

DAILY PT POINTERS

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The Hindu-Governance(GSII)-Page10

Is the caste Census a useful exercise?

Proponents argue that a caste Census would determine the population sizes of various castes and that these numbers can be used to provide a proportionate share to each caste in government jobs etc. However, upon closer inspection, it becomes clear that the caste Census would be impractical

FULL CONTEXT

Anish Gupta
Shubham Sharma

The demand for a caste Census has become a heated political issue, fuelled by calls from opposition leaders, NGOs, and, more recently, the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) also adding itself to the cohort. Proponents argue that such a Census would determine the population sizes of various castes and that these numbers can be used to provide a proportionate share to each caste in government jobs, land, and wealth.

This article discusses how the attempt to collect individual caste data will



THE GIST

The exercise of a caste Census in India dates back to the late 19th century when the first detailed caste Census was conducted in 1871-72.

Frustrated with the complexities of understanding caste, W. Chichele Plowden, who prepared the 1881 Census report, termed the whole question of caste 'confusing' and hoped that 'on another occasion no attempt will be made to attempt to obtain

- The demand for a caste Census in India has gained political momentum, supported by opposition leaders, NGOs, and even the RSS. Proponents argue that a caste Census would provide data to ensure proportionate government benefits for each caste, such as in jobs, land, and wealth. However, the article highlights the inherent flaws and challenges of such an initiative, drawing on historical and contemporary examples.
- Historical Context: The caste Census in India dates back to 1871-72, with multiple efforts over the years, including the 1931 Census, which identified over 4,000 castes. The 2011 Socio-Economic and Caste Census (SECC) identified 46.7 lakh castes, but these efforts faced major challenges due to misclassification and inconsistent reporting. Caste identification is often arbitrary and prone to errors, as seen in the 2022 Bihar Census controversy over the inclusion of 'hijra' and 'kinnar' categories.

The Hindu-IR(GSII)-Page10

India backs UN resolution calling for Israel's exit

Press Trust of India
UNITED NATIONS

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- India voted in favour of a United Nations General Assembly resolution that called for the withdrawal of Israel from the Palestinian territory occupied since 1967, including East Jerusalem. The resolution reiterated the call for achieving a comprehensive, just, and lasting peace in West Asia.
- The draft resolution, “Peaceful settlement of the question of Palestine”, tabled by Senegal, was overwhelmingly adopted in the 193-member General Assembly on Tuesday.
- India was among the 157 nations that voted in favour, while eight member states including the U.S. voted against it.
- Through the resolution, the General Assembly reaffirmed its unwavering support, per international law, for the two-state solution of Israel and Palestine, living side by side in peace and security within recognised borders, based on the pre-1967 borders.
- It rejected any attempt at demographic or territorial change in the Gaza Strip.
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The Hindu-Governance(GSII) –Page13

RS passes Boilers Bill for safety at factories

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

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- The Rajya Sabha passed the Boilers Bill replacing the Boilers Act of 1923 brought by the colonial administration. Union Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal said the Bill would ensure safety at factories where industrial boilers were used.
- the Bill was for ensuring uniformity throughout India in all technical aspects pertaining to the regulation of boilers.
- “This included standards of construction, maximum pressure specifications, as well as the registration and periodic inspection of all boilers, with particular focus on matters concerning the safety of life and property,” he said.
- Mr. Goyal added that the Bill would provide for the regulation of the manufacture and use of boilers, ensuring the safety of life and property of persons from the danger of explosions in boilers.

The Hindu-Environment(GSIII) –Page20



The Nilgiri narrow-mouthed frog, which is found in the lateritic plateaus of the northern Western Ghats. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Study flags agroforestry threat to frogs

Rahul Karmakar

Researchers have found that agroforestry practices may be harmful to some species of endemic frogs, while a few are less affected by modified habitats. The study was conducted by researchers from the Mysuru-based Nature Conservation Foundation (NCF-India), and the Bombay Environmental Action Group (BEAG).

