

## NFHS says women outnumber men

**Syllabus- GS 2- Issues relating to Health**

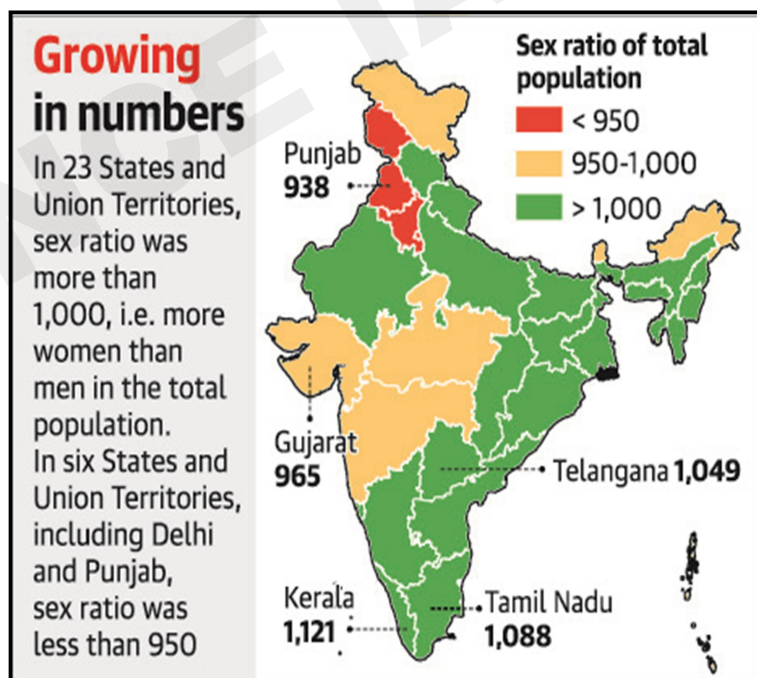
### Why in news:

- ❖ The fifth edition of the National Family Health Survey (NFHS) has confirmed signs of a demographic shift in India. **For the first time** since the NFHS began in 1992, **the proportion of women exceeded men.**
- ❖ There were **1,020 women for 1,000 men.** In the last edition of the survey in 2015-16, there were 991 women for every 1,000 men.

### More information:

Sex ratio at birth for children also improved from 919 per 1,000 males in 2015-16 to 929 per 1,000, underscoring that **boys, on average, continued to have better odds of survival than girls.**

- ❖ The States that had fewer women than men included **Gujarat, Maharashtra, Arunachal Pradesh, Haryana, Madhya Pradesh, Punjab** and Union Territories such as **Jammu & Kashmir, Chandigarh, Delhi, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Dadra and Nagar Haveli, and Ladakh.**
- ❖ All of these States and UTs, however, showed improvements in the population increase of women.
- ❖ A State-wise breakup of the NFHS data also show that **India is on its way to stabilising its population**, with most States and UTs having a Total Fertility Rate (TFR) of less than 2.



- **Replacement level fertility rate:** A TFR of less than 2.1, or a woman on average bearing two children over a lifetime, suggests that an existing generation of a people will be exactly replaced.
- **Anything less than two suggests an eventual decline in population over time.** Only six States — Bihar, Meghalaya, Manipur, Jharkhand and Uttar Pradesh — have a TFR above 2.
- **Bihar has a TFR of 3** which, however, is an improvement from the 3.4 of the NFHS-4. Again, the TFR in all States has improved in the five years.
- ❖ **Most populous country:** India is still poised to be the most populous country in the world, with the current projection by the United Nations population division forecasting that **India's population will peak at 1.6 billion to 1.8 billion** from 2040 to 2050.

- A Government report last year projected that **India would overtake China as the world's most populous country around 2031** — almost a decade later than the United Nations projection of 2022.
- A **notable exception is Kerala**, a State with among the highest ratios of women to men at 1,121 and improvement over 1,049 recorded in the NFHS-4. However, the **TFR in Kerala has increased to 1.8 from 1.6**.
- **Kerala has reported a decline in the sex ratio of children** born in the past five years. There were 1,047 females per 1,000 males in 2015-16 that has now declined to 951 per 1,000 males.

It is notable that **only the decadal Census is considered the official marker of population trends in India** and has a wider surveillance programme. The **NFHS surveys are smaller**, but are conducted at the district level and are a pointer to the future. For instance, The NFHS-5 survey work has been conducted in around 6.1 lakh sample households from 707 districts (as on March, 2017) of the country, covering 724,115 women and 101,839 men to provide disaggregated estimates up to the district level.

#### NATIONAL FAMILY HEALTH SURVEY:

- The National Family Health Survey (NFHS) is a large-scale, multi-round survey conducted in a representative sample of households throughout India.
- The First National Family Health Survey (NFHS-1) was conducted in 1992-93.
- The NFHS-5 captured data **during 2014-19** and its **content is similar to NFHS-4** (2015-16) to allow comparisons over time and also **marks a shift** from it.
- For the **first time**, the **NFHS-5 sought details on the percentage of women and men who have ever used the Internet**.