

- It also asked the Centre to disclose the raw caste data on other backward classes (OBCs) collected during **Socio Economic Caste Census (SECC)-2011**.
 - In January 2021, The Maharashtra legislative assembly and in November Andhra Pradesh Legislative Assembly passed a resolution urging the Centre to hold a caste-based Census for Other Backward Caste (OBC) in 2021. Since then many other political parties like Janta Dal United (Bihar) and Andhra Pradesh have demanded the same.

What is caste census and its historical background

- The first census in India **began in 1872** (held under The Governor-General of **India Lord Mayo**) and the periodic count in 1881 under British rule. Since then, the data on caste was always included, though only till 1931.
- Every **Census in independent India from 1951 to 2011 has published data on Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes**, but not on **other castes**. It, however, has never counted **OBC's, the lower and intermediate castes, which according to the Mandal commission make up around 52 per cent of the country's population**. All castes other than Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes are counted under the general category.
- **Constitutional Mandate:** Our Constitution too favours conducting a caste census. **Article 340 mandates the appointment of a commission** to investigate the conditions of socially and educationally backward classes and make recommendations as to the steps that should be taken by governments.

Caste census: It is the **procedure of systematically acquiring and recording the caste-wise** tabulation of India's population.

- Caste Census is under the **administrative control of the Ministry of Home Affairs: Registrar General of India (RGI) and Census Commissioner of India**.
- The first census in India **began in 1872** (held under The Governor-General of **India Lord Mayo**) and the periodic census in 1881 under British rule. Since then, the data on caste was always included, till 1931.
- After Independence, census data included the census of the Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Caste in the general census of India held after every ten years
- For the first time after Independence, caste census for all castes were held in the 2011 census.
- The 2011 caste census was titled as "Socio Economic Caste Census 2011(SECC)".

Socio Economic Caste Census 2011:

- **SECC-2011:** It is a study of **socio economic status of rural and urban households and allows ranking of households based on predefined parameters**.
 - SECC 2011 has three census components which were conducted by three separate authorities but under the overall coordination of the **Department of Rural Development in the Government of India**.
 - Census in **Rural Areas** has been conducted by the **Department of Rural Development (DoRD)**. Census in **Urban areas** is under the administrative jurisdiction of the **Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation (MoHUPA)**.

- SECC-2011's caste data of 130 crore Indians have been with the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.
- Due to flaws in the data, an expert committee headed by the then Vice-Chairman of the NITI Aayog, Arvind Panagariya was formed.
- But since other members of the committee were not named, the committee never met, and as a result, no action was taken on the raw data to collate it into publishable findings.
- **Status of 2021 caste census:** The Union government has clearly told the Supreme Court that a **caste census in 2021 "would not be feasible"** and that it has taken a "conscious policy decision" to not to **seek information regarding any other caste, except SCs and STs. Therefore inclusion of OBCs is not possible in the caste census.**

Government's Stand:

- The Union government has ruled out conducting a Socio-Economic Caste Census (SECC), stating that a caste census (except that for the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes done traditionally) is **unfeasible, administratively difficult and cumbersome.**
- It has refused to make public even the **raw caste data of the SECC-2011.** According to the central government the entire data set is flawed and the census unreliable, rendering it unusable for the purposes of reservations and policy.
 - The flaws in the data stem primarily from the fact that **no registry of castes was prepared before conducting the 2011 caste census.** This resulted in mistakes by enumerators, who spelt the same caste in dozens of different ways.
- Then it argues that the **judiciary cannot direct the government to** conduct a caste census because it is a "**policy decision**" and the judiciary cannot interfere with government policy.

Why there is a demand for Caste census

- **For efficient welfare Programmes:** India runs the world's largest affirmative welfare programme based on caste identity. Reservation in educational institutes and government jobs are provided on the basis of caste identities.
- Therefore, **enumeration of population of each caste group** would help the **government formulate more accurate welfare programmes.**
- It is important for poverty alleviation, ending unemployment, and equitable distribution of resources for the OBCs.
- Government relies on Census data for identifying and classifying the communities which need to be targeted for its various welfare programmes. Government has this data on SC and ST but it is still using extrapolated 1931 caste data of OBC
- **Political representation in Local bodies:** In the Local bodies there is a provision for reservation of OBC under the 73 rd and 74th constitutional amendment. Due to absence of accurate data the reservation for OBC has become a politically sensitive issue and this was the main reason for Maharashtra to move the SC
- **Political reason:** Parties such as JDU, RJD, SP, BSP, RJD and the DMK depend on certain caste **groups for their political strength.** They are the ones leading the heavy campaign for caste census along with Census 2021.
 - Chief Minister of Bihar Nitish Kumar has argued that the current caste benefit system (through reservations in education, jobs and election) does not give representation in accordance with caste demography. This means that the OBCs are under-represented in public office.

