

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS



Current Affairs Analysis

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THE HINDU • PAGE 1 • POLITY & GOVERNANCE

DMK lays down conditions to support delimitation Bill

These conditions come amid renewed efforts from the Centre to reach out to the Opposition to secure numbers for the Bill; however, a top DMK leader says the government has not approached them yet.

SANDEEP PHUKAN & SOBHANA K. NAIR — NEW DELHI

- As the Narendra Modi government explores the possibility of bringing in a **constitutional amendment Bill** to carry out a fresh delimitation exercise, the **Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK)** may consider extending support if the Centre revises the legislation that reached the Lok Sabha in April with **three essential changes**.
- There is a **freeze on Lok Sabha seats based on the 1971 Census**, and this freeze ends after the latest Census, which is expected to be completed in **2027**.
- The DMK wants the constitutional freeze to remain for **another 25 years**, while amending the Constitution to introduce a **50% blanket increase** in the Lok Sabha seats for all States — a step verbally promised by Home Minister Amit Shah when the legislative package aimed at bringing about delimitation was tabled in Parliament in April.
- The party also wants a **Schedule of the number of seats** that each State will have written into the legislative package itself, and says the government has not yet approached it "formally or informally" — a final call will be taken only after the form and substance of the Bills are known.

TERMS FOR SUPPORT — The DMK's Three Conditions

- A **freeze on the 1971 Census** as the basis for delimitation for another 25 years.
- A **blanket 50% increase in Lok Sabha seats** for all States, as verbally promised by the Home Minister.
- A **Schedule of the number of seats** that each State will have, embedded in the legislative package.

PRELIMS BOOSTER — Delimitation: Concept & History

- Delimitation** is the process of fixing the number of seats and the boundaries of territorial constituencies in each State for the Lok Sabha and Legislative Assemblies; it also fixes seats reserved for **SCs and STs**.

- It is performed by a **Delimitation Commission** set up under an Act of Parliament; its orders have the force of law and cannot be questioned before any court.
- Delimitation Commissions have been constituted **four times** — in **1952, 1963, 1973 and 2002** — under the Acts of 1952, 1962, 1972 and 2002. The first exercise (1950–51) was carried out by the President with the help of the Election Commission.
- The **42nd Amendment Act, 1976** froze the allocation of Lok Sabha seats to States and the division into constituencies at the **1971 level** until the year 2000, to avoid penalising States that controlled their population.
- The **84th Amendment Act, 2001** allowed readjustment of constituencies on the basis of the **1991 Census**; the **87th Amendment Act, 2003** shifted this basis to the **2001 Census** — but in both cases without altering the number of seats allotted to each State in the Lok Sabha.

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GOBARdhan / National Circular Bioenergy Scheme

GS 3 • ECONOMY

THE HINDU • PAGE 15 • ECONOMY & ENERGY

Govt. okays ₹23,371 cr. GOBARdhan scheme

The National Circular Bioenergy Scheme aspires to raise local production of Compressed Bio-Gas by tenfold, and to mobilise private investments on a large scale.

SAPTAPARNO GHOSH — NEW DELHI

- › The Union Cabinet approved the **National Circular Bioenergy Scheme — GOBARdhan**, provisioning **₹23,371 crore** to catalyse the growth of **Compressed Bio-Gas (CBG)**.
- › The GOBARdhan (**Galvanising Organic Bio-Agro Resources Dhan**) outlay — to be in place until **FY2035-36** — seeks to raise local CBG production almost **tenfold** via assured offtake, administered pricing, capital subsidies, boosting pipeline infrastructure and easier access to finance.
- › The government emphasised that the scheme would impart a "**strong and predictable framework**" to fuel the uptick of the CBG ecosystem.
- › The programme would use **agricultural residue, cattle dung, sugar-industry waste** (such as press mud), **municipal organic waste** and other biomass to produce CBG, which can be blended into **CNG** used in automobiles and into **piped natural gas (PNG)**.
- › Industry welcomed it: the Indian Biogas Association noted the scheme addresses **three imperatives** — remunerative price, assured offtake and capital support — and that moving from about 300 operating plants towards 5,000 could create lakhs of rural jobs.

- A flagship initiative of the Government of India promoting the **scientific management of biodegradable waste** — particularly cattle dung and organic waste — to produce biogas, CBG, bio-CNG and organic manure.
- Launched in **2018** under the **Swachh Bharat Mission (Grameen) Phase II**; it aims to convert "**waste to wealth**", promote a circular economy, improve rural sanitation, enhance farmers' incomes and boost clean-energy generation.
- Nodal implementation: **Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation (DDWS)** under the **Ministry of Jal Shakti**.
- Promotes **household, community** and **commercial-scale** biogas plants.

