

LAKSHADWEEP

DATA HIGHLIGHTS: THE SCHEDULED TRIBES Census of India 2001

The Union Territory of Lakshadweep is a group of coral islands, which lie scattered in the Arabian Sea. It comprises of 11 inhabited islands, 12 uninhabited islands and 5 attached islets with a number of sunken banks, open reefs and sand banks. They are located at a distance of 225-450 k.m. from the nearest Kerala coast of Indian sub-continent. It is a uni-district Union Territory. Among all states/UTs, Lakshadweep is the smallest both in terms of areas and population. There are no castes notified as Scheduled Castes in the UT. Only one tribe has been scheduled, which has no specific name. They have been notified throughout the UT as "inhabitants of Lakshadweep, Minicoy and Amindivi Islands who, and both of whose parents, were born in those islands" under the Constitution Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Lists (Modification) Order, 1956 and the Laccadive, Minicoy and Amindivi Islands (Alteration of Name) (Adaptation of Laws) Order, 1974.

2. The total population of Lakshadweep as per the 2001 Census is 60,650. Of this, 57,321 persons (94.5 per cent) are Scheduled Tribes (STs). Among the states/UTs Lakshadweep has the highest proportion of ST population besides Mizoram. The growth rate of ST population in the decade 1991-2001 at 19 per cent is slightly higher if compared to the overall growth rate of 17.3 per cent of UT population as a whole.

3. The overall sex ratio of the ST population of Lakshadweep is 1003 females per 1000 males. The sex ratio has improved from 994 reported at 1991 Census. The child sex ratio (0-6) is 957 of ST population of the UT.

4. According to 2001 Census, percentage of literate persons (those who can read & write with understanding), aged 7 years and above, among ST population of Lakshadweep is 86.1 per cent. The literacy data show that ST population of the UT has made improvement in literacy during the decade 1991-2001. The literacy rate, which was 80.6 per cent at 1991 Census, has increased to 86.1 per cent at 2001 Census.

5. The work participation rate (WPR) is the percentage of workers to the total population. The WPR of the ST population is 22.9 per cent at 2001 Census, which is lower than 24.1 per cent recorded at 1991 Census. The male WPR has been 38.6 per cent and the female WPR 7.1 per cent in 2001. There has been a decline in the ST main workers from 89.2 per cent in 1991 to 74 per cent in 2001. This, in turn, has resulted in corresponding increase in the marginal workers from 10.8 per cent in 1991 to 26 per cent in 2001. At 2001 Census, no cultivators and agricultural labourers have been reported from this UT. This has been the case in the previous censuses also.

Out of the total workers, 'other workers' constitute 93.2 per cent and 'household industry' accounts for 6.8 per cent. It may be due to the fact that fishing and coconut plantation predominant activities of the islanders are classified as 'other work' in broad fold classification.

6. The 2001 Census data on marital status show that 53.6 per cent persons among the STs of Lakshadweep are 'never married'. The 'currently married' constitute 41 per cent while 4.3 per cent are 'widowed'. Only 1.2 per cent is 'divorced and separated'.

7. Majority of girls and boys among STs in Lakshadweep are getting married after attaining the legal age of marriage. Marriages of ST girls below 18 years are 0.8 per cent and boys below 21 years are 0.3 per cent. The mean number of children ever born per ever married ST woman of all ages is 3.5, and in 45-49 years age group is 4.9.

8. Out of total 57,321 ST population of the UT, only 200 are Hindus and 46 are Christians, the remaining are all Muslims as per the 2001 Census.
