

FINDER

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FORTUNE IAS NEWS DAILY EXPLAINER

Delimitation — a case of to be or not to be

Prelims: General Studies Paper - 1
Current events of national and international importance

Mains: General Studies - 2
Indian Constitution—historical underpinnings, evolution, features, amendments, significant provisions and basic structure.

1. Context

- The government called a **special session of Parliament to discuss key Bills, including the Constitution (131st Amendment) Bill, Delimitation Bill, and UT Laws Amendment Bill.**
- The **aim was to reorganize Lok Sabha and Assembly seats across India** and implement reservation for women in legislatures.
- The **delimitation exercise was proposed based on the 2011 Census**, to redraw constituency boundaries and redistribute seats among States.
- The **total number of Lok Sabha seats was proposed to increase to 850.**
- The timing of the session, during elections in West Bengal and Tamil Nadu, **faced criticism from Opposition parties.**

2. Delimitation in India: Constitutional Provisions and Historical Practice

- Articles 82 and 170(3) of the Constitution mandate delimitation** (seat readjustment) after every Census for Lok Sabha and State Assemblies.
- The **first delimitation (1950–51) was done by the Election Commission of India using estimated population data**, since the 1951 Census was not yet complete.
- After the first general elections, **delimitation was properly done using 1951 Census data, and later repeated after 1961 and 1971 Censuses.**

- The **1971-based delimitation (completed in 1976) was the last full exercise before a freeze.**
- The **42nd Constitutional Amendment Act froze delimitation until the Census of 2001 to ensure that States controlling population were not penalized with fewer seats**, while high-growth States did not gain extra advantage.

3. Population Growth and Delimitation Freeze in India

- The **government led by Atal Bihari Vajpayee extended the freeze on increasing seats in Lok Sabha and Assemblies** to maintain balance despite population changes.
- Constituency boundaries were redrawn using 2001 Census data to ensure population parity**, without increasing the total number of seats.
- The **Constitution (Eighty-Fourth Amendment) Act, 2001 extended the freeze till 2026 to encourage population control** and support family planning efforts.
- Large-scale rural-to-urban migration and uneven population growth created imbalances** in constituency sizes, affecting fair representation.
- The **Delimitation Bill, 2026 proposes using 2011 Census data, raising concerns** about reliance on outdated population figures.

4. Way Ahead

- Use the latest Census data (post-2026) to ensure constituencies reflect current population realities.
- Include additional criteria like geography, migration, and development levels**, not just population.
- Ensure that States which controlled population growth are not politically disadvantaged**, maintaining trust in the federal structure
- Increase Lok Sabha seats in a phased and proportionate manner** to avoid regional imbalance.
- Ensure a transparent and independent delimitation process** with strong institutional oversight.

Lessons from Hungary's vote and Orbán's defeat

Prelims: General Studies Paper - 1
Current events of national and international importance

Mains: General Studies - 2
Effect of policies and politics of developed and developing countries on India's interests, Indian diaspora.

1. Context

- **Viktor Orbán ruled Hungary for 16 years** and built a strong, centralized system.
- His **style of rule influenced leaders like Donald Trump and Narendra Modi**.
- Such systems make people believe the leader cannot be defeated, reducing voter interest.
- Recently, **Hungarian voters voted him out of power in the 2026 election, ending his long rule and proving strong leaders can be defeated** through elections.

2. Democratic resilience affirmed

- **Hungarian voters removed Viktor Orbán (former PM of Hungary)**, showing democracy is still strong.
- People **voted against divisive, majoritarian politics promoted by Orbán**.
- Even though Péter Magyar (opposition leader who defeated Orbán) has similar views on some issues, voters wanted a change in the system.
- **Voters rejected Orbán's criticism of Volodymyr Zelenskyy** (President of Ukraine) and did not blame Ukraine for Hungary's problems.
- **Hungarians did not support Orbán's closeness with Vladimir Putin** (President of Russia) and instead blamed corruption at home.

