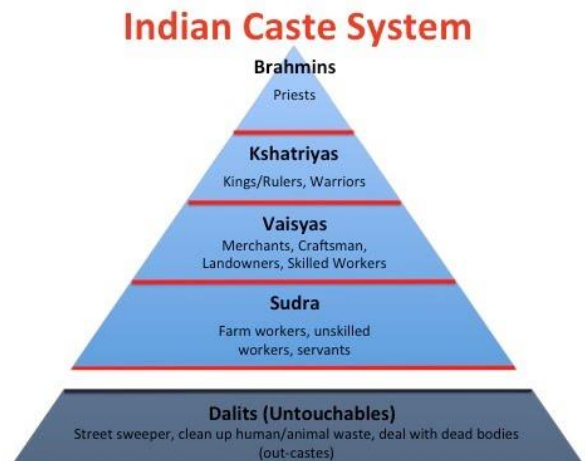


Choose the best option for each blank.

The Indian caste system (1) \_\_\_\_\_ society into groups of people with different functions and status.

Originally, the highest caste, the Brahmins, were the intellectual and spiritual guides, priests and philosophers. Second were the Kshatriyas, the caste of warriors and rulers. Then came the Vaishyas, (2) \_\_\_\_\_ with trading and commerce, and the lowest caste were the Shudras, who were labourers and craftsmen.



*Image: Giveaway285, CC BY-SA 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons*

People of these four castes had to (3) \_\_\_\_\_ any contact with the "untouchables", people who ranked below all others and did the dirty work. While the higher castes managed to (4) \_\_\_\_\_ their position in Hindu society the lower ones were not given any power (5) \_\_\_\_\_. Those who (6) \_\_\_\_\_ caste rules were punished severely.

During their (7) \_\_\_\_\_, the British tried to give more rights to the lower castes and abolish traditional practices, but in practice they did not succeed. Since 1949 the Constitution of India has (8) \_\_\_\_\_ all its citizens equal rights, but changes have been slow.

India's (9) \_\_\_\_\_ development of the past decades has done a great deal to weaken the caste system. With huge, overpopulated cities, caste laws can (10) \_\_\_\_\_ be observed. Indians can improve their social status through professional and financial success. In rural areas, however, the caste system remains an influential (11) \_\_\_\_\_ in society.

The majority of the former untouchables, who now call themselves Dalits (the oppressed), are still (12) \_\_\_\_\_, but as their numbers are strong (18-20% of the population), democracy has provided them with more rights and better jobs.

<b>1</b>	distributes	divides	contains	shares
<b>2</b>	joined	united	linked	associated
<b>3</b>	avoid	protect	defend	promote
<b>4</b>	support	power up	brace	strengthen
<b>5</b>	at all	above all	at least	in fact
<b>6</b>	submitted	distracted	disobeyed	obeyed
<b>7</b>	rule	law	power	reign
<b>8</b>	offered	permitted	allowed	granted
<b>9</b>	economy	economics	economic	economical
<b>10</b>	not longer	no longer	any longer	much longer
<b>11</b>	factor	key	cause	reason
<b>12</b>	dispossessed	denied	fortunate	underprivileged

## KEY

The Indian caste system **(1) divides** society into groups of people with different functions and status.

Originally, the highest caste, the Brahmins, were the intellectual and spiritual guides, priests and philosophers. Second were the Kshatriyas, the caste of warriors and rulers. Then came the Vaishyas, **(2) associated** with trading and commerce, and the lowest caste were the Shudras, who were labourers and craftsmen.

People of these four castes had to **(3) avoid** any contact with the "untouchables", people who ranked below all others and did the dirty work. While the higher castes managed to **(4) strengthen** their position in Hindu society the lower ones were not given any power **(5) at all**. Those who **(6) disobeyed** caste rules were punished severely.

During their **(7) rule**, the British tried to give more rights to the lower castes and abolish traditional practices, but in practice they did not succeed. Since 1949 the Constitution of India has **(8) granted** all its citizens equal rights, but changes have been slow.

India's **(9) economic** development of the past decades has done a great deal to weaken the caste system. With huge, overpopulated cities, caste laws can **(10) no longer** be observed. Indians can improve their social status through professional and financial success. In rural areas, however, the caste system remains an influential **(11) factor** in society.

The majority of the former untouchables, who now call themselves Dalits (the oppressed), are still **(12) underprivileged**, but as their numbers are strong (18-20% of the population), democracy has provided them with more rights and better jobs.