The study was conducted by Vijayan Jithin and Rohit Naniwadkar of the NCF. The BEAG's researchers were Manali Rane and Agarna Wate. The findings were published in *Ecological Applications*, a journal of the Ecological Society of

- A study conducted by the Nature Conservation Foundation (NCF-India) and the Bombay Environmental Action Group (BEAG) explored the impact of agroforestry practices on endemic frog species in the northern Western Ghats.
- Study Area: The research focused on the low-elevation lateritic plateaus in Maharashtra, particularly in orchards, paddy fields, and unmodified areas during the monsoon season (June–September 2022).
Key Findings:
Amphibian Diversity: Diversity was lowest in paddy fields, and abundance was the least in orchards compared to undisturbed plateaus.
- Endemic Frog Species: Endemic species like the CEPF burrowing frog (*Minervarya cepfi*) and Goan Fejervarya (*Minervarya gomantaki*) were less abundant in modified habitats, indicating harm from agroforestry practices.

Indian Express-Miscellaneous -Page 1

Indian-origin artist wins Turner Prize: 'Weaves personal, political, spiritual'

PAGE 1
ANCHOR

VANDANA KALRA
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 4

INDIAN-ORIGIN SCOTTISH artist Jasleen Kaur has won the prestigious Turner Prize 2024 for her exhibition, "Alter Altar", that reflects on plurality, personal and political themes.

The jury – chaired by Alex Farquharson, Director, Tate Britain – praised "the considered way in which Kaur weaves together the personal, political

and spiritual... choreographing a visual and aural experience that suggests both solidarity and joy". It also highlighted Kaur's "ability to gather different voices through unexpected and playful combinations of material".

At 38, Kaur was the youngest nominee for this year's award that includes a cash prize of £25,000. This year marks the 40th anniversary of the prize. The other shortlisted artists included Pio Abad, Claudette Johnson and Delaine Le Bes. Born in Glasgow, Kaur's great-grandfather reportedly moved from Punjab in 1950, three years after Partition, her fa-

ther owns a hardware store in Scotland. Her prize-winning exhibition "Alter Altar", first shown in Glasgow last year, also reflects on her own family history as migrants to Scotland and her upbringing.

It featured, among others, a vintage red Ford Escort covered with a huge crocheted doily, a reference to her father's migrant aspirations, worship bells, Ir-Bru orange resin, an Aminster carpet, and family photographs. Also playing were soundtracks that were part of Kaur's growing up years, from Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan to Bob Marley. In several interviews, Kaur



Jasleen Kaur at the award ceremony in London. David Perry/PA
Media Assignments

EXPLAINED
The
Turner
Prize

SINCE IT was established in 1984, the Turner Prize has emerged as one of the most prestigious art awards. Recognising the work of a British artist, it endeavours to highlight recent developments in contemporary British art. Indian-origin British artist Anish Kapoor won the prize in 1991.

has often discussed her multicultural upbringing and influences. In her 2021 series, "Cut Feelings Meri Jaan", explored ideas around inheritance and belonging, history and archive, in the 2018 "I Keep Telling Them These Stories", she used archival footage and recordings gathered from India and Scotland to explore culture as praxis, family, identity and origins. Her 2019 publication, "Be Like Teflon", commissioned by Panel for Glasgow Women's Library, comprises conversations between Kaur and women of Indian heritage living in the UK.

Her website describes her as:

"An artist making with the slurry of life. Raised amidst betrayal, secrecy and banished outsiders, her work is to make sense of what is out of view or withheld. She is called towards plurality, declassifications, polyphony, the blur. She is practising singing in the sediment till she is intoxicated."

In an interview on the Tate website, Kaur states: "There's this particular theory that I grew up with from the Sikh tradition which talks about Miri Piri, which is this balance of the political and the spiritual. I'm really interested in that duality and I've become quite obsessed with this

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

- Indian-origin Scottish artist Jasleen Kaur has won the prestigious Turner Prize 2024 for her exhibition, "Alter Altar", that reflects on plurality, personal and political themes.
- The Turner Prize since it was established in 1984, the Turner Prize has emerged as one of the most prestigious art awards. Recognising the work of a British artist, it endeavours to highlight recent developments in contemporary British art. Indian-origin British artist Anish Kapoor won the prize in 1991.

Indian Express-GS2(IR) -Page 14

Nepal, China sign BRI framework, paves way for work on projects

YUBARAJ GHIMIRE
KATHMANDU, DECEMBER 4

NEPAL AND China on Wednesday signed the execution framework for the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) in Beijing, indicating that Nepal will soon decide on projects for implementation. The development has come when Nepal PM K P Sharma Oli is on an official visit to China.

