

1951

CENSUS REPORT

INDIA



सत्यमेव जयते

CENSUS OF INDIA, 1951

VOLUME I

INDIA

PART I-A — REPORT

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OF THE INDIAN CIVIL SERVICE,
Registrar General, India and ex-officio Census Commissioner for India

Price

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FEW PEOPLE OUTSIDE realise that census is an administrative operation of great dimensions and, in addition, it is a scientific process. Indian census, in particular, covers the largest population in the world and it is also one of the most economical administrative operations. Census as an institution goes back to the remote past, but it is no longer a mere counting of heads; it involves extraction of information which plays a vital role in the determination of many of our administrative policies. The facts elicited during the course of this operation yield valuable scientific data of sociological importance. In many matters it provides a useful guide for the effectiveness or otherwise of our economic policies. The theory of population is in itself an interesting part of economics. The census helps us to test and adapt that theory to facts.

— Sardar VALLABHBHAI PATEL



No. 51/59/53-RG

THE REGISTRAR GENERAL, INDIA
New Delhi, the 1st August, 1953

From

Shri R.A. Gopaldaswami, I.C.S.,
Registrar General, India ; and
ex-officio Census Commissioner for India

To

The Secretary to the Government of India,
Ministry of Home Affairs,
New Delhi

Sir,

I have the honour to submit herewith my report on the 1951 Census.

Yours faithfully,

R. A. GOPALASWAMI,

Registrar General, India ; and
ex-officio Census Commissioner for India

INTRODUCTION

I. **The 1951 Census Reports**— The reports on the 1951 Census are issued in 17 volumes, which are divided into 63 parts. The first of these volumes contains the All-India Census Report. It is divided into five parts entitled :

PART I-A—REPORT;

PART I-B—APPENDICES TO THE REPORT;

PART II-A—DEMOGRAPHIC TABLES;

PART II-B—ECONOMIC TABLES (General Population);

PART II-C—ECONOMIC TABLES (Rural and Urban Population).

The other volumes which are divided into 58 parts, contain the State Census Reports. These are prepared by my colleagues—the Superintendents of Census Operations—in different states as shown below* :

<i>Name of Superintendent</i>	<i>Volume number</i>	<i>Number of parts</i>	<i>Name of state(s)</i>
Shri RAJESHWARI PRASAD, I.A.S.	II	5	Uttar Pradesh
Shri S. VENKATESWARAN, I.C.S.	III	3	Madras and Coorg
Mr. J. B. BOWMAN, I.C.S.	IV	3	Bombay, Saurashtra and Kutch
Shri RANCHOR PRASAD, I.A.S.	V	3	Bihar
Shri ASOK MITRA, I.C.S.	VI	6	West Bengal and Sikkim

* All reports except the following have been or are being published :

(i) The following parts of reports are in the press :

BOMBAY	PART I	Report and Subsidiary Tables
	PART II-A	Demographic, Social and Cultural Tables
WEST BENGAL	PART I-C	Subsidiary Tables
	PARTS III and IV	Calcutta Report and Tables
HYDERABAD	PART I-B	Subsidiary Tables
	PART II-B	Economic, Household & Age (Sample) Tables
RAJASTHAN	PART I-A	Report
	PART I-B	Subsidiary Tables
ORISSA	PART I	Report and Subsidiary Tables
ASSAM	PART I-A	Report
	PART I-B	Subsidiary Tables
	PART II-A and II-B	Tables
TRAVANCORE-COCHIN	PART I-A	Report
	PART I-B	Subsidiary Tables
	PART II	Tables

