

Delimitation in India: Impact on Southern States & Parliamentary Seats

February 27, 2025 • vajiramandravi.com



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Delimitation in India Latest News

- Union Home Minister Amit Shah assured that southern states would not lose any parliamentary seats after delimitation, addressing concerns of states like Tamil Nadu and Kerala.

- Due to slower population growth in the South compared to the North, delimitation based on the latest data could have resulted in a significant increase in seats for northern states.
- Delimitation, which redraws constituency boundaries, is expected after the delayed Census and was initially set for 2026. In Independent India's history, delimitation has taken place four times – 1952, 1963, 1973 and 2002.

Need for Delimitation

- Delimitation is a constitutional mandate carried out after each Census to readjust the number of seats in Parliament and state Assemblies and redefine constituency boundaries.
 - **Article 82 of the Constitution** mandates that after each Census, the allocation of Lok Sabha seats must be adjusted based on population changes.
 - However, **Article 81** limits the total number of Lok Sabha members to 550, with 530 from states and 20 from Union Territories.
 - It also requires that the ratio of seats to the population in each state be as uniform as possible, ensuring that constituencies across the country have roughly equal populations.
- The goal is to ensure equal representation by maintaining similar population sizes across constituencies.

History of Delimitation in India

- **Pre-1976:** After the Censuses of 1951, 1961, and 1971, seats in Lok Sabha, Rajya Sabha, and state Assemblies were redistributed.
- **42nd Amendment (1976):** During the Emergency, Parliament froze the total number of seats until the 2001 Census to prevent states with higher population growth from losing representation while implementing family planning measures.
- **2001 Delimitation:** While constituency boundaries were redrawn, the number of seats remained unchanged due to opposition from southern states.

Impact of Delimitation on Lok Sabha Seats and Elections

- The number of seats each state receives after delimitation will depend on the base average population that a future delimitation commission establishes.
- In 1977, each MP represented an average of 10.11 lakh people. Ideally, constituencies should be evenly distributed around this average.

Potential Increase in Lok Sabha Strength

- If the 10.11 lakh average is retained, Lok Sabha strength could rise to nearly 1,400 based on 2025 population projections.
 - UP (including Uttarakhand) could see its seats triple from 85 to 250, while Bihar (including Jharkhand) could increase from 25 to 82.
 - Tamil Nadu and Kerala would see only moderate increases (39 to 76 and 20 to 36, respectively).
- Since the new Parliament has only 888 seats, this formula is unlikely to be implemented.

- Experts believe that regardless of the formula, southern states would gain fewer seats compared to northern states, reinforcing concerns over their diminishing political influence.

Impact of Delimitation on Elections

- Regional parties in the South fear that delimitation based on population will benefit parties with a strong base in North India.

Concerns of Southern States Over Delimitation

- Southern states fear that delimitation based on the latest population data will reduce their representation in Parliament, weakening their political influence.
- Tamil Nadu CM M.K. Stalin announced an all-party meeting on March 5 to discuss delimitation, calling it a looming threat to southern states.
- He warned that Tamil Nadu could lose parliamentary seats due to its success in family planning.

Delimitation in India FAQs

Q1. What is delimitation in India?

Ans. Delimitation is the process of redrawing parliamentary and assembly constituencies based on population changes after each Census.

Q2. Why are southern states concerned about delimitation?

Ans. Southern states fear losing parliamentary representation due to slower population growth compared to northern states.

Q3. How often has delimitation occurred in India?

Ans. Delimitation has taken place four times: in 1952, 1963, 1973, and 2002.

Q4. What impact could delimitation have on Lok Sabha seats?

Ans. Northern states may gain more seats, while southern states could see minimal increases, affecting political representation.

Q5. What is the Tamil Nadu CM's stance on delimitation?

Ans. Tamil Nadu CM M.K. Stalin has called delimitation a threat and convened an all-party meeting to discuss its impact.

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