

**XXXIII Annual Conference of Indian Association for the Study of Population  
(IASP), at SGPGIMS, Lucknow, 11-13 Nov. 2011**

**Rapporteur General's Report**

The XXXIII annual Conference of IASP was held at the Sanjay Gandhi Post Graduate Institute of Medical Sciences (SGPGIMS), Lucknow during November 11- 13, 2011. About 200 delegates representing various universities, research institutions, population research centers, governmental departments, NGOs and international donor agencies participated in the conference. The inaugural session was held on 11<sup>th</sup> November in the auditorium of the SGPGIMS. Prof. F. Ram, President of IASP, in his presidential address discussed about the current demographic scenario in the country and the need for more interventions in the health sector. He also elaborated on the challenges for bringing down the maternal mortality and infant mortality and the contribution of programmes like Janani Suraksha Yojna. The inaugural address was delivered by Prof. R.K. Sharma, Director of SGPGIMS. He underlined the need for better collaboration between medical community and population scientists. According to him, many of our research findings are not leading to policy decisions mainly because there is no proper dissemination of the research studies.

The souvenir of the conference was released by Prof U.K. Mishra, Dean, SGPGIMS. During the conference, seven distinguished senior demographers were felicitated for their immense contribution to Indian demography in general and IASP in particular. They include Prof. Sumati Kulkarni, Prof. K.E. Vaidyanathan, Prof. R.C. Yadava, Prof. M. Sivamurthy, Prof. T.K. Roy (in absentia), Dr. J.N. Srivastava and Late Prof. B.N. Bhattacharya (posthumously). Dr. K.Srinivasan Award was presented to Chandralekha Basu and Debesh Chakraborty for their paper entitled "Migration from Bihar, Orissa and Uttar Pradesh to West Bengal during 1901-1991" published in Demography India Vol 39, No 1, 2010. Dr. K.B. Pathak Award for best paper published in the field of population and health was presented to Dr Nandita Saikia for her paper entitled "Trends and Geographic Differentials in Mortality Under Age 60 in India". The awards were announced by Dr. U.V. Somayajulu, General Secretary, IASP. Prof. Pradeep Mishra, Vice President of IASP spoke about the objectives and activities of the association. Prof C.M. Pandey, the organizing secretary of the conference welcomed the gathering while Prof. Sayeed Unisa, Treasurer, IASP proposed the vote of thanks.

Dr. George Simmons Memorial Oration is one of the important aspects of IASP conference and this year, the Memorial Oration was delivered by Prof. P.M. Kulkarni, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi on the theme of “Towards an Explanation for Fertility Transition in India”. Prof. Kulkarni in his comprehensive analysis using the available evidence from census, sample surveys and micro level studies, illustrated the pace and dimensions of fertility reduction in a vast and complex country like India. Drawing inferences from historical facts, theoretical explanations and empirical support, he presented the possible reasons and contributing factors for fertility transition in different parts of India and the likely scenario for years ahead. Prof. U.K. Mishra Prof F Ram chaired this session.

The conference had two plenary sessions. The first one was on “Millennium Development Goals: Challenges for India”. This session was chaired by Professors K. Srinivasan and Sumati Kulkarni. The two panelists were Dr. Shireen Jejeebhoy (Population Council) and Dr. K.M. Sathyanarayana (UNFPA). These presentations focused on the MDG targets and the progress achieved so far, particularly with regard to adolescents, youth, and maternal health. The presentations were followed by very productive discussion on the challenges before India to achieve the set goals.

The second plenary session was on “Census of India 2011: Emerging Issues”. The four speakers deliberated upon the different dimensions of the latest census results. Mr. R.C. Sethi, Additional Registrar General of India, presented the important findings of the 2011 Census and its implications. Prof. Amitabh Kundu (JNU, New Delhi) focused on the urban challenges for India and the need for more detailed data analysis to examine the urban growth dynamics and the factors behind the rural to urban migration. Prof. Arvind Pandey (NIMS, New Delhi) spoke about India’s population growth, changing composition and widening regional disparities in terms of demographic outcomes. Prof. Sulabha Parasuraman (IIPS, Mumbai) addressed the concerns of changing sex ratio patterns, increasing incidences of female foeticide and its implications for gender equality. The four presentations were followed by very lively discussion. This session was chaired by Professors A.K. Sharma and K.N.S. Yadav.

The conference had twenty four technical sessions in which about eighty papers were presented. These sessions include themes like fertility, family planning, sexual health, morbidity, maternal and child health, reproductive health, nutrition, sex ratio, human development, mathematical models, migration and urbanization, ageing, water and sanitation,

population and environment, methodological issues and others. Majority of the papers were based on various rounds of NFHS, DLHS and NSS. However, there was good number of research papers that used evidence from primary surveys, mainly by Ph.D. scholars, which brought out very valuable insights based on their field work in respective areas. In general, the overwhelming majority of the papers were dealing with reproductive and child health issues. There were a few papers on issues related to migration, technical demography and the linkages between population, environment and development. The presentations made in various technical sessions indicate the need for evolving better methodology for programme evaluation and assessment, and need for ensuring quality and reliability of data sets. In some sessions, issues related to ethics in data collection as well as the strength of interdisciplinary approaches were highlighted.

The conference also had three poster sessions on each day in which about seventy posters were presented. These sessions provided an opportunity particularly for young scholars to present their research findings. Large number of these posters was addressing various aspects of RCH issues. Prof. S.N. Singh Poster Award was presented to Ritwika Mukherjee (“The Tale of the Missing Girls”), Nidhi Sharma (“A Methodological Innovation to Study HIV Vulnerability among Urban Youth : A Sequential Analysis of Critical Events”) and Baiju Dinesh Shah and Laxmikant Dwivedi (“Causes of Neonatal Death and New Born Care”) .

Another important aspect of the conference is the competition for Dr. C. Chandrasekaran Award for the young scholars. Seven presentations were made in this category. An expert committee consisting of Prof. P.M. Kulkarni, Prof. Amitabh Kundu and Prof. C.M. Pandey evaluated the papers and presentations. Dr. C. Chandrasekaran Award was presented in the valedictory session to Diwakar Yadav (“Structural Determinants of Simultaneity in the Use of Contraceptives and Maternal Child Health Care Services in Uttar Pradesh, India”) and Anup Kumar (“Sex Ratio at Birth : A Model Based Approach”)..

The valedictory session held on 13<sup>th</sup> November was chaired by Prof. F. Ram, President of IASP. Mr. Amit Mohan Prasad, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India was the chief guest. In his address, Mr. Prasad elaborated on the achievements of NRHM and the tasks identified for further action. Dr. T.V. Sekher, Joint Secretary, IASP presented the Rapporteur General’s Report. Dr. U.V. Somayajulu, General Secretary of IASP thanked UNFPA, UNICEF, ICRW, Urban Health Initiatives Project and IIPS for their generous financial support on behalf of IASP. He also thanked SGPIMS, PRC

Lucknow, IIPS, NIMS, Sigma et al for their active support in the activities of IASP in general and the conference in particular. Prof. C.M. Pandey, local organizing secretary thanked IASP and its members for making the conference a success.

The General Body Meeting of IASP held on Nov 12, 2011 deliberated on the ongoing activities and also suggested various measures for strengthening the association as well as its journal- Demography India.

Overall, the conference provided an opportunity for demographers, social scientists, development partners and programme managers to come together to discuss and deliberate upon major issues of concern related to population and health sector in India. It was also an ideal platform for students and young demographers to present their research studies to a wider audience.

**The end**