[Footnote continued

Shri J. D. KERAWALLA, I.A.S. (Died on 7-10-1952)	VII	6	Madhya Pradesh
Shri LAKSHMI CHANDRA VASHISHTHA, of Punjab Civil Service	VIII	4	Punjab, PEPSU, Delhi, Himachal Pradesh and Bilaspur
Shri C. K. MURTHY, I.A.S.	IX	4	Hyderabad
Shri YAMUNA LAL DASHORA	X	5	Rajasthan and Ajmer
Shri M. AHMED, of Orissa Civil Service	XI	3	Orissa
Shri R. B. VAGHAIWALLA, I.C.S.	XII	4	Assam, Manipur and Tripura
Dr. U. S. NAIR	XIII	3	Travancore- Cochin
Shri J. B. MALLARADHYA, I.A.S.	XIV	2	Mysore
Shri RANGLAL	XV	4	Madhya Bharat and Bhopal
Shri N. K. DUBE	XVI	2	Vindhya Pradesh
Shri A. K. GHOSH, I.C.S.	XVII	1	Andaman and Nicobar Islands

2. **District Census Handbooks**—In addition to the All-India Census Report and the State Census Reports, 307 District Census Handbooks have been compiled by my colleagues. Each handbook relates to one district

Footnote concluded]

MYSORE	PART II	Tables
MADHYA BHARAT	PART I-B PARTS II-A and II-B	Subsidiary Tables Tables
VINDHYA PRADESH	PART I PART II	Report and Subsidiary Tables Tables

(ii) The following parts of reports are under preparation or nearing completion :

UTTAR PRADESH	PART I-A	Report
BIHAR	PART I	Report and Subsidiary Tables
HYDERABAD	PART I-A	Report
MYSORE	PART I	Report and Subsidiary Tables
MADHYA BHARAT	PART I-A	Report
ANDAMAN AND NICOBAR ISLANDS		Report and Tables

separately and contains all the 1951 Census statistics relating to different local areas within the district as well as the basic totals of population (by eight separate livelihood classes) for every village and every ward of every town in the district. The handbooks (which are issued as State Government publications) also include other items of information relating to the districts which could be readily assembled and seemed likely to be useful for purposes of reference. One hundred and twelve District Census Handbooks have been published already and the others are in the press.

3. **Census of India brochures**— It will be noted that the statistical information contained in the All-India Census Report is limited to demographic and economic data relating to the country as a whole. Other types of data are published separately in a series of brochures. These are self-contained papers, which present the relevant statistics with the minimum of introductory information required for their proper understanding and use. This series of brochures also includes a summary of demographic and economic data which it was found necessary to make available to the public in advance of the main report, as well as some which are of a specialised nature.

The following brochures have been published already :

- (i) Final Population Totals;
- (ii) Population Zones, Natural Regions, Sub-Regions and Divisions;
- (iii) Sample Verification of the 1951 Census Count;
- (iv) Religion;
- (v) Summary of Demographic and Economic Data; and
- (vi) Special Groups.

The following brochures are in the press :

- (i) Maternity Data;
- (ii) Languages;
- (iii) Displaced Persons;
- (iv) Age Tables;
- (v) Life Tables;
- (vi) Literacy and Educational Standards; and
- (vii) Subsidiary Tables.

4. **Cost**— These are the end-products of the 1951 Census. The total cost involved cannot be stated exactly until after next year. But as most of the expenditure is known, the total can be estimated fairly closely. It is reckoned that the Central Government will have spent 149 lakhs of rupees in all on the 1951

Census. This works out to a sum of Rs. 41/12 per 1,000 persons enumerated. The corresponding rate for the 1931 Census (the last census for which full tabulation was undertaken) was Rs. 15/8. The rise in the unit cost is smaller than the increase which has occurred in the general level of prices, wages and salaries since 1931.

5. Preparation—The system of census-taking in India is somewhat unusual. It used to be likened in the past to the phoenix—the only bird of its kind which is reputed to complete its life-cycle by burning itself on the funeral pile and then to rise from the ashes with renewed youth to live through another cycle. Mr. M. W. M. YEATTS described it in somewhat less complimentary terms as follows :

“The system, if that word can be used here, is in brief that every 10 years some officer is appointed to conduct a census and officers to work under him are appointed in each province. The states take corresponding action. These appointments are made at the minimum of time beforehand and within one year questionnaires have to be settled, the whole country divided into enumeration units, a hierarchy of enumeration officers created and trained, millions of schedules or slips printed and distributed over the face of the country, the whole process of enumeration carried out and checked, tabulation then carried out in offices located in any old place that can be found, on make-shift pigeon-holes and furniture and with temporary staffs, rushed through the presses—and then, in the third year the whole system is wound up, the officers and the office staffs are dispersed and India makes haste to discard and forget as soon as possible all the experience so painfully brought together.”

