

National Commission for Scheduled Tribes

MINUTES OF THE MEETING WITH THE REGISTRAR GENERAL OF INDIA, EX-OFFICIO CENSUS COMMISSIONER OF INDIA HELD ON 8.4.2008 IN THE COMMISSION FOR ENUMERATION OF POPULATION OF MIGRANT ST POPULATION INCENSUS 2011

List of those present in the meeting is annexed.

The meeting was held with Shri D.K. Sikri, the Registrar General of India, ex-officio Census Commissioner of India and other senior officers of the Registrar General of India to discuss the adequacy of the existing formats for census 2001 for collecting requisite information, relating to Scheduled Tribes in the forthcoming Census 2011 in the context of exploring the possibility of enumerating the population of migrant ST population in each State and for estimating the population of communities which are included in the list of Scheduled Tribes during inter-Census period.

2. Explaining the existing methodology of enumeration, the RGI informed that under the Census Act, Census Commissioner is required to collect de-facto information and not de-jure information. In accordance with the mandate of the RGI, as approved by MHA, caste-based demographic information is not to be collected/ produced. As regards collection of data regarding Scheduled Tribes, (and Scheduled Castes) the Household Schedule seeks information whether a person belongs to a Scheduled Tribe; and if so, the status (as belonging to ST) will be entered if he/she belongs to a community which is included in the list of Scheduled Tribes in relation to the State in which this enumeration is being conducted. For this purpose, the Enumerator is provided with a list of Scheduled Tribes specified in relation to that State. It was informed that if a person declares that he or she belongs to ST but his/her community is not found in the list of ST specified in relation to that State, the Enumerator has to make a record of it. Such data is later refined in consultation with experts to substitute the name of the ST Community as listed in the Constitutional Orders as far as possible. Persisting errors (quantum unspecified) are finally discarded from the data tabulation. RGI further informed that the Part II of the Household Schedule seeks information whether the person has migrated to the present place of residence and if so, the details thereof. Hand held Computers were proposed to be used by enumerators in urban areas only in the next Census for want of trained personnel, logistic problems, etc.

3. Secretary, NCST observed that enumeration of migrant STs in a State is desirable to avoid their undercounting, to ensure convergence of programmes for their benefits in the State to which they have migrated, and also to study demographic changes. In fact, their enumeration in the State to which they have migrated, reflects de-facto position. Deputy Director (Census) mentioned that the filled-in Schedules are transferred to a computerized data base through OCR for generating requisite Tables and Reports. Secretary, NCST observed that since the list of Scheduled Tribes in relation to each State is available with the Registrar General of India, and the information furnished by the person is checked up with the list at the time of computation, it may not be infeasible/ difficult to co-relate the data furnished in response to column No. 9 with that in column No. 22 and to tabulate the data in respect of migrant ST population separately to avoid under count of ST population in the country. He therefore, emphasized that the present mandate of the RGI including the methodology to enumerate STs only in their state of original residence as followed in the Household schedule for Census 2001, needs to be re-looked/ unmodified during the next Census (2011).

4. RGI, informed that the NPR data format had still to be finalized and may be circulated alongwith the agenda papers for the Data Users' conference. It was not proposed to enumerate/ record the caste of individual as per current Census mandate practice. As regards estimation of population of communities included as ST during inter-census period, the system will require information about the community/caste to which each person belong so that population of that caste/community, which is included after a census, could be estimated by re-tabulation of available data.

5. Attention of RGI was drawn to the recommendation made by this Commission in para 3.2.3 of its first Report wherein it was mentioned that "Now when the Govt. of NCT of Delhi have decided to restore the benefits of reservation to SC/ST candidates irrespective of their nativity in civil posts under them, the Commission recommends that the Ministry of Home Affairs should advise the Registrar General and Census Commissioner of India to enumerate in the next Census of 2011 the migrant population of Scheduled Tribes residing in the National Capital Territory of Delhi and other UTs." RGI stated that his office is not aware of such recommendation. It was indicated by the Commission that, after receipt of Report of the Commission in the Ministry of Tribal Affairs (MTA), MTA was expected to forward these to RGI, through Ministry of Home Affairs, and there was no information as to whether this was forwarded by MTA.

6. Secretary, NCST enquired about the methodology for up-dation of the National Population Register in conjunction with the Register of Births & Deaths. He also suggested that the possibility of recording the communities of persons in the proposed NPR should also be explored in order to facilitate correct counting of STs and issue of community certificates in future.

7. The RGI informed that the arrangements for creation/ management of the NPR was still under consideration, along with the issue as to which agency will be responsible for its maintenance. Secretary, NCST opined that since the RGI maintains the data base on registration of births and deaths, it was better equipped for maintenance of NPR also. Once the NPR is compiled along with Census 2011 and changes are regularly updated by RGI, it will be possible to estimate the population of STs at any point of time.

8. Secretary, NCST desired that the Commission should hold a detailed meeting with the RGI, MHA and MTA on the subject of enumeration of STs and compilation of NPR in order to facilitate counting of STs and issue of community certificate, after the Data Users' Conference convened by the RGI on 24-25 April, 2008.