

Assam

DATA HIGHLIGHTS: THE SCHEDULED TRIBES Census of India 2001

The total population of Assam in 2001 Census has been 26,655,528. Of them, 3,308,570 persons are Scheduled Tribes (STs), constituting 12.4 per cent of the total population of the state. The state has registered 15.1 per cent decadal growth of ST population in 1991-2001. There are total twenty three (23) notified STs in the state. Of these, no population of Pawi has been returned in 2001 Census. Pawi is a small community of Mizoram.

Population: Size & Distribution

2. Among STs, Boro represents nearly half of the total ST population of the state (40.9 per cent). Miri (17.8 per cent), Mikir (10.7 per cent), Rabha (8.4 per cent), Kachari (i.e. Sonowal Kachari) (7.1 per cent), and Lalung (5.2 per cent) are the other major STs each having 5 per cent or above of total STs. Along with Boro they constitute 90 per cent ST population of the state. Besides them, Dimasa constitutes 3.4 per cent and Deori 1.2 per cent of the total ST population of the state. The rest of the Scheduled Tribes are very small in their population size (Statement-1).

Statement-1: Population of Major STs, 2001 Census

SL. No.	Name of the Scheduled Tribe	Total population	Proportion to the total ST population
1	All Scheduled Tribes	3,308,570	100%
2	Boro	1,352,771	40.9
3	Miri	587,310	17.8
4	Mikir	353,513	10.7
5	Rabha	277,517	8.4
6	Kachari	235,881	7.1
7	Lalung	170,622	5.2
8	Dimasa	110,976	3.4
9	Deori	41,161	1.2

3. The ST population in Assam is predominantly rural with 95.3 per cent rural and only 4.7 per cent urban population. Of the eight major STs, Dimasa have recorded the highest 10.4 per cent urban population, followed by Mikir (8.3 per cent). On the other hand Miri have recorded the lowest 1.8 per cent urban population.

4. North Cachar Hills and Karbi Anglong the two autonomous hill districts of Assam are predominantly tribal housing two important STs of Assam – the Dimasa and Mikir (now recognized as Karbi). As per 2001 Census, the North Cachar Hills has got the highest 68.3 per cent ST population, followed by Karbi Anglong (55.7 per cent). In absolute number Karbi Anglong is on top sharing 13.7 per cent of the total ST population

of the state. Hailakandi, Karimganj, and Cachar districts have a negligible presence of ST population (Statement-2).

Statement-2: District wise ST population

SL. No	State/ District	Percentage of STs to total population of the State/ District	Percentage of STs to total State's ST population
1	ASSAM	12.4	100%
2	Kokrajhar	33.7	9.2
3	Dhubri	2.0	1.0
4	Goalpara	16.0	4.0
5	Bongaigaon	12.2	3.3
6	Barpeta	7.5	3.7
7	Kamrup	9.9	7.6
8	Nalbari	17.6	6.1
9	Darrang	16.6	7.6
10	Marigaon	15.6	3.6
11	Nagaon	3.9	2.7
12	Sonitpur	11.6	5.9
13	Lakhimpur	23.5	6.3
14	Dhemaji	47.3	8.2
15	Tinsukia	5.8	2.0
16	Dibrugarh	7.5	2.7
17	Sibsagar	3.9	1.3
18	Jorhat	12.3	3.7
19	Golaghat	9.9	2.8
20	Karbi Anglong	55.7	13.7
21	North Cachar Hills	68.3	3.9
22	Cachar	1.3	0.6
23	Karimganj	0.3	0.1
24	Hailakandi	0.2	0.0

Sex Ratio

5.The overall sex ratio of ST population is 972, which is below the national average for STs (978). Of the eight major STs, Lalung have recorded the highest sex ratio of 985, while it is the lowest among Dimasa (951). The state has recorded child sex ratio (0-6 age group) of 962, which is again lower than the national average (973) for STs. The child sex ratio among Kachari (Sonowal) of 945 is the lowest, followed by Lalung (949).

Literacy & Educational Level

6.The ST population of Assam has recorded 62.5 per cent literacy rate, which is well above the national average for STs (47.1 per cent). The male and female literacy

rate of 72.3 per cent and 52.4 per cent respectively show that women are lagging behind by 19.9 percentage points.

7.Kachari (Sonowal) with 81.4 per cent literacy rate are well ahead of others. On the other hand it is low among Mikir (53.7 per cent). Among Kachari (Sonowal), the female literacy rate of 74.4 per cent is quite close to male (88.2 per cent). Gender gap in literacy among Miri, however, has been recorded to be the highest. With 71.4 per cent male and 48.3 per cent female literacy, the Miri women are lagging way behind by as much as 23.1 per cent points (Statement-3).