Nepal Foreign Ministry officials said the framework agreement was signed by the acting foreign secretary and the vice chairman of China's National Development Reforms Commission, ending speculation triggered by the government's stance that it will accept only grants for projects under the BRI.

Last week upon returning from Chengdu, Nepal Foreign Minister Arzu Rana Deuba had said that Nepal will accept only grants from China for BRI projects as the country is not in a position to go for loans

might face a crisis once the Prime Minister returns Thursday.

According to *The Kathmandu Post*, China had removed the word "grant" proposed by the Nepali side and suggested replacing it with "investment" for projects under the BRI. After reviewing the new terms and conditions, officials found a compromise and decided to include the phrasing "aid and technical assistance" to project execution in Nepal, it said.

The word "aid" adds ambiguity and marks a step back from the Nepali Congress's position of clearly specifying grants. Some countries also term line of credit as aid but which are essentially loans, the paper said.

The two sides had signed nine MoUs and agreements on Tuesday.

Speaking at a programme held at Peking University, Oli later said that Nepal would reap benefits from the BRI.

He expressed the belief that China has strongly supported

- Nepal and China signed a much-awaited framework agreement on the multi-billion-dollar Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) paving the way for enhanced economic cooperation on the projects.
- The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), previously known as the One Belt One Road Initiative, a mammoth infrastructure project launched by China in 2013. China aims to recreate its medieval Silk Road. China wants to build infrastructure such as ports, bridges and rail lines in over 150 countries spanning Asia, Africa and Europe. While China claims it is solely an economic initiative, not many countries, including India, are willing to buy that argument. The countries opposing the project fear this could a China-centered sphere of influence and lead to "debt traps".

Will Reserve Bank go for a CRR cut?

HITESH VYAS
MUMBAI, DECEMBER 4

ALTHOUGH THERE seems to be a broad consensus that the repo rate — the key policy rate — is likely to remain unchanged at 6.5 per cent in the three-day monetary policy review that got underway Wednesday, there is an expectation that the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) may announce a cut in the cash reserve ratio (CRR). The calls for a reduction in the CRR have gained momentum amid a tight liquidity condition in the banking system and shockingly low gross domestic product (GDP) growth, which slowed to a seven-month low of 5.4 per cent in the July-September 2024 quarter.

The reduction in the CRR will be a signal that the RBI is keen on easing the monetary policy, without cutting the repo rate.

What is Cash Reserve Ratio (CRR)?

The Cash Reserve Ratio (CRR) is the



File

percentage of a bank's total deposits that it is required to maintain in liquid cash with the RBI as a reserve. At present, the RBI has fixed CRR at 4.5 per cent. The CRR percentage is determined by the RBI from time to time. Banks do not get any interest on this amount, which is kept as CRR from the RBI. The CRR is a tool used by the RBI to manage inflation and check excessive lending.

CRR cut expected?

Given the tight liquidity con-

dition in the system, some analysts feel that the RBI may announce a cut in the CRR in the upcoming monetary policy. While the RBI's Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) decides on the repo rate and policy stance, the responsibility of liquidity measures lies solely with the RBI.

The RBI may reduce the CRR either by 25 basis points (bps) or 50 bps, analysts said. One basis point is one-hundredth of a per-

centage point. This would be the first cut in the CRR in more than 45 years.

"The liquidity in the banking system has tightened because of the RBI's actions to stabilise the rupee. There have been a lot of dollar sales (by the RBI), which has affected the overall liquidity in the system. In December, liquidity will further tighten due to outflows related to payment of advance tax, goods and services tax (GST), and quarter-end demand for credit. Under this situation, some kind of a permanent measure can be announced (by the RBI), which could be a CRR cut or OMO purchase," said Madan Sabnavis, chief economist, Bank of Baroda.

The RBI has been selling dollars in the forex market to check the rupee volatility caused due to continued foreign portfolio investors (FPI) selling and strengthening of the US dollar. Since October 1, the rupee has depreciated nearly 1 per cent against the dollar.

