discharge. Agricultural and medical advances reduced the impact of starvation and disease without reducing the urge to discharge mucous matter genitally. Over- population looms big before mankind at present. In the past high birth rates were balanced by high mortalities and the net increase was minimal.

— *KHADI GRAMODYOG, JULY 1971.*

The Journal of Rural Economy, Volume Seventeen.

Vinoba's Population Control Code



Sarvodaya leader Acharya Vinoba Bhave has evolved a four point code of conduct for population control.

He has said: "First marry at a late stage; second, announce the decision of Vanaprastha; third if you have three children, let one of them practice Brahmacharya; and the fourth is that people should, as far as possible, remain satisfied with two children."

In his talks with the two Sarvodaya workers Govindrao Deshpande and Thakurdas Bang, currently reported in the Sarvodaya Journal "People's Action," the Acharya says: "Bhoodan" will be in vain if its workers do not preach self-restraint.

"Within 10 years," the Acharya says, if the people did not propagate self-restraint, "population will increase in such numbers that it will again not be possible to solve the problem of land."

(The Tribune, 20 April 1970)

Population Education

Sushama Merh



Conceptual clarity has been a weak point of the Indian Population Education Programme even after more than a decade. One of the reasons is a lack of interaction and collaborative dialogue between the educationists and population specialists, and an absence of continuous re-assessment and development of knowledge base in the area vis-à-vis the changing perceptions and understanding about the population phenomenon. Population Scientists for the past 30 years have been working extensively in establishing inter-relationships between population processes and developmental process. Since the 1970s, these experts and specialists have been expressing their views and academic points of view regarding their findings on the Indian situation. Our Population Education Programmes unfortunately have failed to take note of these emerging dimensions.

There is a difference between describing a

situation or a problem and defining it. The Indian Population Education Programme is limited to describing the population situation in alarming “doomsday” terms. There is no attempt to define it scientifically. We stand on a threshold today to re-examine our basic postulates and objectives of population education programmes. This will require redefining our concepts, developing precision of language and expression while describing and analyzing various human issues as well as formulating policies and strategies for providing relevant substantive content to the audience of the programme.

The activity of education goes beyond the provision of information to encourage investigation, concrete analysis and weighing of alternatives. It should facilitate examining and “thinking” through various issues in order to take rational decisions resulting in corresponding actions and behaviour. This has failed to arrive through our population education programmes. Population interpreted as an “undifferentiated mass of people” exploding to unimaginable proportions a result of irresponsible, ignorant reproductive behaviour of the poor unwanted people of our country. The note is obviously elitist.

The stance has been quite negative, treating people as “problem markers.” Population should mean ‘people’ and not statistics. The quantitative assessments should help us in diagnosing the dimensions of the various qualitative human maladies. In this view, people should be recognized within their several identities—sociocultural, economic, ethnic, ecological and demographic. People are the prime movers of

the developmental process. They are the participants and living resource in this context. Thus population education programme should treat people as “problem solvers” and not “problem makers”. The symbiotic relationship between population and environment should be recognized.

As is evident from the result of the 1981 census and United Nations finding that in spite of our efforts towards Family Planning in India, the growth rate has not shown any difference not the rural-urban ratio also has shown any change. Literacy rate and disparities also remain. Infant mortality rate is still high. Children are still an economic asset to the majority of the families living at the subsistence level; sex-ratio has not shown much improvement; urban development has not been able to give an impetus to economic and industrial growth. People are still struggling in the unorganized sector of the economy; the status of women, migrant workers, child labour and marginal workers are still burning issues. We are yet to evolve a population distribution policy.

In India, population problem has many dimensions. A framework of analyzing the quality of life parameters in totality and identifying the factors responsible for it should provide conceptual and knowledge base to population education.

The implications are threefold. One is that India has runaway population growth, India also has to manage, and plan for the expected increase in population, and thirdly has to provide for economic and social upliftment and development of the already existing and

growing population within a democratic framework. It goes without saying that India's preoccupation has largely been with the first aspect. Population policy will take more than fifty years to show any significant impact. Hence we can see that the problems India is facing in the field of population cannot be resolved by family planning alone. Development being the best contraceptive is not just a rhetoric. The solution ought to be in the development process with clear fertility goals in which family planning education and contraception become an imaginative and practical input. People will have to be at the centre of things. The role of science and technology and human rational intervention cannot be over-looked.