Shortly after the transfer of power, Government decided to put an end to this reproach. The action taken by Government was described in the following terms by the late Sardar VALLABHBHAI PATEL, then Home Minister, when he inaugurated the first Census Conference :

“Ever since I assumed charge of the Home Ministry, I have been taking some interest in census matters and I was really very happy to have been instrumental in placing on the Statute Book a permanent enactment dealing with the whole operation of Census.....

“Hitherto, the Census used to be looked upon as a decennial operation for which haphazard temporary arrangements used to be made. I have already stated that there is now a permanent Census Act on the Statute Book and Government have already a permanent office of the Registrar General and Census Commissioner. It is our

intention through this unified organisation to effect continuous improvement over the whole field of population data including the Census and vital statistics and to conduct experiments in sampling which would reduce not only the elaboration of these operations but also the cost."

Mr. YEATTS, who had taken part in the 1931 Census as the Superintendent of Census Operations in Madras and directed the 1941 Census as Census Commissioner for India, was appointed Registrar General and *ex-officio* Census Commissioner. Thanks to these arrangements, it was possible to begin advance planning for the 1951 Census somewhat earlier than at former censuses. A provisional questionnaire was drawn up ; printing of census slips was taken in hand ; a general outline of the scheme of operations was drawn up ; and the officers were selected and earmarked for appointment as state census superintendents. Then, Mr. YEATTS fell ill and went on leave. I took charge of the census preparations in November 1949 as a temporary leave arrangement, in addition to my other duties in the Ministry of Home Affairs. Unfortunately, Mr. YEATTS died in August 1950, when his responsibility devolved on me entirely.

A definite stage in the preparatory period was reached during the last week of February 1950, when the newly appointed state census superintendents met in conference. We discussed the work before us in all aspects and achieved an agreed understanding of our tasks. Final orders of Government were obtained on the dates to be fixed for the census and on certain issues of policy affecting the scope of census enquiries. The questionnaire was finalised, as also a set of model all-India instructions. Detailed local instructions were prepared by my colleagues in all the local languages. Census charges were delimited in every district, divided into census circles and sub-divided into census blocks—the ultimate territorial unit for purposes of census enumeration. The census workers were selected and allotted to their respective charges, circles and blocks. They were supplied with forms and stationery, given oral as well as written instructions, practised and tested. During the first week of February 1951, when the preparatory phase ended, a temporary organisation consisting of about 7 lakhs of field workers was got ready for action. The exact numbers, according to reports received, were as follows : *5,93,518 census enumerators, grouped under the supervision and guidance of 80,006 census supervisors, themselves directed by 9,854 census charge officers.*

6. Enumeration—The nature of the work entrusted to the field workers is clearly described in a message which was sent to them on the eve of

enumeration by Shri C. RAJAGOPALACHARI, then Home Minister of the Government of India :

“Dear colleagues in the Census work! This is the first census held under orders of the Republic of free India. I am addressing the enumerators in particular. You have the privilege and honour of taking a hand in the first census of free India. Ten years hence the next census will be held. Yours is the earliest privilege. You are an enumerator and therefore you build the very base of the whole big structure. The base is, as you know, the most important part of any structure. The record of your work will remain carefully kept for use throughout the next ten years.

“Enumeration begins at sunrise on the 9th day of February. From then upto sunrise on the 1st March you will be visiting all the houses in your block, locating all the people for whose enumeration you are responsible ; and ascertaining and recording, in respect of all of them, the replies which are given to you for the prescribed census questions. On the 1st, 2nd and 3rd days of March you will re-visit all the houses for final check. You will then make sure that you have prepared the record of census enumeration in all respects as instructed, and hand it over to the supervisor.

