



Daily Current Affairs



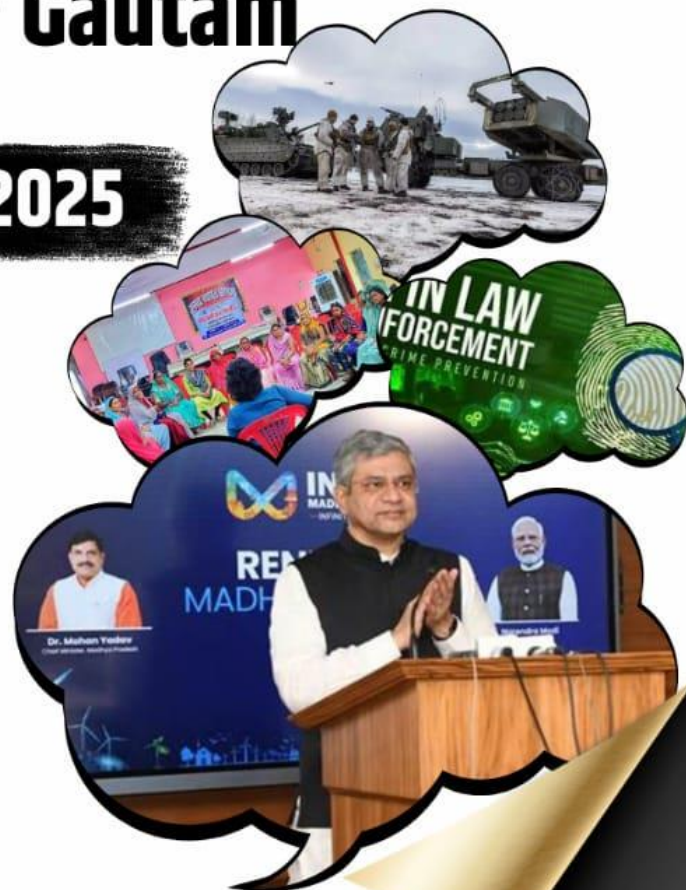
To The Point by Dhananjay Gautam

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1 Delimitation Debate: Why Are Southern States Concerned?

Context: The Union Home Minister has assured that **no parliamentary constituencies in southern states** will be reduced following the proposed **delimitation exercise**. This statement comes in response to concerns raised by the **Tamil Nadu Chief Minister** about **political representation disparities**.



What Is Delimitation?

Delimitation refers to the **redrawing of parliamentary and legislative assembly boundaries** to reflect **population changes**. It aims to:

Ensure **fair representation** based on **demographic shifts**.

Adjust the **number of seats** allocated to different states.

Determine **reservations** for **Scheduled Castes (SCs)** and **Scheduled Tribes (STs)**.

This system is designed to balance **population growth** with **political representation**, upholding the democratic principle of "**one citizen, one vote, one value**."

Constitutional Provisions on Delimitation:

- **Article 82** – After every **Census**, Parliament enacts a **Delimitation Act** to redefine constituency boundaries.
- **Article 170** – Adjusts the **total number of seats** in **state assemblies** based on the Delimitation Act.

Who Conducts the Delimitation Process?

- The **Delimitation Commission**, an **independent body**, is responsible for conducting delimitation.
- It is **established through a Parliamentary Act**, and its **decisions cannot be challenged in court**.
- The **Election Commission of India (ECI)** provides **technical support** for the process.
- However, in **2024**, the **Supreme Court** ruled that **delimitation orders** can be **reviewed** if they **violate constitutional values**.

Composition of the Delimitation Commission:

Chairperson: A retired Supreme Court judge.

Members:

The **Chief Election Commissioner (CEC)** or an appointed commissioner.

State Election Commissioners from respective states.

A Brief History of Delimitation in India:

Parliamentary Control: The **power of delimitation** lies with **Parliament**, which has conducted the process **four times** under the **Delimitation Commission Acts of 1952, 1962, 1972, and 2002**.

