

GOVERNMENT POLICIES AND INTERVENTIONS

Caste Census in Bihar

In News

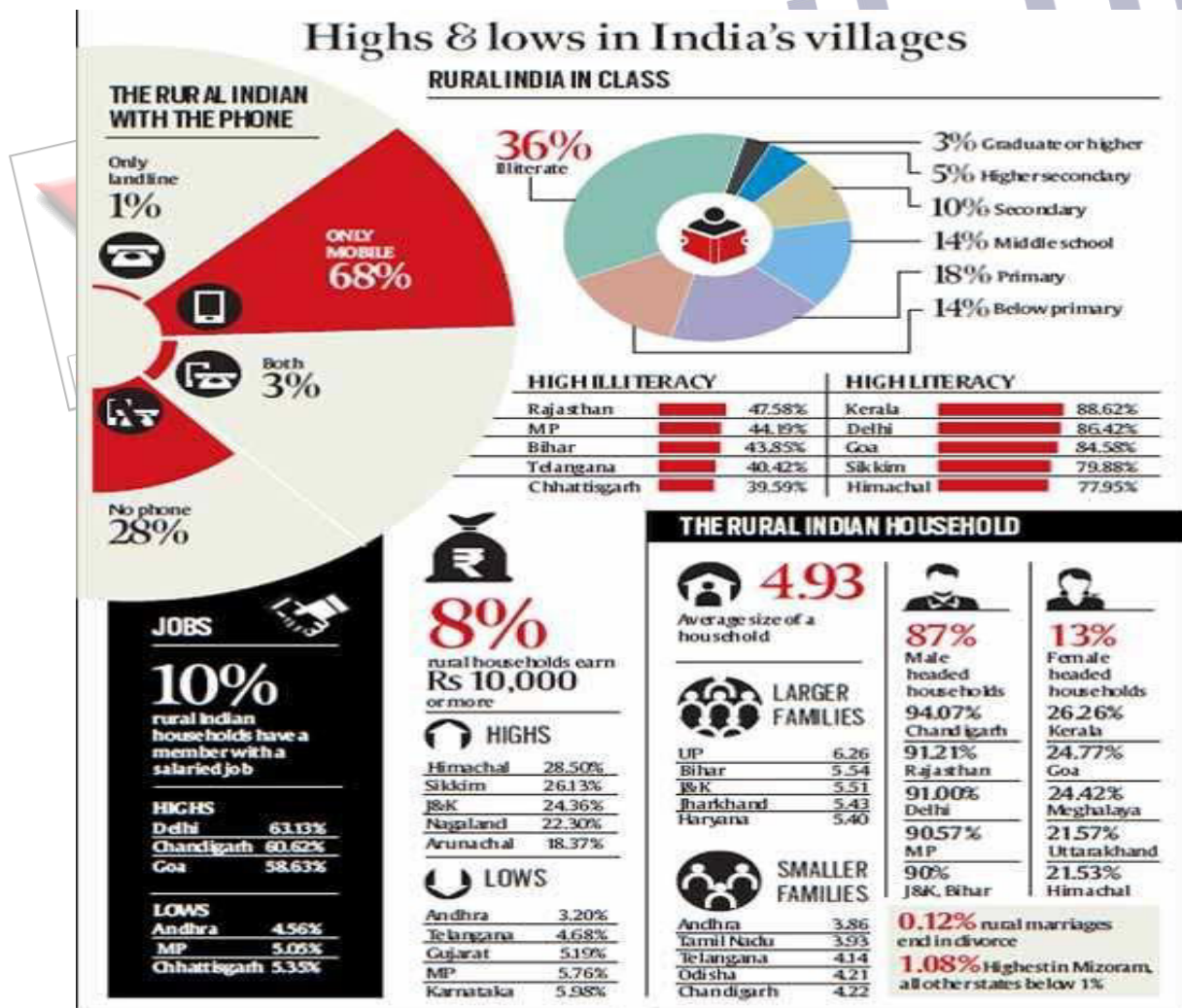
- Recently, the Supreme Court of India refused to entertain petitions challenging the Bihar government's decision to conduct a caste survey in the state.

