

## The Problems of Population Growth in Thailand and its effects on economic and social development

The population of Thailand is growing rapidly. The first population census, undertaken in B.E. 2454, indicated that Thailand had a population of 8.3 million; by B.E. 2503 the population had grown to 26.2 million and is now about 30.0. Since the current population growth rate is 3.2 per cent a year the size of the population will continue to increase. A conservative estimate, assuming fertility decline and rapid mortality decline, is that Thailand's population in 2523 will be 50 million. This rapid rate of growth will hinder economic and social development.

The thesis discusses several consequences of rapid population growth. With a rapidly growing population the proportion of dependent children will remain high and this will constitute a drag on the economy. Unemployment and underemployment may be a problem. Rapid population growth may aggravate the problem of capital shortage and the amount of cultivable land per capita will be reduced. Per capita food supplies will be reduced unless agricultural productivity increases faster than the population. A rapidly growing population will intensify the need for health, education, and welfare services and the urban migration associated with rapid growth will magnify urban problems already present.

Given all these problems the writer suggests that the government pay immediate attention to problems of population growth. For economic and social development the government must have programs for population control as well as for economic growth.

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