THE HINDU • PAGE 14 • GOVERNANCE & RIGHTS

Govt. opposes income-based creamy layer in SC/ST quotas

Judicial precedent has clarified that the concept is not applicable to scheduled groups, the Centre tells the Supreme Court; it adds that most schemes already have a means test ensuring benefits percolate to "those who deserve them".

ABHINAV LAKSHMAN — NEW DELHI

- › Opposing a batch of petitions in the Supreme Court that seek the exclusion of the "**creamy layer**" from the Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs) — on the lines of the system for Other Backward Classes (OBC) — the Union government argued that judicial precedents have clarified that the "**principles of creamy layer are not applicable to SCs and STs**".
- › The **Social Justice and Empowerment Ministry** told the court in an affidavit that in a "majority" of welfare and development schemes for SCs, STs and OBCs — except reservation in educational institutes and services under the State — there is already a "**means test**" ensuring benefits percolate to those who actually deserve them.
- › The stand comes after the apex court in February issued notice on the petitions and asked the Centre to file an **Action Taken Report** following the **2024 Supreme Court decision** that paved the way for **sub-categorisation** among SCs and STs; the Ministry said no such report appears to have been filed.
- › The Ministry submitted that any modification of reservation policy — particularly to introduce **income-based preferences** within reserved categories — should be preceded by a **holistic review and thorough empirical study**, including socio-economic data of reserved-category beneficiaries.

- › It said the reservation policy's main objective is to **achieve social equality and justice**, overcome historical disadvantage and discrimination, ensure economic empowerment and upliftment, and promote inclusive participation in education, public services and decision-making.
- › The government further contended that the current matter **neither raises a constitutional issue nor discloses the violation of any fundamental right**, and that the petitioners had "indulged in misstatement of facts".

● CONTEXT — Where the Creamy-Layer Debate Stands

- The demand for a creamy layer in SC/ST reservation gained pace after the **2024 seven-judge Bench** ruling in **State of Punjab vs Davinder Singh**, which permitted **sub-classification** within SCs and STs.
- In that verdict, **Justice B.R. Gavai** observed that the government "must" find a way to identify a creamy layer for SCs and STs — even if the criteria differ from those used for OBCs.
- While the 2024 judgment sanctioned States to sub-categorise SC/ST quotas, the **Centre has been unclear** on wielding this power at the national level.

4

The "Digital Arrest" Scam

GS 3 • SECURITY

THE HINDU • PAGE 8 • EDITORIAL & INTERNAL SECURITY

Stop the scam

The "digital arrest" scam persists from overseas actors — and demands faster investigation, tighter banking safeguards and coordinated diplomatic pressure.

EDITORIAL — THE HINDU

- › The Supreme Court's order of **August 4** on the "digital arrest" menace is notable for not being lured into complacency, even as the numbers improve.
- › The Indian Cybercrime Coordination Centre's status report showed that complaints on the **National Cyber Crime Reporting Portal** fell from **1,23,672 in 2024** to **58,249 in 2025**, and stood at **16,377** in the first six months of 2026.
- › Scammers have proved **nimble**: they route calls through **SIM boxes** to mask their origin and make numbers appear Indian, use multiple **mule accounts** across many States to move funds swiftly, and now deploy **deepfakes on video calls** to dupe victims while remaining untraceable.

- › The Court's insistence on **restoring money** — completed in **36,290 cases** involving **₹18.05 crore** — and on the swift disposing of account-freeze cases, alongside detection systems such as **MuleHunter.AI** (used in over 20 banks), will limit damage even when perpetrators are not caught.
- › Convictions remain rare because many of these frauds are run from overseas "**scam compounds**" in **Myanmar, the wider Golden Triangle, and Cambodia**. After Beijing's 2023 crackdown, scammers shifted focus to other countries, with Indians also being **trafficked and tortured** to commit digital crimes against fellow citizens.
- › The editorial argues New Delhi must use **diplomatic pressure** — in coordination with China, the U.S. and ASEAN — to compel Naypyidaw and Phnom Penh to act against the networks hosting these compounds.

● PRELIMS BOOSTER — MuleHunter.AI & Mule Accounts

- **MuleHunter.AI** is an AI-driven solution to detect and mitigate mule bank accounts, developed by the **Reserve Bank Innovation Hub (RBIH), Bengaluru**, to curb the misuse of mule accounts in online financial frauds.
- Its functions include **real-time identification** of mule accounts, a **collaborative framework with banks** for advanced fraud detection, and use of **AI/ML** for enhanced monitoring and fraud prevention.
- **Mule bank accounts** are accounts used by fraudsters to launder illicit funds, often acquired from individuals with limited financial knowledge; innocent "money mules" get implicated in investigations while the actual criminals evade detection.