About

- A bench of Justices BR Gavai and Vikram Nath recently dismissed the petition to conduct a census as "publicity interest litigation" on grounds of no merit.
- The bench made a point that the courts can't issue directions on how much reservation should be granted to certain castes and can't entertain such petitions.
- The court also said that if the prayer is granted, how the state will determine how reservation is to be granted.
- The petitions were filed by NGO Ek Soch Ek Prayas, Hindu Sena and an individual, Akhilesh Kumar.

Census in India

- The first census in India was conducted in 1872, during British colonial rule.
- Since then, the census has been conducted every 10 years since 1872, with the exception of 1941, due to World War II.
- The census is conducted by the Registrar General and Census Commissioner of India, an office under the Ministry of Home Affairs.
- The census provides detailed information on the population and demographics of the country, including data on topics such as age, gender, education, occupation, migration, and religion.
- The census data is used to inform government policies and planning decisions, and to identify socio-economic disparities and underprivileged communities.



Important points:

- ✓ The 1981 census was the first to include a question on the mother tongue of individuals.
- ✓ The 2001 census was the first to include a question on the disability status of individuals.
- ✓ The 2011 census was the first to include a question on the transgender population.
- ✓ The 2021 census was the first to be conducted completely online with the use of mobile Application and also it was first to be conducted during the pandemic.
- The census is a constitutional requirement under Article 330 and Article 332 of the Indian Constitution.
- The census is one of the largest administrative exercises in the world, involving millions of enumerators and supervisors.

Caste census

- Caste census in India is conducted to gather information about the population's caste and tribe demographics. Some important features of the caste census include:
- The census is conducted by the government and is usually carried out every 10 years.
- The data collected during the census is used to inform government policies and programs related to social welfare and affirmative action.
- The census includes information on caste and tribe, occupation, literacy and education, and other demographic information.
- The last caste census in India was conducted in 2011, the results of which were not made public by the Indian Government.

Advantages of Caste census

- ✚ **Improved data:** A caste census would provide more detailed information on the population and demographics of the country, including information on castes and subcastes.
- ✚ **Identification of socio-economic disparities:** A caste census would allow for the identification of socio-economic disparities within castes, which can help target government programs and policies to the most disadvantaged communities.
- ✚ **Affirmative action:** The census data could be used to inform the implementation of affirmative action policies, such as reservation in education and government jobs, to ensure that underprivileged communities have equal access to opportunities.
- ✚ **Inclusivity:** A caste census would be inclusive of all castes, and would provide a detailed representation of the population.
- ✚ **Better understanding of the population:** It would provide a better understanding of the population and could help to identify and address issues related to social inequality, poverty and marginalization.
- ✚ **Improved allocation of resources:** The census data could be used to improve the allocation of resources and services to different communities, and to help identify areas where additional investment is needed.
- ✚ **Basis for policy making:** The census data would be a reliable source of data for policy making, which would help to identify the needs of different communities and target policies to address them.

Challenges of caste census

- ✚ **Definition of caste:** There is no clear consensus on how to define and classify castes, which can lead to confusion and inaccuracies in the census data.
- ✚ **Underreporting:** Some individuals may choose not to disclose their caste, either out of fear of discrimination or to avoid being identified as belonging to a lower caste.
- ✚ **Self-identification vs. government classification:** There may be discrepancies between how individuals self-identify their caste and how the government classifies them based on their occupation or social status.
- ✚ **Inaccuracies and manipulation of data:** There have been concerns that the data collected in a caste census may be manipulated to serve political or other interests.
- ✚ **Ethical concerns:** Critics argue that a caste census reinforces the caste system and can perpetuate social inequalities.
- ✚ **Lack of political will:** The census is a very expensive exercise and the benefits of it are not clear cut, hence there is lack of political will to conduct it.
- ✚ **Religious and linguistic minorities:** The census data may not accurately reflect the complex identities of religious and linguistic minorities, leading to undercounting or oversimplification of their populations.