Key Constitutional Amendments Impacting Delimitation:

- **42nd Amendment Act (1976)** – **Froze** the allocation of **Lok Sabha seats** based on the **1971 Census** to prevent states that controlled **population growth** from losing representation.
- **84th Amendment Act (2001)** – Allowed **territorial constituency adjustments** based on the **1991 Census**, but **prohibited** changes in the **number of seats** per state.



- **87th Amendment Act (2003)** – Updated **delimitation data** to the **2001 Census**, without altering seat distribution in **Parliament and State Assemblies**.

Why Is Delimitation Being Reconsidered?

The next **delimitation exercise** is expected to be based on the **2021 Census** (delayed due to the pandemic).

If delimitation follows historical patterns (**1951, 1961, 1971, and 2002**), the number of **Lok Sabha seats** could **increase from 543 to 753**, based on a population ratio of **20 lakh people per constituency**.

Why Are Southern States Concerned?

Population Disparities:

- **Northern states** (Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, etc.) have seen **higher population growth**, potentially increasing their **seat share**.
- **Southern states** (Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana) have maintained **lower population growth** but **fear losing representation** despite better **governance and development efforts**.

What's Next?

- **Possible Increase in Lok Sabha Seats** – Instead of **reducing** seats from any state, Parliament may **increase the total seats** to balance **population disparities**.
- **2026 Review** – The next delimitation can only take place **after the first Census post-2026**, likely the **2031 Census**.
- **Impact of Women's Reservation Act** – The implementation of **33% women's reservation** in Parliament and State Assemblies may also influence **seat allocations**.

Conclusion:

The **delimitation debate** raises critical questions about **political representation, regional balance, and governance equity**. While the **northern states seek a proportional increase in representation**, **southern states fear losing their parliamentary voice despite successful development policies**. The **final decision** will shape India's **electoral landscape** for decades to come.



2

Integrating AI in India's Judiciary and Law Enforcement

Context: India is embracing **Artificial Intelligence (AI)** to transform its **judicial system** and **law enforcement**, making justice more accessible, reducing delays, and improving efficiency. AI-driven tools are streamlining legal research, case management, policing, and crime prevention.

**Challenges in India's Legal and Law Enforcement System:**

Despite having a well-structured judiciary with the **Supreme Court, High Courts, and subordinate courts**, several challenges persist:

- **Massive Case Backlogs:** Over **5 crore pending cases** clog the system (National Judicial Data Grid - NJDG).
- **Delayed Judgments:** Prolonged legal proceedings due to **complex documentation** and procedural inefficiencies.
- **Manual Case Management:** Traditional paper-based processes slow down legal operations.
- **Law Enforcement Challenges:** **Policing inefficiencies, rising cybercrime, and limited resources** hinder crime prevention.

AI in Judiciary: Transforming Legal Processes:**1. AI-Powered Legal Research & Case Management:**

- AI-driven tools like **SUPACE (Supreme Court Portal for Assistance in Court Efficiency)** assist judges in **analyzing vast legal data** efficiently.
- AI helps in **identifying relevant case laws**, automating legal documentation, and improving decision-making.

2. Predictive Justice & Case Prioritization:

- AI models predict **case outcomes** based on past rulings.
- Helps courts **prioritize urgent cases**, estimate **probable case durations**, and **analyze case patterns**.

3. Virtual Courts & AI-Powered Dispute Resolution:

- **E-Courts** enable virtual hearings and online case management, reducing delays.
- AI-powered **Online Dispute Resolution (ODR)** platforms **resolve minor disputes** without judicial intervention.

4. AI-Assisted Legal Translation:

- AI-based real-time **legal translation tools** bridge language gaps, making legal resources accessible in **regional languages**.
- **SUVAS (Supreme Court VidhikAnuvaad Software)** translates judicial documents between English and vernacular languages.

