

## Making sense of Jammu and Kashmir Census 2011 numbers

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October 4 2015

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The recent release of census figures has opened a virtual Pandora's box. People are analyzing the census figures according to their perceptions while some are trying to defend apparent changes in demography and percentage of population for no rational reason. Figures are cold statistics, but do have a subtext.

In this article, I wish to focus on demographic changes in Jammu & Kashmir since independence and analyze reasons behind the apparent skew, some unexplainable figures. For example, population of Jammu has increased considerably but % and number of voters has not.

**Table 1 - Change in demography vs. change in voters**

Region@	2001 Census	2011Census	Numbers in Lakhs		
			2002Assembly Voters	2008Assembly Voters	2014Lok SabhaVoters
Kashmir	54.77	68.88	28.85	32.63	35.97
Jammu	44.30	53.79	30.26	31.15	31.76
Ladakh	2.37	2.74	1.74	1.59	1.60
<b>Total</b>	<b>101.44</b>	<b>125.41</b>	<b>60.85</b>	<b>65.37</b>	<b>69.33</b>

@In article Kashmir Valley is referred to as Kashmir, Jammu Region as Jammu, Ladakh Region as Ladakh.

Between 2001 and 2011 the State's population went up by 23.6% whilst the number of voters between 2002 and 2014 went up by 14%.

In absolute terms population in Kashmir between 2001 and 2011 went up by 14.11 lakhs (25.8%) whilst increase in number of voters between 2002 and 2014 was 24.7% (7.12 lakhs). Corresponding figures for Jammu are 21% and 5%.

Note that in 2002 number of voters in Jammu were more than Kashmir by 1.41 lakhs, in 2014 Kashmir exceeds Jammu by 4.21 lakhs i.e. a swing of 5.67 lakhs.

Let us now delve into State's population by region and religion for the period 1951-2011. The religion column is divided into Indian born religions (Hindus, Buddhists, Jains, Sikhs) and Muslims.

Table 2 - **Population Profile of the Indian State of J&K by Region** (excludes areas under unlawful occupation by China and Pakistan)

		Nos in Thousands						
<i>Region</i>	<i>Sq Kms</i>	<i>1951</i>	<i>1961</i>	<i>1971</i>	<i>1981</i>	<i>1991</i>	<i>2001</i>	<i>2011</i>
1. Kashmir	15,948	1,713	1,899	2,436	3,135	NA	5,477	6,888
2. Jammu	26,293	1,459	1,572	2,076	2,718	NA	4,430	5,379
3. Ladakh	59,146	82	90	105	134	NA	237	274
4.Total Population	<b>101,387</b>	<b>3,254</b>	<b>3,561</b>	<b>4,617</b>	<b>5,987</b>	<b>7,719</b>	<b>10,144</b>	<b>12,541</b>
<b>% Incr in Pop</b>								
5.India			21.7	24.8	24.6	23.9	21.5	17.7
6.State			9	30	30	29	31	24
7.Kashmir			11	29	29	NA	NA	26
8.Jammu			8	32	31	NA	NA	21
<b>Pop divided into</b>								
9.% of Indian born Religions		29.9	31.6	34	35.67	33.64	32.83	<b>31.40</b>
10.% of Muslims		70	68.3	65.84	64.19	66.19	66.97	<b>68.31</b>

**Note-** There is no Census data for 1951 and 1991. The 1951 and 1991 data in the book@ are only interpolated figures between actual census values before and after. Figures in red indicate increase in population as compared to the previous year. Row five is 'India' so that you can compare growth rates in population of country with J&K.

A analysis of numbers show -

- From Census ending 1971-2001 average population growth in State was app 30%, dropping to 24% in 2011. Corresponding figures for Kashmir are app 29% dropping to 26% in 2011 and Jammu app 31% dropping to 21% in 2011.
- The % growth in Jammu population post 1991 would actually be lower than 21% since **some part** of the migrated Kashmir population, post 1990 genocide, must be residing in Jammu. Due to migration within and outside the State, the % growth in Kashmir's population should have lower but it grew by 26%.
- Census figures show that the difference between population of Jammu and Kashmir has in a way disproportionately increased with every decade particularly between 1981 and 2001 (251 % over 2 census periods ie over 100% per decade) and 2001 and 2011(44%). It was 254k in 1951, 327k in 1961, 360k in 1971, 417k in 1981, 1047k in 2001 and 1509k in 2011. Note difference between two regions increased by 44% between 2001 and 2011 i.e. post outbreak of insurgency in 1989 as compared to 16% between 1971 and 1981.