Way Ahead

- Conducting the caste census in India at this stage is uncertain, as it is a complex and controversial issue which requires a political will and a consensus among the political parties and general public.
- There is also a need to develop a consensus on how to define and classify castes in order to ensure accurate data collection.

- Overall, the government should take proactive measures to ensure that individuals' personal information is protected and kept confidential to encourage honest disclosure.

PRELIMS

1. What is a Trademark?

- Recently, Delhi High Court ruled had dismissed a case of trademark infringement brought by the global fast food chain against Suberb, a Delhi-based restaurant.

What is a trademark?

- It is a symbol, design, word or phrase that is identified with a business. When a trademark is registered, its owner can claim “exclusive rights” on its use.
- A trademark is a sign capable of distinguishing the goods or services of one enterprise from those of other enterprises.

Legislation in India: The Trademark Act, of 1999, governs the regime on trademarks and their registration.

- The Act guarantees protection for a trademark that is registered with the Controller General of Patents, Designs, and Trademarks, also known as the trademark registry.
- A trademark is valid for 10 years, and can be renewed by the owner indefinitely every 10 years.

Violation of trademark: Using a registered trademark without authorization of the entity that owns the trademark is a violation or infringement of the trademark.

- Using a substantially similar mark for similar goods or services could also amount to infringement.
- In such cases, courts have to determine whether this can cause confusion for consumers between the two.

Ways in which a trademark can be infringed:

- **Deceptive Similarity:** The law states that a mark is considered deceptively similar to another mark if it nearly resembles that other mark, confusing the consumer in the process.
- Such deception can be caused phonetically, structurally or visually.
- **Passing off:** a brand logo is misspelt in a way that's not easy for the consumer to discern.
- In such cases, the infringing products need not be identical — but similarity in the nature, character, and performance of the goods of the rival traders has to be established.
- The Supreme Court has said that passing off is a “species of unfair trade competition or of actionable unfair trading by which one person, through deception, attempts to obtain an economic benefit of the reputation which other has established for himself in a particular trade or business”.

2. First G20 Health Working Group Meeting:

- The first G20 Health Working Group meeting under India's presidency was held in Thiruvananthapuram in Kerala.
- Various discussions are being held focusing on international cooperation for Universal health care, in the three-day conference.
- Discussions on strengthening medical value travel enabling easy travel to countries with low cost treatment facilities and also on holistic health care through the integration of traditional methods of treatment like Ayurveda were held.

Three priorities for the G20 Health Track:

- **Priority I:** Health Emergencies Prevention, Preparedness and Response (with focus on One Health & AMR).
- **Priority II:** Strengthening Cooperation in Pharmaceutical Sector with focus on Access and Availability to safe, effective, quality and Affordable Medical Countermeasures (Vaccines, Therapeutics and Diagnostics).
- **Priority III:** Digital Health Innovations and Solutions to Aid Universal Health Coverage and Improve Healthcare Service Delivery.

3. 1st Global Tourism Investors Summit:

- The Ministry of Tourism is organizing the 1st Global Tourism Investors Summit from 10th to 12th April 2023 at Pragati Maidan in New Delhi.
- It is organised under the aegis of India's G20 Presidency.
- The aim of the summit is to bring together global business leaders, and policymakers to understand and explore Tourism Business opportunities in India.
- The event focused on promoting India as an investment destination for travel, tourism, and hospitality by identifying State-Specific investment possibilities and discusses avenues to promote sustainable tourism.

4. Hybrid Immunity

- A recent study in the journal the Lancet Infectious Diseases held that “hybrid immunity” provides better protection against severe Covid-19.

What is Immunity?

- Immunity refers to the body's ability to prevent the invasion of pathogens. Pathogens are foreign disease-causing substances, such as bacteria and viruses.

Types of Immunity

There are broadly two types of immunity: active and passive.

Active Immunity:

- It develops from the exposure to a disease thereby triggers the immune system to produce antibodies to that disease.
- Active immunity can be acquired through natural immunity or vaccine-induced immunity.
- Infection-induced immunity is defined as the immune protection in an unvaccinated individual after one or more infections.
- Vaccine-induced immunity is acquired through the introduction of a killed or weakened form of the disease organism through vaccination. For Example COVID-19 vaccines.