In the final analysis any modification in the pattern of fertility is an integral part of the total modernization process. The component of productivity consciousness, conservation and management and generation of resources have to be interlinked with population education. In short we can say that a sound 'development education' should be provided through population education, environmental education and other such programmes.

The thrust of an appropriate population education programme should emphasise a dialogue and communication between academicians/scholars in the population field and educators. The information, and knowledge base materials prepared and provided are, from scientific, verifiable research documents and sources. The main feature of education philosophy should take positive stance towards the population

understanding. It treats and project people as—"problem solvers" and not "problem makers" as rational beings capable of critically examining and taking decisions and actions, as people not just with a mouth, a stomach, and two hands, but with a brain and a heart as well. This philosophy focuses on qualitative aspects of human resources development, people as active participants, policy makers and beneficiaries in the developmental process.

Family Planning Or Planning For Citizenship?

Shri S. Ramakrishnam

Family planning guidance should not merely be confined to stressing the need for performing the sex-act without causing pregnancy. It should extend to physical culture, yogic exercises, steps to gradually develop self-restraint and the all-round blessings of a sober life.



We should tell our people the evils of over-indulgence, the debilitating effects—physical and mental of unrestrained conjugal life. The sanctity of family-life, its purpose, and the joys and rewards of a regulated, disciplined life, should also be emphasized.

The main plank of the program we should be to liberate people from the oppressive atmosphere with its over-emphasis on sex to the point of making them feel that obsession with sex is the most natural thing in life.

There is such a proliferation of pornographic literature today that even many respectable publications are turning lewd and can no more be read together by all

members of a family. “Sales dropping? Add a liberal dose of sex.” That seems to be the easy solution. At whose cost? Surely, this is a region where the Government can easily step in. It can discourage in a thousand ways those publications which are clearly bent on making money by peddling sex. They should be sternly dealt with and those others which are tending to be so should be suitably warned.

As for advertising, sex appeal has become a “must”. A casual glance at any newspaper or periodical any day is enough to convince that everything from a cake of soup to a plane ticket is being advertised with the aid of sex. Cannot the Government devise measures to discourage advertisements which are blatantly sex-oriented?

True. Of late there are some advertisements appearing—their number is yet so small—which belong to the morally-elevating category. Cannot the Government provide incentives to encourage this trend?

Another major corrupting influence, of course, is the modern cinema with its money spinning formula of sex and crime. While the Government should help those films that measure up to aesthetic standards, it should not hesitate to put down the pernicious ones.

While there is the need for popularizing by all the available means, the message of a smaller family, let there *not* be the open invitation to people to ‘enjoy’ without paying the ‘price’. On the positive side, let people be exposed to the minimum of temptations and be educated in the benefits that flow from living a moral and religious life.

The need for ensuring the quality of children should be stressed. And indeed healthy and good children will only be born out of prayerful longing of the parents.

Let me quote a moving passage from Swami Vivekananda : “Why should mother be worshipped? Because she made herself pure. She underwent harsh penances sometimes to keep herself as pure as purity can be. For, mind you, no woman in India thinks of giving up her body to any man; it is her own. When a man comes in physical contact with his wife, the circumstances she controls through what prayers and through what vows! It is the greatest prayers between man and wife, the prayer that is going to bring into the world another soul fraught with a tremendous power for good or for evil. Is it a joke? Is it a simple nervous satisfaction? Is it a brute enjoyment of the body? The child must be prayed for.

“Those children that come with curses, that slip into the world, just in a moment of inadvertence, because that could not be prevented—what can we expect of such progeny?”

The patriot-prophet of India spoke these words from the innermost depths of his being and today modern science itself is recognizing the value of pre-natal influence about which extensive studies are being conducted.

For example, Dr. Alexis Carrel, a Nobel Prize winning biologist, warns, “The drunkenness of wife or husband at the moment of fecundation is a positive crime, for children conceived in such conditions often suffer from incurable nervous or mental taints. Generally speaking, parents who are rash enough to ignore the

obligations of eugenism are automatically punished by their own children.”

What Dr. Ashley Montague, an authority on genetics, says about pre-natal influence is also worth remembering : “During the pre-natal period—that is, the nine months between conception and birth—a human being is more susceptible to his environment than he will ever be again in his life. What happens to him than can help him in his development, or it can hinder him; it can promote his growth or it can interrupt it... The events that take place before his birth and his reactions to them will influence him for the rest of his life. When he is 20 or 40 or 60 there will still be aspects of his body or his mind or his emotions that will be traceable directly to the influences that acted on him before he was born.”

