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Institute Of Civil Services

# DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

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**TATHASTU**  
Institute Of Civil Services

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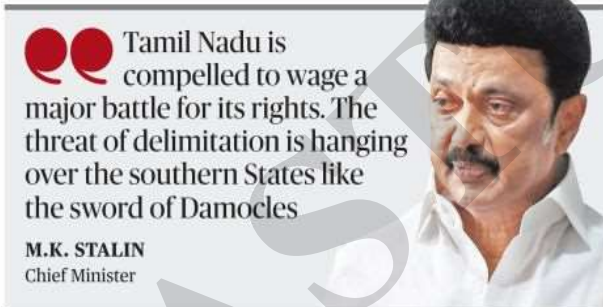
**STALIN CALLS FOR ALL-PARTY MEET ON MARCH 5, SAYS DELIMITATION AFFECTS ALL OF SOUTH INDIA**

# Stalin calls for all-party meet on March 5, says delimitation affects all of south India

**The Hindu Bureau**  
CHENNAI

Chief Minister M.K. Stalin has convened an all-party meeting at the Secretariat in Chennai on March 5 to discuss the impact of the proposed delimitation exercise, which may lead to a reduction in the number of Lok Sabha seats in Tamil Nadu.

Addressing the media after chairing a Cabinet meeting at the Secretariat on Tuesday, the Chief Minister said, "Tamil Nadu is compelled to wage a major battle for its rights. The threat of delimitation is hanging over the southern



States like the sword of Damocles. Tamil Nadu, a leader in HDIs [Human Development Indices], faces serious danger. The Union government plans to conduct the delimitation exercise in 2026. Population control has been a key national objective, and Tamil

Nadu has successfully achieved it through effective family planning, prioritising women's education, and advancements in healthcare."

**Reduction in seats**  
"As of now, Tamil Nadu has 39 Lok Sabha seats. The

delimitation exercise is likely to reduce it to 31. It is not just a reduction in numbers. It is about our rights. The voice of Tamil Nadu is being suppressed on the pretext of delimitation. Transcending political differences, everyone should come together and raise our voice," Mr. Stalin said.

Mr. Stalin also wrote a letter to various political parties on Tuesday, urging them to voice their opposition to the delimitation exercise.

"Delimitation isn't just about Tamil Nadu, it affects all of south India," he added.

- Chief Minister M.K. Stalin has convened an all-party meeting at the Secretariat in Chennai on March 5 to discuss the impact of the proposed delimitation exercise, which may lead to a reduction in the number of Lok Sabha seats in Tamil Nadu.

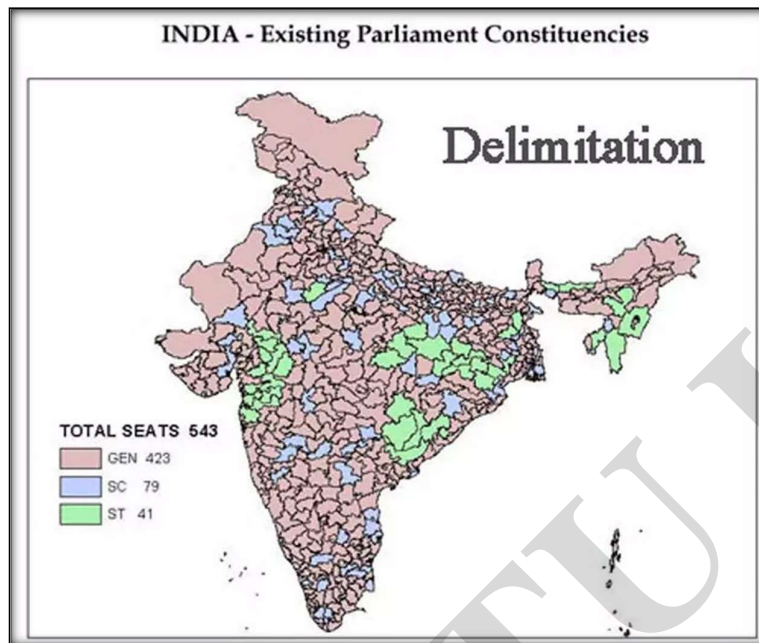
**What is Delimitation?**

- Delimitation is the process of redrawing the boundaries of **parliamentary and assembly constituencies** to ensure fair representation based on population changes. The **Delimitation Commission** carries out this exercise. In India, delimitation has been conducted in **1952, 1963, 1973, and 2002**, but a **freeze on seat allocation was imposed in 1976** (until 2026) to encourage family planning measures.





