



# Centre Issues Notification for the 2027 Census

## Why in News?

The central government has officially notified the conduct of the next **decennial census in 2027**, exercising its authority under **Section 3 of the Census Act, 1948**.

- This notification **supersedes an earlier order from March 2019**, which had initially set the schedule for the Census in 2021 but was delayed due to the **Covid-19 pandemic**.

**Note:** Under **Section 3**, the Central Government may, by **notification in the Official Gazette**, declare its intention of **taking a census in the whole or any part of the territories** to which this Act extends, whenever it may consider it necessary or desirable to do so, and there upon the census shall be taken.

## Key Points

- **Updated Census Schedule:**
  - The Census will have a reference date of **1st March, 2027**, for most parts of the country.
  - However, regions like **Jammu and Kashmir, Ladakh, Himachal Pradesh, and Uttarakhand**, which face logistical challenges due to snow and difficult terrain, will follow an earlier reference date of **1st October, 2026**.
    - This adjustment **allows for more accurate data collection in these areas**.
- **Census:**
  - **About:**
    - The Indian Census is the **largest source of demographic and socio-economic data** on the country's population.
    - **India's first synchronised census** occurred in **1881** under **W.C. Plowden**, the then Census Commissioner of India.
    - It has consistently **provided detailed statistical information every 10 years**, starting in **1872**, when the first non-synchronous census was conducted across different regions of India.
  - **Legal Framework and Institutional Evolution:**
    - The **Census Act of 1948** was enacted to create a legal framework for census operations and to define the roles of census officers.
      - While the Act provides the legal framework, it does not mandate a specific frequency, making the decennial pattern a convention, not a constitutional requirement.
    - In May 1949, the Government of India established a **permanent Census organization under the Ministry of Home Affairs** to systematize the collection of population and demographic data.
    - The **Office of the Registrar General** was later tasked with implementing the **Registration of Births and Deaths Act, 1969**, further expanding its role in maintaining vital statistics.

# 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** (16<sup>th</sup> century)
- 1<sup>st</sup> Non-synchronous Census (held in a few places): **1872** under **Gov. Gen. Lord Mayo**
- 1<sup>st</sup> 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

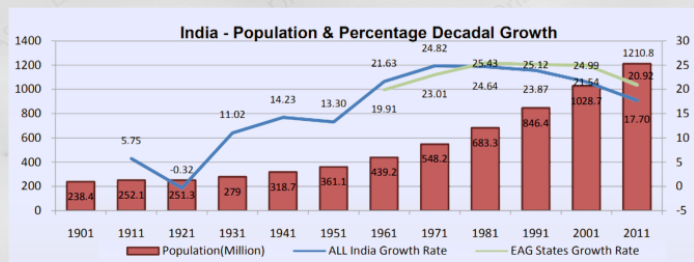
- A Union list subject under **Article 246**
- Conducted under **Census Act (CA), 1948**

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