“Yours is not an isolated local inquiry. You are one of about six hundred thousand patriots, all of whom will be engaged on an identical task at the same time. All of you are jointly responsible for enumerating all the people. Collectively you will prepare a record of basic facts relating to the life and livelihood of all the citizens and families in our Republic.

“If this record is to be correct and complete, the part which you contribute should, in itself, be correct and complete. You should master the simple instructions which you have received, and apply them uniformly and conscientiously. These instructions are based on a common plan for the country as a whole. Like a swarm of bees that build a beautiful hive according to the laws of geometry, each doing its part in obedience to a mystic urge, you should do your part according to conscience and the sense of truth inherent in us all.

IMPORTANT THINGS TO REMEMBER

“*First*,— EVERY PERSON SHOULD BE ENUMERATED ONCE, AND NOT MORE THAN ONCE. Most people would be enumerated at their usual

place of residence. There are a few who should be enumerated wherever they are found.

“Secondly,— Do not grudge the time and effort which will be necessary to get correct and complete answers to the questions relating to **ECONOMIC STATUS AND MEANS OF LIVELIHOOD.**

“I do hope you will take pride over the quality of your contribution to this nation-wide enterprise and do your best. GOD BLESS YOU !”

During the last 21 days of February 1951, 6 lakhs of census workers visited 644 lakhs of occupied houses and made enquiries. The information supplied to them by about 7 crores of citizens was recorded in 3,569 lakhs of census slips each of which was a dossier of one person. Then or later the more important items of the information contained in these dossiers were transcribed in the National Register of Citizens of which one part is allotted to every village and every ward of every town. The Register shows all the occupied houses and households arranged in numerical order ; and against each household every line records the information relating to one member of the household.

The census slips and the National Register of Citizens were the record of basic information collected during the 1951 Census. We ascertained the following particulars in respect of every person who was enumerated :

- (i) Name, relationship to head of household, birth-place, sex, age and marital status ;
- (ii) Household economic status, employment status (if any), principal means of livelihood and subsidiary means of livelihood (if any); and
- (iii) Nationality, religion, membership of ‘special group’* (if any), mother tongue, bilingualism (if any), literacy and educational standard, and particulars of displacement (for displaced persons only).

In addition to these items which were common to all parts of India one other item was prescribed in each state by the State Government concerned.

7. Tabulation— The second phase of census operations, *viz.*, enumeration ended with the second visit to all houses carried out during the first three days of March and the report by the field workers of the number counted by them. These reports were transmitted from the block, circle and charge, through the district administrative hierarchy, to state census superintendents and to me, and the ‘Provisional Totals’ based on them published during the second fortnight of April 1951 for districts, states and the country as a whole. The third phase commenced during April–May 1951, with the opening of 52 temporary tabulation

*This relates to Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, Anglo-Indians and certain classes treated provisionally as ‘backward’ for purposes of the Census.

offices, sited at convenient centres in all parts of the country ; and the arrival at these offices of the census slips and National Register of Citizens together with abstracts and relevant information prepared by local officers.

The manner in which these offices were to be organised, workers recruited and trained, and the nature of the work to be performed in these offices had been planned in advance. The main principles were discussed and settled in a conference held during the last week of December 1950. Very detailed instructions designed to secure rigid uniformity of forms and procedures as well as safeguards against error had been settled and issued.

There were three stages in the working of these offices. The first was 'sorting and compilation' at the end of which, the numbers relating to each item of information were extracted from the census slips by sorters on what are called 'sorter's tickets' and then put together by compilers in 'posting statements' for the smaller territorial units within each district. This was the most important stage of tabulation. It was also the most expensive since the tabulation offices were at maximum strength while it was in progress. According to detailed information available about all the 52 offices except one (Hyderabad) for which figures are not available, 47,218 man-months were used up in this process of sorting and compilation. It took 10·4 sorter-months, 2·4 compiler-months and 1·1 supervisor-months to sort and compile the dossiers of one lakh of people.†

The second stage of tabulation consists in processing the compilers' posting statements into the main census tables in the form prescribed for all states; the institution of arithmetical checks and counter-checks for avoidance of error ; and finally their scrutiny and independent check in a central tabulation office set up within my office. The final tables are then prepared for the press and go out as separate parts containing purely statistical material with brief introductions and explanations.

