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Title: Further discussion on need to lay down specific parameters for conducting the Census, 2011 raised by Shri Ananth Kumar on 5 may, 2010 (Discussion concluded).

MADAM SPEAKER: Now, we shall take up item no. 25 – Discussion under Rule 193. Now, I would request the hon. Home Minister to give the reply.

...(Interruptions)

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): Madam Speaker, we have had ...(Interruptions)

MADAM SPEAKER: We have moved on to another item now. Nothing will go on record except what the hon. Home Minister is saying.

(Interruptions) अ€! *

श्री लालू प्रसाद (सारण): जनगणना कार्यक्रम पर हुई कल चर्चा का जवाब मंत्री जी देंगे।

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: We are replying. Please sit down. ...(Interruptions)

अध्यक्ष महोदया: लालू जी आप बैठ जाएं। मंत्री जी जवाब दे रहे हैं।

श्री लालू प्रसाद : हिन्दी में बोलिए।

श्री पी. चिदम्बरम: मैं तमिल में बोलूंगा।

Madam Speaker, this has been a useful and instructive discussion. It was titled "Short Duration Discussion on need to lay down specific parameters for conducting the Census, 2011." It was spread over two days and a large number of hon. Members from all sections of the House have spoken. I thank them profusely.

The central issue of the debate, as expected, was whether information on the caste of the respondent should be collected in the on-going Census 2011.

Before I respond to that issue, I wish to explain a few aspects of Census 2011 and the National Population Register which, I believe, will be useful to all hon. Members, and I would request the hon. Members to bear with me just for a few minutes.

The census is done under the authority of the Census Act, 1948. Census 2011 will be the fifteenth national census since 1872 and the seventh since Independence. Population census is the total process of collecting demographic, economic and social data. What is published as the Census data are only aggregates; the information relating to the individual is confidential and not shared with anyone or any authority. Census 2011 will be conducted in two phases – the first phase is called the House listing and Housing census and the second phase is called the Population Enumeration. The questions to be canvassed during the two phases were decided on the basis of suggestions made during the Data Users' Conference, experience of past censuses and the recommendations of the Technical Advisory Committee comprising eminent demographers, statisticians, social scientists and senior officers representing different Ministries and Departments of the Central Government.

The Citizenship Act is a separate law. The Citizenship Act was amended in 2003 and the Citizenship (Registration of Citizens and Issue of National Identity Cards) Rules, 2003 were notified on December 10, 2003. Rule 2(l) defines "population register". It is the register containing details of persons usually residing in a village or rural area or town or ward or demarcated area within a ward in a town or urban area. Rule 2(k) defines "National Register of Indian Citizens" as the register containing details of Indian citizens living in India and outside India. Rule 2(n) defines "State Register of Indian citizens" as the register containing details of Indian citizens usually residing in the State. Sub-rule (1) of Rule 3 mandates the Registrar General to establish and maintain the National Register of Indian Citizens and sub-rule (4) thereof directs the preparation of a Population Register. Rule 4 specifies the steps to be taken during the enumeration. One of the steps is house to house enumeration for collecting specified particulars relating to each family and individual including the citizenship status.

Sub-rule 3 of Rule 4 requires that the particulars collected of every family and individual in the Population Register shall be verified and scrutinised; and under Sub-rule 4, in case of doubtful citizenship the individual of the family shall be informed

immediately after the verification process is over. Therefore, under the Rules made and notified in 2003, the Rules require preparation of both the Population Register and the Register of Citizens.

It will be obvious that the Register of Citizens will be a subset of the Population Register. This should clarify why information is being collected for preparation of the National Population Register and how the Register of Citizens will be established and maintained thereafter.

The two exercises, Madam, that are underway are Census, 2011 and the exercise of preparing the National Population Register. The fact that both exercises are being undertaken by the Registrar General of India may have led to a certain lack of understanding of the objects and purposes of the two exercises. Nevertheless it is important to note the distinction between the Census, 2011 and the NPR.