In other words, bringing up good and healthy children does not merely depend upon the number begotten, of feeding them with the choicest baby food of giving them the costliest education. The self-restraint and discipline and the moral standards of the *parents* have the greatest bearing on the birth of good children.

How many couples who are constantly being bombarded with incitements for unbridled sexual indulgence are aware of this ancient, eternal truth which has been attested by the findings of modern science?

We must not be hasty adopting whole-sale Western concepts though certainly we should not fight shy of accepting anything that is positively beneficial from any part of the world once we are convinced of their suitability to our conditions.

Take the case of sex education itself. There are

many amidst us who vigorously plead for it without even waiting to understand its impact on the nations which have gone in for it. Dr. Bickshoff, writing in the famous British medical magazine, *Lancet*, avers: "In all countries where sex-instruction has been widely adopted, there has been a phenomenal increase in illegitimate births (almost doubling in 11 years in Britain). There also been a lowering of the age of the illegitimately pregnant and of those who commit aggressive sexually symbolic offences (formerly committed by adults only); and the increasing immaturity of parents has resulted in more psychiatric disturbance in their offspring. A senior girls' remand home, known to me since 1952, has recently turned turtle in character. Originally the girl with sexual experience was unusual and pregnancy was rare, but now all girls interviewed have had sexual experience and the commonest offence is some form of flight, coupled with sexual misdemeanour; pregnancy is fairly commonplace and abortion not unknown.

In modern India there is a tendency among the so-called "progressives" to dub as "puritan" anyone who talks of self-restraint, ethics, religion or morality. But when it comes to fundamental, matters of national interest, every voice deserves to be heard.

Prof. Wigfield, another eminent medical authority, says: "Education should be towards civilization and *citizenship*. To adulthood rather than adultery. To personal pride, self-esteem responsibility and altruism.

In India, the ideal of Brahmacharya even in Grihasthashrama, is time-honoured. Let us hold up before the people the ideal of Brahmacharya. It has its positive effects on physical and mental health, in

addition to the much-needed advantage of restricting the number of children. The union of husband and wife for the sake of children is not considered a violation of Brahmacharya by our Shastras. "I am that passion in people which is unopposed to one's duty, Dharma." Gita, VII, II.

In this age of science, it is absolutely essential to stress the physiological processes involved in the process of celibacy, for which let me quote Dr. M. Sivaram: "The Spermatozoa are produced in the germinal layer of the testes. A hormone from the pituitary gland stimulates the production of the sperms. This hormone is called the follicular stimulating hormone. The sperms produced by the several groups of germinal cells, flow out through various seminiferous tubules into a main spermatic duct. The spermatic duct passes through two glands, the prostate and the seminal vesicles. These glands pour their secretions on to the sperms and thus the semen is fully conditioned. When the semen that has accumulated is discharged as in a sex-act or wet dream, then the germinal cells of the tests start producing another batch of sperms.

"The supply is conditioned by the demand. If for some reason or the other the semen is not discharged, then the germinal layers of the testes lie dormant. The follicular stimulating hormone is not utilized and the body can make use of it for other purposes; *mainly for mental and meditative purposes*.

Every religion has emphasized the virtue of self-control and every moral giant, through the ages, has been a standing demonstration of the benefits of a self-regulated life.

It is true that self-control cannot be practiced by all at all times. But that does not mean that the ideal should be lost sight of and not propagated. If a man with an ideal commits a hundred mistakes, a man without one would commit a thousand mistakes. So it is always good and necessary to place the highest ideals before our people and educate them to make an earnest and honest efforts.

The quality of life is more important than life itself. Is sex the be-all and end-all of life? Certainly not.

At the same time let us not view sex from the puritan angle as something vulgar and debasing.

Sex has its place in life. It is sacred. It is divine. It has its role in married life to be instrumental in giving birth to quality children who will flower into responsible, disciplined citizens of tomorrow—to ensure the unbroken continuity of the Family of Man.

Family Planning, devoid of a positive approach, will surely lead to Sex Anarchy, with catastrophic consequences to the individual, to the family and to the nation. It is already changing the lives of men and women more radically than any other revolution of our time. And it is giving birth to an ugly child—Drug Culture—which is fast establishing itself as a significant symbol of Youth Culture.

