

# An Alternative Approach to Seats Reapportionment in House of People of India

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**Abstract:** The delimitation process of constituencies in India is set to roll after the Census of 2031. Proportional representation is being debated upon in the political corridors as non-justifiable. As states with low fertility rates have begun questioning if proportional representation can bear them the fruits financially and in terms of number of seats in Lok Sabha; states who were unsuccessful in curbing birth rates seem to be awarded with undue gain. It has become imperative to formulate a different methodology to reassign the number of seats to the states in the Lok Sabha.

**Keywords:** component, Lok Sabha seats, India, democracy, constituency, delimitation commission, state GDP.

## 1. Introduction

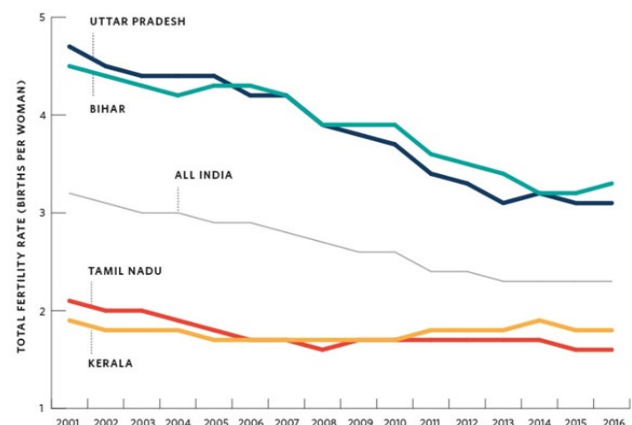
Constituency is the basic representative area comprising of voters into which a democratic country is divided. Adult and eligible electors/voters are organized into such an electoral unit, wherein each individual holds true to the democratic idealism of one-person, one-vote, one-value. In a federal state like India, the division into constituencies is an uphill task, as the states need to be represented in the parliament in the most democratic manner while upholding their interests without being partial. Such an exercise of fixing limits and boundaries of territorial constituencies in a country is carried out by a high-powered body termed as Delimitation Commission (ECI, 2020), whose orders have the force of law and cannot be called in question before any court. Article 81 of the Constitution of India requires that each state receive seats in proportion to its population and allocate those seats to constituencies of roughly equal size. Article 81 in The Constitution of India provides us the methodology of Composition of the House of the People, i.e., the Lok Sabha. It dictates that the states will be proportionally represented by 530 members elected directly from the constituencies. The union territories and states with a population below 6 million will be represented by 20 members who shall be chosen in such a manner as parliament may by law provide. After the 104th Constitutional Amendment Act, the reservation of the members of the Anglo-Indian community to the Lok Sabha has been done away with. The number of Lok Sabha seats has been frozen since 1976. In a country like India, where diverse ethnic, linguistic and religious groups reside, the federal structure of the law of the land and the Constitution has been undoubtedly successful in keeping peace and the nation

together. But the freeze on the composition of Lok Sabha has been unsuccessful in adequately representing the change in population. The demographic change will become a cause of contention among the states after the freeze comes to an end in 2026 AD, and the delimitation commission goes ahead using the census of 2031 AD.

## 2. Reapportionment in Lok Sabha

### A. Rising Crisis

The allotment of parliamentary seats by the next delimitation commission post 2031 census will open new doors of contention. States which have implemented family planning successfully will be punished for the sake of proportional representation. The reduced seats for states like Tamil Nadu, Kerala will go into the kitty of the states which were not that successful in implementing family planning properly. Though the fertility rates are declining slowly, the rates don't sync. With a population growth below the national figure, the southern states have been successful in curbing it, while at the same time leading the way forward with significant growth. The figures of per capita income of Indian states seem to tell us the same story.



SOURCE: Sample Registration System, Indian Ministry of Home Affairs, 2018.