I shall now turn to Census, 2011. As I said, this is the 15th Census. The information relating to the caste of each member of the household was last collected and published in detail in 1931. After Independence, as a matter of policy, the question relating to caste, other than the Scheduled Caste and the Scheduled Tribe, was not included. An hon. Member has quoted Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. What he said is well known to all of us. Caste was not included in the last Census of 2001 also.

I may point out that the records show that an attempt was made by the Ministry of Social Justice to include caste as one of the questions that should be canvassed during the 2001 Census. However, the Government of the day – the NDA Government – did not take a decision to that effect and maintained the policy that has been in force since 1951.

There are two questions here. The first question is, 'whether it is desirable to enumerate the caste of each member of the household.' The second question is, assuming that it is desirable to do so, 'is the Census the vehicle to carry out the enumeration?'

I do not wish to enter into a debate on the first question. There can be different views on the subject. We must respect each other's views. In fact, the hon. Members who have said that "caste is a reality" also acknowledged that caste is a divisive factor and that we are nowhere near establishing a casteless society...(*Interruptions*)

श्री मुलायम सिंह यादव (मैनपुरी): यह गलत है, यह किसी ने नहीं कहा, आप नाम बताइये। आप गलत-बयानी मत कीजिए। ...(व्यवधान)

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: Please sit down. A number of Members have spoken...(*Interruptions*)

It is the second question that is relevant for the present discussion. The Registrar General has pointed out a number of logistic and practical difficulties in canvassing the question of caste while conducting the Census...(*Interruptions*)

श्री लालू प्रसाद : ऐसा किसी ने नहीं कहा।...(व्यवधान)

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: Please listen to the whole reply Mulayam Singhji...(*Interruptions*) Please listen to the whole reply Laluji.

The Registrar General has pointed out a number of logistic and practical difficulties in canvassing the question of caste while conducting the Census. In this connection, we must keep the distinction between 'enumeration' on the one hand and 'compilation, analysis and dissemination' on the other. It has been pointed out that Census is meant to collect 'observational data'. Twenty-one lakh enumerators, mostly primary school teachers, have been selected and trained. They have been trained to ask the question and record the answer as returned by the respondent. The enumerator is not an investigator or verifier. And, it must be clearly understood...(*Interruptions*) Let me complete my reply. Then I will answer your questions...(*Interruptions*)

श्री शरद यादव (मधेपुरा): आप मुझे की बात कीजिए, यह क्या एक्सप्लेन कर रहे हो।...(व्यवधान)

MADAM SPEAKER: Let him complete his reply.

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: Sharad Yadavji, I will answer your all questions. First, let me complete my reply...(*Interruptions*)

श्री शरद यादव : जिस विषय पर रिप्लाय है, उस पर रिप्लाय दीजिए।...(व्यवधान)

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: Madam, Shardji, should allow me to finish my reply.

MADAM SPEAKER: Yes, please.

SHRI P.CHIDAMBARAM: I am willing to answer their questions.

In 2001, as I pointed out, you were a Member of the Government, which did not by one reason or the other take the decision. Let me complete my reply. When I end my reply, I am sure, you will be satisfied. Then, I will answer your questions. You do not know what I am going to say.

Let me complete my reply.

21 lakh enumerators, mostly primary school teachers, have been selected and trained. They have been trained to ask the question and record the answer as returned by the respondent. The enumerator is not an investigator or verifier. And, it must be clearly understood that the enumerator has no training or expertise to classify the answer as OBC or otherwise. As hon. Members are aware, there is a Central list of OBCs and State-specific list of OBCs. Some States do not have a list of OBCs; some States have a list of OBCs and a sub-set called Most Backward Classes. (Interruptions)

Wait a minute. Let me complete my reply. I heard you patiently. Give me five more minutes.

The Registrar General has also pointed out that there are certain open-ended categories in the lists such as orphans and destitute children. Names of some castes are found in both the list of Scheduled Castes and list of OBCs. Scheduled Castes converted to Christianity or Islam are also treated differently in different States. The status of a migrant from one State to another and the status of children of inter-caste marriage, in terms of caste classification, are also vexed questions.

The Registrar General has also pointed out that assuming that it is desirable to canvass the question of caste, further issues will arise regarding the methodology, avoiding phonetic and spelling errors, stage of canvassing, maintaining the integrity of the enumeration, doing an accurate headcount of the population etc.

