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Theme:

- Bihar chief minister Nitish Kumar has demanded the central government to conduct a caste census in the upcoming population census, 2021. Some political parties are also in favour of conducting the caste census.

What is caste census:

- Population census is conducted once every 10 years. The last census was started in 2010 and concluded in 2011. The latest census was supposed to begin in 2020 and conclude in 2021 but it was delayed due to COVID-19.
- The last caste census was conducted during British rule in the population census of 1931. Later, in 1941, the caste census was abolished.
- In population census, counting scheduled castes and scheduled tribes is included in the year 1961 because we need data about this for the seats reserved for SCs & STs in panchayats, municipalities and parliament. But OBCs are not included in the census yet.
- Before almost every census, demand to conduct caste census crops up.

Pros of Caste census:

- The present reservations and policies are based on old data. With the caste census, we can fetch fresh data on the socio-economic status of castes. We can know how many of the particular castes have jobs, are public servants and are able to grab the job opportunities etc. By knowing, who really needs the support of the government, policies can be drafted to help them in uplifting their economic status.
- There are protests from many castes for reservations. Caste census will help in analyzing the genuineness of the demands.
- We can know how much progress is achieved with the help of reservations.
- To bridge caste inequalities, a fresh caste census is very beneficial.

Cons of Caste census:

- Caste divides people. So, a caste census may increase caste feelings in some people and that may lead to clashes, especially in villages where maintaining anonymity is difficult.
- Caste census is a cumbersome process. Some castes have different names in different places, and some castes are pronounced differently. This may create confusion.
- This will give data to political parties on whom they should impress in order to win. Vote-bank politics may increase to a large extent.

Conclusion:

Caste census will help the government in understanding the socio-economic status of castes, and thereby the government can make better policies to bridge caste inequalities and to improve the economic status of marginalized people.

Your Turn...

Do you think the caste census will result in a positive outcome? Express your thoughts through the comment section below. And subscribe to our blog to read answers to the trending GD topics.

References:

- [Caste census](#)
- [Explained | caste census - who wants it & why; the politics & the concerns](#)
- [The caste census, debate around it & the Constitution angle](#)