The third stage of tabulation consists in the preparation of what are called 'subsidiary tables' and constitutes statistical preparation for the next phase—*viz.*, study and report. The aim at this stage is two-fold. One is to work out derivative data such as rates and percentages so as to institute comparison between the 1951 Census data and the corresponding data of previous censuses. The other is to work out the inter-connections between the census data and other important data (these are mainly vital statistics and cultivation statistics). Here

†In other countries, electrically operated machinery is used at this stage, thus rendering the employment of large staff unnecessary. A proposal that such machinery should be used at this census in order to carry out a part of the work was considered carefully and decided against, on the ground that it would certainly increase the cost and, in all probability, take more time. Subsequent experience has not indicated any reason to regret the decision to rely entirely on human agency.

again, identical forms and instructions were prescribed in advance. A special difficulty of a fairly formidable character was presented by the fact that the boundaries of India as well as of almost all states and a great many districts had undergone very extensive changes after the 15th August, 1947. All the relevant statistical data of earlier years had to be recomputed for the new territorial units ; and the manner in which this was done had to be clearly explained. The three stages mentioned above are applicable to the work done in the tabulation offices controlled by my colleagues. The second and third of these three stages were reproduced in the central tabulation office, where the all-India tables were prepared on the basis of state tables which had been checked in this office and approved for publication.

8. Study and Report— It has been a regular feature of all previous censuses (except that of 1941 when practically all tabulation except the basic population totals and community totals was dispensed with) that the census organisation did not content itself with the bare presentation of statistical data. The data were subjected to careful study and the results of the study were embodied in narrative reports of quite considerable length. Three broad purposes were sought to be served by such study :

First,— It was necessary to assess the value, in terms of completeness, reliability and comparability of the data procured and furnish such comments and explanations as would be helpful to users of census statistics. The officers who trained the field staff and scrutinised the basic record in the various stages of tabulation were in the best position to do this work ;

Secondly,— Much of the material collected at successive censuses is of an identical nature or at any rate relatable and comparable. A comparative study, with the help of the subsidiary tables already mentioned, helped to bring out evidence of changes in various characteristics which were usually important and significant either directly as matters of public interest or as the raw material for more specialised economic and social enquiries which might be undertaken by others ; and

Thirdly,— There are a great many topics of interest relating to the social and economic life of the people. Where the officers in charge of census operations were specially interested in any of them, they were in a position to collect and study the relevant data along with the routine study referred to above and the results were set out in the form of specialised discussion of such topics.

The Census Commissioner and the Superintendents are chosen primarily with reference to their intimate knowledge of the administrative machinery whose services are required to be mobilised as well as their capacity for general management of staff employed on governmental duties, rather than for any specialised knowledge or aptitude for making statistical computation or for carrying out economic and social research. The quality of the result achieved by their study was, therefore, of a varying nature. Almost all reports were characterised by their painstaking thoroughness, while the intellectual standard set by some reports was conspicuously high.

Careful consideration was given, on this occasion, to the question whether precedent should be followed at all or whether the census organisation might content itself with bare presentation of statistical material. The conclusion was reached that it was essential that the first and second of these three purposes should be secured as satisfactorily as possible within the time, and that the officers should exercise their discretion in respect of the third. In one respect, however, a departure from precedent was clearly stipulated from the outset. The 1951 Census was *not* to concern itself with questions regarding races, castes and tribes—except in so far as the necessary statistical material relating to ‘special groups’ was to be published and certain other material relating to backward classes collected and made over to the Backward Classes Commission. On the other hand, it was also enjoined that the maximum possible attention should be paid to economic data. The instructions which were issued to state census superintendents about the preparation of state census reports indicated the general structure required, and concluded with a statement of objective in the following terms :