Let me reiterate that the main objective of the population census is to do an accurate *de facto* headcount of the usual residents in India on the deemed date i.e. 00.00 hours on March 1, 2011. Based on universally applied scientific demographic tools, we have an estimate of what the population will be on that day. However, it is necessary and desirable to make an accurate headcount. Hence, the Census. I am sure hon. Members will agree with me when I say that nothing should be done that may affect the accuracy of the headcount or the integrity of the population census.

Now, hon. Members, the discussion in this House over the last two days has thrown up a number of arguments and reasons for canvassing the question of caste. I acknowledge your arguments and reasons. The Government is already seized of the matter. The views of the hon. Members will certainly be a valuable guide to the Government.

I hear the hon. Members loudly and clearly. Lalu Prasad Ji, I hear you loudly and clearly. As I understand the hon. Members, what they want is that the question of caste must be canvassed. That means, to the best of my understanding, the enumerator should record whatever answer the respondent gives to the question, 'what is your caste?' At that point of time, it is simply collection of the information. According to hon. Members, it is desirable to collect the information. The Government will certainly keep in mind the views of the hon. Members.

I assure the House that the Government will give due weight to all aspects of the issue that was discussed in this House during the last two days.

श्री दारा सिंह चौहान (गोसी): आपने स्पष्ट नहीं किया है, ... (व्यवधान)

अध्यक्ष महोदया : आप शांत रहिए।

वेई (व्यवधान)

श्री लालू प्रसाद : आप इस विषय पर विस्तार से बहस करइए। ... (व्यवधान)

अध्यक्ष महोदया : आप बैठ जाएं।

वेई (व्यवधान)

श्री मुलायम सिंह यादव (मैनपुरी): यह तरीका गलत है, पूरे देश को जगाना पड़ेगा। ... (व्यवधान)

13.24 hrs.

At this stage Shri Sharad Yadav, Shri Mulayam Singh, Shri Lalu Prasad and some other hon. Members came and stood on the floor near the Table.

अध्यक्ष महोदया : आप कृपया बैठ जाएं।

â€¦(लवधान)

...(Interruptions)

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: Madam, if you will allow me.....(Interruptions)

At this stage, Shri Sharad Yadav, Shri Mulayam Singh Yadav, Shri Lalu Prasad and some other hon. Members went back to their seats

...(Interruptions)

MADAM SPEAKER: Please sit down.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: I have already clarified. At three places in my statement I have said that Government is already seized of the matter. The views of hon. Members will certainly be a valuable guide to the Government....(Interruptions)

Listen to me, please. Do the courtesy of listening to me, please. As I said, I have understood what you say. The question 'what is your caste' must be asked and answer must be recorded. It is simply a collection of information. You have said it is desirable to collect the information. I have said, Government will certainly keep in mind your views and I assure the House that the Government – means I am not alone, the Cabinet – will give due weight to all aspects of the issue discussed in this House. ...(Interruptions)

13.27 hrs

At this stage, Shri Akhilesh Yadav and some other hon. Members came and stood on the floor near the Table

...(Interruptions)

MADAM SPEAKER: The House stands adjourned to meet again at 2.30 p.m.

The Lok Sabha then adjourned till Thirty Minutes past Fourteen of the Clock.

The Lok Sabha re-assembled at Thirty Minutes past Fourteen of the Clock.

(Madam Speaker in the Chair)

THE PRIME MINISTER (DR. MANMOHAN SINGH): Madam, the hon. Home Minister has made a detailed statement on the issue of Census, 2011. I am aware of the views of hon. Members belonging to all sections of the House. I assure you that the Cabinet will take a decision shortly.