5

Private Medical Education — The "Access Paradox"

GS 2 • HEALTH

THE HINDU • PAGE 8 • EDITORIAL & HEALTH

Access paradox

Private medical education widens access, but affects affordability — and risks concentrating both cost and quality unevenly across India.

EDITORIAL — THE HINDU

- › The scope of medical education in India has expanded so rapidly that it raises important questions about access. The number of seats has **nearly tripled in 12 years**, aided by the government's push to improve health care through infrastructure upgrades and simplified regulations.

- › Much of the growth has been in the **private sector**, alongside new government colleges attached to district hospitals. This year, for the first time, private institutions host **more than half of all MBBS seats**; of the roughly **10,000 new seats**, **79%** are in such institutions — signalling that near-future growth will remain concentrated there.
- › The increase is commendable in itself, as India's students still compete fiercely for MBBS seats even while health-care centres face a **debilitating shortage of specialists**. Expanding domestic "capacity" is a natural response to relieve the bottleneck and keep talent at home instead of pushing thousands to study abroad.
- › But problems abound: a government-college MBBS seat rarely exceeds **₹5 lakh** for the full term, whereas a private seat can cost **ten times more**, sustained by unflagging demand. This viability is clustered in **tier-I and tier-II cities** of prosperous States, so skills concentrate where health-care providers are already plentiful, worsening rural scarcity.
- › Rapid growth also risks **uneven quality**, with institutions seeking NMC accreditation at the bare minimum; "**capitation fees**" persist despite bans, creating debt that shapes graduates' behaviour, while poor rural pay, housing and schooling pull them toward private practice or abroad.
- › The paradox obliges the government to keep adding cheap capacity (including new **AIIMS-like institutions**). The editorial urges enforcing the **NMC rule that half of all private seats be charged at government rates**, backing surprise inspections and record checks, and **rewarding — not just compelling — rural service**.

6

National Handloom Day — Heritage into Global Growth

GS 3 • ECONOMY

THE HINDU • PAGE 8 • OP-ED & ECONOMY

Handloom — weaving India's heritage into global growth

On the 12th National Handloom Day, a call to view handloom as a strategic sector for a world that values sustainability, authenticity and resilient supply chains.

GIRIRAJ SINGH — UNION MINISTER OF TEXTILES

- › The making of a developed nation is not defined by technology alone but by the ability to transform enduring strengths into engines of future growth. As India advances towards **Viksit Bharat 2047**, one of its greatest strengths has been with it all along — its **handloom tradition**.

- › On **August 7**, India marks the **12th National Handloom Day**. Every handwoven fabric reflects courage, patience and honest craftsmanship — making handloom not merely a craft but a **civilisational strength**: from the Indus Valley, where cotton was first cultivated and woven, to the 18th century when Indian textiles dominated global trade.
- › Bengal's legendary **muslin** — so fine a 25-metre length could pass through a ring — along with **Banarasi silk, Kanchipuram weaves and Pochampally Ikat**, earned India worldwide admiration. As the world turns to sustainable, handcrafted products, India has a historic opportunity to reclaim that leadership and make every handwoven product an **ambassador of Brand India**.
- › Handloom is India's **largest cottage industry**, supporting over **35 lakh weavers** and allied workers, nearly **72% of whom are women**. Over the past decade the sector has been strengthened through the **Raw Material Supply Scheme**, 797 handloom clusters, over 1.24 lakh improved looms, skill upgradation for nearly 97,000 artisans, and initiatives such as Producer Companies, GI-tagged products, the **Handloom Mark**, India Handmade certification, Urban Haats and Design Resource Centres.
- › Innovation has always been part of the journey — from Gandhi's **Ambar Charkha** to Assam's **Maina Loom** and the **Chitranjan Handloom** of Sivasagar. Under the Centre, the **Handloom 4.0** initiative uses digital tools and AI to monitor productivity and quality, while platforms such as **VisionXT** forecast trends and connect weavers directly with global markets.
- › The vision is to enable every weaver to earn a dignified income — with the ambition of **₹50,000 per month** in the years ahead — treating weavers not as a workforce but as **entrepreneurs, innovators and creators of value**, and the custodians and architects of India's progress.

1. With reference to delimitation in India, consider the following statements:

1. Delimitation Commissions have so far been constituted four times.
2. The orders of a Delimitation Commission can be challenged before the Supreme Court.
3. The first delimitation exercise after independence was carried out by the President with the help of the Election Commission.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 1 and 3 only
- (c) 2 and 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

2. The 42nd Constitutional Amendment Act, 1976 froze the allocation of Lok Sabha seats to States at the level of which Census, and until which year?