Passive immunity:

- It is provided when a person is given antibodies to a disease rather than producing them through his or her own immune system. For example, A newborn baby acquired passive immunity from its mother through the placenta.

Hybrid Immunity

- Hybrid immunity is defined as the immune protection in individuals who have had one or more doses of a COVID-19 vaccine and experienced at least one SARS-CoV-2 infection before or after the initiation of vaccination

Sero prevalence :-

- Exposure to SARS-CoV-2 through infection or vaccination triggers the production of antibodies that can be readily measured in the blood (referred to as 'sero conversion'). If the level of antibodies in the blood exceeds a pre-specified threshold, the individual is said to be 'sero positive'.
- The percentage of sero positive individuals in a population at a given time point is referred to as the sero prevalence of SARS-CoV-2 in that population.

ANSWER WRITING

Q. The Dam Safety Rehabilitation and Improvement Project (DRIP) will pave the way towards dam safety and management which is critical for surrounding areas and downstream communities. Discuss.

Introduction

- India ranks third globally with 5334 large dams in operation and about 411 are under construction. In addition, there are several thousand smaller dams. These dams are vital for ensuring the water security of the Country and these also constitute a major responsibility in terms of asset management and safety.
- In April 2012, the Ministry of Water Resources through the Central Water Commission with an objective to improve safety and operational performance of selected dams, along with institutional strengthening with a systemic management approach, embarked upon the six year Dam Rehabilitation and Improvement Project (DRIP) with World Bank assistance.

Importance of Dam safety and management:

- Dam safety management is important to protect surrounding areas and downstream communities.
- Given the social and the economic dependence on these structures, dams must be maintained in good operating condition and reservoirs managed safely.
- Each year, dozens of lives are lost at dams across the world's waterways. While all dams are potentially dangerous, low-head dams are especially dangerous because the water around them often appears to be tranquil and inviting.
- Constructing dams exposes downstream areas to the risk of catastrophic flooding. In the event the dam fails or water has to be released in an emergency.
- Adopting risk-based decision-making systems for making policy, implementation and management decisions regarding dams are crucial for mitigating this risk. Conducting dam break analysis is a basic requirement for creating such a system. In the existing regulatory system, clearance for constructing new dams requires the builder to conduct a dam break analysis.
- However, there is no standardization in how the dam break analyses are conducted and reported.
- It is also unclear how many projects actually comply with this requirement. There is no statutory requirement for conducting a consequence analysis to estimate the likely loss of life and property, and economic damage in the event of dam failure.
- Existing design standards for dams are not based on the risk created by the dam, but rather on their heights and storage capacities. Further, there is no centralized system for documenting and reporting actual dam failures, which is another crucial component of dam risk mitigation. Putting in place systems for regularly conducting dam break analysis, regular reporting of dam failure events, and ready public availability of such data is a necessary precondition for the development of risk-based decision-making systems to mitigate risk from dams.

Role of DRIP in addressing the Dam safety and management issues

- DRIP has been successful in bringing together dam owners, engineers, scientists, academicians, industries, World Bank as well as renowned dam safety professionals.
- DRIP performs well in the rehabilitation of dams, and other important activities including Design Flood Review, publication of important Guidelines as well as Manuals dealing with Dam Safety Management, preparation of O&M Manuals, Emergency Action Plans etc.
- DRIP has also worked for the development of web based asset management tool i.e. Dam Health And Rehabilitation Monitoring Application (DHARMA), Seismic Hazard Mapping along with development of Seismic Hazard Assessment Information System (SHAISYS).
- DRIP is tasked for the risk assessment of a few selected dams, organization of Dam Safety Conferences, national and international training programmes, technical exposure visits etc.

Conclusion:

- A large number of dams were constructed at a time when the effects of climate change were not fully understood. Their designs have likely not taken into account large changes in precipitation patterns.
- In areas where the intensity of climate change results in a large increase in the intensity of floods, these older dams may not be able to withstand such floods. Further, while the dams themselves may not have significantly changed, risk factors may have. For example, settlements typically tend to grow around dams, because of an expectation of regular water supply.
- Therefore, even without a change in the hazard, the disaster risk may have changed, necessitating an assessment of such dams for upgrades or decommissioning. To address these issues, DRIP has been playing a crucial role since its establishment.