श्री लालू प्रसाद : माननीय अध्यक्ष महोदया, माननीय प्रधान मंत्री जी, नेता सदन और आप पर सदन का पूरा भरोसा है। आज आपके आवासन देने के बाद हमने अपना एजिटेशन रोक दिया।

श्री मुलायम सिंह यादव : माननीय प्रधान मंत्री जी और नेता सदन दोनों को बहुत-बहुत धन्यवाद और बधाई। मुझे विश्वास है कि आम तौर पर जो देश की बड़ी तादाद है, आप उनकी भावनाओं का आदर करेंगे और बहुत से उच्च जातियों के जिन लोगों ने समर्थन दिया है, उन्हें भी मैं विशेष बधाई देता हूँ।

श्री शरद यादव : अध्यक्ष महोदया, आज पिछले साठ वर्ष का जो एक तनाव था, उसका आज आपने और नेता सदन ने समाधान निकाला है। मैं पूरी तरह से आपके इस बयान का स्वागत करता हूँ। इस देश के करोड़ों गरीब लोग साठ वर्षों से इस मांग को उठाते रहे, जिसका आज आपने बड़े दिल का परिचय देकर समाधान निकाला। इसलिए हम आपका सलाम के साथ बहुत-बहुत धन्यवाद करते हैं।

श्री मुलायम सिंह यादव : हम सोनिया जी का भी धन्यवाद करते हैं।

श्री गोपीनाथ मुंडे (बीड): अध्यक्ष महोदया, आजादी के बाद पहली बार ओबीसी की जनगणना की मांग थी। माननीय प्रधान मंत्री जी और सदन के नेता ने कई दिनों से इस बारे में बहुत तनाव था, उसे उन्होंने आज हल किया और इस पर फैसला किया। इसलिए मैं सरकार का अभिनंदन और स्वागत करता हूँ।

श्री दारा सिंह चौहान (घोसी): माननीय अध्यक्ष जी, मैं माननीय प्रधान मंत्री, नेता सदन, गृह मंत्री जी और उनके सभी सहयोगियों को अपनी पार्टी की तरफ से धन्यवाद देता हूँ। कल से संसद में जो तनाव बना हुआ था, यूपीए की चैयरपर्सन, श्रीमती सोनिया गांधी जी के दिशा-निर्देश में यह तय हुआ है, उसके लिए मैं श्रीमती सोनिया जी और आप सभी को बधाई देता हूँ।

श्री लालू प्रसाद : हम सोनिया जी को भी धन्यवाद देते हैं।

SHRI T.R. BAALU (SRIPERUMBUDUR): Madam, on behalf of my Party and my Leader Dr. Kalaignar M. Karunanidhi, who strongly has a conviction towards social justice, thank the hon. Prime Minister of India as well as Madam Sonia ji for having assured this august House to have the census on caste-basis. We profoundly thank the Leader of the House and also all the Members of the House. Thank you very much.

कोयला मंत्रालय के राज्य मंत्री तथा सांख्यिकी और कार्यक्रम कार्यान्वयन मंत्रालय के राज्य मंत्री (श्री श्रीप्रकाश जायसवाल): अध्यक्ष महोदया, कल से आज तक जो थोड़ा बहुत सेंसेज़ को लेकर इल्यूज़न था,

आज माननीय प्रधानमंत्री जी ने जिस तरह का बयान दिया है, मैं उनका स्वागत करता हूँ और श्रीमती सोनिया गांधी जी का स्वागत एवं अभिनन्दन करता हूँ। निश्चित रूप से सारे देश में जो भ्रम उत्पन्न हो रहा था, वह इस बयान से दूर हो गया है।

SHRI GURUDAS DASGUPTA: Madam, I profusely thank the hon. Prime Minister. ...(*Interruptions*) It is because they have taken a decision so expeditiously. It appears that the Government is becoming alive towards the demands and opinion of the Members of the House. It is a good sign, but this example should be followed in other cases also.

DR. M. THAMBIDURAI (KARUR): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I thank, on behalf of my Party and my Leader, for the gesture shown by the hon. Prime Minister for considering the sentiments of this House. It is because most of the Members insisted that the census must be taken on caste-basis as caste is very important for giving benefit to the backward classes. Therefore, I thank the hon. Prime Minister for this.

