

## **Is there a demographic component of the proxy war in the Kashmir Valley?**

*Fertility Tables published by Census 2011 indicate that the annual number of births in Kashmir Valley has doubled since Census 2001. There were 85 thousand live births in the Valley in the year preceding Census 2001, that number has risen to 1.77 lakh in 2011. This abrupt rise is restricted only to births in the Valley. In Jammu region, number of births has increased by only about 19 percent, which is somewhat less than the rise in population of that region. In Ladakh, number of births has declined by nearly a third.*

*Of the children born in the valley more than 99 percent are Muslim. The spurt in live births in Jammu and Kashmir is thus a phenomenon of the Muslims in the Valley. The rise is such that an average Muslim woman in the Valley is likely to give birth to 1.34 extra children over her lifetime compared to what she could have expected in 2001. Such a drastic change in fertility rates over a period of just one decade is indeed surprising.*

*Census provides one more measure of fertility: number of children in the 0-6 year age group per hundred of the population of different communities. This measure also confirms the sudden rise of fertility in the Muslim community of the Valley. Census 2001 counted 14.64 children per hundred of population among them, the ratio in 2011 is 17.83. Thus, compared to 2001, there are 3.2 more children per hundred of the population among Muslims there.*

*There has obviously been a great spurt in the fertility of Muslims in the Valley. This has the potential to alter the demographic balance not only between different religious communities, but also, and even more importantly, between Kashmir Valley and Jammu regions of the state.*

*Such a drastic rise in the fertility measures is unlikely to happen spontaneously. The numbers do indicate a systematic, concerted and successful effort among the Muslims of the Valley to have more children. Surprisingly, no indications of such an effort have emerged in the public domain.*

*Since these numbers are of such great significance, we compile below the detailed figures for all three measures of fertility that we have mentioned above.*

## Rise in the number of Births in Jammu & Kashmir

*Number of births has increased by 63 percent*

Census 2001 counted a total of 1.68 lakh births in the preceding year; the number in 2011 has risen to 2.74 lakh. As seen in the Table, this amounts to an increase of 63 percent in the live births, while total population in this decade has grown by only 24 percent. Such a rise in the number of births unrelated to the rise in total population is extremely unusual.

	2001	2011	%Gr	%Gr-P
Total	1,68,486	2,74,081	62.67	23.64
Hindu	47,593	55,574	16.77	18.68
Muslim	1,16,434	2,13,882	83.69	26.12

%Gr: Growth in births, %Gr-P: Growth in population

*The spurt is entirely among Muslims*

This spurt in births is entirely in the Muslim population. Number of births among Muslims has increased by nearly 84 percent, which is thrice the increase in their population. Number of births among Hindus, on the other hand, has risen by only 16.8 percent, which is somewhat lower than the increase of 18.7 percent in their population.

*The spurt is only in Kashmir Valley*

The spurt in births is also limited to the Kashmir Valley region of the state. In the Valley, number of annual live births has more than doubled between Census 2001 and 2011. In Jammu, the number has increased by only about 19 percent; and in Ladakh, the number of births has declined by nearly a third.

	2001	2011	%Gr	%Gr-P
J&K	1,68,486	2,74,081	62.7	23.64
Kashmir	85,157	1,76,673	107.5	25.77
Jammu	79,305	94,640	19.3	21.41
Ladakh	4,024	2,768	-31.2	15.96

*The Valley now accounts for 64.5 percent of births*

Kashmir Valley now has a share of 64.5 percent in the total births in the state. This is much higher than the share of 55 percent that the Valley commands in the total population. In 2001, share of the Valley in the total births was only 50.5 percent. Share of Jammu in total births is now 34.5 percent, compared to 47 percent in 2001. Share of Ladakh in total births has declined even more sharply from 2.4 percent to just 1 percent.

	2001	2011	%Pop
J&K	100.00	100.00	100.00
Kashmir	50.54	64.46	54.93
Jammu	47.07	34.53	42.89
Ladakh	2.39	1.01	2.19

%Pop: Share of the region in 2011 population.

