

## West Bengal

### DATA HIGHLIGHTS: THE SCHEDULED CASTES Census of India 2001

The total population of West Bengal at 2001 Census has been 80,176,197. Of these 18,452,555 persons are Scheduled Castes (SCs), constituting 23 per cent of the total population of the state. The state has registered 14.8 per cent decadal growth of SC population in 1991-2001. There are fifty nine (59) notified SCs, and all have been enumerated in 2001 Census.

#### Population: Size & Distribution

2.The Rajbanshi and Namasudra having more than 32 lakhs population each constitute 35.8 per cent of the total SC population of the state. Bagdi, Pod, Bauri and Chamar each have more than 10 lakhs population. They along with Rajbanshi and Namasudra together constitute 73.9 per cent of the total SCs. The Jalia Kaibartta, Hari, Dhoba, Sunri (excluding Saha), Dom, Lohar, Mal, Kaora, and Tiyar have sizeable population (Statement-1). The rest of the SCs have a comparatively smaller population.

**Statement-1: Population and Proportion of Sixteen Major SCs,  
2001 Census**

SL. No.	Name of the Scheduled Caste	Total population	Proportion to the total SC population
1	All Scheduled Castes	18,452,555	100 %
2	Rajbanshi	3,386,617	18.4
3	Namasudra	3,212,393	17.4
4	Bagdi	2,740,385	14.9
5	Pod	2,216,513	12.0
6	Bauri	1,091,022	5.9
7	Chamar	995,756	5.4
8	Jalia Kaibartta	409,303	2.2
9	Hari	390,619	2.1
10	Dhoba	369,808	2.0
11	Sunri (excluding Saha)	317,543	1.7
12	Dom	316,337	1.7
13	Jhalo Malo	293,714	1.6
14	Lohar	279,582	1.5
15	Mal	273,641	1.5
16	Kaora	263,731	1.4
17	Tiyar	195,340	1.1

3.North Twenty Four Pargana, South Twenty Four Pargana and Barddhaman districts account for one third of the total SC population of the state.

4.Majority of SCs are living in rural areas (84.1 per cent). Individual SC wise, the highest 98 per cent rural population has been recorded among Bhogta, followed by Paliya (97.4 per cent), Koch (97.2 per cent) and Chaupal (97 per cent). Contrary to the

overall situation of the state, Halalkhor (90.9 per cent), Khatik (87.9 per cent), and Pasi (81 per cent) are predominantly urban by their residence.

## Sex Ratio

5.The sex ratio of the total SC population is 949, which is higher than the national average (936) for all SCs. Of the sixteen major SCs, the sex ratio among Bagdi (978), Bauri (973), Kaora (963), Hari (963), Mal (962), Dom (959), Lohar (959), and Jalia Kaibartta (951) is above the state average for all SCs. It is lower than the state average among the remaining seven major SCs; the lowest has been among the Chamar (911).

6.The child sex ratio (0-6 age group) of 958 for SCs in the state is higher than the national average for the same category (938). Jalia Kaibartta (954), Sunri (excluding Saha) (951), Tiyyar (951), Hari (948), Pod (947), and Dhoba (942) have recorded lower child sex ratio as compared to the state average (958).

## Literacy & Educational Level

7.Among all SCs, 59 per cent of the population is literate, which is higher than the aggregated national average for SCs (54.7 per cent). The gender gap in literacy among SCs is quite conspicuous with male and female literacy rates of 70.5 per cent and 46.9 per cent per cent respectively (Statement-2).

8.The Sunri (excluding Saha) with 82.5 per cent literacy is on top of the list. Other SCs who have recorded literacy rate higher than the state average for SCs are Dhoba (73.9 per cent), Pod (72.1 per cent), Namasudra (71.9 per cent), Jalia Kaibartta (64.9 per cent), Tiyyar (62.1 per cent), and Rajbangshi (60.1 per cent). Bauri have the lowest literacy rate (37.5 per cent)

