

REGISTRAR GENERAL AND CENSUS COMMISSIONER OF INDIA

CHAPTER XIII

CENSUS AND VITAL STATISTICS

13.1 The Office of Registrar General and Census Commissioner of India (ORGI) is in-charge of planning, coordination and supervision of the decennial Housing and Population census, tabulation/compilation and dissemination of census results under the provisions of the Census Act, 1948 and the Census (Amendment) Act, 1993. Besides, this office is responsible for overall implementation of the Registration of Births and Deaths Act, 1969 in the country and compilation of data of vital statistics on births and deaths. The ORGI separately brings out estimates of fertility and mortality at the national and state level through a well represented sample under the Sample Registration System (SRS). Since 2003, the RGI has also been functioning as National Registration Authority and Registrar General of Citizen Registration under the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2003.

Census of India 2001

13.2 India has a long tradition of having regular decennial censuses since 1872 Census which was held non-synchronously. From 1881 onwards, synchronous census has been held once in ten years uninterrupted. After the partition of India in 1947 and the formation of the Indian Union, 1951 Census was the first census. Thus while 2001 Census was the 14th Census in the series, it was 6th since independence.

13.3 Population Census is the largest statistical

exercise in the country, undertaken once in 10 years. The Census operations are conducted in two phases. The first phase which is Houselisting Operations, precedes the population enumeration by about 8 to 9 months. The main purpose of the Houselisting Operations is to prepare the frame for undertaking population enumeration, besides providing host of data on housing stock, amenities and the assets available for each of the households.

13.4 At each census, processing of large-scale data has been a challenge. The effort at each census has been then to choose a technology, which enables faster processing of data for quicker dissemination of results. During the 2001 Census, Intelligent Character Recognition (ICR) technology was chosen for processing of data. It involved scanning of canvassed schedules, recognition of hand-written numeric information from the scanned images, data validation and generation of ASCII files for further processing. Adoption of this technology has helped not only in faster processing of data compared to earlier censuses but also the generation of most of the output tables on cent percent basis than sampling, which was resorted to in past censuses.

13.5 Unlike in past census when it used to take long time to release the data, in 2001 census almost all the tables on population and its characteristics, such as age, scheduled caste/scheduled tribe, religion, literacy, disability, marital status, fertility, economic activities, language/mother tongue etc., have been released within four years.

Data Dissemination

13.6 The Data Dissemination Centres set up in each of the states, have helped in creating awareness about availability of census data and its use on various subjects such as demographic, socio economic activities, migration, fertility, etc. A large number of census data products in the form of printed volumes and CDs were made available for use by wide array of data users, including government departments, voluntary organizations within the country and at international level and to individual research scholars. Only a few new tables were released in 2008-09 as almost all the tables were released by 2007-08. Efforts were thus concentrated more on publicizing the availability of the cross-classified tabulation. 12 Data Dissemination Workshops were organized across the country highlighting important characteristics of the population in the respective states by presenting data at district and tehsil level. In 2008, the organization participated in 25 book fairs to enhance publicity on the availability of census data products. Rs.65 lakh were realised on account of sale of census volumes, data on CD and maps.

13.7 In 2008-09, series of State Census Atlases have been released showing spatial analysis of 2001 Census data on important characteristics for each State/UT separately. In addition, following products have been released:

- (i) Language Tables – Paper 1 of 2007 (Book)
- (ii) General Population Tables (Book)
- (iii) Individual Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribe-wise Tables (in CD)
- (iv) Population by mother tongue (in CD)
- (v) Other Reports (Book):
 - (a) Marital status and age at marriage – Analysis of 2001 Census data
 - (b) Workers and non workers – An analysis based on 2001 Census data

- (c) Special studies – Temples of Thrishur, Kerala
- (d) Statistical Report – Sample Registration System 2007
- (e) SRS based Abridged Life Table
- (f) General Population Tables (A1-A4) for 5 States (Rajasthan, Haryana, Punjab, Andhra Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh)
- (g) Medical Certificates for Cause of Death 2002
- (h) Vital Statistics of India 1996-2001
- (i) Vital Statistics of India 2002-2005
- (j) Report on Causes of death in India 2001-03

13.8 The facility of Shopping Cart at the Census of India website was modified to help users to select relevant tables or census reports and place orders for on-line purchase. E-mail alerts were sent to the registered data users on new releases.

