Polity & Governance · GS - II

To what extent can delimitation influence the federal balance and political representation in India? Discuss its implications in the context of the proposed implementation of women's reservation.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
DAILY PRACTICE 26/11/2026	GS - II	Polity & Governance

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
15	~250 words

Answer Hint

Delimitation, population-based representation, federal balance, women's political representation, regional disparities, 106th Constitutional Amendment

Model Answer

Delimitation and representative democracy

Delimitation involves redrawing territorial constituencies and determining the allocation of legislative seats to reflect changes in population. It seeks to uphold the principle of equal representation, but its consequences extend beyond electoral boundaries to India's federal structure.

Implications for federal balance

1. **Uneven demographic growth:** States with higher population growth may gain greater representation if seat allocation is revised on population-based principles. States that have achieved demographic stabilisation may perceive this as a reduction in their relative political influence.

2. **Regional political influence:** Changes in constituency distribution can affect the balance of representation among regions and influence national policy priorities.

3. **Electoral equality:** Delimitation can address disparities in constituency population, strengthening the principle of equal value of votes.

4. **Administrative and social consequences:** Redrawing boundaries can affect geographical representation, reserved constituencies and the political voice of local communities.

Link with women's reservation

The Constitution (106th Amendment) Act, 2023 provides for one-third reservation for women in the Lok Sabha and State Legislative Assemblies. Article 334A links its implementation to the publication of relevant figures from the first census conducted after commencement of the Amendment and a subsequent delimitation exercise.

Consequently, the timing and design of delimitation will influence when women's reservation becomes operational and how reserved constituencies are distributed.

Ensuring balanced representation

A transparent delimitation process, objective criteria, adequate consultation with states and safeguards against regional marginalisation are essential. Women's representation should also be supported through political party reforms and leadership development.

Conclusion: Delimitation must reconcile electoral equality with India's federal diversity. Its implementation alongside women's reservation requires institutional transparency and sensitivity to regional representation.

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