AI in Law Enforcement: Smarter Crime Prevention:**1. AI-Powered Surveillance & Facial Recognition:**

- **CCTNS (Crime and Criminal Tracking Network & Systems)** integrates AI to:
 - **Identify suspects** using CCTV footage.
 - **Track missing persons and criminals** in real-time.
 - **Monitor crowds** to enhance public safety.

2. Predictive Policing & Crime Analytics:

- AI helps predict **crime hotspots** by analyzing **historical crime data**.

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- Detects **behavioral patterns** of repeat offenders.
- Monitors **social media** and online activities to **track cybercriminals**.

3. AI in Forensic Investigations:

- AI enhances forensic analysis through:
 - **Voice recognition** and **deepfake detection**.
 - **AI-assisted DNA and fingerprint matching** for faster case resolution.
 - **AI-driven cybercrime forensics** to track digital crimes.

4. AI Chatbots for Public Assistance:

- AI-powered police chatbots help citizens:
 - **File FIRs online**.
 - **Track case updates**.
 - **Receive legal advice** in simple language.

Challenges in AI Adoption:

While AI offers transformative potential, key challenges include:

- **Ethical and Bias Concerns:** AI models may inherit **biases from historical judicial data**, affecting fairness.
- **Data Privacy & Security:** Ensuring **confidentiality of legal and crime databases** is crucial.
- **Infrastructure & Digital Divide:** Lack of **AI infrastructure in rural courts and police stations**.
- **Regulatory Gaps:** Absence of **AI-specific legal frameworks** to govern AI-driven judicial processes.

Government Initiatives for AI Integration:

1. Supreme Court AI Initiatives:

- **SUPACE:** AI tool for legal research and case analysis.
- **SUVAS:** AI-powered legal translation software.

2. AI for Legal Translation & Accessibility: AI enables **multilingual legal document translation** for better access to justice.

3. E-Courts (Phase III) Mission Mode Project:

- 7210 Crore allocated for integrating AI in **court management and legal procedures**.
- 53.57 Crore dedicated to **AI and Blockchain adoption** across High Courts.

4. CCTNS: AI-Enabled Crime Tracking: AI-driven **nationwide police database** for tracking criminals and coordinating investigations.

5. AI Task Force & NITI Aayog's AI Strategy: The NITI Aayog AI Task Force is formulating policies for **AI adoption in governance**, including **judicial and police reforms**.

Way Forward: AI for a Smarter Justice System:

- **Establish AI Ethics Guidelines:** Ensure **fairness and transparency** in AI-driven legal decisions.
- **Strengthen AI Infrastructure:** Invest in **AI training for judges and law enforcement**.
- **Enhance Public Awareness:** Educate citizens on **AI-based legal tools** and their rights.
- **Encourage AI Research in Law:** Support **legal AI innovations** through academic and industry partnerships.

Conclusion:

AI has the potential to **revolutionize India's judiciary and law enforcement**, making the legal system **faster, fairer, and more accessible**. With **strong ethical frameworks, robust AI infrastructure, and policy-driven implementation**, AI can usher in a **smarter and more efficient justice system** for India.

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3

Concerns of PwDs Over DPDP Rules

Context: Disability rights activists have raised concerns over certain provisions in the draft **Digital Personal Data Protection (DPDP) Rules, 2023**, arguing that they undermine the **digital autonomy** of Persons with Disabilities (PwDs).

Background: Protecting Personal Data

The **DPDP Act, 2023** aims to safeguard citizens' rights by ensuring **secure handling of personal data**. However, **Section 9(1)** has sparked controversy as it treats **PwDs similarly to children**, requiring **guardian consent** for data processing.



Key Provisions of the DPDP Rules:

1. Definition of Key Entities:

- **Data Fiduciaries:** Entities responsible for processing personal data.
- **Data Principals:** Individuals whose data is collected.

2. Role of Guardians in Data Processing:

- **Section 2(j)(ii):** Defines a "**lawful guardian**" as a Data Principal for PwDs in specific cases, effectively shifting **decision-making power from PwDs to their guardians**.
- **Section 9(1):** Mandates that for PwDs with **legal guardians**, **data processing can only proceed with guardian consent**.