13.9 For providing access to micro level census data for research, a work station is being set up at Jawaharlal Nehru University. The Centre will be the first of its type and will be operated under strict supervision of the faculty from the University. The modalities for setting up the work station have been finalized and the required funds have been placed at the disposal of JNU for implementation of work and for making necessary procurement of hardware.

Planning for the next Decennial Census 2011

13.10 The preparations for the ensuing census in 2011 had commenced in 2007-08 with the conduct of first set of field trials in May-June 2007 for evaluating the responses to selected questions with different formulations. Subsequently following the deliberations in the Conference in December, 2007 to take stock of the technology

options with experts from government departments, national and international organizations, industry leaders in the field of IT having experience in data capture & data processing, it has been decided to continue the use of scanning and ICR technology alongwith its improvements at the next census. National Informatics Centre (NIC) has been engaged since then to arrange for demonstrations on improvements in technology and assess the software which would be appropriate for census operations. At the same time, NIC would recommend the hardware/software specifications which are required for processing of data using ICR technology. The NIC is in the process of finalising its recommendations.

13.11 A Conference of Data Users was held on April 24-25, 2008 at New Delhi in which the representatives of Central and State Governments, their affiliated bodies, national level institutes and universities, eminent demographers and experts in the field of population studies, prime users of the census data for planning and research had participated and presented their views on the strategy for 2011 census, questions to be canvassed, proposed tabulation plan and the methodology for preparation of National Population Register. Following the deliberations, Questionnaires for Houselisting operations and Population Enumeration have been revised. These will be pre-tested during full dress rehearsal for 2011 Census which would be during June 28 – August 17, 2009. A Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) has been constituted in September 2008 which had its first meeting in November 2008, to discuss these issues in more details.

13.12 The intention of taking of 2011 Census with reference date as 01.3.2011 has been declared under Section-3 of the Census Act and notified in the Gazette of India, Extraordinary, Part II, Section 3, Sub-section –ii, vide S.O. 562(E) dated February 27, 2009.

Amendments to the Census Act, 1948 and the Census Rules, 1990

13.13 Complete coverage and accuracy of data

have been the principal concerns at each of the censuses. For this, security of information shared by the individuals is of utmost importance. Section-15 of the Census Act guaranteed confidentiality of data provided by the informants in census which has been eroded partly after the enactment of Right to Information Act, 2005. Since this may infringe upon the privacy of individual household, the respondents may not be as forthcoming to share the household details at the next census as in the past. Further, a need has been felt for an enabling provision in the Act for appointment of Observers in identified areas to oversee the census operations and, thereby, act as a deterrent to any of the wrong doings at the time of population enumeration. Simultaneously, there is a need to enforce greater accountability on the part of census officers by providing for certification of the coverage of population under their charge. All this has become necessary after the experience of 2001 census in which census results were challenged in the courts and applications were filed seeking information about individuals from the census data. With a view to address these issues, Government had set up a Committee in May 2008 under the Registrar General and Census Commissioner, India to review the provisions of the Census Act, 1948 and the Census Rules, 1990. The Committee has completed the work and given its Report.

Meetings/Conferences/Trainings/Projects

13.14 In-house training is an ongoing activity in the ORGI to equip the officials with necessary technical knowledge required for the specialized nature of work carried out by the organization. Between April-September 2008, 68 newly recruited Assistant Directors and Statistical Investigators Grade I have been imparted induction training. Besides, 350 Electronic Data Processing (EDP) officials have been imparted training on census and sample registration system (SRS) between July-September, 2008. Training programmes on Geographic Information System (GIS) and Computer Mapping for the officials of ORGI and

three newly created Directorates of Census Operations in Uttarakhand, Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh have also been completed during the year.

13.15 Besides, the officers of ORGI have participated in different workshops, meetings, etc. held abroad and sponsored by World Bank, WHO, UNSD, UNFPA, USAID etc. for exchange of experiences and for keeping themselves abreast with the developments in concerned fields worldwide. These include:

- Workshop on Improving Disability Measurement in South Asia at Bangkok, Thailand (April 2-4, 2008).
- UN Expert Group Meeting on Geographic Information Systems and Census Mapping at New York, USA (April 7-10, 2008).
- WHO's Regional Consultation on Utilization of Health Information for Decision Making at Colombo, Sri Lanka (June 16-18, 2008).
- Workshop on Census and Survey Microdata Dissemination: Benefits and Challenges at Bangkok, Thailand (June 18-20, 2008).
- Technical workshop on data management, US Census Bureau Washington DC, USA (June 30 to July 4, 2008) and discussions at the Office of National Statistician, London, UK (July 7-8, 2008)
- United Nations Regional Workshop on Census Data Processing: Contemporary technologies for census data capture, data editing and documentation at Bangkok, Thailand (September 15-19, 2008).