MCQs

1. Consider the following statements.
 1. F.I.R. means any information recorded by an on-duty officer given by an aggrieved person or any other person either in writing or made orally about the commission of a Cognizable Offence.
 2. Zero F.I.R.: With the help of zero F.I.R., a complaint can be lodged at any police station irrespective of the jurisdiction of the Police Station.
 3. It is an amendment that came after Nirbhaya Rape Case.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

 - a) 1 and 2 only
 - b) 2 only
 - c) 2 and 3 only
 - d) **All of the above**
2. What is Hakku patras or title deeds?
 1. A title deed is a property ownership document, and the bearer of the document owns the land.
 2. The title deeds enable owners to avail of bank loans with the said document.
 3. They will also be eligible to buy or sell land to which the title deed is granted by the government.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

 - a) 1 and 2 only
 - b) 2 only
 - c) 2 and 3 only
 - d) **All of the above**
3. Consider the following statements about the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI).
 1. SEBI is a statutory body.
 2. It established on April 12, 1992 in accordance with the provisions of the Securities and Exchange Board of India Act, 1992.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

 - a) 1 only
 - b) 2 only
 - c) **Both 1 and 2**
 - d) Neither 1 nor 2
4. Consider the following statements about Trademark.
 1. A trademark is a sign capable of distinguishing the goods or services of one enterprise from those of other enterprises.
 2. A trademark is valid for 10 years, and can be renewed by the owner indefinitely every 10 years.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

 - a) 1 only
 - b) 2 only
 - c) **Both 1 and 2**

- d) Neither 1 nor 2
5. Which of the following statements is true about Subhash Chandra Bose?
1. Bose was born on 23 January 1897 in Cuttack.
 2. Recently, Prime Minister Narendra Modi attended a ceremony to name 21 largest unnamed islands of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands after Param Vir Chakra awardees on the birth anniversary of Netaji.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- a) 1 only
 - b) 2 only
 - c) **Both 1 and 2**
 - d) Neither 1 nor 2
6. Consider the following statements
1. For the second year in a row, Haryana's tableau for the Republic Day Parade has been selected, with this year's theme being the 'International Gita Mahotsav'.
 2. 'International Gita Mahotsav' was celebrated every year in Kurukshetra "to bring moral and cultural resurgence among the people".
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- a) 1 only
 - b) 2 only
 - c) **Both 1 and 2**
 - d) None of the above
7. Consider the following statements about first Global Tourism Investors Summit:
1. Recently, The Ministry of Tourism is organizing the 1st Global Tourism Investors Summit from 10th to 12th April 2023 at Pragati Maidan in New Delhi.
 2. It is organised under the aegis of India's G20 Presidency.
 3. The aim of the summit is to bring together global business leaders, and policymakers to understand and explore Tourism Business opportunities in India.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- a) 1 and 2 only
 - b) 2 only
 - c) 2 and 3 only
 - d) **All of the above**
8. Consider the following statements.
1. Climate change is predicted to reduce maize and cotton yield in Punjab by 13% and 11% by 2050.
 2. Punjab accounts for around 12% of the total cereals produced in the country.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- a) 1 only
 - b) 2 only
 - c) **Both 1 and 2**
 - d) None of the above
9. Recently published Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) 2022, released by which of the following organization?
- a) **Pratham**
 - b) WEF
 - c) ILO
 - d) WHO
10. 'Schools of Eminence' project, recently launched by which of the following state?
- a) **Punjab**
 - b) Rajasthan
 - c) Odisha
 - d) kerala
11. Consider the following statements
1. A population census was first carried out by the British colonial state in 1872.
 2. Caste census is the procedure of systematically acquiring and recording the caste-wise tabulation of India's population.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- a) 1 only
 - b) 2 only
 - c) **Both 1 and 2**
 - d) None of the above