“It does not matter if available material does not permit of analysis sufficiently definite for reaching conclusions..... It does not also matter if the time available to reporting officers is insufficient for carrying out even such analysis as may be permitted by the material. What is essential is that the prescribed subsidiary tables should be correctly prepared and the reporting officers should apply their mind to these tables and attempt a review on the lines indicated.*The reports thus prepared will be of value mainly as the starting point of more detailed studies (to be undertaken subsequently) of the inter-relationships of population changes and economic changes in the country as a whole, as well as in the different states and natural divisions of the country. If this purpose is served, reporting officers will have discharged their duty.*”

All state census superintendents have been proceeding on these lines generally in preparing their reports. It should be emphasised here that the

views expressed in these reports written by different officers are of a purely personal nature. They should not be regarded as committing Government in any manner to any particular expression of opinion on controversial issues of any kind.

While the study of census data organised on the lines above described was proceeding, public interest in the population problem was increasing rapidly. The Planning Commission took cognisance of the subject and initiated group discussions in which I also took part. The report of the Planning Commission embodies specific proposals and visualises the collection of data bearing on the problem, partly as the basis for action by Government and partly as material for consideration by a Commission, the setting up of which is mentioned as a possibility.

In these circumstances, I felt that an all-India report on the 1951 Census would be materially incomplete, if it failed to deal adequately with the population problem of the country. I have accordingly set out a clear and full statement of my own personal appreciation of the problem and what I conceive to be the correct solution. *As explained already the views expressed in the report are of a purely personal nature and should not be understood to commit Government in any manner whatsoever.*

9. Arrangement of the All-India Report— The All-India Report, as already mentioned, is divided into five parts. Three of these parts (PARTS II-A, II-B and II-C) consist of statistical tables, accompanied by introductory notes which explain the manner in which the data were secured and the tables were compiled.

PART I-A is the narrative report proper and PART I-B consists of the APPENDICES. The report is divided into five chapters. The first three chapters present the picture as observed in 1951.

The first chapter, entitled "The Land and the People—1951" focusses attention on the area of land per head of population available in the country as a whole, describes how this varies in different parts of the country and how this variation is relatable to variations in topography, soil and rainfall. After dividing the country into 5 natural regions and 15 sub-regions in terms of these factors, a description is given of the salient facts of population and land use in three groups of sub-regions which are distinguished from one another as high, low and medium density sub-regions. Finally a comparison is instituted, with other countries of the world which leads to the conclusion not only that there is a very notable shortage of 'land area per capita' in our country but that the utilisation of usable land within this

limited area has proceeded very far already. A great deal of statistical information—in parts newly ascertained—has been brought together in APPENDIX I (*Population and Land Use*) and used as the basis for the account given in the first chapter.

The second chapter is headed "The Pattern of Living—1951". It begins with an account of total numbers and numbers in different size-groups of villages and towns and the distribution of the people among them. Then there is a description of houses and households—information regarding the relative proportion of households of different size-groups as well as their composition being a new feature of this census. This is followed by a description of the variations of the sex ratio in different parts of the country. The age-structure of our people is then described and compared with that of other countries of the world. The last two sections of this chapter contain much material which is both new and important. It is well-known that data based on registration of births and deaths are both incomplete and defective. But a serious and largely successful attempt was made on this occasion to put them to the fullest use by separating the grain from the chaff and studying them in combination with census data and all other data which were capable of throwing some light on the subject. A systematic study of the whole subject is contained in APPENDIX II (*Note on Birth Rates and Death Rates*). As a result of this study, reasonably firm conclusions are reached regarding the levels (which prevailed during the decade ending 1950), of our true birth rates and death rates (as distinguished from our registered birth rates and death rates). Estimates are furnished not only for India as a whole, but six broad zones (North India, East India, South India, West India, Central India and North-West India); and they are then compared with similar rates of other countries. The information presented in the last section of this chapter entitled 'Maternity Pattern' is even more important. Thanks to the wise use made by certain State Governments of the 'local option' given to them to put one question of their choice, very valuable data have been secured about the average number of children born to mothers of different age-groups. Careful analysis of the data thus secured has yielded, for the first time, a clear picture of the pattern of maternity in this country and permits a comparison with the corresponding pattern in other countries. These statistics have led me to a new form of presentation of the solution for the population problem which, I believe, offers definite practical advantages. These are explained in the last chapter.

