

Meghalaya

DATA HIGHLIGHTS: THE SCHEDULED CASTES Census of India 2001

Meghalaya has got a very small Scheduled Caste (SC) population of just 11,139 persons to its total population of 2,318,822 as per 2001 Census. The SC population of the state constitutes just 0.5 per cent. It may be relevant to mention that there is no indigenous SC in Meghalaya. The list of SCs of Assam is applicable to Meghalaya. As such, sixteen communities are notified as SCs in the state. The state has registered 22.8 per cent decadal growth of its SC population in 1991-2001.

2.The SC population of Meghalaya being that of migrants from neighbouring states like Assam and West Bengal, exhibits a skewed demographic trend.

Population: Size & Distribution

3.Individual SC wise, Namasudra having 2,754 persons is numerically the largest group among the SCs in Meghalaya, followed by Muchi (2,037), and Jhalo (1,469). These three SCs together constitute 56.2 per cent of the total SC population. The rest of the thirteen SCs are small in size having less than one thousand persons each. Of these, six SCs namely Patni, Hira, Mahara, Jalkeot, Dugla, Lalbegi each have less than hundred population, Statement-1.

Statement-1: Scheduled Caste Population, 2001 Census			
SL. No.	Name of the Major Scheduled Caste	Total population	Proportion to the total SC population
1	All Scheduled Castes	11,139	100%
2	Namasudra	2,754	24.7
3	Muchi	2,037	18.3
4	Jhalo	1,469	13.2
5	Mehtar	726	6.5
6	Bhuinmali	410	3.7
7	Brittial Bania	349	3.1
8	Bansphor	325	2.9
9	Sutradhar	300	2.7
10	Dhupi	188	1.7
11	Kaibartta	113	1.0

4.As regards district-wise distribution, majority of the SC population are concentrated in the West Garo Hills (66.8 per cent) and East Khasi hills (20.9 per cent) districts.

5.The SC population living in rural areas accounts for 63.4 per cent. Thus, 36.6 per cent of the SCs are urban by residence. Individual SC wise of the three main SCs, the highest urban population has been recorded among Muchi (68.5 per cent). Namasudra (80.2 per cent) and Jhalo (92.3 per cent) are primarily living in rural areas of the state.

Sex Ratio

6.The sex ratio among the SCs has been 882, which is very low than the national average for SCs (936). Of the three main SCs, low sex ratio has been recorded among Muchi (898), while among Jhalo (961) and Namasudra (946) this is above the state average for SCs.

7.The child sex ratio (0-6 age group) at 965 for all SCs is above the aggregated figure at national level for SCs (938). The child sex ratio is above a thousand mark has been registered among Jhalo (1060) and Muchi (1043). However, a very low child sex ratio has been registered among Namasudra (888).

Literacy & Educational Level

8.Among SCs, 56.3 per cent of the population is literate, which is above the aggregated national figure for SCs (54.7 per cent). Having male and female literacy of 65.9 per cent and 45.2 per cent respectively, the gender gap in literacy is conspicuous (Statement-2).

SL. No.	Name of the Scheduled Caste	Literacy Rate (7+ years)		
		Total	Male	Female
1	All Scheduled Castes	56.3	65.9	45.2
2	Jhalo	62.8	73.0	52.1
3	Muchi	44.4	56.8	30.3
4	Namasudra	47.1	55.1	38.8

9.The Jhalo has recorded the highest literacy rate of 62.8 per cent. Namasudra (47.1 per cent) and Muchi (44.4 per cent) have low overall literacy.

Work Participation Rate (WPR)

10.The percentage of SC workers to total population (WPR) is 31.3 per cent, which is lower than the aggregated figure for SCs at national level (40.4 per cent). Of the total workers, 85.3 per cent has been recorded as main workers and 14.7 per cent as marginal workers. The female WPR is only 11.7 per cent, which is lower than their male counterparts (48.6 per cent). Majority of workers among males are main workers (91.8 per cent), Statement-3.

Statement-3: Distribution of Total, Main & Marginal Workers among SCs

T/M/F	Total Workers (Percentage to Total Population)	Main Workers (Percentage to Total Workers)	Marginal Workers (Percentage to Total Workers)
Total	3,486 (31.3%)	2,972 (85.3%)	514 (14.7%)
Male	2,875 (48.6%)	2,638 (91.8%)	237 (8.2%)
Female	611 (11.7%)	334 (54.7%)	277 (45.3%)

Category of Workers

11. Agriculture is not the mainstay of economic activities among the SCs in Meghalaya. Merely 4.3 per cent of the total main workers have been registered as cultivators and 7.7 per cent as agricultural labourers. 84 per cent of the SC main workers have been registered as 'other workers' outside agriculture and household industry.

Marital Status

12. As regards marital status, 55.2 per cent of the SC population is never married, 40 per cent currently married, 4.2 per cent widowed, and only 0.6 per cent divorced/separated. Of the three main SCs, the highest percentage of divorced/separated has been recorded among Namasudra (0.5 per cent), followed by Muchi (0.3 per cent) and Jhalo (0.1 per cent).

13. Among SC females, 2 per cent have been recorded as ever married below 18 years of age, the minimum legal age for female marriage. The Namasudra have registered the highest at 3.1 per cent, followed by Muchi (2.3 per cent) and Jhalo (0.3 per cent).

14. The ever married SC males below 21 years – the minimum legal age for marriage – constitute 2.4 per cent of the total population. The Muchi have registered the highest at 4 per cent, while it is the lowest among Namasudra (0.8 per cent).

Religion

15. Of the total of 11,139 SC population returned in 2001 Census 10,553 persons are Hindus, constituting 94.7 per cent. Of the remaining population, 580 persons are Sikhs and only 6 Budhists.
