

20 July 2023

EC INITIATES PUBLIC HEARING ON ASSAM'S DRAFT DELIMITATION PROPOSAL

GS II: Polity & Governance

Source: IE

Election Commission's Public Hearing:

- The Election Commission (EC) has started public hearings in Guwahati regarding the draft delimitation proposal for Assam.
- The EC's full Bench, led by Chief Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar, will meet with political parties, civil society organizations, and other sections of society.
- These public hearings are part of the EC's consultative process during the delimitation procedure.

Background of the Delimitation Process:

- The delimitation process for Assembly and Parliamentary constituencies in Assam commenced in December 2022, utilizing the 2001 Census data for seat readjustment.
- On June 20, 2023, the draft delimitation proposal for Assam was published, inviting objections until July 11.
- The proposal suggested maintaining 126 Assembly seats and 14 Lok Sabha constituencies in Assam.
- Additionally, it recommended increasing the number of reserved Assembly seats for Scheduled Castes from eight to nine and for Scheduled Tribes from 16 to 19.
- The draft also proposed reserving two parliamentary seats for STs and one parliamentary seat for SCs.

Challenge in the Supreme Court:

- Recently, 10 opposition leaders from nine parties in Assam approached the Supreme Court to challenge the EC's draft delimitation order.
- The parties questioned the methodology used in the delimitation exercise and the application of different average assembly sizes for various districts.

ARTICLE 82 AND 170 - The Constitution grants the Parliament the authority to modify the distribution of seats in the Lok Sabha and the State Legislative Assemblies following each census.

ARTICLE 330 AND 332 - The number of seats set aside for Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs) in the Lok Sabha and the state legislatures will be adjusted in light of the 2001 census.

- The Delimitation Commission Acts were passed by the Parliament in this regard in 1952, 1962, 1972, and 2002.
- After the 1981 and 1991 censuses, there was no Delimitation Commission Act.
- Current constituencies was carried out using data from the 2001 Census.
- After 2026, a new Delimitation Commission will be established.

The Commission is made up of: **Election Commissioner (chairperson) Supreme Court Judge and State election commissioners.**

Orders issued by the Commission are **binding and cannot be challenged in court.**

Understanding Delimitation: Its Meaning, Purpose, and Constitutional Provisions

Definition of Delimitation:

- Delimitation refers to the process of fixing boundaries for territorial constituencies in a country or province with a legislative body.
- In the Indian context, delimitation involves redrawing boundaries of Lok Sabha and Legislative Assembly Constituencies in a region.
- The number of seats allocated to a state or union territory in Lok Sabha or Legislative Assembly may vary through this process.

Need for Delimitation:

- Delimitation ensures the equitable division of geographical areas based on the data from the latest Census.
- The goal is to maintain an approximately equal population in all constituencies, providing a level playing field for political parties and candidates.

Role of Delimitation Commission:

- The Delimitation Commission, comprising a retired or working Supreme Court Judge as the chairperson, an Election Commissioner, and concerned State Election Commissioners, redraws constituency boundaries.
- Appointed by the President in collaboration with the Election Commission, the Commission's orders have the force of law and cannot be challenged in court.
- The Commission's orders are presented before Lok Sabha and legislative assemblies but cannot be modified by them.

Way forward

A national consensus exercise should be started in order to resolve difficulties before 2026.

The Finance Commission's weighting of the population can be lowered to 10% or even 5%.

The strength of the Lok Sabha is anticipated to expand from 543 to 888 when parliamentary constituency boundaries are redrawn, according to statistics from the 2011 Census.

The Rajya Sabha might have 384 members instead of the present 245.

**BHOOMI SAMMAN AWARDS: RECOGNIZING EXCELLENCE IN DIGITAL INDIA LAND RECORDS
MODERNIZATION PROGRAMME (DILRMP)**

Source: PIB

President Presents Bhoomi Samman Awards:

- Recently, the President of India presented the "Bhoomi Samman" 2023 at an event organized by the Union Ministry of Rural Development in New Delhi.
- The awards were given to 9 state Secretaries and 68 District Collectors who demonstrated exceptional achievement in implementing the Digital India Land Records Modernization Programme (DILRMP).