- The next delimitation exercise, scheduled for **2026**, will be based on the **population figures of the 2021 Census** (which was delayed due to COVID-19 and is yet to be conducted).



### Tamil Nadu's Worries?

- **Change in Seat Allocation**

- Southern states like **Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, and Telangana** have been **successful in controlling their population growth** through effective policies in **family planning, women's education, and healthcare**.
- In contrast, **northern states like Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, and Rajasthan** have witnessed **higher population growth**.
- If Lok Sabha seats are reallocated based on the **latest population figures**, states with **lower population growth (such as Tamil Nadu)** may lose seats, while states with **higher population growth (like Uttar Pradesh and Bihar)** may gain more seats.

- **Loss of Political Representation**

- Tamil Nadu currently has **39 Lok Sabha seats**. The proposed delimitation could **reduce this number to 31**, **weakening the state's influence in Parliament**.
- The **south contributes significantly to India's economy**, but a reduction in seats would mean **less say in national policies**.
- **Smaller states may become politically weaker**, while states with **higher population growth** will gain disproportionate power in the Lok Sabha.

- **A Broader Southern India Concern**

- Stalin emphasized that this issue is **not limited to Tamil Nadu alone** but affects the **entire southern region**, which includes **Kerala, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, and Telangana**.
- These states have performed well in **human development indicators (HDIs)** and contributed significantly to **India's GDP**, yet they risk **losing political representation**.





- The reallocation of seats may result in an **imbalance of power between northern and southern states.**
- This could lead to **policies favoring northern states**, further widening the **economic and developmental divide.**

➤ **Solution: A Balanced Approach**

- A possible solution could be **delinking parliamentary representation from population size alone** and **considering factors like economic contribution, literacy, and HDI.**
- Another alternative is **increasing the total number of Lok Sabha seats**, ensuring **no state loses representation** while still accommodating population growth.





## SHOULD A THIRD LANGUAGE BE COMPULSORY?

# Should a third language be compulsory?

Why is the Union government delaying funds under the Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan to Tamil Nadu? When was the three-language policy first introduced and what did it mandate? What are the challenges in having extra language courses in government schools?

### EXPLAINER

Rangarajan. R

#### The story so far:

There has been a tussle between the Centre and the Tamil Nadu government over the three-language formula in schools under the New Education Policy (NEP), 2020. The Union government has indicated that it needs to be complied with for release of funds tied to the Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan. However, the Tamil Nadu government views it as a 'smokescreen' for Hindi imposition and insists that it would continue with its two-language policy.

#### What are constitutional provisions?

The Constitution provides that Hindi is the official language of the Union. English was originally meant to continue as the official language for 15 years from the commencement of the Constitution (till 1965). However, the Official Languages Act, 1963 provides for the continued use of English, in addition to Hindi, for all official purposes of the Union without any time limit. The legislature of a State may adopt any one or more of the languages in use in the State or Hindi as the official language(s) for official purposes of that State.

Further, the Constitution provides that it shall be the duty of the Union to promote the spread of the Hindi language so that it may serve as a medium of expression for all the elements of the composite culture of India.

#### What is the three-language policy?

The three-language formula was first introduced in the NEP of 1968. This policy and the Official Language Resolution, 1968 mandated the teaching of Hindi as a language in non-Hindi speaking States. There were protests against the same in Tamil Nadu and it has steadfastly followed its two-language policy of teaching Tamil and English in its government schools.



**Firm stance:** A protest against the three-language policy, in Chennai, on February 18, 2021.

The NEP, 2020 has retained the three-language formula albeit with a key difference that it doesn't impose any language on any State. It specifies that the languages to be learnt will be the choice of States, regions and the students, so long as at least two of the three languages are native to India.

#### What are the issues?

The Annual Status of Education Research (ASER) conducted regularly by renowned NGO Pratham leaves much to be improved upon with respect to learning abilities. The report of 2022 indicates that close to 60% of students in Class V could

not read a Class II level text. The report of 2023 reveals that 25% of youth in the age group of 14-18 years could not read a Class II level text fluently in their regional language. More than 40% of this age group could not read sentences in English. The learning outcomes in foundational numeracy skills like subtraction and division is equally poor.

