

Census activities put off due to pandemic

The first digital Census has a provision for self-enumeration, says Nityanand Rai in written reply

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Owing to the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic, Census 2021 and other Census-related field activities have been postponed until further orders, the Union Home Ministry said in the Lok Sabha on Tuesday.

“In the Census, data is collected on demographic and various socio-economic parameters like education, SC/ST, religion, language, marriage, fertility, disability, occupation and migration of the individuals. The forthcoming Census is to be the first digital Census and there is a provision for self-enumeration,” Minister of State for Home Affairs Nityanand Rai said in a written reply to



Hard living: In this photo from March 2011, Census workers take a survey of the homeless in Bengaluru. ■ K. MURALI KUMAR

Congress leader Shashi Tharoor's question.

A mobile application for data collection and a Census

portal for managing and monitoring various Census-related activities have been developed. The question-

naire for the first phase of Census was notified in the Gazette.

“The individual data collected in Census under the Census Act, 1948, are not made public as per the provisions contained in the Act. The individual data are not used for the preparation of any other database, including the National Register of Citizens. Only the aggregated Census data at various administrative levels are released,” it said.

Faster processing

Special emphasis was given to scientifically designing the Census questions for faster processing and early release of data, said the Minister. In response to another query

from MP S. Jothimani, the Minister said the Census Schedule was designed in consultation with various stakeholders, including State governments. The intent of the government for conducting Census 2021 was notified in the Gazette of India on March 28, 2019, but the Census activities were postponed due to the COVID-19 outbreak.

“In the Census, the castes and tribes which are specifically notified as Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs) as per the Constitution (Scheduled Castes) Order 1950 and the Constitution (Scheduled Tribes) Order, 1950, as amended from time to time, are enumerated,” he said.