Family Planning or Birth Control

Richard B. Gregg

How the Irish did It? (Solution of the population problem)

The Irish peasantry proved that a certain kind of self-control is possible on a large scale. After the dreadful famines in Ireland in 1847-52, the peasants, against the advice of their priests and politicians, began having fewer marriages, and the marriages were much later in life than formerly. Also they began consolidating their tiny farms through marriages so that the holdings generally became large enough to be economically workable. Today in Ireland the number of bachelors and old maids is very large in proportion to the rest of the population; the birthrate is among the lowest in Europe; the population is nearly half of what it was in 1845, and the per capita wealth a few years ago was reported to be for a while one of the highest in Europe. But now, 1957, there are one hundred thousand people unemployed, the economic situation is said to be serious, and the Irish emigrating, we read, at the rate of fifty thousand per year. The story is told in the book *Human Fertility: the Modern Dilemma* by Robert C. Cook. That is at least one way of reducing the birthrate and pressure of excess population; and it is remarkable that it was achieved by the initiative of the peasants themselves, without legislation or governmental commissions, in spite of the opposition of the Roman Catholic Church and The Statesmen. I am neither approving it nor disapproving it; I am too ignorant. But there it is as a fact, for whatever it may be worth.

Reproduced from the book which way lies hope?

The Fiery Ordeal

Symbol Of Moral And Spiritual

Perfection And Symbol Of The Diety



The Holy Mother Shrimati Sharda Devi

*Wife of Ramakrishna Paramhansa founder of
Ramakrishan Mission Calcutta*

It is in the stress of circumstances that a truly great man reveals the strength of his character. Imagine the reaction of a lifelong ascetic when he is suddenly

confronted with his young wife, who has come with the definite purpose of meeting him and, possibly, asserting her claim over him. If he were a stern ascetic, he would shun her; if not, he would gradually succumb to her influence. Sri Ramakrishana did neither. His reactions had a uniqueness of their own. It had already been mentioned that he received her cordially, but what followed was even more remarkable. He decided to avail himself of his wife's presence at Dakshineswar to do two things—firstly, to fulfill his foremost duty to her as a husband namely, to educate her in the high ideals of life for which he stood, and secondly, to subject his own mind to a crucial test in point of same sightedness and freedom from lower instincts. Of these, the first was a long and subtle process of spiritual education, which will be described elsewhere. As for the second, Sri Ramakrishna, on meeting his wife, remembered the precious advice he had been given by his master, Totapuri, when he knew that his disciple was married. A wife, he said, presented no danger to one, if one were really established in Brahman. He whose mental purity was based upon a strong sense of distinction between the sexes, was no doubt a good aspirant, but the realization of Brahman was still far away from him. For a true seer of Brahman would see no difference between man and woman, and his purity of behaviour would be based, not on a sense of moral conflict, but on this super sensuous perception of unity. So, Sri Ramakrishna felt that the presence of his wife at Dakshineswar was for him an opportunity to test his own attainment in this respect. He was a radical by temperament and when an idea entered his mind, he felt, he must carry it out at once. So unlike an ordinary ascetic he allowed his wife to be by his side and serve him to her heart's content. Not only that, for about six months of her stay at Dakshineswar,

he permitted her even to sleep with him.

This was, indeed, a fiery ordeal for any youthful ascetic, but not for Sri Ramakrishna. His discriminating mind could not be caught in any worldly snare. The nature of this test and the reactions of his mind to it are best described in the eloquent words of Swami Saradananda, the disciple and biographer of Sri Ramakrishna. He writes: “One day, seeing the Holy Mother sleeping by his side, the Master discriminated within himself. ‘O mind, this is what the world calls the body of a woman. Men wistfully run after it. But one who goes after it remains enmeshed in body-consciousness, and cannot attain God. Now, O my mind, be not insincere-say not one thing outside and have another idea in the heart. Tell me, do you want this woman’s body, or do you want the Lord? If the first, here it is in front of you, and you are free to have it’. Discriminating in this way, he was about to touch the Holy Mother, when his mind recoiled so violently that he was absorbed in Samadhi for the whole night! Next morning the name of the Lord had to be asserted long in his ears before his mind came to the sense plane.”

This will give one an idea of the kind of conjugal life that the Holy Mother had with her saintly husband. To complete the picture of it, another incident quite characteristic of Sri Ramakrishna may be mentioned here. One day his youthful wife was massaging his feet. She put him a straight question, “How do you look upon me? She asked. And Sri Ramakrishna replied, “The Mother who in the Deity in the temple, the mother who gave birth to me and now resides in the Nahabat-even she is now massaging my feet. I look upon you in that light-as the embodiment of Motherhood.” These are, indeed, puzzling words for the sense-bound mind of

man, but they were only a common place in the mouth of Sri Ramakrishna, the true worshiper of the Universal Mother.