As per the report on 'Analysis of Budgeted expenditure on Education' prepared by the Ministry of Education, Government of India, in 2022, out of the total revenue expenditure on elementary education estimated at ₹3.03 lakh crore (2019-20), 15% is spent by the Centre

while 85% is spent by the States. The total expenditure on elementary, secondary, higher and technical education by the Centre and States combined hovers around 4-4.5% of the GDP as against the target of 6% set out in the NEP 2020. Thus, the expenditure on education is yet to reach the desired levels.

#### What can be the way forward?

While English is not a native language, its proficiency has helped us in becoming globally competitive in various service industries. India is a multi-lingual country and the objective of learning more Indian languages in schools is desirable. However, the existing issues of learning outcomes coupled with constraints on resources require that the efforts of government run schools should be focused on improving the teaching of the mother tongue/local language and English, apart from foundational numeracy skills. Even in private schools where a third language is taught till Standard VIII, there is limited proficiency being attained by the students in such language.

The 2011 Census data reveals that approximately 26% of India is bilingual and 7% is trilingual. The corresponding figures for urban areas are 44% and 15%, as against 22% and 5% for rural areas. With rapid urbanisation and migration of labourers across the country, this number is bound to increase in the forthcoming Census, indicating that the young and adult population would learn additional languages according to their needs.

There must be a constructive dialogue between the Centre and the Tamil Nadu government to ensure that funding is not delayed.

Considering the share of expenditure borne by the States as well as regional diversities, there also needs to be a productive discussion on providing more autonomy to the States in policy matters relating to school education.

*Rangarajan. R is a former IAS officer and author of 'Polity Simplified'. Views expressed are personal.*

### THE GIST

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- Further, the **Constitution** provides that **it shall be the duty of the Union to promote the spread of the Hindi language** so that it may serve as a **medium of expression for all the elements of the composite culture of India.**

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- The **NEP, 2020 has retained the three-language formula albeit with a key difference that it doesn't impose any language on any State.** It specifies that the languages to be learnt will be the choice of States, regions and the students, so long as at least two of the three languages are native to India.

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## The Way Forward

- **English has helped India compete globally**, but improving **mother tongue education, English skills, and basic numeracy** should be the priority in government schools.
- Even in **private schools**, students **do not gain fluency** in the third language taught till Class VIII.
- **Census 2011 data** shows that **many Indians are already bilingual or trilingual**, and with **urbanization and migration**, people will naturally learn more languages as needed.
- The **Centre and Tamil Nadu should have a constructive discussion** to ensure that **education funding is not delayed**.
- States should have **more autonomy** in making **education policies** that reflect their **regional needs** and spending capacity.



**WHAT DID THE HC RULE ABOUT ARRESTING WOMEN AT NIGHT?**

# What did the HC rule about arresting women at night?

Is the provision which restricts the arrest of women after sunset and before sunrise absolute? What did the 135th report of the Law Commission of India on Women in Custody recommend?

R.K. Vij

**The story so far:**

The Madurai Bench of the Madras High Court in *Deepa versus S. Vijayalakshmi and Others* ruled that the legal provision in the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS), 2023, which restricts the arrest of a woman after sunset and before sunrise, is directory and not mandatory. In this case, a woman was arrested at 8pm. A single Judge of the High Court held that the arrest was in breach of Section 46(4) of the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC). However, a two-Judge Bench of the High Court, in an appeal, held that Section 46(4) of the CrPC was directory and not mandatory.

**What are the safeguards?**

Two safeguards are provided under Section 43(5) of BNSS (which corresponds

to Section 46(4) of CrPC) for the arrest of a woman by the police. First, no arrest of a woman shall be made after sunset and before sunrise except in exceptional circumstances. Second, even in exceptional circumstances, the prior permission of the jurisdictional magistrate must be sought by a woman police officer by making a written report. Section 46(4) of the CrPC is a beneficial provision incorporated to ensure the safety of women. However, the provision does not explain what would constitute an exceptional situation. In addition, the proviso to Section 46(1) states that the arresting police officer should not touch the person of the woman, unless it is a woman police officer or if the circumstances otherwise require it.

**What did the Madras HC rule?**

The Madras High Court said that Section 46(4) of CrPC does not spell out the

consequence of non-compliance of the provision. If the provision was intended to be mandatory, the legislature would definitely have provided for the consequences of non-compliance. A police officer who effects arrest, carries out a public duty. The Court underlined that there could be a situation where a heinous offence is committed by a woman in the night and the magistrate may not be available for obtaining permission. Under such a situation, the accused woman may escape. Therefore, such mechanical adherence to procedure can injure public interest.

