Polity & Governance · GS - II

Delimitation is not merely an electoral exercise but also a challenge to India's federal balance. Discuss.

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

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
15	~250 words

Answer Hint

Delimitation, Article 82, population-based representation, federalism, regional inequalities, North-South divide, democratic representation, cooperative federalism

Model Answer

Delimitation refers to the redrawing of electoral constituency boundaries and, where applicable, readjustment of legislative representation based on population. It seeks to uphold the principle of equal representation but also raises concerns about federal balance.

Major dimensions of the debate

1. **Democratic representation:** Population-based delimitation seeks to ensure that constituencies have broadly comparable populations, strengthening the principle of electoral equality.
2. **North-South divide:** States with higher population growth may gain greater parliamentary representation, potentially altering the relative political influence of southern states.
3. **Population stabilisation:** States that successfully controlled population growth may perceive a reduction in their relative representation as unfair.
4. **Federal balance:** Unequal changes in parliamentary representation may affect the political influence of states in national decision-making.
5. **Political consensus:** Delimitation without adequate consultation may intensify regional disagreements and undermine cooperative federalism.

Constitutional framework

Article 82 provides for readjustment of Lok Sabha representation and constituency boundaries following a Census, subject to constitutional provisions. The existing constitutional freeze makes the timing and methodology of future delimitation particularly significant.

Way Forward

1. Develop a transparent and broadly acceptable delimitation framework.
2. Consult states and political stakeholders before major changes.
3. Examine appropriate safeguards to balance population-based representation with federal equity.
4. Ensure that demographic performance does not create unintended political disadvantages.

Conclusion

Delimitation must reconcile democratic equality with federal stability. A consultative, transparent and constitutionally sound approach is essential to preserve national unity and equitable political representation.

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