There have been people who have expressed sympathy for the Holy Mother on account of what they consider the barrenness of her married life. For did not the very greatness of her husband stand in the way of her experiencing the substance of matrimonial life, and what is more, the greatest privilege of a woman, namely motherhood? Indeed, her own mother, Syamasundari Devi, seems to have felt in this way at one time, and remarked in the hearing of Sri Ramakrishna, “My Sarada has been married to a lunatic. She has not known family life. She has no children. She will never know the happiness of being addressed as mother”. At this Sri Ramakrishna remarked, “Well, mother, you need not worry about that. Your daughter will have so many children that she will be tired of being addressed day and night as ‘Mother’.”

But the remarkable fact about this phase of the Holy Mother’s life is that, unlike her sympathizers, she herself never felt aggrieved on this account. In later times it was with a feeling of exaltation that she would refer to those blessed days she had spent with the Master. She used to say: “The divine state, in which the Master used to be absorbed, passes all description. In ecstatic moods he would smile or weep, or at times remain perfectly still in deep Samadhi. This would sometimes continue throughout the night. In that divine presence any whole body would tremble with awe, and I would anxiously await the dawn. For I knew nothing of ecstasy in those days. One night his Samadhi continued for a very long time. Greatly frightened, I sent for Hriday. He came and began to repeat the name of the Lord in the

Master's ears. When he had done this for a little while, external consciousness reappeared. After this incident, he came to know of my difficulty, and taught me the appropriate divine names that should be uttered in the ear in particular states of Samadhi. Thenceforth my fear was much lessened, as he would invariably come to earthly consciousness on the utterance of the particular divine names. But even after this, I sometimes kept awake whole nights, as there was no knowing when he would fall into Samadhi. By degrees he came to know of my difficulty. He learnt that even after the lapse of a considerable length of time I could not adjust myself to his Samadhi temperament. So he asked me to sleep separately at the Nahabat."

Indeed, the attitude of pity which some feel for the Holy Mother for what they consider her enforced virginhood in married life, is based upon a total ignorance of her exalted spiritual state. If she chose, it was perhaps open to her to have drawn Sri Ramakrishna to the ordinary level of life. But she was constituted otherwise. "Do you want to drag me down into Maya?" Sri Ramakrishna asked her once in the early days of his association with her at Dakshineswar. "Why should I do that"? Came the prompt reply, "I have come only to help you in the path of religious life."

A noble answer, indeed! Only a woman of immaculate purity of mind could have given it. There was no artifice in it, no hypocritical intention to please anybody. It was the spontaneous expression of her nature, of the lofty ideal of life that had unconsciously become hers as much as her husband's.

In fact the world at large not yet recognized the important part played by the Holy Mother in fulfilling this aspect of Sri Ramakrishna's life. Often there is a

tendency to attribute this unique feature of their married life entirely to the saintly character of Sri Ramakrishna. But it is forgotten that at the Holy Mother. For such an ideal could be translated into life only because she was his match in point of purity, and co-operated with him whole-heartedly in the fulfillment of the ideal.

Sri Ramakrishna himself was the first to appreciate her exalted spiritual state and to recognize the immense value of her contribution to his religious life. "Had she not been so pure", he said to his disciples in later times, "who knows whether I might not have lost my self-control from her inducements? After marriage. I prayed to the Divine Mother, 'O Mother, remove even the least taint of carnality from the mind of my wife'. When I lived with her, I understood that the Mother had really granted my prayer.

This admission of Sri Ramakrishna especially in the light of his conduct towards the Holy Mother soon after her arrival at Dakshineswar, is full of import. It gives us a glimpse of the spiritual evolution of the Holy Mother during the days when the Master was performing austerities at Dakshineswar. Does the above prayer of Master signify an affirmation of mind by which he made her in spirit the participant of his memorable religious practices? Did it establish an unconscious spiritual link between the two individuals, so that in spite of distance and years of separation, the one could draw the sap of holiness that the other was accumulating in the solitude of the Dakshineswar temple-garden? The spiritual fitness that the Master recognized in the Holy Mother on her unexpected appearance at Dakshineswar justifies such an inference. Besides, the Master's own words reveal the subtle unseen relation that existed between him and his chief disciple, "The devotees are like Kalmi greens"

he said, "If one end of it is pulled, the whole group of shoots connected with it must done out."