- (a) 1961 Census; until 1991
- (b) 1971 Census; until 2000
- (c) 1981 Census; until 2011
- (d) 1971 Census; until 2026

3. Consider the following pairs of Constitutional Amendment Acts and the census basis they provided for delimitation:

1. 84th Amendment Act, 2001 — 1991 Census
2. 87th Amendment Act, 2003 — 2001 Census

Which of the pairs given above is/are correctly matched?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

4. "GOBARDhan", recently in the news with a ₹23,371-crore outlay, stands for:

- (a) Green Organic Bio-Agriculture Development
- (b) Galvanising Organic Bio-Agro Resources Dhan
- (c) Governance of Bio-Agricultural Rural Development
- (d) Grid of Biogas & Renewable Agro Networks

5. Consider the following statements about the GOBARDhan scheme:

1. It was launched in 2018 under the Swachh Bharat Mission (Grameen) Phase II.
2. It is implemented by the Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation under the Ministry of Jal Shakti.
3. The newly approved National Circular Bioenergy Scheme aims to raise local CBG production almost tenfold.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 2 and 3 only
- (c) 1 and 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

6. Compressed Bio-Gas (CBG) under the scheme can be produced from which of the following feedstocks?

1. Cattle dung
2. Press mud from sugar industry
3. Municipal organic waste
4. Agricultural residue

- (a) 1 and 4 only
- (b) 2 and 3 only
- (c) 1, 2 and 3 only
- (d) 1, 2, 3 and 4

7. The concept of a "creamy layer" for SC/ST reservation was discussed by the Supreme Court in which of the following cases?

- (a) Indra Sawhney vs Union of India
- (b) State of Punjab vs Davinder Singh (2024)
- (c) M. Nagaraj vs Union of India
- (d) Jarnail Singh vs Lachhmi Narain Gupta

8. MuleHunter.AI, seen in the news in the context of cyber-financial fraud, has been developed by:

- (a) CERT-In
- (b) National Payments Corporation of India
- (c) Reserve Bank Innovation Hub, Bengaluru
- (d) Indian Cybercrime Coordination Centre

9. Consider the following statements regarding the "digital arrest" scam:

1. Scammers route calls through SIM boxes to make numbers appear Indian.
2. Many of these frauds are run from overseas "scam compounds" in Myanmar and Cambodia.
3. Complaints on the National Cyber Crime Reporting Portal rose sharply between 2024 and 2025.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 2 and 3 only
- (c) 1 and 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

10. Consider the following statements about National Handloom Day and the handloom sector:

1. National Handloom Day is observed every year on August 7.
2. Nearly 72% of the workers in the handloom sector are women.
3. The Handloom 4.0 initiative uses digital tools and AI to monitor productivity and quality.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 2 and 3 only
- (c) 1 and 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

ANSWER KEY

1 – (b)

2 – (b)

3 – (c)

4 – (b)

5 – (d)

6 – (d)

7 – (b)

8 – (c)

9 – (a)

10 – (d)

MAINS PRACTICE

TWO ANALYTICAL QUESTIONS • 250 WORDS EACH

GS PAPER II

15 Marks

Q1. Delimitation carried out solely on the basis of population risks penalising States that have successfully stabilised their population. In this context, critically examine the concerns surrounding the proposed delimitation exercise and suggest a balanced way forward.

Approach: Define delimitation and the constitutional freeze (42nd, 84th, 87th Amendments); explain the north-south representation asymmetry after the 2027 Census; present the DMK's three conditions (freeze extension, 50% blanket increase, seat-Schedule) as a federal-bargaining lens; weigh cooperative federalism, fair representation and the "one-person-one-vote" principle; conclude with options such as a longer freeze, proportionate seat increases, or an empowered upper house.

GS PAPER III

15 Marks

Q2. "Compressed Bio-Gas can simultaneously advance India's energy security, rural incomes and the circular economy." Discuss the significance of the National Circular Bioenergy Scheme (GOBARdhan) in this light, and identify the challenges to scaling it up.

Approach: Outline the scheme (₹23,371 cr outlay, tenfold CBG target, assured offtake, administered pricing, capital subsidies till FY2035-36); link CBG to import substitution, farmer incomes, waste-to-wealth and emissions reduction; note the "three imperatives" — price, offtake, capital; flag challenges (feedstock aggregation, plant viability, pipeline access, quality, moving from ~300 to 5,000 plants); conclude with a circular-economy and Viksit Bharat framing.

— — END OF TODAY'S ANALYSIS — —