**What is history of Section 46(4) CrPC?**

The 135th report of the Law Commission of India on Women in Custody (1989) recommended that ordinarily no women shall be arrested after sunset and before sunrise. If there are exceptional cases, prior permission of the immediate

superior officer shall be obtained, or if the case was of extreme urgency, then an arrest report with reasons shall be made to the immediate superior officer and to the magistrate. Similar recommendations were made in the 154th report of the Law Commission in 1996, and Section 46(4) of CrPC was inserted with some changes in 2005.

**What has the Supreme Court said?**

In a case, the Nagpur Bench of the Bombay High Court directed the State to issue directions to all police officials that no female persons shall be detained without the presence of a lady constable, and in no case after sunset and before sunrise. Here, the Supreme Court observed that a strict compliance with the said directive in a given circumstance would cause practical difficulties.

**Will the ruling dilute the provision?**

The Court has clearly said that despite holding Section 46(4) of CrPC/43(5) as directory and not mandatory, the provision cannot be rendered futile by the police. While failure to adhere to the statutory requirement may not lead to the arrest being declared illegal, the officer may have to offer explanation for the inability to comply with the provision. The Court also directed the police to issue guidelines, clarifying as to what constitute exceptional circumstances.

R.K. Vij is a former IPS officer.

**THE GIST**

The Madurai Bench of the Madras High Court ruled that the legal provision in the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS), 2023, which restricts the arrest of a woman after sunset and before sunrise, is directory and not mandatory.

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The Court has clearly said that despite holding Section 46(4) of CrPC/43(5) as directory and not mandatory, the provision cannot be rendered futile by the police

**The story so far:**

- The Madurai Bench of the Madras High Court ruled that the restriction on arresting women at night, as per the **Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS), 2023**, is **directory, not mandatory**.
- In a case where a woman was arrested at 8 PM, a single-judge bench initially called it a violation of **CrPC**. However, a **two-judge bench later ruled** that the provision is only a guideline and not a strict rule.

**What are the safeguards?**

- BNSS Section 43(5) (earlier **Section 46(4) of CrPC**) provides **two safeguards** for arresting women:
  1. Women **cannot be arrested at night** except in **exceptional circumstances**.
  2. Even in such cases, **prior permission from a magistrate** must be obtained by a **woman police officer** in writing.
- However, the law **does not define** what qualifies as an "exceptional situation." Also, male officers **cannot touch** a woman while arresting her unless no female officer is available.



### What did the Madras HC rule?

- The High Court observed that the law **does not specify** what happens if the rule is violated.
- If Parliament intended it to be **mandatory**, it would have **included penalties**.
- The Court also noted that **strict adherence** to the rule could hinder public interest—especially if a **woman accused of a serious crime** escapes because a magistrate is unavailable at night.

### What is the history of Section 46(4) CrPC?

- The **Law Commission of India** first recommended in **1989** that women should **not be arrested at night**, except in emergencies with prior **superior officer approval**.
- Similar recommendations were made in **1996**, leading to the introduction of **Section 46(4)** in **2005**.

### What has the Supreme Court said?

- The Bombay High Court once ruled that **women cannot be detained without a lady constable and never after sunset**. However, the **Supreme Court** noted that **strict enforcement** could create **practical difficulties** in some cases.

### Will the ruling dilute the provision?

- The Court clarified that **police cannot ignore the rule** entirely. While violating it **won't make an arrest illegal**, the officer must **justify** why the rule wasn't followed. The Court also ordered the **police to define "exceptional circumstances"** through **clear guidelines**.





'ACCEPTING TALIBAN ENVOY IN DELHI WILL UNDERMINE INDIA'S CREDIBILITY'

# 'Accepting Taliban envoy in Delhi will undermine India's credibility'

Afghan exiles at Herat Security Dialogue urge India to maintain its stated foreign policy regarding terrorists; appeals come after reports surface that India is on the verge of allowing Taliban appointee to head Afghanistan Embassy in New Delhi

**Suhasini Haidar**  
MADRID

**A**midst a growing number of reports that India will accept a Taliban-appointed diplomat to head the Afghanistan Embassy in Delhi, speakers at a conference of prominent Afghan exiles urged New Delhi to not "normalise" its engagement with the regime in Kabul. The reports carried by Afghan media, citing Taliban Foreign Ministry officials and international news agency Bloomberg, followed weeks after India's Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri met with the Taliban's 'Acting' Foreign Minister Amir Khan Muttaqi in Dubai on January 8. This is the highest-level engagement the Indian government has conducted with the Taliban since the latter took power in Kabul in August 2021.

