

MY LUCKNOW

{ AHEAD OF UP ELECTIONS }

Demand grows for a caste-based census

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LUCKNOW: Ahead of assembly elections in around half-a-dozen states, including Uttar Pradesh, early next year, several political parties have joined hands to demand a caste-based census and sub-categorisation of castes in the country, putting the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in an apparent dilemma.

Uttar Pradesh, the politically most crucial state, is home to as many as 79 castes belonging to the Other Backward Classes (OBCs) and 66 scheduled castes (SCs) and sub-castes. However, only a handful of them like Yadavs, Kurmis, Lodhs, Rajbharas, Mauryas and Kushwahs among the OBCs and Jatavs, Pasis, Valmikis and Koris among the SCs have been able to get political visibility with a lion's share in political power, economic resources and government jobs.

The OBCs and the SCs together account for around 60-70% of UP's population. The tabulation of the SC-ST population is done every 10 years when the census is held in the country but the last caste-wise enumeration was carried out in 1931 and the same data is taken into account for various purposes even today. Around 40-50% of UP's population is estimated to be OBC while the SC population was counted at 20.7% in the 2011 census. And in the case of SCs and STs, too, sub-categorisation of castes is not done.

On August 23, an 11-member delegation led by Bihar chief minister Nitish Kumar met Prime Minister Narendra Modi to press the long-pending demand for counting the OBCs in the census scheduled to be held shortly.

The old demand was revived in July this year after the Centre informed the Lok Sabha that it would not enumerate caste-wise population, except those for the SCs and STs.

Political parties' stand

The Samajwadi Party (SP) in UP has been the most vocal in raising the demand for the caste enumeration with the party having its eyes firmly fixed on OBCs, apart from consolidating the Yadavs, its core vote bank, for the 2022 assembly election.

"A caste-wise tabulation of the census is necessary to achieve the objective of social justice because without knowing the numerical strength of various castes it is not possible for governments to plan and execute

welfare policies for them in the right way," SP spokesman Rajendra Chaudhary argued.

"It is in this context that our leader Akhilesh Yadav has often insisted on the 'jiski jitni sankhya bhari, uski utni hissedari' (the more numerically dominant a caste is, the more share it should have in the country's resources) formula of social justice," he added.

Other small regional outfits, including Anupriya Patel's Apna Dal (Sonehal), Om Prakash Rajbhar's Suheldev Bharatiya Samaj Party (S BSP), Sanjay Nishad's Nishad Party, Keshav Dev Maurya's Mahan Dal and Babu Singh Kushwaha's Jan Adhikar Party that are led by OBC leaders all vocally support the demand for the caste-based census.

Apparently, aware of the importance of caste politics in UP, the Congress, too, has backed the demand. It also claimed that it was during the last UPA government that the work of the socio-economic caste census was carried out.

"The UPA government got the caste-based census done in 2011 but the BJP that came to power in 2014 did not publish the caste data although the party demanded caste-based census when it was in Opposition," UP Congress chief Ajay Kumar 'Lallu' said.

The Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) and the Rashtriya Lok Dal (RLD) are probably the other important political players that are yet to take a clear stand on this issue.

BSP state president Bhim Rajbhar refused to comment on the issue while RLD leaders, including party chief Jayant Chaudhary, also refrained from taking a stand so far. The RLD is the SP's potential ally for the assembly polls 2022 but does not seem to be on the same page as far as the demand for caste-based census is concerned.

Culmination of social churning

The growing demand for the caste-based census by many

political parties, according to political scientist Shashikant Pandey, is a step closer towards culmination of the social churning and the "second political upsurge" that began with the emergence of OBC leaders like Mulayam Singh Yadav and Kalyan Singh in UP and Lalu Prasad Yadav and Nitish Kumar in Bihar.

"I see the social churning taking a concrete shape now with the regional parties rooted in castes being in a position to have their say in political affairs and dictating terms to national parties like the BJP and the Congress," he said. Pandey is the head of the department of political science in the Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar University, Lucknow.

Caste tabulation, a double-edged sword

The caste enumeration, according to Pandey, may, however, turn to be a double-edged sword. "The caste data that the caste-based census can yield may help governments in planning and executing welfare schemes in a better way benefiting the most backward and deprived castes that have been marginalised till date," he said.

"But it has a flip side too. And this lies in the fact that once the exact numbers of OBCs and SCs are known and made public following the caste census, it may further hit the interests of the marginalised castes if their numerical strength is found to be lower than what it is presumed today since in that situation resources will be distributed as per the numerical strength of castes and hence the marginalised may become even more marginalised," Pandey added.

Such a situation, he cautioned, may also lead to caste conflict within the OBCs and SCs and could also further intensify the caste tension and animosity in the society in general.

"It will be very interesting to watch the after-effects of the caste-based census if it takes place," he observed.

Getting 50% quota cap removed real motive?

Observers say though many political parties are demanding the caste-based census in the name of social justice, their real motive, according to them, is to get the 50% cap on reservation removed or raised after the actual caste-wise data is available in the public domain.

"The next logical demand after the caste census is held will be for the enactment of a law to do away with the 50% cap ceiling put by the Supreme Court on reservation," Pandey said. Agreeing with him, social scientist Rajesh Mishra said, "Reservation for OBCs will have to be revised, sooner or later. The provision for 10% quota for the poor among the upper castes has opened the Pandora's Box and allayed the legitimacy of the 50% limit."