## Rise in the TFR

Total Fertility Rate (TFR) of a population is the average number of children likely to be born to a woman over her lifetime calculated on the basis of the average number of children currently born to women in different age groups. TFR is the parameter that demographers generally use to measure the relative and changing fertility of different populations. Rise in the number of births counted in Census 2011 as compared to 2001 has naturally led to a significant rise in the TFR of the state, but the changes in the TFR of different regions and communities are very different as we discuss below.

### *Rise is only in the Muslim TFR*

With the extraordinary rise in the number of births, the TFR of the state has increased substantially from 2.53 to 3.08. But the rise is limited only to Muslims, whose TFR has increased from 2.73 to 3.65. This means that a Muslim woman in the state is likely to have nearly one more child in her lifetime compared to what she could have expected in 2001.

TFR of J&K, 2001-11		
	2001	2011
Total	2.53	3.08
Hindu	2.18	2.02
Muslim	2.73	3.65

### *TFR of Hindus has gone below the replacement rate*

TFR of Hindus in the state, on the other hand, has declined from 2.18 to 2.02. TFR of 2.1 is considered to be the replacement rate sufficient to keep a population stable. Below that rate, populations begin to contract. Demographically, Jammu & Kashmir is now in a situation, where the population of Hindus is likely to contract, while that of Muslims is likely to rise much faster than what could have been expected in 2001.

### *Rise in TFR is also confined to the Valley*

As in the case of number of births, rise in the TFR between 2001 and 2011 is also restricted to Kashmir region alone. TFR of Kashmir Valley has risen from 2.52 to 3.85. This means that on the average a woman in Kashmir is likely to have 1.33 extra children in her lifetime than what she could have expected in 2001. TFR of Jammu region has however declined from 2.52 to 2.27. Incidentally, in 2001, TFR of the two regions was exactly the same.

TFR of the regions		
	2001	2011
J&K	2.53	3.08
Kashmir	2.52	3.85
Jammu	2.52	2.27

### *Hindu TFR in Jammu has dipped below 2.1*

TFR of Hindus in Jammu region has declined from 2.19 to 2.03, which is below the replacement rate of 2.1. Interestingly, TFR of Muslims in Jammu has also declined considerably from 3.45 to 2.88. The rise in the TFR is thus almost exclusively for Muslims in the Valley as we see below.

TFR of Jammu		
	2001	2011
Total	2.52	2.27
Hindu	2.19	2.03
Muslim	3.45	2.88

### *Muslim TFR in the Valley has risen spectacularly*

TFR of Muslims in the Valley has risen spectacularly from 2.54 to 3.88. There is some rise in the TFR of Hindus also. But this is not significant, because the total number of Hindu births in the valley is just 536. That number was 275 in 2001. The valley has been largely cleansed of Hindus; not many Hindu families live there. In 2011, 99.13 percent of the total births in the Valley belong to Muslims and merely 0.33 percent to Hindus.

TFR of Kashmir		
	2001	2011
Total	2.52	3.85
Hindu	1.37	1.88
Muslim	2.54	3.88

## **Rise in the number of children (0-6 yr)**

Number of children in the 0-6 year age group per hundred of population is another indicator of the relative fertility and growth of different communities. Both of the parameters that we have considered above depend upon the number of births in a particular year. Number of children, however, is a distinctly different parameter that depends upon the age distribution of the population at the time of the Census. The

abnormal rise in the TFR and number of births in the state is also reflected in the rise in the number of children in 2001 and 2011.

*There are 2.6 extra children per hundred Muslims*

Number of children per hundred of the population in the state has increased from 14.65 in 2001 to 16.10 in 2011. This rise is also entirely among Muslims. Number of children among the Hindus has declined from 13.30 to 12.04 per hundred. Among Muslims, on the other hand, the ratio has increased from 15.43 to 18.04 per hundred.

Children per hundred in Jammu & Kashmir		
	2001	2011
Total	14.65	16.10
Hindu	13.30	12.04
Muslim	15.43	18.04

There are thus 2.6 extra children per hundred of the Muslim population of the state.

