

Relation between Development and Population

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Sometimes I would like to stroll in the world of my imagination. Everyone inherits personally and socially many things. Everyone also leaves much behind him/her. In our day to day life we have inherited much from many people. In our inheritance we are indebted to people like Poet Ravindranath Tagore, to one time President of India Abdul Kalam, to the servant of the poorest of the poor Mother Teresa and to Cricketers' icon Sachin Tendulkar. As you read this essay, you have inherited something or other from big and small people.

Now I imagine. No. Let us all imagine a world without our Father of the nation Gandhiji, the Great Poet Ravindranath Tagore, Cricketer Sachin Tendulkar and St. Mother Teresa. Imagine that they never existed on earth. How poor India would have been without them in the fields of politics, in Literature, in science, in humanitarian services and in Cricket!

India would never have achieved the name and fame which India enjoys today without those eminent people and many other big and small people like them.

In our present world for all the problems and difficulties in India we blame the population growth as the root cause and we respond to the problem with having just one or two kids. Then, we proclaim that this family planning is golden path to prosperity and welfare of our nation!

If there were family planning like in our times in those times of the birth of the people like Mahatma Gandhiji, poet Tagore, Scientist Abdul Kalam, Mother Teresa and Cricketer Tendulkar, those people would not have been born or if born by mistake they would not have been allowed to exit on mother earth as they would have been done away with in one way or other. For, they were all born after their parents had already two or more children!

Gandhiji has acknowledged in his autobiography that his mother Puthalibai had one daughter and four sons and he was her last child. Ravindranath Tagore who said, "Every child born is symbol of hope that God still loves the world," was born as the 14th child of his parents! The scientist and ex-president of India Abudul Kalam was the 7th child in his family. Mother Teresa was the 5th child of her parents. Sachin Tendulkar was the 4th child in his family.

We say about family planning, "One is ideal, two are enough and no more after three." The ideals like this one never existed before the birth of those great men and women. In the time of their birth, around the time of India's independence, people were very poor. In many places people died of starvation and contagious deceases. Even today in modern India starvation deaths and contagious deceases are there in some places. All the same India is making great strides of progress from being an underdeveloped country into a developed nation. In this progress there are contributions from small and big people like Gandhiji, Abdul Kalam, Tagore, Mother Teresa, Sachin Tendulkar. I have taken here a few names. But, I believe that in the building and development of our nation innumerable people, who are true to themselves, have made

significant contributions.

Today in India uncontrolled population explosion is attributed to unemployment, starvation, dearth of drinking water and shortage of houses. The people who hold these types of beliefs say that the population explosion is the reason for all these problems! But the reality is the fact that we have made the population as a scapegoat for all the ills like corruption, bribery, injustice, inequality, cheating, etc. I believe that if we bring solution to all these problems on the path of truth and justice, the population growth will be seen as a blessing.

Here let me recall the words of Gandhiji, who said, "I challenge the belief that the country should go for birth control on account of its great population growth. This has never been proved. The earth provides everyone for their needs; but not enough for their greed." Everyone who protest against population growth and try birth control should deeply meditate on these words of Gandhiji.

Those who have researched and studied deeply the subject of population growth have concluded that the poverty of country has not increased on account of population growth. On the contrary, many nations have taken great strides of progress along with the population growth. We can see in those the countries, which were totally destroyed during the Second World War, have achieved great development and economic growth along with their population growth. The history of the second half of 20th century is a clear proof for this statement. Even the post independent development in India has taken place through the population growth.

Our economic development has gone along our human resource development. The then Prime Minister Manmohan Singh has said and I agree with him that, "Today for India the population growth is not a problem but it is our wealth". Today if we are facing many problems and difficulties, they are due to the evils like abortion, artificial family planning, forced on people in the name of population explosion. The women who have been subjected to abortion have often become victims of psychological trauma and physical sicknesses. Consequently the happy and tension-free family atmosphere has been affected. In some states in India on account of unnatural family planning have led to terrible imbalance of the ratio of men and women. This imbalance has led to many crimes like rapes in the country.

Decrease in the number of children has also led to the closure of institutions like schools and colleges, which in turn caused unemployment for the people working in such institutions. The decrease in population in some European countries has led to a situation where there are not enough people to maintain even essential services. Elderly people are encouraged to work without retirement as long as they are able physically and mentally to do their jobs.

A leading state in India in population control is Kerala. There are no people in the state to do essential works in many areas in spite of having the highest daily wages in India. So one can see fields in many areas left out uncultivated. Most workers in building houses and roads in Kerala are people from other states like far away UP, Bengal, Orissa, etc.

A human being comes into existence from the moment of its conception with the intercourse of a women and a man. Without considering this fact of human existence people have recourse to

artificial birth control and abortion. Consequently the whole world is terribly affected with the killing of innocent human beings in their mothers' womb.

All problems caused by population have only one solution. Every human existence should be loved and respected from the moment its conception to its natural end. There are institutions in our country to look after together with medical care the needy and helpless women with child in her womb. Similarly if any woman is unable to look after her child after giving it birth, we have humanitarian people and institution to help.

Mother Teresa once appealed all such helpless parents and helpless mothers. "Please do not in any way destroy your children. God lives in them. Give me your child if you are unable to look after. I will take care of the child on your behalf."

Today Mother Teresa is no more in our midst. But that service is happily done by the Sisters of her congregation with great love and care. Every one among us desires progress and development. Let us understand the relation between development and population; and cherish every human being like the Sisters of Mother Teresa.

I believe that, when we cherish human being from its moment of existence to its end with respect and without making any discrimination; and when all people lead a life of human morality, then, there will be a balanced ratio of men and women. With such human progress there will be no problem but blessings of population growth.

Last change: June 1, 2016
Next change on: June 16, 2016
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