Society & Social Justice · GS - II

Discuss the debate over sub-categorisation within women's political reservation in India, particularly in relation to OBC and other socially disadvantaged groups.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
DAILY PRACTICE 28/11/2026	GS - II	Society & Social Justice

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
15	~250 words

Answer Hint

Substantive representation, intersectionality, social justice, OBC women, political participation, constitutional amendment

Model Answer

Women's political reservation seeks to address historical gender-based underrepresentation in legislative institutions. However, differences of caste, class and community within the category of women have generated debate over equitable representation.

Constitutional framework:

The 106th Constitutional Amendment Act, 2023 provides for one-third reservation for women in the Lok Sabha, State Legislative Assemblies and the Delhi Legislative Assembly. It includes women belonging to SC and ST communities within the respective reserved seats but does not establish a separate OBC sub-quota.

Arguments for sub-categorisation:

1. **Intersectional disadvantage:** OBC, EBC and minority women may experience overlapping forms of social and economic exclusion.
2. **Inclusive representation:** Sub-categorisation could broaden opportunities for groups that remain underrepresented in political institutions.
3. **Social justice:** Representation debates should consider inequalities within the broader category of women.

4. **Political empowerment:** Greater diversity among elected representatives may bring a wider range of concerns into legislative deliberations.

Challenges: Designing sub-quotas requires reliable demographic data, constitutional clarity and careful consideration of existing reservation arrangements. It must also avoid excessive fragmentation of representation.

Conclusion: The debate highlights the distinction between numerical representation and substantive inclusion. Transparent constitutional deliberation and evidence-based policy design are essential to reconcile gender justice with social justice.

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