Purpose of Bhoomi Samman Awards:

- The awards aim to acknowledge and motivate outstanding performance in the execution of the Digital India Land Records Modernization Programme (DILRMP).
- Madhya Pradesh secured the top position in the country for its remarkable progress in digitizing land records.
- 15 districts in Madhya Pradesh received Platinum Grading for achieving 100 percent success in all components of the Digital India Land Records Management Programme.

Cooperative Federalism Approach:

- The Bhoomi Samman Awards exemplify the cooperation and partnership between the central and state governments, based on trust and mutual collaboration.
- The grading system relies significantly on reports and inputs provided by the States/Union Territories regarding computerization and digitization of land records.

Key Aspects of Digital India Land Records Modernization Programme (DILRMP):

Implementation and Authorities:

- The DILRMP is a central sector scheme being executed by the Department of Land Resources under the Ministry of Rural Development.

Objectives:

- The program aims to capitalize on commonalities in land records across different states and
- Develop an Integrated Land Information Management System (ILIMS) nationwide.
- The ILIMS integrates land records databases, processes, and various sectors such as banks, financial institutions, circle rates, and Registration Offices.

PRELIMS SPECIFIC

SWAMITVA SCHEME

- **SVAMITVA (Survey of Villages and Mapping with Improved Technology in Village Areas) is a Central Sector Scheme of the Ministry of Panchayati Rajasthan.**
- **The objective of the scheme is to provide a record of rights (RoR) to all house owners in rural areas in the country.**
- **This will be done through the use of drone technology and other modern surveying techniques.**
- **The RoR will be a legally valid document that will give the property owners clear title to their land.**
- **The scheme is being implemented in partnership with the Survey of India (SoI) and the State Governments.**
- **The RoRs will be issued in electronic format.**
- **The scheme is being funded by the Government of India.**

Major Components:

- **Computerization of land records:** Modernizing land records through digital technologies.
- **Survey/re-survey:** Conducting surveys or re-surveys to update land records accurately.
- **Computerization of Registration:** Digitizing land registration processes for efficient management.

THE RAJASTHAN MINIMUM GUARANTEED INCOME BILL 2023: ENSURING SOCIAL SECURITY FOR CITIZENS

GS II: Social Issues

Source: IE

Objective of the Bill:

- The Rajasthan government has recently tabled the Rajasthan Minimum Guaranteed Income Bill 2023 with the aim of providing individuals or households with an assured minimum income as part of entitlement-based social security.

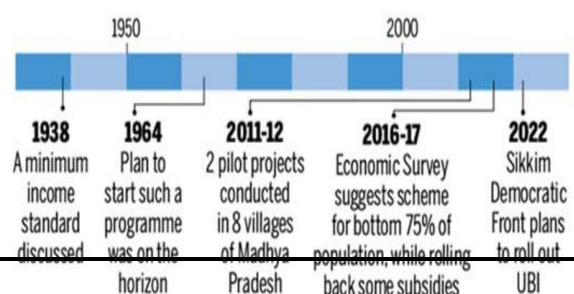
Salient Provisions:

- **Minimum Guaranteed Income:** Every adult citizen in the state is guaranteed a minimum income for 125 days a year.
- **Implementation:** The guaranteed income will be provided through two schemes - the Indira Gandhi Shahri Rozgar Guarantee Yojana for urban areas and the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) for rural areas.
- **Guaranteed Employment:** To ensure the right to employment, minimum wages must be paid on a weekly basis or, at most, within a fortnight.
- **Job Site Proximity:** The work site should be within a 5 km radius of where the job card is registered, overseen by Program Officers (BDO in rural and Executive Officer of the local body in urban areas).
- **Unemployment Allowance:** If the program officer fails to offer work within 15 days of application, the applicant is entitled to an unemployment allowance.
- **Guaranteed Social Security Pension:** Eligible categories such as the aged, disabled, widows, and single women will receive a minimum pension of Rs 1,000, which will increase by 15% annually.

