Introduction

- The difference between birth and death rates (i.e. natural growth rate) is a major factor in the growth of population of a country though migration plays a significant role in population expansion at a regional level.

- Demographic Transition (DT) refers to the process of change in fertility and mortality levels from a stage when both are high but almost equal to a stage when both are low and almost equal
• At both these stages the rate of population growth is low or almost stationary.
• The DT theory is better understood if considered in both its
  ➢ “classical” form – the experience of Western countries and
  ➢ “modified” form – the experience of developing countries
• The DT model is an important tool to assess the population dynamics of any country.

• The Classical Demographic Transition Model is based on the trends in fertility and mortality and the resultant population growth in Western Europe from the middle of the 18th century to the middle of the 20th century.
• In most countries of Western Europe, mortality declined first, followed by fertility decline after a lag of time
• The modified form of demographic transition is taking place in the developing countries, where a period of rapid population growth after World War II is followed by a slower population growth since the 1980s.
• There are similarities in the sequence of mortality and fertility decline between the classical and modified forms of DT, but the speed of the modified DT is faster.

• Western countries have passed through four main stages of transition as follows:
  1. High and fluctuating birth and death rates between 30 and 40 per thousand population (High stationary stage or pre-modern stage).
  2. High birth rate and declining death rate (Early expanding stage. Urbanizing/industrializing).
  3. Declining birth rate with rapidly declining death rate (Late expanding stage. Mature industrialization).
  4. Low birth and death rates (Low stationary stage. Post industrialization).
Demographic Transition Model: Trend in Birth and Dearth Rates (A), Growth Rates in population (B), and Population Size (C)

- Europe (including Russia), North America, Australia and New Zealand have completed their demographic transition.
- Singapore, Thailand, Hong Kong, Japan, South Korea and Taiwan in the east and southeast Asia have also reached this stage.
- Most parts of Africa, however, are still in the early stages of demographic transition.
• Some of the countries in the West and countries like Singapore and South Korea in southeast Asia have gone to a fifth stage in DT with decline in population due to very low birth rate and higher death rate due to higher number of deaths among aged population.

• This is also referred to as the “Second demographic transition”, with sub-replacement fertility and high levels of population ageing.

The Cambodian Situation
Let us first look at the demographic data of Cambodia:

• We do not have exact demographic information relating to Cambodia for the early years of the last century as a time series.
• The 1962 Census was the last official census in Cambodia prior to 1998.
• It revealed a population of 5.7 million. According to some available records Cambodia’s population was estimated as 2.6 million in 1920, and 7.4 million in 1970.
The Cambodian Situation (Contd.)

- The General Demographic Survey conducted in 1980 put down the country’s population at about 6.6 million.
- The 1998 and the 2008 Censuses had counted 11,437,656 persons (adjusted as 11,482,656 for areas omitted) and 13,395,682 persons respectively.

Thus the average population growth rate of Cambodia has been:
- It decreased to 1.05% during 1970-1980 due to heavy mortality (genocide) and decreased fertility during the Khmer Rouge regime (1975-79).
- The period 1980 -1998 has witnessed a phenomenal increase in the population growth to an annual rate of 4.09%.
- Between the two censuses of 1998 and 2008 the population growth rate was 1.67%.
• The year 1980 may be called the year of the Great Divide for Cambodia, demographically, as it differentiates
  ➢ the period before 1980 (barring the 1970s) of declining birth rate and rapidly declining death rate
  ➢ from the period after 1980 when the birth rate first increased and then declined from the late 1980s and the death rate declined.

• There is no complete vital registration system as yet in Cambodia. The results of the 1998 and 2008 Censuses, the Cambodia Demographic and Health Surveys (CDHS) of 2000 and 2005, the Cambodia Inter-censal Population survey (CIPS) of 2004 and the Population Projections made so far have enabled to summarize the demographic situation in the recent past.
• The Total Fertility Rate (TFR) in Cambodia has declined from more than 6 children per woman in the early 1980s to 4.0 children in 1998, 3.4 children in 2004 and around 3 children in 2008.
• After a period of large scale erratic variations, the infant and child mortality rates in Cambodia have also experienced substantial decline.