The same fact is further confirmed by the remarkable form of worship that Sri Ramakrishna performed as the culmination of his spiritual practices. In that rite he placed the Holy Mother on the pedestal of the Deity and worshipped her as the great mother of the universe. It looks as if her association with him in this final act of his austerities is the conclusion of a long process of soul culture beginning with the prayer at the time of his marriage, which strangely enough, coincides approximately with the commencement of his austerities.

*Sri Ramakrishna Math
Mylapore, Madras-4. (INDIA)*

Chastity is the only Virtue

Chastity is the flowering of man; and what are called Genius, Heroism, Holiness and the like, are but various fruits which succeed it...By turns our purity inspires and impurity casts us down. What is chastity? How shall a man know if he is chase?

He shall not know it. We have heard of this virtue but we know not what it is, we speak conformably to the rumour which we have heard. From exertion come wisdom and purity; from sloth ignorance and sensuality. In the student sensuality is a sluggish habit of mind. An unclean person is universally a slothful one, who sits by a stove, on whom the sun shines prostrate, who reposes without being fatigued. If you would avoid uncleanness, and all the sins, work earnestly, though it be at cleaning a stable.

It would be worth the while to ask ourselvesIs our life innocent enough? Do we live inhumanely, toward man or beast, in thought or act? To be serene and successful we must be at one with the universe. The least conscious and needless injury inflicted on any creature is to its extent a suicide. What peace or life can a murderer have? We are conscious of an animal in us which awakens in proportion as our higher nature slumbers. It is reptile and sensual, and perhaps cannot be wholly expelled like the worms which even in life and health, occupy our bodies. Possibly we may withdraw from it, but never its nature. I fear that it may enjoy a certain health of its own, that we may be well but not pure...Who knows what sort of life would result if we had attained to purity ? If I knew so wise a man as could teach me purity I would go to seek him forthwith.

*THOREAU-'The Living Thoughts of Thoreau',
presented by Theodore Dreiser. Published by Cassel & Co
Ltd. London pp138. Bhagat Puran Singh*

PINGALWARA DIARY

(UPTO APRIL, 2017)

Services rendered by Pingalwara Institution for the service of the suffering humanity are:-

1. Homes for the Homeless

There are 1764 patients in different branches of Pingalwara now a days:-

(a) Head Office, Mata Mehtab Kaur Ward, Bhai Piara Singh Ward	374 Patients
(e) Manawala Complex	854 Patients
(b) Pandori Warrach Branch, Amritsar	82 Patients
(c) Jalandhar Branch	39 Patients
(d) Sangrur Branch	228 Patients
(f) Chandigarh (Palsora) Branch	94 Patients
(g) Goindwal Branch	<u>93 Patients</u>
Total <u>1764 Patients</u>	

2. Treatment facilities

- (a) **Dispensary & Laboratory:-** Pingalwara has a dispensary and a laboratory for the treatment of patients. It has an annual expenditure of about Rs.90 lakhs. Medicines are also distributed free of cost to the poor and needy people.
- (b) **Medical Care Staff:-** Experienced medical staff like Nurses, Pharmacists and Laboratory Technicians are available for the care of the Pingalwara residents.
- (c) **Blood-Donation Camps:-** A Blood Donation Camp is organized on Bhagat Ji's Death Anniversary every year. The blood is used for Pingalwara residents and road accident victims.

(d) **Ambulances:-** Ambulances with basic Medical aid are available for victims of road accidents on G.T. Road, round the clock and provide facilities for taking Pingalwara patients to the hospital.

(e) **Artificial Limb Centre:-** There is an Artificial Limb Centre at Manawala Complex, dedicated to the memory of Bhagat Ji which provides free of cost Artificial Limbs to amputee cases and calipers to paraplegic ,hemiplegic or polio affected people. 8137 needy people have benefitted till April 2016.

(f) **Physiotherapy Centre:-** A Physiotherapy Centre equipped with State-of-the-art equipment is functioning in the Manawala Complex since June 2005. On an average 80 patients are treated everyday.

(g) **Operation Theatres:-** There is a well equipped Operation Theatre in Bhai Piara Singh Ward Amritsar for general surgery and A Micro Surgery Operation Theatre in Manawala Complex where Cochlear Implants and major operations are carried out.