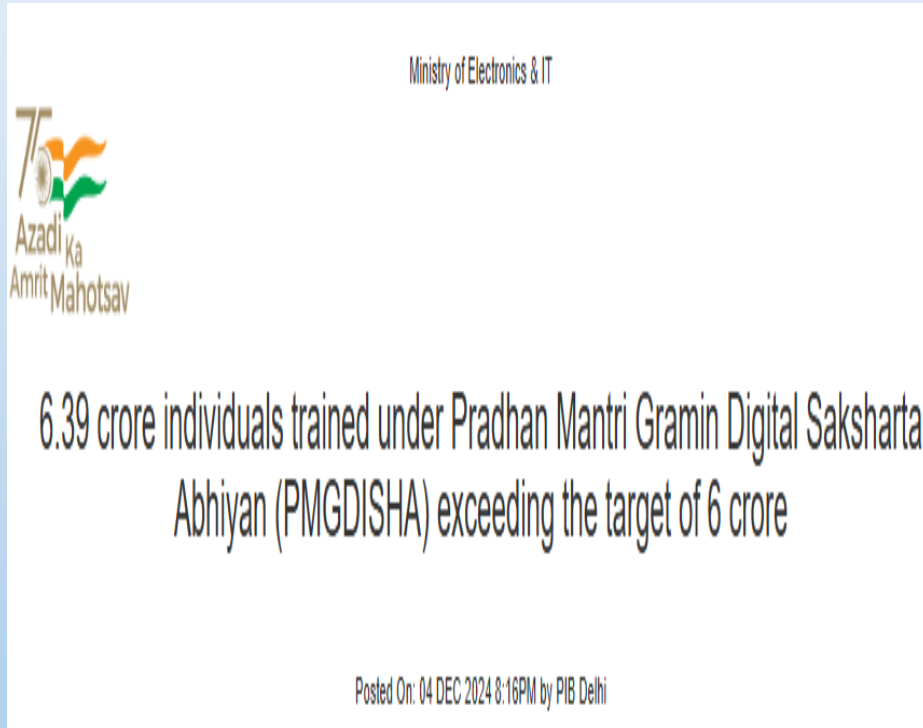
FULL REPORT ON
www.indianexpress.com



- The three-day review began on December 4, with expectations that the repo rate will remain at 6.5%.
- CRR Reduction Expected: Analysts predict a potential cut in the Cash Reserve Ratio (CRR), a measure to ease banking liquidity.
- Reason for CRR Cut: Tight liquidity conditions and a 5.4% GDP growth in Q2 2024 have increased calls for a CRR cut.
- What is CRR? CRR is the percentage of a bank's deposits it must maintain with the RBI as cash reserves. It is currently set at 4.5%.
- Impact of CRR Cut: A reduction of 25 to 50 basis points (bps) could free up Rs 55,000 crore to Rs 1.2 lakh crore in liquidity for banks.
- Effect on Lending: The extra liquidity would be available for lending, which could stimulate economic growth.
- Liquidity Issues: The RBI's interventions to stabilize the rupee have further tightened liquidity, prompting the need for measures like a CRR cut.

HEADLINES OF THE DAY

PIB-Governance(GSIII)



- Pradhan Mantri Gramin Digital Saksharta Abhiyaan (PMGDISHA) is a Digital Literacy Scheme by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), to make six crore persons in rural areas, across States/UTs, are digitally literate, reaching around 40% of rural households by covering one member from every eligible household.
- The Scheme is applicable only to rural areas of the country. Only one person (14 - 60 years of age) per eligible household would be considered for training. Priority would be given to Non-smartphone users, Antyodaya households, college drop-outs, and Participants of the adult literacy mission; Digitally illiterate school students from class 9th to 12th, provided facility of Computer/ICT Training is not available in their schools. Preference would be given to SC, ST, BPL, women, differently-abled persons, and minorities.

HEADLINES OF THE DAY

Air-Governance(GSII)

Beti Bachao Beti Padhao Improves Sex Ratio And Gross Enrollment Ratio Of Girls Says WCD Minister



- The Government has said that the Sex Ratio at Birth of girl child in the country has improved from 918 in 2014-15 to 930 in 2023-24
- Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP) scheme was launched on January 22, 2015 as a collaborative effort by the Ministry of Women & Child Development with the Ministry of Education, and Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. It focuses on preventing gender-biased sex-selective practices, ensuring survival and protection of the girl child and promoting her education. BBBP is a centrally sponsored scheme with 100% funding by the Central Government in all the districts of the country under Sambal vertical of Mission Shakti. The government of West Bengal is not implementing BBBP.