• According to the 2004 CIPS, infant mortality in Cambodia declined from a rate of 93 deaths per 1,000 live births in 1998 to 66 in 2003.

• It has further declined to around 60 in 2006 according to the estimate made on the basis of the results of the 2008 Census.
• In the early periods until 1920, Cambodia’s birth and death rates would have been very high marking a high stationary or pre-modern demographic situation.

• The second stage of the demographic transition in Cambodia might have set in during the late 1930s with a decline in the death rate, but a continuation of high birth rate.

• The 1960s perhaps marked the third stage of demographic transition with declining birth rates responding to the decline in death rates.
• The demographic trend was completely disrupted during the Khmer Rouge regime (1975-1979). Cambodia’s population size and structure were severely affected during those years both in terms of excess mortality and reduced fertility.

• A new chapter in the demographic history of Cambodia was opened in the post war years of 1980s and early 1990s, when a baby boom occurred with the level of mortality coming down rapidly to around 10 deaths per 1,000 population.

• Again Cambodia found itself in the second stage of demographic transition in the 1990s.

• The latter half of the 1990s and the first decade of the twenty first century saw Cambodia progressing in the third stage of demographic transition

• The continued decline in the growth rate in the most recent years indicates that the country is gradually moving towards the end of the third stage of demographic transition (late expanding stage), with a death rate at low level (around 7 per 1,000 population) and a rapidly declining birth rate (around 23 per 1,000 population)
• Though fertility has declined in Cambodia the rate of population growth in the next few years may be high at around 1.5 to 2 percent per annum due to what is called population momentum.

• This occurs when the large cohorts of women that were born during the period of high fertility rates (1980-1995) are attaining the age of reproduction, and even with low fertility rates, are producing enough children to keep the population growing.

• The discussion presented here is confined to the national level. The incidence of DT at provincial levels of Cambodia would vary between the provinces depending on the trends in their fertility, mortality and inter-provincial migration.

**Bi-directional relationship between Population and development**

• The influence of the evolutionary process on the size and growth of population is described by the DT theory.

• What is the effect of population growth on the process of economic development?

• It is difficult to generalize since such a situation is governed by other social, cultural and economic factors.
In Cambodia for example, the declining fertility and mortality trends call for new and deeper understanding of population trends in the country.

It is good that the country has a National Population Policy to deal with such a situation.

The life expectancy in Cambodia has risen considerably during the last decade mainly due to substantial decline in infant and child mortality.

But the reduction in early childhood mortality itself is mainly due to fertility decline.

To sustain and improve this situation, renewed efforts are needed for social and economic development, improved living conditions of the people and progress in health infra structure in the country. There should be no room for complacency.

Poverty level is declining, but still it is high (30 percent). Rural poverty is higher.

Food security and nutritional status have to improve.
• Sustainable long term economic growth (with equitable growth in urban and rural areas) is needed in the present global economic crisis (GDP growth at 7% or above per annum)

• Investments and improvements are required in the following sectors: agriculture, water, transport, electricity, sanitation, human resources, labour-intensive-industry, tourism, exploitation of oil, natural gas and minerals, information and communication technology and trade.

• NSDP 2006-2010 is addressing these issues

• About 72 % of the population depend on agriculture. With progress in education, job opportunities have to be provided for the educated youth in other sectors

• Urbanization level has increased in the last decade with the advent of new towns and rural-urban migration. Phnom Penh is growing into a mega city.

• It is of utmost importance to improve the urban centers with more housing, roads, transport and other infrastructural facilities
• Cambodia is gradually moving away from being a country of “young population” to being a country of “intermediate population”. Population ageing will be the new challenge to be faced in the next few decades.
• As Cambodia is in the vanguard of progress it is very necessary to keep a tab on the population growth and changes in other demographic variables.

• There is therefore a need to constantly update population data and closely and continuously monitor population issues. Periodical population surveys are necessary in between the population censuses.
• Updated population data base should be maintained at the NIS.
• The need of the hour is to maintain an efficient civil registration system in Cambodia so that up to date and reliable data on births, deaths and marriage in the country could be made available for monitoring progress in population matters.

Thank You!