



Census

DECENNIAL POPULATION CENSUS

A process of collecting, compiling, analysing and disseminating demographic, economic and social data (at a specific time) of all persons in a country.



BRIEF HISTORY

- Earliest mentions: **Rigveda** (800-600 BC), **Arthashastra** (300 BC) & **Ain-i-Akbari** (16th century)
- 1st Non-synchronous Census (held in a few places): **1872** under **Gov. Gen. Lord Mayo**
- 1st Synchronous Census (held all over British India): **1881** by **W.C. Plowden** (Census Commissioner of India) under **Lord Ripon**

RESPONSIBLE BODY

- Until 1951, Census Organisation was set up on an ad-hoc basis for each Census
- Since 1951, Office of the **Registrar General and Census Commissioner** (MHA)

LEGAL BACKING

- A Union list subject under **Article 246**
- Conducted under **Census Act (CA), 1948**

CONFIDENTIALITY OF INFORMATION COLLECTED

- Guaranteed under CA 1948
- Information not even accessible to the courts of law

SIGNIFICANCE

- Largest single source of statistical information about people of India
- Used for good governance purposes
- Demarcation of constituencies & representation in Legislature

Census	Major Event
5 th (1921)	Only census to witness a decadal population decline (0.31%) Hence, called the year of " The Great Divide "
11 th (1971)	Added information on fertility for currently married women
13 th (1991)	Concept of literacy changed to children aged 7+ (previously 4+)
14 th (2001)	Leap in tech front; usage of Intelligent Character Reading (ICR)
15 th (2011)	Notable fall in case of Empowered Action Group (EAG) States noticed first time

Socio-Economic and Caste Census (SECC)

ABOUT

- Conducted in **2011** for the **first time since 1931**

COMPONENTS

- Economic status** (to define a poor/deprived person)
- Specific caste** (to evaluate caste groups that are economically worse/better off)

CONSTITUTIONAL BACKING

- Article 340** mandates the **appointment of a commission** to investigate the conditions of socially/educationally backward classes

Census v/s SECC

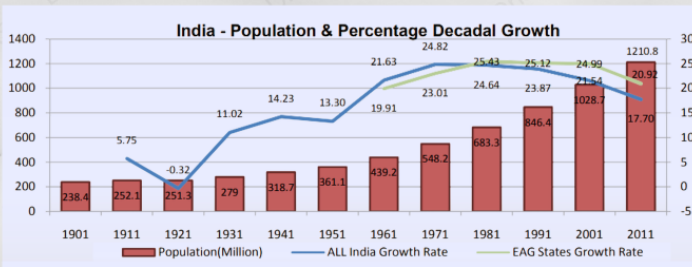
- SECC **identifies beneficiaries** of state support (Census - national population data)
- SECC **data open for use** by govt depts (Census data - confidential)

SIGNIFICANCE

- Better inequality mapping
- Quantifiable data to support existing reservation levels

SOME KEY FINDINGS OF SECC 2011

- Total Households - 24.49 crore
 - Rural - 17.97 crore
 - SC/ST Households - 3.87 crore (21.56%)
- Households with no literate adult (age >25) - 23.5%



PDF Refernece URL: <https://www.drishtias.com/printpdf/census-32>