BJP's dilemma

Although the Centre informed the Lok Sabha last month that it would not go for caste enumeration, both Pandey and Mishra agree that it may not be possible for the BJP government at the Centre to ignore any longer, the demand for the caste-based census considering the growing importance of OBC politics, particularly in UP.

"Notwithstanding political divisions among the OBC castes/classes, no political party can afford their resentment on the issue, especially in the light of the upcoming assembly polls in UP," Mishra said.

Avoiding a direct reply, UP BJP spokesman Sameer Singh said, "The Justice Rohini Commission is already working on the sub-categorisation of OBCs and once the commission presents its report, the Central government will take a call to further promote the interests of OBCs." The BJP government, he said, gave the Constitutional status to the National Commission for Backward Classes and decided only recently to implement 27% OBC quota in NEET.

The BJP, according to the observers, is reluctant for a caste-based census because such an exercise is fraught with the danger of leading to a situation that was witnessed when the Mandal Commission report was dug out and implemented in 1990 and this situation will harm the BJP's goal of uniting and mobilising Hindus. "The BJP and its parent organisation the RSS have always made a case for unity of Hindus and any caste divisions that the caste enumeration may further intensify will hamper the goal of Hindu unity. This explains the BJP's dilemma over whether to accept or not the demand for the caste-based census and sub-categorisation in the country," Pandey said.

Woman's father, kin shot dead during panchayat to settle marital dispute

KANPUR: A woman's father and a kin were allegedly shot dead by her father-in-law during a panchayat called to settle her marital dispute in Etawah's Jaswant Nagar on Thursday. The victims were identified as former serviceman, Ram Shankar, 60, and Kailash Yadav, 55, said police.

Four people, including the woman's father-in-law Sarvesh Yadav, had been taken into custody and efforts were being made to arrest the others, said Kapil Dev, SP (city) Etawah. A year and a half back, Ram Shankar's daughter, Neha, was married to Shivam Yadav who lives with his family in Jankipuram locality in Jaswant Nagar. However, some marital issues

cropped up between them. Neha's family alleged that she was being victimised. In order to settle the issues, Ram Shankar and some of his relatives went to Sarvesh's house on Thursday. They spoke to Shivam's family members and came out of the house after a short while when someone opened indiscriminate fire at them from the rooftop. Kailash's son Rajesh Yadav alleged that he saw Neha's father-in-law Sarvesh Yadav opening fire. Ram Shankar and Kailash Yadav were rushed to the hospital where they were declared dead on arrival. The SP (city) said the police were registering a case of murder. HTc

DOCs REMOVE BUNCH OF HAIR WEIGHING 2KG FROM GIRL'S STOMACH

LUCKNOW: Doctors of Balrampur hospital operated upon a 17-year-old girl and took out a bunch of hair from her stomach weighing about 2 kg on Thursday. She was suffering from trichobezoars, a mass of undigested hair within the gastrointestinal tract and she weighed 32 kilograms when she reached the hospital.

"The girl had been eating hair due to mental illness for approximately 10 years," said Dr SR Samaddar, who led the operating team. "She will be fine in a

RO SARB, Allahabad. Bank of Baroda. Sale Notice For Sale of Movable/Immovable Properties. "APPENDIX- IV-A [See Proviso to Rule 6 (2) & 8 (6)]". E-Auction sale notice for sale of Movable/immovable assets under Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso of rule 6(2) & 8(6) of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002. Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the borrower(s) and guarantor(s) that the below described Movable/Immovable Properties mortgaged/charged to the secured creditor, the symbolic possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of Bank of Baroda secured creditor, will be sold on "As is where is, As is what is", and "Whatever there is" basis for recovery of below mentioned Accounts. The details of Borrower/s/Guarantor/s/Secured Assets/s/Dues/Reserve Price/E-auction date & Time, EMD and Bid Increase Amount are mentioned below: Date & Time of Auction: 23.09.2021, 02:00 PM to 06:00 PM Last Date & Time of EMD: 22.09.2021, 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) shall be paid online through i.e. NEFT/Transfer (After generation of Challan from (https://www.msctecomm.com) in bidders Global EMD Wallet. Table with 5 columns: SI No., Name & Address of the Borrowers/Guarantors, Give short description of the immovable property with known encumbrances, if any, Total Dues, Date & Time of Property Inspection & Deposit of EMD, Reserve Price /EMD/ Bid Increase Amount. Items 1 through 10 are listed.

Medanta begins liver transplant services. CMS student bags award. LUCKNOW: Medanta Hospital started the OPD for liver transplants on Thursday and operations will soon be conducted here, said Dr AS Soan, chairman of Medanta Institute of liver transplant and regenerative, in a press conference held here on Thursday. Dr AS Soan, Dr Abhay Verma, director and hepatologist of Medanta Lucknow, will be present for the OPD. Dr Soan said the cost of a liver transplant would be approximately ₹20 to ₹23 lakh for a patient getting liver transplant surgery done in Lucknow. Dr Soan informed on the first day of the liver transplant programme OPD 125 patients were screened. CMS student bags award LUCKNOW: Amish Ahmed Beg, a student of Class XII of City Montessori School, Gomti Nagar Campus I has been conferred 'AP Scholar with Honour' award by College Board, the USA for his exemplary achievement, scoring a perfect 5 in 4 subjects. Chardham yatra package LUCKNOW: Modair has introduced an all-inclusive Chardham Yatra package for the devotees who want to visit Yamunotri, Gangotri, Kedarnath and Badrinath. Besides meals and accommodation, the Chardham Yatra Package includes air transport, pick up and drop off from Jolly Grant airport, Dehradun and exclusive helicopter services to the sacred dhams. HTc

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