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Population | Family Planning

Women Can Achieve Anything – Multimedia Initiatives in India

Population Foundation of India (PFI), a reputed Indian NGO has launched an exciting new programme—Main Kuch Bhi Kar Sakti Hoon, a woman, can achieve anything, a multimedia entertainment education series, which aims to enhance knowledge and change perceptions and attitudes on women's empowerment and the social determinants of maternal and reproductive and sexual health. The serial has been on air on Doordarshan (DD) National, India's public broadcasting channel, since March, 2014, on weekends. Recently, given the tremendous response it received within four weeks of being on air making it the forerunner among all new shows on the channel, which reaches more than 50 countries. The series is being disseminated through other media as well, including a radio adaptation, internet and mobile phones. The radio series has been launched on May 2014 on 155 stations of All India Radio, India's national radio service. MKBKSH also has a very active Integrated Voice Response System (IVRS), a call-back number, where viewers can engage with the serial and share their stories. So far, it has received more than 2,00,000 calls in an overwhelming response from all over the country and the recordings are uploaded on the serial's. – mkbksh.com

As the World Bank Turns

Something exciting, almost revolutionary, is happening at one of the most conservative of the world's international institutions. The World Bank, which for decades has been criticized has overly focused on the construction of dams and other infrastructures as the cure for poverty, is turning its focus to the real engine of economic progress in the developing world: girls and women. Last month, the team released a new report titled, "Voice and Agency: Empowering women and girls for shared prosperity." The report argues, and persuasively so, that investing in gender equality will "yield broad development dividends." Gender equality requires, at a minimum, that women have "voice." By voice, the Bank means "having the capacity to speak up and be heard and being present to shape and share in discussions, discourse, and decisions." But voice alone is not enough. Women also require "agency," which the Bank describes as, "the capacity to make decisions about one's own life and act on them to achieve a desired outcome, free of violence, retribution, or fear." While full gender equality requires "agency" at all levels. Bob Walker, President, Population institute has also written an editorial on Population Media Center. – Huffington post

Family Planning is Vital for Pakistan's Security

In developing countries, like terror-stricken Pakistan. A runaway population growth rate without a compensatory economic growth rate has a direct bearing on a state's ability to survive. The 2009 States Index by the Fund for Peace, a nonprofit organization based in Washington, D.C., showed that Pakistan had a total fertility rate—the number of children per woman—at five, while the then global average was 2.6. The 2013 Index, where Pakistan features at No. 13, connects the risk of radicalization to the lack of economic opportunities and unemployment. When states are unable to afford the basics for their people (schooling, nutrition, health care, etc.) the denudation of the state is hastened by the employment of its people for radical causes. It's also now evident that having more children results in more, not less, poverty. Since Pakistan's future is very closely tied to its demography, no policy framework to deal with its economic and security challenges can be either sustainable or comprehensive without recognizing the significance of family planning. – Newsweek

Proper bike seat can help you avoid reproductive problems

Cheremie, a cyclist and body-geometry fit specialist at Bike Source in Dublin, has a device that uses memory foam to identify the proper saddle width to support a rider's skeletal anatomy instead of soft tissue. The proper width, shape and padding, he said, help minimize pressure on that soft tissue, reducing the risk of some male reproductive-health problems. "In the past, male cyclists had a high incidence of erectile dysfunction because everyone was just sitting on their soft tissue," Cheremie said. Although the health benefits of cycling are well-known, there are potential risks for men who frequently cycle for long periods, said Dr. Edmund Sabanegh, a urologist, recreational cyclist and director of the Cleveland Clinic Center for Male Fertility. – Columbus Dispatch

The Swinging Pendulum of Population Policy in Iran

The high cost of living and limited economic opportunities in Iran are a boon to birth control, as couples take steps to keep their families small. But the Iranian Parliament has recently debated punishing people who promote contraception. And on June 24, 2014, it voted 106 to 73 in favor of making it illegal to perform sterilization operations. Whether or not this becomes law, the discussion signifies a dramatic about-face from when the government offered free vasectomies.

Iran is often hailed as a population success story. Encouraged by an extensive family planning and education campaign supported by religious clerics, average fertility rates there fell from over six children born per woman in the early 1980s to two children during the first years of this century. In just one generation. While Iranian leadership has recently reverted to pro-natalist rhetoric and policies, urging women to stay home and have more babies, it is unlikely that the highly educated and economically stressed young population will revert to the high birth rates of their grandparents' time. Yet the family planning policy pendulum has swung back the other way, as evidenced by the recent Parliamentary vote. Birth control is no longer subsidized, though a vibrant private industry means that it is still widely available. – Earth Policy Institute

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Message for Leaders

“If we do not voluntarily bring population growth under control in the next one or two decades, the nature will do it for us in most brutal way, whether we like it or not”

Henry W. Kendall



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