

## West Bengal

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

The total population of West Bengal at 2001 Census has been 80,176,197. Of this 4,406,794 persons are Scheduled Tribes (STs) constituting 5.5 per cent of the total population of the state. The state has registered 15.7 per cent decadal growth of ST population in 1991-2001. There are total thirty eight (38) notified STs in the state.

#### Population: Size & Distribution

2.The Santal represents more than half of the total ST population of the state (51.8 per cent). Oraon (14 per cent), Munda (7.8 per cent), Bhumij (7.6 per cent) and Kora (3.2 per cent) are the other major STs having sizeable population. Along with Santal, they constitute nearly 85 per cent of the state's total ST population. The Lodha, Mahali, Bhutia, Bedia, and Savar are the remaining STs, and having population of one per cent or more (Statement-1). The rest of the STs are very small in population size.

**Statement-1: Population and Proportion of Ten Major STs, 2001 Census**

SL. No.	Name of the Scheduled Tribe	Total population	Proportion to the total ST population
1	All Scheduled Tribes	4,406,794	100 %
2	Santal	2,280,540	51.8
3	Oraon	617,138	14.0
4	Munda	341,542	7.8
5	Bhumij	336,436	7.6
6	Kora	142,789	3.2
7	Lodha	84,966	1.9
8	Mahali	76,102	1.7
9	Bhutia	60,091	1.4
10	Bedia	55,979	1.3
11	Savar	43,599	1.0

3.The STs in the state are predominantly residing in the rural areas (93.9 per cent). Among Lodha, Savar, and Bedia more than 95 per cent are residing in the rural areas. Contrary to the overall situation among the majority of tribes, Bhutia has recorded the highest 34 per cent urban population. The Mahali (10.2 per cent) and Kora (9.9 per cent) are the other STs having comparatively higher concentration in urban areas.

4.ore than half of the total ST population of the state is concentrated in the four districts namely Medinapur, Jalpaiguri, Purulia, and Barddhaman. Of the remaining districts, Bankura, Maldah, Uttar Dinajpur, and Dakshin Dinajpur have sizable ST population.

## Sex Ratio

5.As per 2001 Census, the sex ratio of total ST population in the state is 982, which is higher than the national average for STs (978). The state also has recorded a higher child sex ratio (0-6 age group) of 981 as compared to the aggregated national figure (973) for the STs.

6.The sex ratio among Bhutia (999) is the highest among the major STs. But the child sex ratio (951) is low among them. Bedia has recorded the lowest sex ratio of 962. The situation is just the reverse among Bedia.

## Literacy & Educational Level

7.Among all STs, 43.4 per cent of the population has been returned as literate, which is lower than the national average (47.1 per cent). The male literacy rate of 57.4 per cent and female of 29.2 per cent, show a gender disparity in literacy. Of the ten major STs, Bhutia with 72.6 per cent overall literacy, 80.2 per cent male and 65.2 per cent female literacy respectively, is well ahead of others. Savar are at the other extreme having 26.3 per cent overall literacy and 16 per cent female literacy rate (Statement-2).

**Statement-2: Literacy Rate among Ten Major STs**

SL. No	Name of the Scheduled Tribe	Literacy Rate (above 7+ years)		
		Total	Male	Female
1	All Scheduled Tribes	43.4	57.4	29.2
2	Santal	42.2	57.3	27.0
3	Oraon	43.4	55.4	31.0
4	Munda	41.0	54.0	27.7
5	Bhumij	45.6	61.6	29.1
6	Kora	43.4	58.4	28.2
7	Lodha	34.8	46.8	22.5
8	Mahali	41.1	55.6	26.3
9	Bhutia	72.6	80.2	65.2
10	Bedia	48.4	61.7	34.6
11	Savar	26.3	36.4	16.0

8.Total of 51.7 per cent of the STs in the age group 5-14 years have been attending any educational institutions. Of the ten major STs, Bhutia has recorded the highest 77 per cent and Savar the lowest 35.5 per cent of their respective population attending educational institutions.

9.In West Bengal, merely 8.4 per cent of total literates among STs are having educational level above matriculation. The Bhutia with 26.1 per cent are well ahead among the major STs in this regard.

## Work Participation Rate (WPR)

10. In 2001 Census, 48.8 per cent of the ST population has been recorded as workers, which is close to the aggregated national average for STs (49.1 per cent). Of the total workers 65.7 per cent has been returned as main workers and 34.3 per cent as marginal workers. WPR at 43.7 per cent among females is slightly lower than males (53.8 per cent). Gender disparity, however, is paramount in the category of main workers; 78.3 per cent males and 49.9 per cent females have been returned as main workers. The percentage of female marginal workers is more than twice than that of male (Statement-3).

**Statement-3: 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	2,149,255 (48.8%)	1,412,133 (65.7%)	737,122 (34.3%)
Male	1,195,480 (53.8%)	936,302 (78.3%)	259,178 (21.7%)
Female	953,775 (43.7%)	475,831 (49.9%)	477,944 (50.1%)

11. Among the major STs, Savar has recorded the highest WPR at 53.4 per cent, while it is lowest among Bhutia (36.3 per cent).

## Category of Workers

12. Industrial category wise, of the total ST main workers, 23.7 per cent have been recorded as cultivators and 45.1 per cent as agricultural laborers.

13. The Mahali are ordinarily involved in non-agricultural activities with only 5.3 per cent of their main workers in cultivation and 19.6 per cent as agricultural labourers.

## Marital Status

14. The distribution of ST population by marital status shows that 50.6 per cent is never married, 43.1 per cent currently married, 5.4 per cent widowed, and 0.8 per cent divorced /separated.

15. The Santal has recorded the highest one per cent of their total population as divorced/ separated, while it is the lowest among Oraon (0.5 per cent), (Statement-4).

**Statement-4: Percentage of ST Population by Marital Status**

SL. No	Name of the Scheduled Tribe	Never married	Currently married	Widowed	Divorced/ Separated
1	All Scheduled Tribes	50.6	43.1	5.4	0.8
2	Santal	49.9	43.4	5.7	1.0
3	Oraon	54.3	40.4	4.8	0.5
4	Munda	50.9	43.1	5.2	0.7
5	Bhumij	49.3	43.9	6.0	0.7
6	Kora	49.9	43.6	5.8	0.8
7	Lodha	50.3	43.8	5.2	0.7
8	Mahali	48.2	45.7	5.2	0.9
9	Bhutia	53.6	40.9	4.7	0.8
10	Bedia	49.3	45.4	4.6	0.6
11	Savar	48.0	46.4	4.9	0.8

16. For all STs, 2.6 per cent of the female population below 18 years – the minimum legal age for marriage – is ever married. Of the ten major STs, Savar has recorded the highest 3.5 per cent of their females as ever married, which is well above the state average for STs. On the other hand among Oraon and Bhutia only 2 per cent of females are ever married below the stipulated age.

17. The ever married males below 21 years – the stipulated age for their marriage – constitute 2.1 per cent of their population. Of the ten major STs, Mahali have recorded the highest 2.9 per cent ever married males, while it is the lowest among Bhumij (1.7 per cent).

**Religion**

18. Of the total of 4,406,794 ST population 74.6 per cent are Hindus, followed by 6.1 per cent Christians, 1.8 per cent Buddhists, and merely 0.4 per cent Muslims.

-----