Fig. 1. Fertility rates in select Indian states, 2001-2016, Source: (Vaishnav, 2019)

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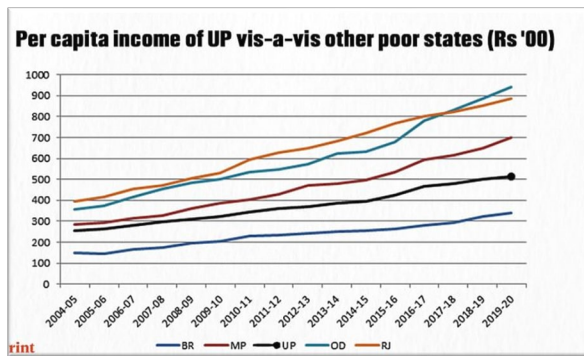


Fig. 2. Per capita income of UP vis-à-vis other poor states, Source: (Vikash, 2022)

**B. Drawback of Proportional Representation**

(Vaishnav, 2019) projected the population figure for 2026, using the 2001 and 2011 Censuses and observed the revised seat counts for each state with proportional representation. Four Indian states (Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, and Uttar Pradesh) would collectively gain 22 seats, while four southern states (Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, Telangana, and Tamil Nadu) would lose 17 seats.

**3. Alternative Approach for Reapportionment**

India is observing a vast gap in terms of economic growth and population growth among its states. To compel the poor performing states to take hard decisions, it might actually need to do away with the system of proportional representation. And instead include the GDP of the states as an important factor to calculate the number of allotted seats.

1. First, the states with population below 18 million should get minimum 3 seats, as a single seat does not do justice to the people, who can feel unrepresented if the representative falls ill during a session of the Parliament or disqualified from the house. With 3 seats, voters will get the opportunity to examine another political party and reduce monotony of long administrating single party representative.
2. A total of 10 states will be in that category and the rest of the seats, i.e., 500 out of the 530 seats will have to be allotted based upon GDP figure and population. The GDP (NSDP - Cr INR at Current prices) raised to the power of 0.5 and the total population (instead of number of voters only) figures raised to the power of 0.5. The elected representative/member is equally responsible to the persons below 18 years of age, so total population figure is considered. The NSDP raised to power of 0.5 will give the value X.
3. Going ahead with the population data of 2018-19 from Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation and dividing each state population by the cumulative population of the 18 states (with population above 18 million) and then raising the quotient to the power of 0.5. This gives Y.
4. Later multiply X and Y and divide by 10 million (a constant).
5. Multiplying the resultant with 500, gives the projected

seats ratio for the 18 states, which total to a value of 0.20132. Rationalising these projected seats by dividing each projected seat ration by 0.20132 and further multiplying by 500 and rounding up, gives us the seats as below:

Table 1  
Calculation examples

		NSDP - Cr INR at Current prices	raised to the power 0.05 (X)
1	Andhra Pradesh	8,62,957	928.95
2	Maharashtra	26,32,792	1622.59
3	Tamil Nadu	16,30,208	1276.80
4	West Bengal	10,89,898	1043.98

Source: Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, Govt. of India

Table 2  
Lok Sabha seats

S.No.	States	New	Old
1	Arunachal Pradesh	3	2
2	Goa	3	2
3	Himachal Pradesh	3	4
4	Manipur	3	2
5	Meghalaya	3	2
6	Mizoram	3	1
7	Nagaland	3	1
8	Sikkim	3	1
9	Tripura	3	2
10	Uttarakhand	3	5
11	Haryana	16	10
12	Chhattisgarh	10	11
13	Punjab	14	13
14	Assam	12	14
15	Kerala	18	20
16	Jharkhand	12	14
17	Telangana	20	17
18	Odisha	16	21
19	Andhra Pradesh	24	25
20	Gujarat	34	26
21	Karnataka	35	28
22	Tamil Nadu	39	39
23	Rajasthan	30	25
24	Madhya Pradesh	29	29
25	West Bengal	36	42
26	Maharashtra	62(-2)	48
27	Bihar	28	40
28	Uttar Pradesh	67	80
	Total*	530	524

\*The difference of six seats is because of removal of statehood of Jammu & Kashmir

**4. Conclusion**

The total comes out to be 502, two of those can be deducted from the share of Maharashtra, which can be seen to achieve an increase in its presence in the lower house. This can be attributed to its tremendous economic growth and large-scale migration from other poor states. Reduction of seats in case of Bihar, West Bengal, Orissa and all, takes into account the importance of economic growth along with population for better standard of living. With this methodology, the southern states won't go penalised for birth control.

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