Polity & Governance · GS - II

How can constitutional delimitation reconcile the principle of population-based representation with the need to protect federal balance among Indian States?

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
DAILY PRACTICE 28/11/2026	GS - II	Polity & Governance

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
15	~250 words

Answer Hint

Delimitation, Articles 81 and 82, Article 170, 1971 Census, population stabilisation, federal equity, parliamentary representation, constitutional consensus

Model Answer

Delimitation is the process of readjusting electoral boundaries and representation to ensure democratic equality. However, in India, population-based redistribution of parliamentary seats raises concerns about federal equity, particularly among States with different demographic growth patterns.

The demand by Tamil Nadu's political leadership to preserve its parliamentary share reflects this tension.

Key dimensions of the issue:

1. **Democratic representation:** Population-based delimitation seeks to maintain broadly equal representation of citizens in legislative bodies.

2. **Federal balance:** A significant redistribution of seats may alter the relative political influence of States in Parliament.

3. **Population stabilisation:** States that successfully implemented family welfare and population-control measures argue that their developmental achievements should not reduce their political representation.

4. **Constitutional framework:** Articles 81, 82 and 170 provide the relevant framework for parliamentary and State Assembly representation and delimitation.

5. **Cooperative federalism:** Consultation with States and political parties can help build consensus on the timing, methodology and safeguards of delimitation.

A transparent formula, constitutional safeguards and transitional arrangements can help address competing concerns.

Conclusion

Delimitation should uphold democratic equality without undermining the federal structure. A constitutionally sound and consultative approach is necessary to maintain trust among States and ensure balanced representation.

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