Significance of the Bill:

- The Bill stands out as it guarantees minimum employment and pensions by law, distinguishing it from traditional cash transfer schemes.

INDIA'S TRYST WITH INCOME SUPPORT



- Part of the Rajasthan government's measures to combat inflation and appeal to voters ahead of the upcoming elections.

Challenges to Implementation:

- **Identifying Eligible Beneficiaries:** Ensuring accurate inclusion and exclusion of beneficiaries.
- **Financial Burden:** The government foresees an additional expenditure of Rs 2,500 crore per year, which may escalate over time.

Conclusion:

- The Rajasthan Minimum Guaranteed Income Bill 2023 reflects the government's moral responsibility to safeguard the welfare of vulnerable and disadvantaged citizens, exemplifying the true measure of a compassionate society, as advocated by Mahatma Gandhi.

Way forward

The bottom end of the talent spectrum has more work options.

Pathways for upward mobility are provided by access to healthcare and education.



RUDRAGIRI HILLOCK: UNEARTHING ANCIENT ART AND MESOLITHIC PAINTINGS

GS I: History & Culture

Source: THE HINDU

Location and Background:

- Rudragiri hillock is situated in Andhra Pradesh's Guntur district.
- Nestled within the Eastern Ghats, it boasts five naturally formed rock shelters, facing westward, which served as living quarters during the Mesolithic age around 5000 B.C.
- The rock shelters are adorned with luminous prehistoric rock paintings from that era, as well as exquisite artwork from the renowned Kakatiya dynasty.

Key Findings:

- **First Cave:** A narrative mural depicts the intense battle between the Vanara brothers, Vali and Sugriva. Rama, positioned behind Sugriva, shoots arrows at Vali. A Ramayana fresco shows Hanuman lifting the Sanjeevani hill with sacred symbols to his right and another prehistoric painting to the left.
- **Middle Cave:** A grand sketch of Hanuman carrying the Sanjivani hill in his right hand, symbolizing his mission to save Lakshmana's life, is accompanied by sacred symbols of the conch (Sankha) and the fire altar (Yagna Vedi).
- **Third Cave:** This houses prehistoric rock paintings from the Mesolithic era, and interestingly, the Kakatiya artist superimposed the elegant figure of Hanuman in a unique 'Anjali' posture, folding his hands in a divine offering.
- **Patronage:** It is believed that the illustrious Ganapati Deva Maharaja, the founder of Muppavaram temple and a prominent figure of the Kakatiya dynasty, likely patronized the rich ancient mural heritage found at Rudragiri.

Mesolithic Period:

- The Mesolithic period, also known as the Middle Stone Age, existed between the Palaeolithic (Old Stone Age) and the Neolithic (New Stone Age).
- **Timeframe:** It is generally dated between approximately 12,000 to 10,000 years ago.
- **Lifestyle:** During this period, human societies were mainly hunter-gatherer communities.

PRELIMS SPECIFIC

FEATURES	PALAEOLITHIC	MESOLITHIC	NEOLITHIC
TOOLS	Crudely carved out stones were used by people for hunting	Small, sharp stone tools called microliths.	Polished stone tools, pottery, and agricultural implements.

HABITATS	Caves and rock shelters.	Open air settlements, near water bodies.	Permanent villages, with houses made of mud and thatch.
LOCATIONS	: Bori (Maharashtra), Soan Valley (Pakistan), Kashmir, Gujarat, Saurashtra, Chotanagpur plateau, Central India, Belan Valley.	Adamgarh (Madhya Pradesh), Bhimbetka (Madhya Pradesh), Kharwar, Jaora and Kathotia (M.P), Sundargarh and Sambalpur (Odisha), Ezhuthu Guha (Kerala).	Burzahom (Kashmir), Gufkral (Kashmir), Koldihwa and Mahagara (lying south of Allahabad), Hallur (Karnataka), Brahmagiri (Karnataka), Tekkalakota (Karnataka), Sanganakallu (Karnataka), Utnur (Andhra Pradesh), Piklihal (Andhra Pradesh).