- In the states like Andhra Pradesh, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh, OBCs votes have a significant role in the elections due to high demographic representations. Therefore regional Parties are demanding it vocally.

- **Administrative issues:** There is a Central list of OBCs and State-specific list of OBCs. Some States do not have a list of OBCs; **some States have a list of OBCs and a sub-set called Most Backward Classes.**
 - Further, names of some castes are found in both the list of Scheduled Castes and list of OBCs.
 - There are certain open-ended categories in the lists such as orphans and destitute children which often creates administrative hurdles for the categorisation.
 - Scheduled Castes converted to Christianity or Islam are also treated differently in different States.
 - The status of a migrant from one State to another and the status of children of inter-caste marriage, in terms of caste classification should also be taken into consideration.
- **Different data sets:** Different data **sets based on sample surveys might not be a true reflection of the current caste headcount** in India. These data sets also differ from the Mandal Commission estimates that form the basis of caste-based reservations and policy formulation.
 - Recently, the figures of the **United District Information System for Education Plus (UDISE)** showed schooling data for each caste group. It shows OBC children comprise 45 percent students in primary schools, SCs 19 per cent SCs and STs 11 per cent. The Remaining 25 per cent were from the upper caste group.
- **Political opposition:** Some political parties are against it as it will further enhance the caste division in India.
- Further, it has been said that there has been enough programmes and policies for the upliftment of the backward classes.

-Written by Rashmi

3. 0909090909 090909 09090909090909 (Dec. 12, 2021)

[illegible][illegible]

2.

090606	090202	092704	090930	092A4D	093026	090947	093615	094715	092A42	093030	09094D	09352E	094116	09094D	092F2E	090224	09094D	093040	093048	090938	09482F	093E15	093E28	09093F	092728
--------	--------	--------	--------	--------	--------	--------	--------	--------	--------	--------	--------	--------	--------	--------	--------	--------	--------	--------	--------	--------	--------	--------	--------	--------	--------

[illegible]

2009 $\frac{09}{2E}\frac{09}{47}\frac{09}{02}$ $\frac{09}{09}\frac{09}{15}$ $\frac{09}{39}\frac{09}{47}\frac{09}{32}\frac{09}{46}\frac{09}{15}\frac{09}{49}\frac{09}{2A}\frac{09}{46}\frac{09}{1F}\frac{09}{39}$ $\frac{09}{26}\frac{09}{41}\frac{09}{30}\frac{09}{48}\frac{09}{18}\frac{09}{1F}\frac{09}{28}\frac{09}{3E}$ $\frac{09}{2E}\frac{09}{47}\frac{09}{02}$ $\frac{09}{39}\frac{09}{47}$ $\frac{09}{35}\frac{09}{3E}\frac{09}{08}$ $\frac{09}{09}\frac{09}{38}$ $\frac{09}{15}\frac{09}{40}$ $\frac{09}{2E}\frac{09}{43}\frac{09}{24}\frac{09}{4D}\frac{09}{2F}\frac{09}{41}$ $\frac{09}{15}\frac{09}{47}$ $\frac{09}{2E}\frac{09}{3E}\frac{09}{26}$ $\frac{09}{35}\frac{09}{39}$
 $\frac{09}{09}\frac{09}{27}\frac{09}{48}\frac{09}{30}$ $\frac{09}{2A}\frac{09}{4D}\frac{09}{30}\frac{09}{26}\frac{09}{47}\frac{09}{36}$ $\frac{09}{15}\frac{09}{47}$ $\frac{09}{2E}\frac{09}{41}\frac{09}{16}\frac{09}{4D}\frac{09}{2F}\frac{09}{09}$ $\frac{09}{02}\frac{09}{24}\frac{09}{4D}\frac{09}{30}\frac{09}{40}$ $\frac{09}{2C}\frac{09}{28}\frac{09}{47}$ ||

[illegible][illegible]

[illegible][illegible]