Guardianship Laws for PwDs in India:

1. The National Trust Act (NT Act), 1999:

- Provides **full guardianship** for individuals diagnosed with **autism, cerebral palsy, intellectual disabilities, or severe multiple disabilities**.

2. The Rights of Persons with Disabilities (RPWD) Act, 2016:

- Advocates for "**limited guardianship**," ensuring that PwDs **retain decision-making rights** while receiving necessary support.
- Aligns with the **United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD)**, which promotes **independent decision-making** for PwDs.

Concerns Raised by Disability Rights Activists:

1. Denial of Digital Autonomy:

- Section 9(1) assumes that **PwDs with legal guardians lack the capacity** to make **independent digital choices**.
- This contradicts **the RPWD Act, 2016**, which supports **limited guardianship** over full control.

2. Challenges for Women with Disabilities:

- **PwD women** will face **additional barriers** in accessing online services.
- Requiring **guardian consent** could **restrict access to essential services** like healthcare, education, and financial transactions.

3. Risks to Data Privacy:



- Digital platforms may **collect disability-related data** even when a **guardian is not involved**, leading to **unnecessary data collection**.
- This increases the risk of **data misuse and discrimination** against PwDs.

Way Forward: Ensuring Inclusive Digital Rights:

1. Introduce Clear Guidelines:

- Provide **detailed illustrations and procedural clarifications** to ensure practical implementation of the rules.

2. Strengthen Digital Accessibility:

- Implement **stronger mandates for accessible digital infrastructure** to eliminate barriers for PwDs.

3. Promote Digital Literacy for PwDs:

- Develop **targeted programs** to enhance **digital skills**, enabling PwDs to **navigate the online world independently**.

Conclusion:

While the **DPDP Act** aims to enhance **data protection**, its provisions must align with **disability rights frameworks** to ensure **digital autonomy** for PwDs. Moving forward, **inclusive policies** and **stronger accessibility measures** are essential to create a **fair and equitable digital space** for all.

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4

India's First Indigenous Semiconductor Chip to be Ready by 2025

GS Paper 2 – Governance, Constitution, Polity, Social Justice

Context: At the **Global Investors Summit 2025** in Bhopal, the **Union Minister for Electronics and IT** announced that **India's first indigenously developed semiconductor chip** will be ready for production by **2025**. This marks a **historic milestone** in India's journey towards **self-reliance in semiconductor manufacturing**.



Understanding Semiconductors:

What Are Semiconductors?

Semiconductors are materials with **electrical conductivity between that of a conductor and an insulator**. They serve as the **backbone of modern electronics** and are used in:

- **Computers and smartphones**
- **Automobiles and electric vehicles (EVs)**
- **Defense and aerospace technology**
- **Medical devices**
- **Telecommunication and AI applications**

Why Are Semiconductors Important for India?

- India is **one of the largest consumers of semiconductors** but currently **imports 100%** of its requirements.
- The launch of an **indigenous semiconductor chip** will:
 - **Reduce import dependence** (India imports **\$24 billion** worth of semiconductors annually).
 - **Strengthen national security** by ensuring secure supplies for **defense and critical infrastructure**.
 - **Boost the "Make in India" and "Atmanirbhar Bharat" initiatives**, enhancing domestic production.
 - **Create high-skilled jobs in semiconductor design and manufacturing**.

Government Initiatives to Build India's Semiconductor Industry:

1. India Semiconductor Mission (ISM) – 2021:

A **76,000 crore** incentive scheme aimed at:

- Establishing **semiconductor fabrication units (fabs)** in India.
- Encouraging **global semiconductor companies** to invest in India.
- Supporting **local semiconductor startups** through the **Design-Linked Incentive (DLI)** scheme.

2. Production-Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme:

- Aims to **boost domestic electronics manufacturing**, making India a **global semiconductor hub**.

