



E-news from the Foundation for Leadership Initiatives (FLI)

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## Population | Family Planning

### Family Planning & India?

It is estimated that the population in India is increasing at an alarming rate; five million souls are being added on to the food-roll every year. If the incidence of death declines and the birthrate correspondingly increases, then the Planners will be hard put to adjust their calculations.... Planning has to take full account of the rate of increase in population in order that the advantages accruing out of economic development are not set at nought. India, it is said, is over-populated, but 'over-population' is a loose term, that is often wrongly applied to a given situation. A country is over-populated if its food production is not sufficient to keep the people fed at a particular level. But food production must be stepped up in order to meet the requirements of the millions. This, of course, does not mean that the masses should not be trained and educatead in planned parenthood. That question still remains, but the task of educating the masses can best be undertaken by social workers and reformers, not by Government. ([freepressjournal.in](#))

### Vietnam's 'golden population' begins to fade

The golden population structure has created not only opportunities but also challenges to the country as the labour force was big in quantity but low in quality due to lack of skilled labourers and limits in management skills. In addition, there is a rapidly ageing population. This is unavoidable in every country with socio-economic development and big improvements in people's lives. Viet Nam's population is ageing at historic speed due to growing life expectancy and reduced births and deaths. Viet Nam is facing a growing imbalance between boys and girls at birth. There are now significantly more boys born than girls. How will this affect society? ([english.vietnamnet.vn](#))

### China "one child law" means easing over 2 million more children per year

With the relaxation of the family planning law - known as the "one-child law" - China can expect about 2 million more new born babies in the coming year. This is according to government sources, Beijing "has already ordered" the creation of new health facilities for maternity care. Zhang Shikun, an official of the Commission for the health of women and children, confirms: "Local authorities have been told to build more health facilities for women and children and add maternity beds". ([asianews.it](#))

### Canadian P.M. support Family Planning, not abortion

Prime Minister Stephen Harper says family planning is an essential part of Canada's efforts to improve maternal and child health, but abortion remains too divisive to be included in that package. In an interview with *The Globe and Mail* on Thursday, Mr. Harper said Canada is striving to be a consensus builder on the issue and suggested that funding abortion could make it more challenging to rally others to the cause. He made the comments as he pledged another \$3.5-billion over five years to improve the health of mothers and children and vowed to keep the cause on the global agenda after 2015. Asked about the role of reproductive health, Mr. Harper said there is a "myth" that Canada doesn't fund any family planning or reproductive health services in developing countries. "That's not true. We do. We, specifically as a consequence of a vote in Parliament, do not fund abortion services but we fund other forms," he said, "And yes, I do happen to believe that's an essential part of the [maternal and child health] continuum." Critics of the government's approach on maternal and child health have called on Canada to reverse a decision not to fund abortion services in developing countries, pointing to World Health Organization estimates that unsafe abortions cause about 8 per cent of maternal deaths. (*Globe and Mail*)

### Desire to avoid pregnancy not necessarily increase use of contraceptives, says a US study

Nearly half of all pregnancies in the United States are unintended, and unplanned pregnancies are associated with poorer health and lower rates of educational and economic achievement for women and their children, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. However, research shows that the desire to avoid pregnancy does not necessarily increase women's use of contraceptives, although this discrepancy is not well understood. Now, researchers have found that levels of prior sex education and moral attitudes toward contraception influence whether women use contraceptives to prevent pregnancy. "Our study showed that when women had more comprehensive sex education that consisted of information about healthy relationships, abstinence from sexual intercourse and how to properly use contraceptives, they were more likely to seek health care and use contraception compared to women who received abstinence-only sex education," said Valerie Bader, a clinical instructor in MU's Sinclair School of Nursing. (*New Medical*)

### Working Cambodian Women do not want to Have Children

The movement for reproductive justice sees women's decision to have or not to have children as a fundamental right. Should they choose to bear a child, women should have the right to care and provide for them; if they opt not to give birth, family planning services should be made available to enable women to space or prevent pregnancies. In Cambodia, where women make up 60 percent of the population of 14 million people, this fundamental right is being trampled by insecure labour contracts, toxic working conditions and a near-total absence of maternity benefits for working mothers. Take Cambodia's garments industry, a massive sector that accounts for 80 percent of the country's exports. A full 90 percent of the workforce is female, but labour rights have not accompanied employment opportunities. ([iede.co.uk](#))

### South Asia High Level Forum on SRH

The World Bank organized a forum on Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) for South Asian countries which focused on the beyond the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) countdown. The forum was held from May 26 to 28 in Negombo (Srilanka) and saw the participation of teams from countries including India, Pakistan and Nepal. ([nation.lk](#))

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## Message for Leaders

**“You cannot have maternal health without reproductive health. And reproductive health includes contraception and family planning and access to legal, safe abortion.”**

**Hillary Clinton**



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