श्री नामा नानेश्वर राव (स्वममाम): Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. अध्यक्ष महोदया, जिस तरह से प्रधानमंत्री जी ने एग्जी किया था, पिछले तीन-चार दिन से हम सब अपोज़ीशन लीडर्स और साथ ही हाऊस में जो डिबेट हुआ था, उससे एग्जी किया है, मैं उसके लिये धन्यवाद करना चाहता हूँ। इसके बारे में हमारे लीडर श्री चन्द्रबाबू बायडू ने प्रधानमंत्री जी को एक लैटर भी लिखा था। श्री एन.टी.रामाराव शुरु से तेलुगु देशम पार्टी के फाऊंडर रहे थे। उन्होंने पहली दफा बैकवर्ड क्लास के लिए रिजर्वेशन आंध्र प्रदेश में किया था और आज के दिन वही रिजर्वेशन चल रहा है। उसी तरह से सेंसेज़ में भी उन लोगों को काउंट किया जा रहा

है, इसलिये हमारी पार्टी की तरफ से हम प्रधानमंत्री जी का धन्यवाद करना चाहते हैं।

श्री शरीफुद्दीन शारिक (बारामुला): महोदय, दो दिन तक जो जबरदस्त, जोरदार बहस हुई।

MADAM SPEAKER: Mr. Shariq, you may kindly associate yourself.

श्री शरीफुद्दीन शारिक: यस मैडम। प्रधानमंत्री साहब और सरकार ने जिस संजीदगी से इसे लिया और जवाब दिया, मैं वज़ीर-आज़म को, सरकार को, यूपीए की वेयरपर्शन को खुसुसी मुबारकबाद देता हूँ। मैं आप सबसे मुबारकबाद का खुद को मुस्तहिक समझता हूँ कि हमारे एक दूर-दराज के गांव में, जो मिलिटेन स्ट्राइक गांव था, एक टीचर का गरीब बच्चा, जिसके बाप को आठ साल पहले मिलिटेंटों ने कत्ल किया, वह आज आईपीएस में सारे हिन्दुस्तान में नम्बर वन आया है।

डॉ. संजीव गणेश नाईक (ठाणे): महोदय, मैं प्रधानमंत्री जी को, आदरणीया सोनिया गांधी मैडम को और सदन के नेता जी को एनसीपी पार्टी की ओर से धन्यवाद करता हूँ। दो दिन से लोग सोच रहे थे, हमारे सदन के लोग भी सोच रहे थे कि क्या होगा, लेकिन यह आम जनता की सरकार है, उन्होंने सही सोचा है, इसलिए मैं सरकार को धन्यवाद करता हूँ। इसी प्रकार से आगे आने वाले दिनों में वे सभी लोगों को खुश रखेंगे, इसके लिए मैं सरकार को धन्यवाद करता हूँ।

श्री माणिकराव होडल्या गावित (नन्दुरवार): महोदय, आपने मुझे मौका दिया, इसके लिए मैं बहुत आभारी हूँ। हमारे देश में अनुसूचित जाति, जनजाति के लिए जो जनगणना हो रही है, उसमें नाम तो आते हैं, लेकिन उसमें जाति का नाम भी लिखा जाना चाहिए। मैं प्रधानमंत्री जी का और हमारी नेता श्रीमती सोनिया गांधी जी और सम्पूर्ण सरकार का मैं बहुत-बहुत आभार व्यक्त करता हूँ। इसमें अनुसूचित जाति, जनजाति के जो लोग हैं, उसमें जो गैर जनजाति में आना चाहते हैं, उसकी तरफ भी इसमें ध्यान दिया जाये। यह मेरा आपके माध्यम से सरकार से आग्रह है।

SHRI MOHAMMED E.T. BASHEER (PONNANI): On behalf of my Party, I express my happiness, and congratulate the hon. Prime Minister, Madam Sonia Gandhi, and the UPA Government for taking such a bold decision for collection of caste data of OBCs in the Census.

SHRI SUDIP BANDYOPADHYAY (KOLKATA UTTAR): Madam, when Laluji, Mulayamji and Sharad Yadavji were not happy after the speech of Shri Chidambaram and when Shrimati Soniaji called them, I was hundred per cent sure that the matter would be sorted out. So, it has been done accordingly and we are all happy. We also fully appreciate the hon. Prime Minister's announcement and we fully endorse it.