3. Semiconductor Manufacturing Ecosystem:

- **Five semiconductor manufacturing units** are currently **under construction** across India.

4. Strategic Partnerships & Global Collaborations:

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- **India-U.S. Initiative on Critical and Emerging Technology (iCET)** to bring leading chip manufacturers to India.
- **Discussions on setting up semiconductor plants** with global technology firms.
- **QUAD Partnership (India, US, Japan, Australia)** focusing on securing the global semiconductor supply chain.

Challenges in India's Semiconductor Industry:

1. Lack of Existing Semiconductor Fabs:

- India **does not yet have** a fully operational **commercial semiconductor fab**. The first is expected by **2025**.

2. Dependence on Global Supply Chains:

- Semiconductor manufacturing is **dominated by Taiwan, South Korea, and the U.S.**, making India **vulnerable to supply disruptions**.

3. High Capital and Technological Demands:

- Semiconductor fabs require **massive investments, precision technology, and specialized skilled labor**.

4. Geopolitical Risks:

- **The U.S.-China trade war and Taiwan tensions** directly impact the **global semiconductor supply chain**, making it essential for India to build **domestic production capacity**.

Future Prospects and the Road Ahead:

1. Achieving Self-Sufficiency in Semiconductors:

- The government must **accelerate the establishment of semiconductor plants** to reduce foreign dependence.

2. Strengthening Infrastructure:

- **Improving power supply, water availability, and logistics** for semiconductor fabs is critical to success.

3. Enhancing Skill Development:

- **Collaboration with global semiconductor firms** to train Indian engineers in **chip design and manufacturing**.

4. Promoting Local Semiconductor Startups:

- Expanding the **Design-Linked Incentive (DLI) scheme** to **support Indian semiconductor innovation**.

Conclusion:

The **development of India's first indigenous semiconductor chip by 2025** is a **significant leap towards technological self-reliance**. By addressing challenges, investing in infrastructure, and fostering global partnerships, India is set to **emerge as a key player in the global semiconductor industry**, paving the way for a **stronger, more resilient digital economy**.



5

Arctic Military Build-Up Brings NATO Troops to Finland

Context: The Arctic Forge 25 military exercise, led by the **United States**, commenced on **February 14** and will continue until **February 28**. Taking place near **Finland's border with Russia**, the drills involve **approximately 900 troops** from **Finland, the U.S., and Canada**, emphasizing **Arctic warfare strategies** and survival techniques.

**Key Details of Arctic Forge 25:****1. Focus on Arctic Combat Readiness:**

- Designed to **enhance NATO forces' ability** to operate in the harsh **Arctic environment**.
- Aims to **prepare troops for potential conflicts** in the increasingly contested **Arctic region**.
- Conducted in **Sodankylä, Finland**, located **130 kilometers from the Russian border**.

2. Extreme Winter Training Conditions:

- Finland's **sub-zero temperatures**, often dropping to **-20°C**, pose serious challenges for troops.
- Soldiers must **navigate snow-covered terrain**, making **camouflage and stealth tactics** crucial.

Mastering Survival & Combat in Arctic Conditions:**1. Camouflage and Tactical Movement:**

- Finnish conscripts **wear specialized winter fatigues** in **white and grey** to blend with the snowy landscape.
- Troops **ski through dense forests** and drag **pine branches** to **mimic the movement of tanks**, confusing enemy surveillance.

2. Extreme Cold Survival Skills:

- Training includes **techniques to prevent hypothermia**, a major risk in Arctic conditions.
- Soldiers learn **how to generate warmth quickly** and handle emergency situations, such as **falling into frozen lakes or swamps**.

Strategic Importance of the Exercise:**1. Growing Arctic Tensions:**

- The Arctic has become a **geopolitical hotspot**, with **Russia and China increasing their presence** in the region.
- NATO is **reinforcing its Arctic strategy** to **counter potential security threats**.

