

Delimitation Debate

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Delimitation Debate: Balancing Representation in India

Context:

- **Delimitation** refers to the **redrawing of parliamentary and assembly constituencies** to ensure fair representation based on population changes.
 - **Southern states like Tamil Nadu and Kerala** fear a **loss of political influence** due to their **slower population growth** compared to the North.
 - **Union Home Minister Amit Shah** assured that southern states **would not lose parliamentary seats** despite concerns.
 - The issue highlights the challenge of **balancing demographic changes with equitable representation**.
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What is Delimitation and Why is it Important?

- **Mandated by Article 82**, which requires **seat reallocation** after every **Census**.
 - **Article 81** limits **Lok Sabha seats** to **550** (530 for states, 20 for Union Territories).
 - Ensures **equal weightage of votes** across regions by maintaining a **similar population size per constituency**.
 - **Prevents overrepresentation and underrepresentation** due to population shifts.
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History of Delimitation in India

- **Four Delimitation Exercises: 1952, 1963, 1973, 2002.**
 - **1976 (42nd Amendment):** Froze **seat allocation** to promote **family planning** and prevent states with high population growth from gaining more seats.
 - **2001 Delimitation:** Redrew **constituency boundaries** but **did not change the total number of seats** due to opposition from southern states.
 - Next delimitation was **planned for 2026**, but delays in the **Census** have postponed the process.
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Impact of Delimitation on Representation

- In **1977**, each MP represented **10.11 lakh people**.
- If this ratio is maintained, **Lok Sabha strength** could rise to nearly **1,400** based on **2025 population projections**.

- Northern states would gain more seats, while southern states might see minimal increases, raising concerns over **diminished representation**.
 - Regional parties fear that population-based delimitation would **benefit national parties** with strong bases in North India.
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Concerns of Southern States

- Tamil Nadu CM M.K. Stalin has called an **all-party meeting on March 5** to discuss the issue.
 - Southern states argue that their **successful population control** should not lead to **reduced political representation**.
 - Fear that **northern dominance in Parliament** could weaken **regional political influence**.
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Conclusion: A Need for Balanced Representation

- **Delimitation must balance demographic realities with regional equity.**
- Northern states deserve additional seats, but southern states should not be penalized for population control.
- A possible solution is **increasing total seats** rather than reducing representation for any state.
- A **balanced approach is essential** to maintain **political stability and national unity**.



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