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Title: Further discussion regarding increasing population in the country raised by Shri Prabodh Panda on 6.5.2005 (Discussion not concluded).

**17.10 hrs.**

### **DISCUSSION UNDER RULE 193**

Increasing population in the country - contd.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Now, the House will take up Item No.13.

Shri Prabodh Panda. He was on his legs last time. Now, he may continue his speech.

SHRI PRABODH PANDA (MIDNAPORE): Thank you, Mr. Deputy-speaker, Sir, at the first stage, while initiating the discussion Under Rule 193, I had also mentioned that our country, India, is the second most populous country in the world, sustaining 16.7 per cent of the population on 2.4 per cent of the world surface area. Sir, realising the high population growth, India became the first country to formulate the National Family Planning Programme in 1952.

2001 Census Report showed that population growth rate fell below two per cent after decades. It was 2.14 per cent growth for the period 1981-1991 and it has declined to 1.93 per cent over a period of 1991-2001. In order to give new thrust to efforts to achieve a more rapid decline in birth rate, death rate and population growth rate, the National Development Council had set up a Sub-Committee on Population in 1992. The sub-committee made some important recommendations and the NDC endorsed all the recommendations in 1993. It is needless to say or mention that over population or uncontrolled population growth adversely affects the economic development and the progress of the country. It creates problems of food, communication, education, employment, housing, health, sanitization, etc. 2001 Census showed that India's population was 1.02 billion, which was 15 million more than the projection made by the Technical Group of the Population projected. It showed that India added 18 crore people between 1991 and 2001, which was more than the population of Brazil, which is considered to be the fifth most populous country in the world. There is an apprehension that if such process

continues, then, India will overtake China by 2035, which is the world's most populous country. So, to change the rapid growth of population, certain measures need to be taken giving the issue paramount importance. At present, there is no central defined method or no specific targets for the family planning. To give emphasis to decentralising planning at the district level by 2010, the National Commission was also constituted in line with the recommendation of the NPP, 2000. But the problem is that, there is some wrong outlook/understanding and these are the impediments of proper assessment and for taking proper steps so far as population problem and population growth problems are concerned<sup>[R54]</sup>.

First is the problem of communal understanding of the situation. In this regard, it will not be out of context to place that there is a communal mindset to address the situation. I have found that several Members from the NDA have given the notice to participate in this discussion. It might be that they would like to discuss this matter from the point of view of communal mindset. It is not understood why those who have given notices to participate in the discussion are not here. As soon as data on the growth of population of different religions was released by the Office of the Registrar General and Census Commission on 6<sup>th</sup> September, 2004, it was seized by the *Sangh Pariwar* for meeting their political end.

The alarm bell started ringing that the Hindus were going to be reduced to a minority status in the foreseeable future. The danger of India becoming an Islamic country was underlined. This was their understanding. It is not understood to me why an inaccurate and incorrect summary was distributed to the Press instead of the full text of the report. The concerned Minister should explain why, in such a scenario, in such a complicated situation, such inaccurate summary of the report was distributed publicly instead of the full text of the report. It was published in many dailies stating that amongst six religious communities, the growth rate of the Muslims is the highest, that is, 36 per cent. Surprisingly, this statement was not qualified by the census that took place in Jammu and Kashmir. No census took place in Jammu and Kashmir and in Assam in 1981. The figures show that it had taken place in 1991 and in 2001. Figures show that amongst all religious communities, it is unadjusted in the case of Hindus. In 2001, in the case of the Hindus, it was 80.5 per cent and when it is adjusted, it came to 81.4 per cent. In the case of Muslims, when it is unadjusted, it showed

the figure of 13.4 per cent and when it got adjusted, it came to 12.4 per cent. So, where is the ground for coming to the conclusion that the Hindu population growth rate has been declining and the Muslim population growth rate is gradually increasing? This is quite baseless. This problem or confusion is created by the report, which is inaccurate and incorrect.

Secondly, so far as the problem of population growth is concerned, there are also age-old prejudices from religious point of view

[p55].

I must say that, due to gradually increasing realisation and awareness among different religions, the present situation is improving. Sir, please allow me to refer something very interesting from the speech made by the Prime Minister of Pakistan.

**17.20 hrs.** (Shri Pawan Kumar Bansal *in the Chair*)

It was made at the inaugural function of a two-day Conference of International *Ulemas* on 'Population and Development', which was held in Islamabad. *Ulemas* and scholars from 29 Muslim countries, including Iran, participated in that Conference. The Prime Minister of Pakistan himself, while inaugurating the Conference, called upon the *Ulemas* to provide guidance and leadership to the *Ulemas* to fight the age-old prejudices and ignorance about planned families and develop consensus on issues of population planning in the light of *Quran* and *Shariyat*. It is to be noted that the population growth of certain countries, which I am referring here, has shown this trend. In Iran, the population growth is recorded at 1.4 per cent. In Indonesia, which is having the highest

population of the Muslims amongst the Muslim countries, it is 1.8 per cent. For all Arab States taken together, it is 2.7 per cent. In our country, it is 1.9 per cent. I am referring these data to show that there is gradual weakening of the age-old prejudices and the situation is improving. But, Sir, what is alarming? One of the alarming facts, that has emerged in the Census of our country, is that the sex ratio is declining. The male population of our country, as per 2001 Census Report, is 53.21 crore. Whereas female population is 49.64 crore. That is, the female population is less by 3.57 crore than the male population. Sir, this is very alarming. National average, that is of sex ratio, is 933. Child sex ratio is also declining. At the national level, sex ratio among Muslims is 936 per thousand, just above the national average, whereas in Hindu population, it is 931. This declining ratio is the reflection of the society towards girl child and female.

I may take this privilege to refer the *Manusamhita*, where the attitude towards women is very much clear

[pkp56].

It is said that women are not being considered as equal to men and that it is not proper to give freedom to the women. This is the age-old prejudice. This age-old prejudice is there not only in the Muslim community but also in the Hindu community. The sex ratio of the population shows the exact problem in this regard.

Another alarming fact of the population is the literacy rate. The literacy rate for the population aged seven years and above for the country as a whole stands at 64.8 per cent. We may take the case of employment. I am just referring to the percentage of employment or the percentage of literacy as the records. The population problem cannot be solved in isolation without considering other related problems. According to the Government data, only about 40 crore people have some kind of employment and there are at least 10 crore people in our country who are absolutely jobless. Problems pertaining to the population growth cannot

be solved without taking into consideration the socio-economic factor of the society.

May I refer the Central Premises of 1994 Cairo Conference in this regard? The notion was that the size, growth, age-structure and rural-urban distribution of country's population have a critical impact on its development prospects and specifically on the prospects of raising the living standards of the poor. Based on this understanding, the ICPD, International Conference of Population and Development have suggested strategies, planning, decision-making and resource mobilisation at all levels. The Millennium Summit at UN Headquarters in 2000 sets the aims of focussing the development assistance more effectively. It had recommended certain points and I do not know how far all these points are being followed in our country. One of the points is, eradication of extreme poverty. It deals with the population problem. Their first recommendation is, eradication of extreme poverty by 2015. The other recommendations are: to achieve universal primary education by 2015; promote gender equity and empowerment by 2015; and reduce child mortality by 2015.

MR. CHAIRMAN : I am sorry for interruption, Shri Panda. You may please continue tomorrow for a little more time. We will now have to take up Half-an-hour discussion. The time fixed for that was 1730 hours and so we will have to begin with that.