Statement-3: Literacy Rate among Major STs

SL. No	Name of the Scheduled Tribe	Literate Rate (7 years and above)		
		Total	Male	Female
1	All Scheduled Tribes	62.5	72.3	52.4
2	Dimasa	59.6	69.4	49.3
3	Mikir	53.7	64.1	43.0
4	Boro	61.3	71.4	51.1
5	Deori	76.2	84.8	67.5
6	Kachari	81.4	88.2	74.4
7	Lalung	61.8	72.0	51.6
8	Miri	60.1	71.4	48.3
9	Rabha	66.7	76.2	57.0

8.A two third (65.4 per cent) of the ST population in the age group 5-14 years has been attending schools or any other educational institutions. Of the eight major STs, it is the highest among Kachari (Sonowal) with 80.2 per cent of their population of this age group attending educational institutions. In addition Deori (79.8 per cent), Rabha (70.2 per cent), and Boro (68.2 per cent) have also registered this proportion above state average for STs, while Mikir have registered below the state average (54.9 per cent). Almost half of the Mikir population in the age group of 5-14 years – the category of potential students – has not been attending schools.

9.Literates among STs who are having educational level graduation and above are 2.3 per cent only. Deori is well ahead, among the eight major STs in Assam, with 4.9 per cent graduate and above. Mikir, Rabha, and Lalung are at the bottom, each having less than two per cent of their literate population with educational level graduation and above.

Work Participation Rate (WPR)

10.According to 2001 Census, 43.2 per cent of the STs have been registered as workers, which is below the aggregated national figure for STs (49.1 per cent). Of the total workers 65.3 per cent are main workers and 34.7 per cent marginal workers. The WPR of 35.8 per cent among females is high though lower than males (50.5 per cent).

Gender wise disparity is, however, distinct in case of main workers; 80.9 per cent among males and only 42.6 per cent among females are main workers (Statement-4).

Statement-4: Distribution of Total, Main & Marginal Workers among STs

T/M/F	Total Workers (Percentage to Total Population)	Main Workers (Percentage to Total Workers)	Marginal Workers (Percentage to Total Workers)
Total	1,430,404 (43.2%)	934,217 (65.3%)	496,187 (34.7%)
Male	847,229 (50.5%)	685,708 (80.9%)	161,521 (19.1%)
Female	583,175 (35.8%)	248,509 (42.6%)	334,666 (57.4%)

11. Among the major STs in the state, Deori have recorded the highest WPR of 55.5 per cent. It is lowest among Dimasa (38.9 per cent). Deori have recorded almost equal participation of male and female in the workforce with 58 per cent male and 52.9 per cent female WPR. On the contrary the gender gap in WPR is quite significant among Rabha (male 51.2 per cent, female 30.7 per cent), Lalung (male 51.8 per cent, female 33.1 per cent), and Dimasa (male 47 per cent, female 30.4 per cent).

Category of Workers

12. The Scheduled Tribes of Assam are predominantly cultivators as 70.6 per cent of the total ST main workers have been recorded as cultivators, while merely 6.1 per cent as agricultural labourer.

13. At the individual ST level, Miri have recorded a high of 85.6 per cent of their total main workers as cultivators, closely followed by Mikir (79.3 per cent) and Deori (78.2 per cent). Rabha have recorded the highest percentage of agricultural laborers, which is only 9 per cent of total main workers thereby indicating that majority of the STs in Assam are not landless.

Marital Status

14. The distribution of ST population by marital status shows that 57.5 per cent is never married, 39.1 per cent currently married, 3.3 per cent widowed, and merely 0.2 per cent divorced /separated. There is no conspicuous variation among the different individual STs (Statement-5).

Statement-5: Marital Status Wise Population among Major STs

SL. No	Name of the Scheduled Tribe	Per cent to Total Population			
		Never married	Currently married	Widowed	Divorced/ Separated
1	All Scheduled Tribes	57.5	39.1	3.3	0.2
2	Dimasa	59.0	37.7	3.0	0.2
3	Mikir	59.9	36.6	3.3	0.1
4	Boro	56.5	40.0	3.3	0.2
5	Deori	60.2	36.6	3.1	0.1
6	Kachari	54.7	41.4	3.7	0.2
7	Lalung	54.3	41.2	4.2	0.2
8	Miri	60.5	36.7	2.6	0.1
9	Rabha	55.1	40.7	4.0	0.2

15.As regards child marriage, 1.6 per cent of the ST female population below 18 years – the minimum legal age for marriage – has been recorded as ever married. Among the twelve major STs, Lalung have registered the highest at 2 per cent of their female population of this age category as ever married, while it is the lowest at 1.3 per cent among Miri.

16.The ever married males below 21 years – the minimum legal age for marriage – constitute only 1.4 per cent of the total ST population of this age category. Of the eight major STs, Lalung have registered the highest at 1.6 per cent of their male population below the stipulated age as ever married, closely followed by Deori and Miri, each with 1.5 per cent. Dimasa have registered the lowest at 1.2 per cent.

Religion

17.Of the total ST population of Assam, 90.7 per cent are Hindus and 8.8 per cent Christians. Besides these two main religions, 6,267 persons are Muslims, 5,153 Budhists, and another 3,574 persons have returned pursuing various other faiths and have been categorized under “Other Religions and Persuasions”.