2. Finland's NATO Membership & Military Alliances:

- Finland, which **shares a 1,340-kilometer border with Russia**, joined **NATO in 2023**, marking a historic shift from its previous stance of **military non-alignment**.
- In **2023, Finland also signed a bilateral defense pact with the United States**, strengthening its **security cooperation** with Western allies.
- NATO's **Forward Land Forces** are now stationed in Finland for **regular training exercises**, further integrating Finland into the alliance's **defensive strategy**.

About Finland: A Key Nordic Ally:



- Finland is a **Nordic nation in Northern Europe**, strategically located between **Sweden, Norway, and Russia**.
- It borders the **Gulf of Bothnia to the west** and the **Gulf of Finland to the south**, giving it **key access to Arctic waters**.

Conclusion: A Stronger NATO Presence in the Arctic:

The **Arctic Forge 25** exercise highlights the **importance of military preparedness in extreme conditions**, reinforcing **Finland's commitment to NATO** and **strengthening Western defense** in the Arctic. As geopolitical tensions rise, these drills signal **NATO's growing focus on Arctic security** and **its readiness to counter potential threats in the region**.



6

Panel Recommends Penalties to End Proxy Rule by Male Relatives of Women Panchayat Leaders

Context: The widespread issue of **male relatives exerting control** over leadership roles meant for **elected women representatives** in **Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs)** has raised serious concerns.



Despite the **73rd Constitutional (Amendment) Act, 1992**, which mandated **one-third reservation for women** in PRIs—later expanded to **nearly 50%** by **21 States and two Union Territories**—many women continue to serve as **mere figureheads** while **their male kin** make key decisions on their behalf.

Supreme Court's Intervention & Advisory Committee Formation:

In **September 2023**, the **Supreme Court** directed the **Ministry of Panchayati Raj** to form an **advisory committee** to investigate the issue of **women pradhans being represented by male family members**.

The committee was assigned the task of **recommending effective measures** to **eliminate proxy leadership** and **ensure true empowerment** of elected women leaders.

Key Recommendations of the Advisory Committee:

1. Enforcing Strict Penalties:

- The panel has suggested **"exemplary penalties"** for **proven cases of proxy leadership**.
- However, the nature of these penalties—**financial or legal**—has not been specified.

2. A Multi-Pronged Strategy to End Proxy Leadership:

To effectively tackle this issue, the committee has proposed:

- **Policy Reforms & Structural Changes** to empower women leaders.
- **Technology-Based Monitoring** to track governance activities.
- **Peer Support Networks** to encourage independent decision-making.
- **Positive Reinforcement Measures** to boost confidence in leadership.
- **Punitive Actions** to deter male relatives from interfering.

3. Gender-Exclusive Quotas & Public Oath-Taking:

- Inspired by **Kerala's model**, the committee recommends **"gender-exclusive quotas"** in **panchayat subject committees**.
- **Women pradhans should publicly take an oath** in the **Gram Sabha Federation of Women Panchayat Leaders** to reinforce their leadership.

4. Strengthening Accountability Mechanisms:

To ensure proper oversight and prevent proxy rule, the panel has suggested:

- **Dedicated Helplines** for lodging complaints.
- **Women Watchdog Committees** to handle grievances confidentially.
- **Whistleblower Rewards** for verified cases of proxy leadership.

5. Education Criteria for Panchayat Elections (Debated Suggestion):

- During field visits, the committee received a proposal to **mandate a minimum school-level education** for candidates contesting for **panchayat president**.



- However, this suggestion was **not included in the final recommendations**.
- A **similar precedent exists in Haryana**, where a law requires a **minimum education qualification (Class 8 for women)** for contesting panchayat elections.

Conclusion: A Step Toward Genuine Women Empowerment

The advisory committee's recommendations highlight the **urgent need to dismantle proxy rule** and ensure that **elected women leaders** truly **exercise their decision-making powers**.

If implemented effectively, these measures can **transform grassroots governance**, making the Panchayati Raj system **more inclusive, accountable, and representative of true women's leadership**.

