Polity & Governance · GS - II

How can Parliament ensure that the implementation of women's reservation strengthens substantive gender representation without undermining constitutional and federal principles?

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, political representation, delimitation, federalism, gender justice, electoral reforms, inclusive democracy

Model Answer

The Constitution (106th Amendment) Act, 2023 marks a significant step towards improving women's representation in India's legislative institutions. However, its implementation raises questions concerning constitutional procedure, federal balance and the quality of political participation.

From numerical representation to substantive empowerment

1. **Correcting historical exclusion:** Reservation addresses the persistent underrepresentation of women in Parliament and State Legislative Assemblies.
2. **Inclusive policymaking:** Greater representation can bring wider attention to issues such as healthcare, education, gender-based violence and social protection.
3. **Democratic legitimacy:** Legislative institutions become more representative of the population they govern.
4. **Leadership development:** Reservation can create opportunities for women to develop political experience and leadership networks.

Constitutional and federal concerns

Article 334A links the commencement of reservation to delimitation undertaken after the publication of relevant figures of the first census conducted after the commencement of the Amendment. This creates uncertainty regarding the timeline of implementation.

Further, delimitation based on population changes may alter the relative representation of states. States that achieved demographic stabilisation have expressed concerns about losing proportional political influence. Therefore, gender justice must be pursued without disregarding the federal compact.

Ensuring meaningful implementation

1. Establish a transparent and constitutionally compliant delimitation process.
2. Encourage political parties to promote women candidates beyond reserved constituencies.
3. Strengthen leadership training, campaign financing access and institutional support for women representatives.
4. Promote participation of women from marginalised communities within the constitutional framework.

Women's reservation should not remain merely a numerical exercise. Its success will depend on timely implementation, genuine political participation and the ability of elected women to exercise independent legislative influence.

BECOME IAS
AI POWERED UPSC PREP