- Workshop on Digital Identity Management, Documents and Solutions Bangkok, Thailand (October 13-14, 2008).
- Second Workshop on Preparation for the 2010 Population and Housing Census' at Bangkok, Thailand (November 10-13, 2008)
- 24th Population Census Conference on 'Changing patterns of utilization and analysis of population census data' (March 25-27, 2009)

VITAL STATISTICS (VS)

Implementation of the Registration of Births and Deaths (RBD) Act, 1969

13.16 The registration of births and deaths in the country is done under the RBD Act, 1969. The Registrar General, India coordinates and unifies the registration activities across the country while the Chief Registrars of Births and Deaths are the chief executive authorities in the respective States for implementation of the Act.

13.17 The proportion of registered births and deaths has witnessed a steady increase over the years. The registration level of births and deaths for the country has gone up to about 68 per cent and 63 per cent respectively registering an increase of around 6 per cent for births and 8 per cent for deaths over the previous year. However, wide variations across the States in the level of registration have continued to persist. The States of Goa, Himachal Pradesh, Mizoram, Nagaland, Meghalaya, Kerala, Punjab, Tamil Nadu, Tripura and Union territories of Chandigarh, Daman & Diu, Delhi and Puducherry have achieved cent per cent level of registration of births. The States of Gujarat, Haryana, Sikkim, Karnataka and West Bengal have also reached more than 90 per cent level of registration of birth. However, this level is still less than 50 percent in the States of Bihar, Jharkhand

and Uttar Pradesh. The level of registration of deaths has been lower than that of births in most of the States. The State of Goa and Union territories of Chandigarh, Delhi and Puducherry have achieved cent per cent level of registration of death. More than 90 percent of deaths are being registered in the States of Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Punjab and Tamil Nadu. The percentages of death registration ranged between 80 and 90 in the States of Haryana, Maharashtra, Punjab, Mizoram, Sikkim and Union territory of Dadra & Nagar Haveli. The death registration is below 35 percent in the States of Arunachal Pradesh and Bihar. The lower level of death registration is partly attributable to non-registration of female and infant deaths.

13.18 There have been significant increase in level of registration of births in Rajasthan (16.2%), Madhya Pradesh (11.9%), Manipur (8%), Gujarat (6.8%), Haryana (6.5%), Karnataka (4.5%) and Jharkhand (4.1%) and considerable improvement in death registration in Gujarat (8.5%), Haryana (8.1%), Andhra Pradesh (7.8%), Rajasthan (7.0%), Himachal Pradesh (6.4%), Karnataka (4.7%) and Madhya Pradesh (4.6%) over the previous year.

13.19 The State of Madhya Pradesh, which has been one of low performing States, has been provided assistance to clear the backlog of about one crore birth certificates to the children in the age group 0-9 years. About 77 lakh birth certificates have been issued and Rs.1.93 crore has been released to the State as matching share of the central assistance.

13.20 A National Conference of Chief Registrar of Births and Deaths was convened on March 5 – 6, 2009 at New Delhi which reviewed the progress of registration of births and deaths in the country. Besides, the other important issues deliberated in the Conference were entry of name(s) of parent(s) of babies born through Assisted Reproductive Technology in birth records; linking of services with birth and death certificates to enhance their utility; generation of vital rates from Civil

Registration data; and legal validity of electronically-generated birth / death certificates issued under the RBD Act.

Amendments to the Registration of Births and Deaths (RBD) Act, 1969

13.21 The RBD Act, 1969 has been in existence for nearly four decades and has not been amended since then. A need has been felt for making amendments which have been necessitated *inter-alia* to fill the existing loopholes by including sections of the population hitherto not covered under the ambit of the Act; to make it people friendly by simplifying different sections of the Act and also to keep pace with the technological innovations taking place, specially, in the field of information technology. A Committee under the Chairmanship of the Registrar General, India having representation of the State Governments, has examined the provisions and made recommendations for making the States more accountable as well as for simplification of the procedure for delayed registration so as to make it hassle free with a view to achieve higher level of registration in pursuance of the goal to achieve the cent percent level of registration of births by 2010 as mandated by the National Population Policy, 2000. After consultations with the State Governments as well as concerned Central Ministries /Departments, the concurrence of the Department of Legal Affairs, Ministry of Law, on the proposed amendments has been obtained and a proposal is under finalization for seeking Government approval and further legislative action.