The third chapter entitled "Livelihood Pattern—1951" begins with the 'India Picture'. It contains a complete accounting of how the people obtain their means of livelihood. The next section explains how the pattern varies from one zone to another. The last section brings out the main

features of contrast between the pattern in India and the pattern in Great Britain and the United States of America. The account given in this chapter is furnished in as simple terms as possible; but serious students are sure to have very exacting standards of precision in respect of definitions and classifications. In order to meet their needs, a systematic review of a more formal nature has been prepared and included in the report as APPENDIX III (*Review of Census Economic Data*). In this review a full account is given of the pitfalls to be avoided in instituting comparison of the data between one part of the country and another for the same census, and between two different censuses for the same territory, and the limitations subject to which it is possible to draw significant conclusions.

The fourth chapter is headed "Before and Since 1921". This, like the three previous chapters, is strictly factual; but it lays the foundation on which the assessment of the population problem presented in the last chapter is subsequently erected. It is a fundamental conclusion of the study—of which the results are set out in this report—that 1921 is the 'Great Divide'. Our pattern of growth subsequent to that year is entirely unlike the pattern of growth before that year. The fact that there is a sharp contrast is first established by a detailed analysis of the relevant figures of all parts of India. Then the reasons which account for that fact are established by documentary evidence. The growth of population had been checked by famine and pestilence repeatedly before 1921. Except for one tragic exception, population grew unchecked after 1921. APPENDIX IV (*Famine and Pestilence*), which contains relevant extracts from old reports, furnishes in detail the evidence which is summarised in the first section of this chapter. The next section is devoted to showing that 1921 is the 'Great Divide' in another respect—before 1921, cultivation had more than kept pace with the growth of population; after 1921, cultivation was lagging far behind while the population total was forging ahead. Developing the conception of 'land area *per capita*', we have the area of cultivated land *per capita*, and based on it, of productivity of cultivation *per capita*. This had been stationary or moving up before 1921; after 1921, it was falling steeply. The value of the material presented in this section consists in this: great care has been taken to sift available data about cultivation, locate the areas for which statistics of high quality are available on a comparable basis over a long period and then work out the results for these areas. The third section sets out the results of the comparative study contained in APPENDIX III and explains how the livelihood pattern has been changing in response to unchecked growth of population and the decline of cultivation *per capita*. The economic strength of the average household is seen to have weakened. The last section of this chapter brings out the final and most important aspect of the 'Great Divide'. Notwithstanding the famines of the last

century, India used to be surplus in food. Round about 1921, India developed a shortage of foodgrains and this shortage has been growing ever since—slowly but steadily. The relevant statistics have been brought together from different sources and they bring out unmistakably how the change came about over a series of years. The change-over is dealt with in different aspects. First, there are the statistics of imports and exports of grains already referred to. Then, there are the statistics of grain prices (for which, thanks to the completeness of information available with the Government of Madras, we can form a good picture for the last 150 years and institute an illuminating comparison with the trend of grain prices in the United States of America). Finally, there is the profound change in the whole conception of the responsibilities of the State in respect of the supply and distribution of grains, the breakdown of free trade, the Bengal Famine, and the development of 'state trading system' on which crores of our people depend to-day. The evidence in support of material conclusions in the analysis made in this section is presented fully in APPENDIX V (*Shortage of Foodgrains*).

