

Census of India

The provisional data of the Census 2011 was made public on March 31, 2011. It stated that India's population has touched a new figure 1.21 billion with a rise of over 181 million from the last decade. Now, India's population has touched the combined population of the well-known countries like the United States, Indonesia, Brazil, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Japan that is 1,214.3 million. It is the 15th Census of India since 1872 and has presented many significant facts some of which are encouraging, while some discouraging as well. The most significant encouraging trend that decade witnessed the addition of smaller population than the decade that had just preceded, i.e., 1991-2001. The significant fact that has some to light is within the last 6 years. 5 States- Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Rajasthan have added considerably to the population growth as half of the kids in these States belong to the age group of 1 to 6. During the past decade (1991-2001) these two States had shown the growth of 25.9 percent and 28.9 per cent, respectively, whereas during the present decade (2001-2011) the growth has come down to 20.1 percent, respectively.

Kerala has also shown a declining trend in the population growth by 9.4 per cent, that is very encouraging. One point is a must remember that Uttar Pradesh and Bihar taken together alone account for the 25 per cent of India's overall population of 121 crore and any trend that pinpoints the decline in population growth is very heartening.

The Census figures indicate an increase in sex ratio in 20 States and Union Territories, with women outnumbering in Kerala. There were 1,084 women against 1000 men in Kerala, followed by Pondicherry where the figure was 1038. Daman and Diu has a sex ratio of 618, next only to Dadra and Nagar Haveli at 775. Among the districts, Male has the highest sex ratio of 1,176 followed by Almora in Uttarakhand, where it is 1,142. The three major States of Jammu and Kashmir, Bihar and Gujarat have shown a decline in the sex ratio compared with the figures of Census 2001, while 29 States and Union Territories have shown an increase.

It is not without significance that for the first time since independence, India added fewer people to its population in the decade just ended than in the previous one. While decadal population growth rates have consistently been declining since the 1960s, the absolute addition in each decade was always higher than in the previous decade. That has now changed.