(h) **Dental, Eye, Ear & Ultrasound Centres:-** These Centres have been set up to provide these services to Pingalwara residents, sewadars and their families.

3. Education

Pingalwara Society is running five Educational Institutions for the poor and needy children.

(a) **Bhagat Puran Singh Adarsh School, Manawala Complex:-** This school provides free education to 723 students from the poor and deprived sections of the society. They are provided with free books and

uniforms. Children being brought up by Pingalwara Society are also studying in this school.

- (b) **Bhagat Puran Singh Adarsh School, Buttar Kalan (Qadian):-** This school is dedicated to the sweet memory of Bhagatji. 452 students are getting free education under the able guidance of well qualified teachers. The school also provides financial help to students who have finished their school studies and are aspiring for higher studies.
- (c) **Bhagat Puran Singh School for Special Education, Manawala Complex:-** This school is providing Special Education to 205 Special children.
- (d) **Bhagat Puran Singh School for the Deaf:-** Bhagat Puran Singh School for Deaf Children is functional at the Manawala Complex since May 2005. The school is equipped with state-of-the-art training aid and has 150 children on its rolls.
- (e) **Bhagat Puran Singh School for Special Education, Chandigarh (Palsora):-**This school caters to the needs of Special adults of the branch.
- (f) **Vocational Centre:-** This Centre is providing free training in embroidery, stitching, craft work, making washing powder, candle making, painting, etc. Young girls from the villages of surroundings areas are the main beneficiaries.
- (g) **Computer Training:-** Computers are available in all the schools for academic and vocational training.
- (h) **Hostel facilities:-** There are separate hostels for boys and girls in Manawala Complex. Many girls are

pursuing higher studies in different colleges.

4. **Rehabilitation**

- (a) **Marriages:-** After being educated, boys and girls at Pingalwara are married to suitable partners. 40 girls and 4 boys have been married off till date.

5. **Environment Related Activities**

- (a) **Tree Plantation:-** Bhagat Puran Singh Ji was deeply concerned about the degradation of the environment. A vigorous campaign of tree plantation is started every year on Bhagat Ji's Death Anniversary. Each year 15,000 to 22,000 trees are planted in various schools, colleges, hospitals, cremation grounds and other public places. These include Amaltas, Kachnar, Behra, Champa, Arjun, Sukhchain, Chandni, Zetropa, Kari-patta were distributed to different institutions.
- (b) **Nursery:-** Pingalwara has its own Nursery where saplings of various plants and trees are prepared. Every year, the aim of nursery is to grow more than 54 different kinds of saplings every year.

6. **Social Improvement Related Activities**

- (a) **Awareness:-** Pingalwara has played an important role in spreading awareness about the evils in the society. This has been done by printing literature on religious, social and environmental issues at the Puran Printing Press Amritsar and is being distributed free of cost. It has an annual expenditure of printing and publicity is about 1 crores 50 lakhs rupees.
- (b) **Puran Printing Press:-** The Printing Press has been updated with an Offset Press.

(c) **Museum and Documentaries:-** A Museum, and a number of documentaries have been prepared on Pingalwara activities as well as on zero budget natural farming. The C.D.s are freely available from Pingalwara.

A feature film produced by Pingalwara Society Amritsar EH JANAM TUMHARE LEKHE (Punjabi) on Rev. Bhagat Puran Singh Ji, founder Pingalwara and his struggle not only for selfless services of wounded humanity but for Environment Crisis also, will prove a beacon for the generations yet to come after us.

7. Help to the victims of Natural Calamities

Pingalwara makes an effort to provide succour to the victims of natural calamities like floods, earthquakes and famines. Aid was sent for the earth-quake victims in Iran, Tsunami disaster victims, Leh landslide and flood affected areas.

8. Cremation of unclaimed dead-bodies

Pingalwara cremates unclaimed dead bodies with full honour.

9. Dairy Farm

120 cows and buffalos at Manawala Complex provide fresh milk to the Pingalwara residents.

10. Old Age Homes

Old age homes at Sangrur and Manawala Complex of Pingalwara caters to the needs of elderly people.

11. Projects Completed and Under Construction

Since 1997 ambitious projects of Sangrur, Palsora at Chandigarh and Manawala Complex have been completed. In the year 2009 new buildings—

Administrative Block, Puran Printing Press, Deaf School, T.B. Ward at Manawala Complex and at Head Office and a New Administrative Block have also been completed.