3. Accusations and global alignments exposed

- Leaders like Viktor Orbán and J. D. Vance **accused others of election interference, but these claims often reflected their own actions**.
- **Orbán blamed the EU and Ukraine, while also using foreign support** and disinformation campaigns, including links to Russia.
- Global leaders like Donald Trump and Benjamin Netanyahu openly supported Orbán politically.

- **Orbán's defeat was also a setback for Xi Jinping**, who saw him as a close ally in Europe.
- China-backed projects in Hungary, like the Fudan University campus, were seen as benefiting elites more than the public, leading to protests.

4. Sustain the momentum

- The idea of a simple "West vs Rest" world is outdated; **countries like Hungary show more complex political battles**.
- **Hungary became a key battleground between democratic values and an illiberal global alliance** involving leaders like Donald Trump, Vladimir Putin, Xi Jinping and Benjamin Netanyahu.
- Viktor Orbán even ignored international norms like arrest warrants, highlighting his defiance of global institutions.
- Hungarian voters **not only removed a national leader but also pushed back against a wider anti-democratic alliance**, showing the need for global pro-democracy unity.

On delimitation and Parliament seats

Prelims: General Studies Paper - 1
Indian Polity and Governance-Constitution, Political System, Panchayati Raj, Public Policy, Rights Issues, etc.

Mains: General Studies - 2
Functions and responsibilities of the Union and the States, issues and challenges pertaining to the federal structure, devolution of powers and finances up to local levels and challenges therein.

1. Existing Provisions on Delimitation

- **Delimitation** = fixing **number of seats and constituency boundaries**.
- Conducted by a **Delimitation Commission** set up via an Act of Parliament.
- Done based on **Census data** (1951, 1961, 1971).
- **Lok Sabha seats were fixed at 543** (based on **1971 Census**, population ~54.8 crore).
- **Freeze on seats** (since 1976) to promote **population control**.
- Next readjustment scheduled after the 2027 **Census**.

- **106th Constitutional Amendment (2023):**
 - ➡ Provides **1/3 reservation for women**.
 - ➡ To be implemented after the next **delimitation**.

2. Key Proposals in the Bills

131st Constitutional Amendment Bill

- Increase **maximum Lok Sabha seats** from **550 → 850**.
- Allow **Parliament** to decide the **Census base** for delimitation.
- **Delink women's reservation** from 2027 Census → use **2011 Census** instead.

Delimitation Bill, 2026

- Set up a **Delimitation Commission** periodically.
- Allocate seats based on the latest **Census**.
 - ➡ Had the Bill been passed and a Commission immediately constituted, the **allocation would have been based on the 2011 Census**.

3. Major Issues & Debates

Government's View

- Increasing the number of **Lok Sabha seats by around 50% (from 543 to 816) would enable the seamless implementation of one-third reservation for women** in an expanded House.
 - ➡ This would have resulted in **approximately 272 seats being reserved for women**.
- Assured **50% pro-rata increase** for all States → no change in **representation share**.

Opposition's Concerns

- **No need to link** women's reservation with delimitation.
- **No explicit guarantee** of 50% pro-rata increase in Bills.
- Allocation based on **population** may disadvantage some States.
- Issue is **sensitive** → **needs detailed discussion**, not quick passage.

4. Way Forward & Core Principles

- Democracy rests on **"one citizen-one vote-one value"**.
- The current system **distorts representation** due to the 1971 freeze.
- Need to balance:
 - ➡ **Democratic principle (population-based representation)**
 - ➡ **Federal principle (State-wise balance)**

Possible Solutions:

- Consider a **50% pro-rata increase** as a **middle path**.
- Use **Parliamentary Committees** for deeper deliberation.
- Strengthen **local bodies (Panchayats & Municipalities)** for grassroots democracy.

What does U.P.'s minimum wage revision change?

Prelims: General Studies Paper - 1
Indian Polity and Governance-Constitution, Political System, Panchayati Raj, Public Policy, Rights Issues, etc.

Mains: General Studies - 2
Government policies and interventions for development in various sectors and issues arising out of their design and implementation.