**Statement-2: Literacy Rate among Sixteen Major SCs**

SL. No.	Name of the Scheduled Caste	Literacy Rate (above 7+ years)		
		Total	Male	Female
1	All Scheduled Castes	59.0	70.5	46.9
2	Rajbangshi	60.1	72.3	47.3
3	Namasudra	71.9	80.6	62.8
4	Bagdi	47.7	60.4	34.8
5	Pod	72.1	83.5	59.9
6	Bauri	37.5	51.8	22.7
7	Chamar	47.0	58.6	34.1
8	Jalia Kaibartta	64.9	74.4	54.8
9	Hari	49.5	61.6	36.8
10	Dhoba	73.9	83.5	63.6
11	Sunri (excluding Saha)	82.5	92.7	71.4
12	Dom	46.0	58.9	32.6
13	Jhalo Malo	60.3	68.4	51.7
14	Lohar	46.5	61.1	31.3
15	Mal	39.6	51.9	26.8
16	Kaora	53.0	64.9	40.6
17	Tiyyar	62.1	73.5	50.1

09. The gender gap in literacy has been noted among the major SCs,. It is high (29 percentage points) among Lohar and Bauri, and it is comparatively small (16 percentage points) among Namasudra and Jhalo Malo.

10.A total of 63.3 per cent of SCs in age group 5-14 years has been attending any educational institutions. Of the sixteen major SCs, Sunri (excluding Saha) is on top having 79.9 per cent population attending any educational institutions, whereas Bauri is at the bottom with merely 45.1 per cent.

11.As regards the level of education, 11.6 per cent of total SCs in West Bengal are having educational level above matriculation. The Sunri (excluding Saha) with 29.3 per cent is well ahead of other SCs. On the other hand Bauri (4.7 per cent) and Bagdi (4.9 per cent) have recorded below five per cent of their total literates having this level of education.

### Work Participation Rate (WPR)

12.The percentage of SC workers to total population (WPR) is 38.8 per cent, which is lower than the aggregated figure for SCs at the national level (40.4 per cent). Of the total workers, 74 per cent have been recorded as main workers and 26 per cent as marginal workers. The female WPR has been 22.3 per cent only, which is quite low when compared with male (54.4 per cent). The overwhelming workers among males are main workers (84.8 per cent), while the ratio of main and marginal workers among female is evenly poised (Statement-3).

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

T/M/F	Percentage of Workers		
	Total Workers	Main Workers	Marginal Workers
Total	7,153,225 (38.8 %)	5,291,661 (74 %)	1,861,564 (26 %)
Male	5,148,910 (54.4 %)	4,364,870 (84.8 %)	784,040 (15.2 %)
Female	2,004,315 (22.3 %)	926,791 (46.2 %)	1,077,524 (53.8 %)

13.The Khaira has recorded the highest WPR of 50.5 per cent. On the other hand the Pasi has recorded the lowest WPR of 29.4 per cent among the major SCs.

### Category of Workers

14.Of the total SC main workers, 31.9 per cent has been recorded as agricultural laborers and 20.3 per cent as cultivators. Almost a third of their total main workers among Paliya (38.9 per cent), Rajbanshi (35.1 per cent), Sunri (excluding Saha) (33.3 per cent), and Kadar (29.7 per cent) have been returned as cultivators. On the other

hand Dosadh (2.6 per cent), Turi (4.8 per cent), Dom (5.7 per cent), Kaora (5.9 per cent) are the non-cultivating SCs who have recorded less than six percent of their total main workers as cultivators.

### **Marital Status**

15.As regards to marital status, 48.9 per cent of the SC population is never married, 45.9 per cent currently married, 4.8 per cent widowed, and only 0.5 per cent divorced/ separated.

16.Among all SCs, 2.8 per cent females below 18 years – the minimum legal age for marriage – are ever married. The Kaur (5.1 per cent), Chamar (4.4 per cent), Dom (4.2 per cent) and Mal (3.8 per cent) have recorded high percentage of ever married females below the stipulated age for marriage.

17.The ever married SC males below 21 years – the minimum legal age for their marriage – constitute 1.9 per cent of the total population of that age category. The Ghasi (3.8 per cent) has recorded the highest percentage of ever married males below the stipulated age, followed by Musahar (3.2 per cent), Dom (3.1 per cent), and Chamar (3 per cent).

18.It is noted that Sunri (excluding Saha) has recorded the lowest percentage of ever married females (1.8 per cent) as well as males (1 per cent) below the minimum legal age.

### **Religion**

19.Of the total of 18,452,555 SC populations 18,445,299 are Hindus constituting 99.96 per cent of the total SCs. Of the remaining population, 4,121 persons are Buddhists and are 3,135 Sikhs.

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