Census 2021 is unlikely to collect “caste wise” data as a similar exercise conducted in 2011 by another ministry threw up about 40 lakh caste names that were difficult to tabulate, a senior government official said on Friday.

The decennial exercise would involve 31 lakh trained enumerators, with data collected digitally using Android based mobile phones.

The Census data would be available by the year 2024-25 as the entire process would be conducted digitally and data crunching would be quicker, said the official, speaking on condition of anonymity.

The 2011 caste data, collected as part of the Socio Economic Caste Census (SECC), is yet to be released by the Centre. As per the National Commission for Backward Classes, there are 2,479 entries in the Central list of the Other Backward Classes (OBC).

“The caste data is difficult to enumerate as last time when it was collected, we got as many as 40 lakh names of castes,” said the official. “For example, a person belonging to the Yadav caste wrote Yadu, Yaduvanshi, etc. in the form; there is no standardisation. People sometimes confuse caste with gotra,” added the official.

The official said that last time, the Census was recorded on paper, with the information then scanned and later fed into the database, leading to the publication of various datasets.

“The dataset on migration, culled out from the 2011 Census, was published last week.

“The digitisation will ensure there is not much delay and most parameters will be available by 2024-25. In many countries, census is collected in one day,” the official said.