- If we were to compare population in absolute numbers between 1981 and 2011, population in Jammu increased by 26.61 lakhs whilst that of Kashmir by 37.53 lakhs. Jammu's numbers include app 3 lakhs who migrated from Kashmir, so the differential increase in Kashmir's population was actually 13.9 lakhs. Looking at the national population growth rate (see row 5 in table), the data puts a question mark on the Census Organization?
- Population of Kashmir as a % of the State's population increased by 3% between 1981 and 2011. It was 52% in 1981, 54% in 2001 and 55% in 2011.
- Comparing 2001 and 2011, population of Kashmir went up by 1411k or by 26% and Jammu by 949k or by 21%.
- Muslim population in State has increased with every decade i.e. 64% in 1981, 67% in 2001 and 68% in 2011. Correspondingly population of Indian born Religions has fallen i.e. 36% (before start of insurgency), 33% and 31%.
- Between 1981 and 2011 population of Muslims as a % of total population increased by 4.12% whilst that of Indian born Religions fell by 4.27%.
- Between 2001 and 2011 share of Muslims in State went up by 1.34% whilst that of Indian born Religions gone down by 1.43%.
- Considering Kashmir is 61% of Jammu's area, abnormal increase in number of voters raises questions!!

**How did Kashmir's population increase by 1411k in 10 years from 2001 to 2011 is a million dollar question? Was there a co-relation between the 75% increase in Kashmir's population between 1981 to 2001 and spurt in militancy during this period?**

*Was the increase due to higher fertility rates, because of those who crossed the border under Resettlement Plan or inflated numbers is unknown.*

Next is a brief background on allocation of assembly seats between regions.

No census data was available in 1951 to decide basis for single member assembly segments (electoral districts) in the constituent assembly of J&K. As per available information it has been claimed that by method of proportions 100 seats were assumed for whole of J&K (including 25 for Pakistan Occupied J&K). This assumed a population of 40 lakhs in 1941 ie 40,000 per seat.

However, after the disturbances in October 1947 and using 1941 census data, only 30 seats were given to Jammu implying that one seat was kept for 60,000 population of Jammu by the 'Delimitation Committee'. Corresponding figure for Kashmir was 43 seats and 40,000 per seat.

Whereas even then on simple population basis (1941 proportions) there could be around 36 to 37 seats distributed over Jammu and only around 35 to 36 seats in Kashmir.

Unlike other Indian States, as per J&K Representation of the People Act of 1957 population is just one of the parameters for deciding the number of seats in the Legislative Assembly, others being geographical compactness, nature of terrain, facilities for communication and like factors.

Going by these parameters Jammu should have got more seats, hence the basis on which 43 seats were given to Kashmir and 30 to Jammu in 1951 is under question mark. May be it was to ensure that Kashmir exercises administrative control over the State.

Even after the J&K Representation of the People Act 1957 had come in force, the J&K Delimitation Commission in 1994 appears to have unfairly distributed the Single member assembly segments only on the basis of population figures i.e. in the proportion of 27.18 and 31.34 (37 Seats to Jammu and 46 Seats to Kashmir).

Next, in order to ensure that Kashmir controls the State Assembly for eternity strategists felt the need to increase their sphere of influence outside the Valley.

One way of doing this was to improve Kashmir's connectivity with Rajouri and Poonch. So the State PWD constructed the Mughal Road. Earlier Srinagar to Poonch was a 556 km drive through Jammu, now reduced to 176 kms.

There exists a plan to construct an all weather road, Wailoo Tunnel, between Kishtwar and Anantnag in the Valley. The current route via Sinthan Pass i.e. snow bound for nearly six months a year and takes about seven hours. Travel time then falls to about four hours.

**Deeper intent is make Srinagar the State's epicenter to the detriment of other regions.** Since Kashmir generates negligible revenue, resources generated by Jammu and received from the Centre could be used to meet this objective.

The extent to which Srinagar centric thinking exists amongst the common man can be gauged by author's experience last October. During early morning walks, locals in Verinag and Kishtwar asked whether I had visited Srinagar. When said no they looked aghast as if I had committed a crime.

It is for similar reasons that Rohingya Muslims i.e. refugees from Myanmar, were recently settled in Jammu and not in Kashmir. A example of increase in Kashmir's population is, 'In 1952 the Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah led Government in the State granted citizenship rights to numerous Uyghur Muslim families and settled them in the Eidgah area of Srinagar with full citizenship rights'.

Next is a review of % increase in population by religion.