Medical Certification of Cause of Death (MCCD)

13.22 The scheme of Medical Certification of Cause of Death (MCCD) under the Registration of Births and Deaths (RBD) Act, 1969 provides a medically authenticated database on causes of death, a prerequisite to monitoring health trends of the population. Till date, 32 States/UTs have issued the notification for implementation of the

scheme of MCCD. Three States/UTs which have yet to do it are Kerala, Meghalaya, and Lakshadweep.

13.23 As per the draft annual report on “Medical Certification of Cause of Death” which is pertaining to 2003, out of the total registered deaths of 43,55,607 in 23 States/UTs, a total of 5,86,700 deaths (3,64,480 Males and 2,22,220 Females) have been reported to be medically certified.

13.24 As only selected hospitals and that too mostly in urban areas, are covered at present under the MCCD, the data is not considered adequate to represent the cause profile of deaths for the States and for the country. In order to widen the scope and coverage under the MCCD, an amendment in Section 10(3) of the RBD Act, 1969 has been contemplated to bring all the medical institutions owned and managed by government, non-government, non-profit institutions and individuals providing specialized or general treatment in the urban as well as rural areas under the coverage of the scheme of MCCD for reporting of the medically certified cause of death to the concerned Registrar on a compulsory basis.

Sample Registration System (SRS)

13.25 The Sample Registration System (SRS) is a large scale demographic survey for providing reliable estimates of birth rate, death rate and other fertility and mortality indicators at the national and sub-national levels. Initiated by the Office of the Registrar General, India on a pilot basis in a few selected states in 1964-65, it became fully operational in 1969-70 covering about 3700 sample units. The present SRS has 7,597 sample units (4,433 rural and 3,164 urban) spread across all States and Union territories, encompassing about 1.3 million households and nearly 7 million population based on Census 2001. The SRS is a dual record system and consists of continuous enumeration of births and deaths by a resident part time enumerator and an independent half yearly survey by a supervisor. The data obtained through

these operations are matched. The unmatched and partially matched events are re-verified in the field and thereafter an unduplicated count of births and deaths is obtained. The time lag between the field survey and release of results under SRS has been reduced to less than one year.

13.26 The latest SRS based estimates of birth rate, death rate; natural growth rate and infant mortality rate have been released for the year 2007 for all States/Union Territories, separately for rural and urban areas, which are given at the **Annexure-XIV**. Salient findings based on the latest data released for the year 2007 from the SRS are as under:

- Crude Birth Rate (CBR) at the national level is 23.1 births per thousand population. Such estimate for the rural areas is 24.7 as against 18.6 for the urban areas. Among bigger States, CBR is the lowest in Kerala (14.7) and the highest in Uttar Pradesh (29.5).
- Sex ratio at Birth at national level is 901 females per thousand males (904 in rural areas and 891 in urban areas). Among the bigger States, the highest sex ratio at birth (969) is in Chhattisgarh and the lowest (837) in Punjab
- Total Fertility Rate (TFR) at the national level is 2.7. Among the bigger States, Bihar (3.9) as well as Uttar Pradesh (3.9) reported the highest TFR. The lowest TFR, recorded for Tamil Nadu (1.6) is much below the replacement level of 2.1.
- Crude Death Rate (CDR) at the national level is 7.4 deaths per thousand population. It varies from 8.0 in rural areas to 6.0 in urban areas. Among the bigger states, Delhi

(4.8) recorded the lowest and Orissa (9.2) the highest death rate.

- Infant Mortality Rate (IMR) at the national level is 55 infant deaths (deaths below age one) per 1000 live births. IMR declined by 2 points over the corresponding estimate of 57 in 2006. It varies from 61 in rural areas to 37 in urban areas. Among the bigger States, Kerala (13) has the lowest and Madhya Pradesh (72) the highest IMR.
- Child Mortality Rate (deaths below age 5) at the national level is 16.0. Among the bigger states, it is the highest in Madhya Pradesh (23.5) and the lowest in Kerala (2.8).

