Polity & Governance · GS - II

Critically examine the constitutional and federal implications of linking women's reservation in legislatures with the delimitation exercise.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
DAILY PRACTICE 27/11/2026	GS - II	Polity & Governance

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
15	~250 words

Answer Hint

106th Constitutional Amendment, Article 334A, women's political representation, delimitation, federal balance, census, democratic equality, implementation challenges

Model Answer

The Constitution (106th Amendment) Act, 2023 provides for one-third reservation for women in the Lok Sabha and State Legislative Assemblies. However, Article 334A links its implementation to a future census and delimitation exercise, making the institutional process as significant as the constitutional commitment.

1. Constitutional significance

1. The amendment seeks to correct the historical under-representation of women in legislative institutions.
2. It strengthens substantive political equality by moving beyond formal equality of voting rights towards greater representation in decision-making.
3. Article 334A establishes the framework for operationalising the reservation following the prescribed census and delimitation process.

2. Implications of the delimitation link

1. **Delayed implementation:** The constitutional guarantee does not translate into immediate reservation, potentially postponing its electoral impact.
2. **Federal concerns:** Delimitation can alter the relative representation of states in the Lok Sabha, making the exercise politically sensitive.
3. **Demographic differences:** States have experienced different population growth patterns, creating concerns about how representation should reflect population changes.
4. **Institutional uncertainty:** Delimitation and reservation require coordination among constitutional institutions, election authorities and governments.

3. Reconciling representation and federal balance

The process should be transparent, evidence-based and guided by constitutional principles. Adequate consultation with states, timely publication of census data and clear communication about implementation are essential. Political parties must also improve women's representation within their organisational structures.

Conclusion

Women's reservation is a major constitutional step towards inclusive democracy. Its credibility will depend on implementing it through a process that advances gender equality without undermining federal trust or the legitimacy of representative institutions.

BECOME IAS
AI POWERED UPSC PREP