*Rise in Children per hundred is limited to the Valley alone*

Rise in the number of children per hundred, as in the number of annual births and TFR, is restricted to the Valley alone, where number of children per hundred of the population has increased from 14.36 to 17.39 between 2001 and 2011. There are thus 3 more children per hundred of the population in the Valley. In both Jammu and Ladakh, the share of children in the population has declined. In Jammu, the decline has been relatively moderate, from 15.06 to 14.67 per hundred. In Ladakh, the number of children per hundred of the population has declined more steeply from 13.58 to 11.65.

Children per hundred In the three regions		
	2001	2011
J&K	14.65	16.10
Kashmir	14.36	17.39
Jammu	15.06	14.67
Ladakh	13.58	11.65

*Within the Valley the rise is only among Muslims*

The rise in the number of children per hundred within the Valley is restricted only to Muslims. There are now 17.83 children of 0-6 years per hundred Muslims in the Valley compared to 14.64 in 2001. They thus have 3.2 extra children per hundred. Number of children among Hindus was rather low at 2.98 percent in 2001; in 2011, the ratio has further declined to 2.95 per hundred.

Children per hundred in the Valley		
	2001	2011
Total	14.36	17.39
Hindu	2.98	2.95
Muslim	14.64	17.83

*But the child ratio for Muslims remains the highest in Jammu*

It needs remarking that the number of children per hundred Muslims has increased, though only slightly, in Jammu region also. Of the three regions, the number of children per hundred was the highest in Jammu in 2001. For the region, the ratio now is considerably below that of the Valley. But Muslims in Jammu still have the highest number of children per hundred. The ratio for them is 19.02 compared to 17.83 for the Muslims in the Valley.

Children per hundred in Jammu region		
	2001	2011
Total	15.06	14.67
Hindu	13.70	12.60
Muslim	18.40	19.02

**Conclusion**

1. Number of annual births in Jammu and Kashmir has increased from 1.68 lakh in 2001 to 2.74 lakh in 2011.
2. This spurt in births is almost entirely among Muslims. Number of Muslim births has increased by 84 percent, from 1.16 lakh to 2.14 lakh. Number of Hindu births, on the

other hand, has increased by just 17 percent, from 47.6 to 55.6 thousand. This rise in Hindu births is somewhat lower than the rise in their population.

3. The spurt in births is confined entirely to the Valley. In Jammu region, the number of births has increased by just 19 percent, and in Ladakh it has declined by nearly a third. In the Valley, however, number of births has more than doubled, from 85 thousand in 2001 to 1.77 lakh in 2011.

4. Of the children born in the Valley more than 99 percent are Muslim. Thus the spurt in births is a phenomenon confined to the Muslim community in the Valley.

5. As a consequence of the rise in births, TFR of Valley Muslims has increased from 2.54 to 3.88. This means that an average Muslim woman in the Valley today is likely to have 1.34 extra children over her lifetime as compared to what she could have expected in 2001.

6. Thus we have a situation where the population of Muslims, especially in the Valley, is entering a phase of sharp expansion, while that of Hindus is likely to begin contracting.

7. Thus we have a situation where the population of Muslims, especially in the Valley, is entering a phase of sharp expansion, while that of Hindus is likely to begin contracting.

8. The phenomenon of a sudden spurt in Muslim fertility is further confirmed by the rise in the number of children of 0-6 year age in the Muslim population of the Valley. The number was 14.64 per hundred in 2001; it has risen to 17.83 in 2011. Thus there are more than three extra children for every hundred Muslims in the Valley. The number of children per hundred Hindus, on the other hand, has shrunk in the state and in all three regions of the state.

9. Such sudden rise in the fertility parameters of a population is highly unusual and is unlikely to be spontaneous. If the data were to be believed, it would seem that Muslims in the valley are making a conscious, concerted and successful effort to increase the number of children among them. Such an effort has the potential to drastically alter the demographic balance not only between the different religious communities of the state, but also, and perhaps more importantly, between different Kashmir Valley and Jammu regions of the state.