In the year 2013, a new modern Bhagat Puran Singh School for Special Education in Manawala Complex of Pingalwara and a new Block for Pingalwara patients in Pandori Warraich Branch and at Sangrur is under construction and is fast coming up.

Other Details:

- a) All India Pingalwara Charitable Society is a Registered Society, registered by Registrar of Companies vide letter No. 130 of 1956-1957 as amended vide No. A-28/4540 dated 07-07-1998.
- b) All donations to Pingalwara are exempted under Section 80 G of Income Tax-II Amritsar letter No. CIT-II/ASR/ITO (Tech.)/2011-12/4730 dated 11/12 January, 2012.
- c) PAN Number of the All India Pingalwara Charitable Society is AAATA 2237R
- d) FCRA (Foreign Contribution Regulation Act) 1976 Registration No. of Pingalwara is 115210002

Wahe Guru Ji Ka Khalsa

Wahe Guru Ji Ki Fateh

Dr. Inderjit Kaur,

President,

All India Pingalwara Charitable Society (Regd.),

Tehsilpura, G.T. Road, Amritsar. (Punjab).

Details of Banks For Sending Donation Through Online Cheque/Draft, Cheque & Bank Drafts may be sent in favour of : All India Pingalwara Charitable Society (Regd.), Amritsar. PAN No. AATA2237R					
S. No.	Name of Account	A/C No.	Name of the Bank	IFS Code for Inland Remittance	Swift Code for Foreign Inland Remittance
1.	FOR FOREIGN CONTRIBUTORS All India Pingalwara Charitable Society (Regd.), Amritsar.	01562010002890	Oriental Bank of Commerce Sharifpura Amritsar	ORBC 0100156	ORBCINBBASR
2.	INLAND ACCOUNT No. All India Pingalwara Charitable Society (Regd.), Amritsar.	01562010003720	Oriental Bank of Commerce Sharifpura Amritsar	ORBC 0100156
3.	All India Pingalwara Charitable Society (Regd.), Amritsar.	10978255668	State Bank of India Town Hall, Amritsar	SBIN000609	SBINHBB274
4.	All India Pingalwara Charitable Society (Regd.), Amritsar.	630510100026147	Bank of India City Centre, Amritsar	BKID0006305	BKIDINBBASR
5.	All India Pingalwara Charitable Society (Regd.), Amritsar.	0018002100097336	Punjab National Bank Hall Bazar, Amritsar	PUNB0001800	PUNBINBBAHB
6.	All India Pingalwara Charitable Society (Regd.), Amritsar.	006601012522	ICICI Bank Ltd., Lawrence Road, Amritsar.	ICIC0000066	ICICINBBFEX
7.	All India Pingalwara Charitable Society (Regd.), Amritsar.	01151000246510	HDFC Bank Ltd., Mall Road, ASR.	HDFC0000115	HDFCINBB
8.	All India Pingalwara Charitable Society (Regd.), Amritsar.	00011000096048	Punjab & Sind Bank Hall Bazar, Amritsar	PSIB000A001	PSIBINBB017
9.	All India Pingalwara Charitable Society (Regd.), Amritsar.	685010100009799	Axis Bank Ltd. City Centre Amritsar.	UTIB0000685	AXISINBB179
10.	All India Pingalwara Charitable Society (Regd.), Amritsar.	13131000082013	HDFC Bnak Ltd. Ghanta Ghar, Golden Temple, Asr	HDFC0001313	HDFCINBB
11.	All India Pingalwara Charitable Society (Regd.), Amritsar.	01010100015572	Bank of Baroda, Town Hall, Amritsar	BARBOAMRITS	BARBINBBAMR

- * Preserve natural resources.
- * Service of the poor and destitutes is the service of God.
- * Plant trees to save environment.
- * Wear Khadi clothes to lessen unemployment.
- * Simple living and high thinking is a bliss.
- * Use less of diesel and petrol.
- * Exercise restraint in your living habits.
- * Don't forget to plant trees. They are the sign of prosperity of a nation.

—Bhagat Puran Singh

K.M. Munshi writes that Matsya Purana says: “One who sinks a well lives in heaven for as many years as there are drops of water in it. But to dig ten such wells equals in merit the digging of one pond; digging of ten such ponds was equal to making a lake; making of ten lakes was as meritorious as be—getting a virtuous son but begetting ten such virtuous son had the same sanctity as that of planting a single tree.”