In November 2024, New Delhi accepted a Taliban-



Afghans-in-exile leaders and diplomats gather for a conference in Madrid to discuss Afghanistan's future. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

approved nominee, Ikramuddin Kamil, as 'Acting Consul-General' in Mumbai. If India were to allow a Taliban-appointed nominee to head the Afghanistan Embassy in Delhi, it would join other countries, including China, Pakistan, Russia, Iran, the UAE, Qatar and Central Asian states, while at least 16 countries have rejected the Taliban's nominees, and still host Ambassadors of the Afghan Republic.

Speaking to *The Hindu*

at the Herat Security Dialogue in Madrid organised by the Afghanistan Institute of Strategic Studies, which is now based in London, former senior officials and diplomats cautioned against any such move.

"This shift [will] mark a stark departure from India's historical stance and undermine its credibility as a nation that has long condemned terrorism in all forms. The Afghan people expect India to uphold its own stated foreign poli-

cy of making no distinction between 'good' and 'bad' terrorists, demonstrating a principled and consistent approach rather than one driven by short-term geopolitical calculations," former Afghan Ambassador Ashraf Haidari said.

Mr. Haidari is the founder and president of Displaced International, an agency advocating for the rights of those displaced by conflict.

Mr. Haidari, who was also Afghanistan's Deputy Chief of Mission in New Delhi and then Ambassador to Sri Lanka in the pre-Taliban era, has been critical of India's decision to engage with the Taliban while refusing visas to Afghans, including thousands of students who gained admission to universities in India.

Asked about the possible move, India's former Ambassador to Afghanistan Jayant Prasad, who too attended the conference,

said India had "done well" to engage the Taliban, as it was the "de facto authority" and connection to the Afghan people. However, he stressed that the government "should not provide legitimacy to the Islamic Emirate at a time it has refused political dialogue to create an inclusive government, and is engaged in the persistent and systematic oppression of women and minorities".

According to reports carried by Amu TV, Indian officials are "close to finalising an agreement" for two Taliban-approved officials to manage the affairs at the Afghanistan Embassy in Delhi, which has been in limbo for over a year.

Thus far, the External Affairs Ministry has maintained that any such reports were "hypothetical".

(The correspondent covered the Herat Security Dialogue at the invitation of the Afghanistan Institute of Strategic Studies.)

- There are reports that **India may accept a Taliban-appointed diplomat to lead the Afghanistan Embassy in Delhi.**
- This has sparked concerns among **Afghan exiles**, who urge India **not to normalize ties** with the Taliban government.
- India has already allowed a **Taliban-approved official** to work as '**Acting Consul-General**' in Mumbai. If India accepts another Taliban nominee in Delhi, it would follow countries like **China, Russia, Pakistan, Iran, and the UAE**, while **16 other countries have rejected** Taliban diplomats.
- At a conference in Madrid, **former Afghan officials** warned that such a move **could harm India's global reputation**, as India has always opposed **terrorism**. **Ashraf Haidari**, a former Afghan diplomat, criticized India for engaging with the Taliban while **denying visas to Afghan students**.
- However, **India's former Ambassador to Afghanistan, Jayant Prasad**, supported engaging with the Taliban but **warned against giving them legitimacy** as they still **oppress women and minorities** and refuse to form an **inclusive government**.
- Reports suggest that **Indian officials are close to finalizing an agreement** with two Taliban-approved diplomats.
- However, India's **External Affairs Ministry has denied any such decision** so far.





## WOMEN SHIFTING FROM UNPAID DOMESTIC WORK: GOVT. SURVEY

- A survey by NSO shows that **more people are working** in 2024 compared to 2019.
- **75% of men and 25% of women (aged 15-59)** were involved in jobs and related work, an increase from **70.9% and 21.8%** in 2019.
- Women are now **spending less time on unpaid housework**—305 minutes per day in 2024 compared to 315 minutes in 2019—suggesting more women are shifting to paid jobs.
- **Men worked for 473 minutes a day, while women worked for 341 minutes.**

### Household chores & caregiving:

- Women spent **137 minutes caring for family members**, while men spent only **75 minutes**.
- **41% of women** were involved in caregiving, compared to **21.4% of men**.

### Leisure & Learning:

- People spent **171 minutes daily** on entertainment, TV, and leisure.
- Children (6-14 years) spent **413 minutes a day** studying.
- People spent **708 minutes daily** on self-care (eating, sleeping, etc.).

