



# 上海论坛 2012 学术简报

## Academic Bulletin of Shanghai Forum 2012

### **Asia's Population and Social Development for 2011-2020: New Challenge, New Strategy**

May 26, 2012

The panel of “Asia's Population and Social Development for 2011-2020: New Challenge, New Strategy” kicked off with vibrant discussion in the afternoon of May 26, 2012. Scholars from China, Japan, Mongolia, India, Thailand and Iran, exchanged their views on the future trends of Asia's population development.

Prof. Noriko O. Tsuya from Keio University, the first speaker, examined the patterns of changes in education and employment of young Japanese men and women, and the effects of educational attainment and first employment on the likelihood of first marriage, using data drawn from a national family survey in 2004 and its follow-up in 2007. She found out that with little childbearing outside marriage, delayed marriage and less marriage have driven Japan's fertility to very low levels.

Prof. Enkhsetseg Byambaa from National University of Mongolia introduced the Social Policy and Fertility Development in Mongolia. After having reached its historical nadir with 1.95 children per woman in 2005, the total fertility has kept increasing in Mongolia, reaching 2.69 children per woman in 2009. This fertility increase corresponds closely to the adoption of new social welfare programs starting from 2005 and expanded later in 2006 and 2007.

Another scholar from Asia, Leela Visaria, Gujarat Institute of Development Research, looked into the Demographic Transition in South India. He found that widespread use of family planning, in the form of female sterilization, is the major factor that has brought about fertility transition in the southern states. It is also likely to be the primary driver of fertility decline in the rest of India.

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Prof. Jianmin Li observed that the population growth rate has changed to negative increase rate, and the fertility rate also shrinks to a very low level. The labor force increase rate turns to negative, which means the end of the “demographic dividend”. Correspondingly, the age structure and the distribution of population between the urban and the rural change rapidly. Prof. Li also argues that the principle of Malthus cannot account for the population issue in China anymore. We should change our strategy and adopt new method to solve the problem following the change of China population in a more balanced way. In order to keep the sustainable development in China, the government should change the value orientation of population policy, and weigh more on the development of people rather than controlling the quantity of population.

Prof. Sureeporn Punpuing from Institute for Population and Social Research, Mahidol University, Thailand, illustrated the process of the demographic transition in Thailand. The government once implemented policies after the Second World War to encourage large family sizes and young people to marry at an early age, leading to a very high fertility rate approaching 6 children per woman. In 1970, the first national family planning program was implemented and the fertility rate began to decline. Till 2010, because the family planning program and the elderly of the people, the growth rate of population in Thailand is about 0.6 percent. She analyzed the fertility trends and concluded that the decline in marital fertility plus the increase in the proportion not marrying has resulted in a sharp reduction in the number of newborn. Then she analyzed the mortality trends and found that the mortality rate had been reduced tremendously. Furthermore, the migration, especially the international migration, is going to contribute more for the population structure change of Thailand. Finally, the professor concluded that the government has take measures to first improve the quality rather than the quantity of births, and to response to the speed of the population aging in Thailand, such as the First National Reproductive Health Development Policy and Strategy and the establishment of the National Commission on the Elderly.



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Prof. Meimanat Hosseini-Chavoshi from Australian Demographic and Social Research Institute illustrated the Demographic transition in Iran. Along with the political change in Iran from 1970s to 2000s, the total fertility rate fell from around 7 in the early 1980s to the replacement level by 2000 and to 1.9 in 2006. Advancement of education particularly for girls, comprehensive and sound rural development, the nationwide health network system as well as the pragmatic views of the Islamic government on the family planning programs have all contributed to the sharp Iran fertility decline in a decade. Finally, she found that the trend of population growth over the last few decades will be presented and discussed the impact of demographic variables on the age structure along with emerging issues and future challenges of Iran's population and their policy implications.

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