

1. Why Southern States are nervous about delimitation

Introduction

Population growth in South India has been far slower than in the North. Thus, if delimitation were to take place based on latest population data, northern states would receive a much larger number of seats in Parliament compared to the South.

Why delimitation?

Delimitation is a Constitutional mandate, to be carried out after every Census in order to readjust the number of seats in Parliament, and the boundaries of constituencies, based on latest population data. The idea is to ensure that each constituency has roughly the same number of people living in it.

Population-wise seat ratio was broadly equitable after last delimitation

States	1961 Population	1967 Seats	Population/ Seat Ratio	1971 Population	1976 Seats	Population/ Seat Ratio
Uttar Pradesh	7,01,43,635	85	8,25,219	8,38,48,797	85	9,86,456
Bihar	3,48,40,968	53	6,57,377	4,21,26,236	54	7,80,115
Rajasthan	2,01,55,602	23	8,76,331	2,57,65,806	25	10,30,632
Tamil Nadu	3,36,86,953	39	8,63,768	4,11,99,168	39	10,56,389
Kerala	1,69,03,715	19	8,89,669	2,13,47,375	20	10,67,369
India	43,92,34,771	520	8,44,682	54,81,59,652	542	10,11,365

Up until 1976, after every Indian Census, the seats of Lok Sabha, Rajya Sabha and State legislative Assemblies were re-distributed throughout the country. This happened thrice, based on the Censuses of 1951, 1961, and 1971.

The 42nd Amendment to the Constitution, passed during the Emergency, froze the total number of Parliamentary and state Assembly seats till the 2001 Census, which was further frozen by 84th amendment act till year 2026.

Why are southern states nervous about delimitation?

States in peninsular India feel that delimitation based on latest population data will reduce their representation in Parliament, and thus diminish their political heft.

What does the data say?

The number of seats each state gets after delimitation will depend upon the base average population that a delimitation commission, as and when constituted, will arrive at.

If the population of each constituency were to be kept at 20 lakh, Parliament would have 707 seats, compared to 543 at present.

Based on projected 2025 population, current seat ratios not equitable

States	Current Seats	2025 Projected Population	Seats at the same ratio as last time #	Seats at 15 lakh ratio	Seats at 20 lakh ratio
UP*	85	25,23,42,000	250	168	126
Bihar*	54	17,08,90,000	169	114	85
Rajasthan	25	8,27,70,000	82	55	41
Tamil Nadu	39	7,73,17,000	76	52	39
Kerala	20	3,60,63,000	36	24	18
India	543	141,33,24,000	1,397	942	707

Southern states would be at a significant disadvantage. Tamil Nadu would neither gain or lose seats, while Kerala would lose two. But UP (including Uttarakhand) would now have 126 seats, while Bihar (including Jharkhand) would have 85.

Even if the average per constituency population were to be kept at 15 lakh (942 seats in Parliament), Tamil Nadu and Kerala would see modest increases to their tally to 52 and 24 respectively, while the tallies of UP and Bihar would rise to 168 and 114 seats respectively.

How will elections be impacted?

Regional parties from the South feel that delimitation based on population could skew elections in favour of parties, such as the incumbent BJP, with a base in the North. Congress too shares this anxiety.

Following the rise of the BJP through the late 1980s and early 1990s, Congress has been doing poorly in the Hindi heartland.

The party presently has 99 seats in Parliament. Congress has, in total, won 53 seats in Karnataka, Maharashtra, Kerala, Telangana and Tamil Nadu alone. In fact, of the 232 seats won by the INDIA bloc in 2024 polls, a little over 100 came from the more populous northern states.

Relevance: GS Prelims & Mains Paper II; Governance

Source: Indian Express

2. NASA's bid to put a lunar Nokia cellular network

Introduction

The Athena moon lander, built by Intuitive Machines (IM), launched through SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket is expected to reach the moon on March 6.

The present mission (Second moon mission by Intuitive Machines called IM -2) is primarily focused on mining for precious resources on the far side of the moon. It will also attempt to deploy the first lunar surface cellular network.

The mobile network was developed as a partnership between NASA and Finnish telecom company Nokia.



Lunar cellular connectivity

Until now, the mode of communication from the moon has been via radio waves. Building a lunar communications network would allow for real-time viewing of high-resolution video.

Cellular technology was thus mooted as an alternative. This January, Nokia announced that it had fully integrated its Lunar Surface Communication System (LSCS) into the

Athena lander. The LSCS will reportedly use the 4G/LTE technology widely used on Earth.

The LSCS comprises two device modules – a lunar rover and a hopper. Once Athena makes its landing, these devices will attempt to connect to its cellular network while exploring the lunar surface. Athena will also be connected to the Earth, enabling high-definition video streaming and command and control operations.

The 4G cell network is expected to work only for a few days on the present mission.

What to know about the IM-2 Mission

The Texas-based Intuitive Machines became the first private company to complete a successful moon landing in February 2024, carrying six NASA payloads, including one at the moon's south pole.

Its second mission, IM-2, intends to build on its 2024 success and land on Mons Mouton, a mountain at the moon's south pole. The moon's south pole has been of interest to space agencies worldwide as it is believed to contain ice and rare minerals, seen as crucial for further space exploration.

The IM-2 will explore this in part, deploying a pair of NASA instruments which will drill three feet into the lunar surface to specifically look for water and carbon dioxide. The presence of water could help to establish a permanent lunar base, or at least assist manned missions to the moon.

Relevance: GS Prelims; Science & Technology

Source: Indian Express

3. Revenue Secretary Tuhin Kanta Pandey appointed SEBI chief

Introduction



The government recently appointed Finance and Revenue Secretary Tuhin Kanta Pandey as the new chairman of the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI).

Mr. Pandey would replace Madhabi Puri Buch, who completed her three-year tenure.

Appointment Process

The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) has approved the appointment of Mr. Pandey.

According to a government order, his appointment is initially for a period of three years from the day he assumes charge.

Relevance: GS Prelims

Source: The Hindu

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