1. Background & Context

- **Uttar Pradesh Government** revised **minimum wages** via notification (April 17, 2026).
- Implemented with **retrospective effect (April 1, 2026)**.
- Triggered by **labour unrest** in industrial areas like **Noida** and **Ghaziabad**.
- Issues highlighted:
 - ➡ **Wage stagnation**
 - ➡ **Rising cost of living**
 - ➡ **Inter-state wage disparities**
- A **High-Level Committee** (officials + workers + employers) guided the decision.

2. Key Features of the Notification

Issued under:

- **Minimum Wages Act, 1948**
- **United Provinces Industrial Disputes Act, 1947**

Three-tier regional classification:

- **Category I:** Industrial hubs (e.g., **Gautam Buddha Nagar, Ghaziabad**)
- **Category II:** Districts with **municipal corporations**
- **Category III:** Remaining districts

Skill-based wage structure:

- **Unskilled, Semi-skilled, Skilled** categories

Example (Category I monthly wages):

- **Unskilled:** ₹13,690
- **Semi-skilled:** ₹15,059
- **Skilled:** ₹16,868

Wages consist of:

- **Basic wage**
- **Variable Dearness Allowance (VDA)**

VDA ensures inflation adjustment, while **basic wage revision corrects structural gaps**.

Notification is **interim in nature**.

3. Legal & Economic Basis

Wages determined using:

- **Consumer Price Index (CPI)** → tracks **inflation**
- **VDA linked to CPI fluctuations**

Issue:

- **Delayed revisions** (due in 2019 & 2024, but not done)
- Result → **gap between actual wages & inflation-adjusted wages**

CPI trend:

- Increased from **216 → 425 (by 2025)**

Supported by:

- **Code on Wages, 2019**
 - ➔ Allows **regional wage differentiation**
 - ➔ Considers **cost of living & employment type**
 - ➔ Proposes **National Floor Wage** for harmonisation

4. Implications & Way Forward

Implications

- **Workers:**
 - ➔ **Income relief**, but may still fall short of **living wage**
- **Employers:**
 - ➔ **Higher labour costs** → possible **profit pressure**
- **State:**
 - ➔ Challenge of **effective implementation**, especially in **informal sector**

Way Forward

- Establish **Wage Board** and notify **State rules** under Code on Wages
- Ensure **regular and timely revisions**
- Build a **data-driven wage system**
- Strengthen **enforcement mechanisms**, especially in informal economy

KEYWORDS**Petroleum Planning and Analysis Cell (PPAC)**

- The **Petroleum Planning and Analysis Cell (PPAC)** was established in 2002 by replacing the **Oil Coordination Committee (OCC)** to support a deregulated petroleum sector.
- It **functions as a technical and advisory body under the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas**, with its **headquarters located in New Delhi**.
- **PPAC plays a key role in assisting** the government in the administration of **subsidies on Public Distribution System (PDS) kerosene and domestic LPG**, including freight subsidies for supply to remote and difficult areas.
- It **maintains a comprehensive petroleum data bank and communication system to monitor supply-demand dynamics** and to respond effectively during emergencies in the energy sector.
- The organization conducts in-depth analysis of international crude oil markets and domestic petroleum prices, providing critical inputs for policy formulation and pricing decisions.
- It also **undertakes forecasting of petroleum demand, imports, and exports**.

PM Vishwakarma

- **PM Vishwakarma** is a **Central Sector Scheme** launched by the **Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME)** to provide **holistic, end-to-end support** to **artisans and craftspeople**.
- It is implemented for **five years (till 2027-28)**.
- **Key Objectives**
 - **Recognition** of artisans as **'Vishwakarma'** to access scheme benefits
 - **Skill upgradation** through relevant **training programmes**
 - Provision of **modern tools** to improve **productivity and quality**
 - Access to **collateral-free credit** with **interest subvention**

- Promotion of **digital transactions** for **digital empowerment**
- Support for **brand promotion** and **market linkages** for better opportunities