**Table 3 - Population of J&K by Religion**

<i>Region</i>	<b>Numbers in 000</b>						
	<i>1951</i>	<i>1961</i>	<i>1971</i>	<i>1981</i>	<i>1991</i>	<i>2001</i>	<i>2011</i>
Indian born Religions	973	1,126	1,570	2,136	2,596	3,330	3,938
% Incre in population	-	16	39	36	21	28	18
Muslims	2,278	2,432	3,040	3,843	5,109	6,793	8,567
% Incre in population	-	7	25	26	33	33	26
Others	3	3	7	8	14	21	36
<b>Total Population</b>	3,254	3,561	4,617	5,987	7,719	10,144	12,541

**Note** - figures in red indicate increase in population as compared to the previous year and are rounded off.

Till 1981 % increase in Indian born Religions population was at a higher rate. Post out-break of insurgency in 1989, differential % of growth rate is going up for Muslims and falling for Indian born religions.

**Table 4 - Population of J and K Region and Religion Wise**

	<b>Numbers in 000</b>					
	<i>1951</i>	<i>1961</i>	<i>1971</i>	<i>1981</i>	<i>2001</i>	<i>2011</i>
<i>1.Jammu Region1 (000)</i>	<i>1,459</i>	<i>1,572</i>	<i>2,076</i>	<i>2,719</i>	<i>4,430</i>	<i>5,379</i>
2.Followers of Indian Religions%		62	66	70	69	66
<i>3.Ladakh Region2 (000)</i>	82	90	105	133	237	274
4.Followers of Indian Religions%		54	53	54	52	53
<i>5.Kashmir Valley3 (000)</i>	<i>1,713</i>	<i>1,899</i>	<i>2,436</i>	<i>3,135</i>	<i>5,476</i>	<i>6,888</i>
6.Followers of Indian Religions%		5.6	6	5	2.8	3
<b>7.Total State Population</b>		<b>3561</b>	<b>4617</b>	<b>5987</b>	<b>10143</b>	<b>12541</b>
8.Total Indian Religions %	3,254	32	34	36	33.9	32.3

A analysis of the numbers show that Indian born Religions were -

- 62% in 1981, 66% in 1971, 70% in 1981, 69% in 2001, 66% in 2011 in Jammu. Between 2001 and 2011 population fell by 3% while share of Muslims went up by 2.8% i.e. from 30.7 to 33.5%.
- 5.6% in 1961, 6% in 1971, 5% in 1981, 2.8% in 2001 and 3.4% in 2011 in Kashmir.
- Between 52-54% in Ladakh for similar periods.

**Table 5 - Relative Growth of Population Jammu vs Kashmir**

Number in 000

<i>Region</i>	<i>1901</i>	<i>1911</i>	<i>1921</i>	<i>1931</i>	<i>1941</i>	<i>1951</i>	<i>1961</i>	<i>1971</i>	<i>1981</i>	<i>1991</i>	<i>2001</i>	<i>2011</i>
Kashmir	1,029	1,146	1,242	1,388	1,526		1,899	2,436	3,135		5,477	6,888
Jammu	1,050	1,078	1,114	1,210	1,344		1,573	2,076	2,719		4,430	5,379
Kash/Jamu	.98	1.06	1.11	1.15	1.14		1.21	1.17	1.15		1.24	1.28

A analysis of the above numbers indicate in 1901 Jammu had higher population than Kashmir; by 1941 Kashmir was 14% more than Jammu, which went up to 21% by 1961, but came down to 15% by 1981, went up to 24% by 2001 and it is now 28% more. Census 1981 seems to be a turning point!

It is apparent that the real reason behind these demographic changes is that people of Kashmir want to rule the State.

Evaluation of population and voter numbers gives a feeling that something is amiss! Who will demystify these numbers to ascertain the actual number of people and voters?

#### **References**

1. @Census numbers prior to 2011 taken from Religious Demography of India by Dr M D Srinivas, A Joshi and Dr J K Bajaj.
2. 2011 numbers from Census.

#### **Also read**

1. Jammu: A road less travelled <http://swarajyamag.com/politics/jammu-a-road-less-travelled/>
2. E book 'All you wanted to know about the Kashmir problem' [http://www.firstpost.com/ebook\\_download.php?id=311](http://www.firstpost.com/ebook_download.php?id=311)
3. Delimitation and Population <http://www.esamskriti.com/essay-chapters/The-Kashmir-Conundrum-is-like-Abhimanyu%60s-Chakravyuh-8.aspx>