13.27 Life Tables, in essence, present the life history of a hypothetical group or cohort as it is gradually diminished by death. The latest Life Tables Report have been released based on the quinquennial estimates of Age Specific Death Rate (ASDR) from SRS for the period 2002-06. The expectation of life at birth for India is 64.2 years for females and 62.6 years for males. The highest expectation of life has been reported by Kerala (74.0) and the lowest by Madhya Pradesh (58.0).

Causes of death in SRS

13.28 The scheme on Survey of Causes of Death (SCD), owing to its restricted coverage in rural areas and other operational problems, was integrated with SRS from 1999. In order to determine the cause specific mortality by age and sex, Verbal Autopsy (VA) instrument was introduced as an integral component of SRS in all States/UTs from 2004. A Special Survey of Death (SSD) through the VA instruments was carried out in all States/UTs, covering all the deaths reported under SRS between 2001 and 2003. Based on this, Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR) for the country and major States for the year 2001-03 had been

released in October 2006. The Report on Causes of Death – 2001-03, which presents the leading causes of death stratified by gender, Empowered Action Group of States and Assam and Other States and rural and urban areas across all ages and also separately for important age groups has been released in March 2009.

PILOT PROJECT ON MULTI-PURPOSE NATIONAL IDENTITY CARD (MNIC)

13.29 The Citizenship Act, 1955 was amended in 2003 and Section 14A was inserted, which provides that the Central Government may compulsorily register every citizen of India and issue National Identity Card to him. Simultaneously, Citizenship Rules 2003 have been enacted laying down the processes to be followed for giving effect to this intent.

13.30 To understand the complexities involved alongwith technical specifications and technology required for national roll out, a pilot project has been implemented in selected areas of (12) States and (1) Union territory namely viz., Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Delhi, Goa, Gujarat, Jammu and Kashmir, Rajasthan, Tripura, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal, and Puducherry covering a population of 30.96 lakh. Under the project, it was envisaged to provide a unique National Identity Number (NIN) to each citizen and subsequently issue identity (smart) cards to all those citizens who are of age 18 years and above and could provide evidence at the time of verification.

Progress of Implementation of Pilot Project

13.31 The implementation phase of the pilot project on MNIC has been completed on March 31, 2008 and more than 12 lakhs cards have been issued to the citizens in the pilot areas. The maintenance and updating phase has also been over on March 31, 2009.

NATIONAL POPULATION REGISTER (NPR)

13.32 The experience of the pilot project has shown that determination of citizenship is an involved and complicated matter and that creation of National Population Register (NPR) with a single reference date would be more feasible in the first instance. Accordingly, there is a proposal for creation of NPR by collecting information on specified items of each resident, alongwith the population enumeration at the time of next decennial census in 2011. The filled up NPR schedules will be handed over to the UID Authorities, being created under the Planning Commission, who will computerise the database and add photographs and finger biometrics of each individual to make the identity database complete. After the NPR is so made ready, it would be possible to create National Register of Indian Citizens (NRIC) independently as a subset of NPR. The Planning Commission has made an allocation of Rs. 300 crore for this project in 11th Five Year Plan.

13.33 There is a parallel scheme of Unique Identification (UID), currently being implemented by the Department of Information Technology

(DIT) at the instance of the Planning Commission (PC) to create a database of residents in the country in the interregnum. This database will be created using the data in electoral rolls of Election Commission, India (ECI), PDS and BPL for better targeting of the beneficiaries under various Government schemes/ programmes. After the NPR is created, it will engulf the UID database, being far more comprehensive and will become the mother database for identity purposes.

National Population Register and Issue of Identity Card in Coastal Areas

13.34 Following the terrorist attack in Mumbai on November 26, 2008, the Government has decided that the National Population Register in the coastal areas for 9 Maritime States and 4 Union territories would be created ahead of 2011 Census and that identity cards would be issued to all the 'usual' residents of these coastal areas including the fishermen. This would be implemented in 2009-10. In Andaman & Nicobar Islands, all the towns and villages will be covered for data collection in the First Phase while in respect of the other coastal States/UTs 3500 coastal villages will be covered. The data collection in the remaining coastal towns/cities is planned to be undertaken along with 2011 Census.