The last chapter entitled "The Prospect—1981" poses the question—what will be the pattern of our growth during the next thirty years? We know whither the current on which we have been drifting since 1921 is taking us. We also know of the great attempts now being made to stop this dangerous drift and steer the ship of State to safety. How strong is the current? And how strong are these attempts? How is a favourable outcome to be assured? These questions are discussed at length and firm conclusions reached. Much of the evidence in support of material conclusions of the analysis in this chapter is set out in APPENDIX VI (*Old Irrigation Projects and Irrigation Development Projects*) and APPENDIX VII (*Maternity Data and Birth Control*). It is fully realised and made clear at every stage of the discussion that the nature of the material is such that widely varying views can be and are being held both in respect of the facts themselves and the appreciation of the significance of the facts. As the Royal Commission in the United Kingdom observed "parts of the subject may be likened to that fabled morass where armies whole have sunk". The various views held on the subject are set out and reasons given for reaching a particular conclusion. The busy reader may, at this stage, turn over to the last section of the last chapter and read the conclusion straightaway.

10. Acknowledgements—Though the CONSTITUTION lays the duty of census-taking exclusively on the Central Government the census is carried out for the benefit of the entire State which, according to the CONSTITUTION "includes the Government and Parliament of India and the Government and the Legislature of each of the States and all local or other authorities

within the territory of India or under the control of the Government of India". It gives me great pleasure to report that this was fully realised ; and the census received unstinted support and ready assistance from the Governments of all states as well as all other authorities.

This census, like its predecessors, was made possible by the efforts of about six lakhs of public-spirited census workers who made the enquiries and the seven crores or so of citizens who gave them the information asked for. The fact that this is the first census of free India was appreciated by all and it contributed greatly to the success of the undertaking. The press throughout the country, as I have gratefully acknowledged once before, was consistently helpful and gave effective publicity and support to the census at all important stages.

The results of the labours of my colleagues will be before the public. Where all have given of their best, it would be invidious to name any one for special mention. I should, however, place on record my tribute of admiration for Shri J. D. KERAWALLA whose enthusiasm for the work was infectious and whose untiring exertions may have contributed to the malady of which he died before his report could be published.

A number of officers helped me to direct the census and write this report. Shri D. NATARAJAN who was on Mr. YEATTS' staff both in 1931 and 1941 has not only contributed his personal knowledge of prior censuses but also borne a heavy burden of administrative responsibility as Assistant Census Commissioner. Without his help I could not have held charge of two distinct offices. I have also benefitted by Shri NATARAJAN'S advice and suggestions in drafting my report. Shri P. N. KAUL had no previous experience of government offices when he was called upon to function as the statistical conscience-keeper not only for me but all the state census superintendents. He did this to the satisfaction of all of us. He organised the central tabulation office, trained and led a temporary staff which constructed all the all-India tables and checked all the state census tables. Shri T. V. RANGARAJAN and Shri SHANKAR KAPOOR rendered notable assistance, in the collection and analysis of material for my use, as well as in checking the drafts and preparing them for the press. All the members of this able team, and the other members of the staff have worked long hours over a long period ungrudgingly and have still got much to do in seeing all this material through the press. This report is as much theirs as mine and I am very grateful to them.

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and whose initial study of the statistics of registration of births and deaths in combination with census data was the starting point of the systematic analysis of demographic data furnished in this report. The Planning Commission spared the services of Dr. V. NATH who helped me to formulate the scheme of natural regions and sub-regions and to build up parts of the statistical material presented in APPENDICES I and VI, including in particular, the data relating to 'decline of cultivation *per capita*'. I valued his advice and suggestions based on his study of conditions in foreign countries as well as his knowledge of discussion and study within the Planning Commission. The Adviser of the Planning Commission on Health Programmes, Dr. T. LAKSHMINARAYANA spared time for many discussions which clarified the issues relating to birth control. His experienced judgment gave me confidence in putting forward definitive conclusions in a highly controversial field.

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In these days the pressure on the Government Press is extremely heavy and Shri C. A. SUBRAHMANYAM, Controller of Printing & Stationery, India has a very difficult task to perform. But the Census of India is an old customer and there has never been any doubt about the anxiety of all concerned in the Government Press to do their best to ensure that census printing is attended to efficiently and speedily. I have every confidence that the work that still remains to be done will be done well.

R. A. GOPALASWAMI,

Registrar General, India ; and
ex-officio Census Commissioner for India.

NEW DELHI :
1st August, 1953

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