

National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST)

February 28, 2020

Source: *PIB & NCST*

16th Foundation of Day of National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST) was celebrated in the month of February 2020

About National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST)

- The National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST) was established by amending Article 338 and inserting a new Article 338A in the Constitution through the Constitution (89th Amendment) Act, 2003.
- By this amendment, the **erstwhile National Commission for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes was replaced by two separate Commissions namely-**
 1. the National Commission for Scheduled Castes (NCSC), and
 2. the National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST) w.e.f. 19 February 2004
- The amendment inter-alia enjoins upon the Commission to oversee the implementation of various safeguards provided to Scheduled Tribes under the Constitution or under any other law for time being in force or under any other order to the Govt. and to evaluate the working of such safeguards.

Composition of NCST

- The Commission comprises a **Chairperson, a Vice-Chairperson** and **three full time members (including one lady member)**.
- **The term** of office Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and Member of NCST is **three years** from the date of assumption of charge.

- **The Chairperson has been given the rank of Union Cabinet Minister**
- The Vice-Chairperson has the rank of a Minister of State and other Members have the rank of a Secretary to the Government of India.

Functions of NCST

Constitution of India under **Clause (5) of Article 338A** has assigned the following duties and functions to the Commission:

- **To investigate and monitor** all matters relating to the safeguards provided for the Schedule Tribes under the Constitution or under any other law for the time being in force or under any order of the Government and to evaluate the working of such safeguards.
- **To inquire into specific complaints** with respect to the deprivation of rights and safeguards of the Scheduled Tribes
- **To participate and advice in the planning process of socio-economic development** of the Scheduled Tribes and to evaluate the progress of their development under the Union and any State.
- To **present to the President, annually** and at such other times as the Commission may deem fit, **report upon the working of those safeguards.**
- To make in such **reports, recommendations** as to the measures that should be taken by the Union or any State for effective implementation of those safeguards and other measures for the protection, welfare and socio-economic development of the Scheduled Tribes.
- To discharge such other functions in relation to the protection, welfare and development and advancement of the Scheduled Tribes as the President may subject to the provisions of any law made by Parliament by rule specify.

Powers of the Commission

For Investigation and Inquiry, the Commission is **vested with powers of a civil court** having authority to:

- Summon and enforce the attendance of any person and examine on oath
- Discovery & production of any documents
- Receive evidence on affidavits
- Requisition any public record or copy thereof from any court or office
- Issue Commissions for examination of witnesses and documents; and
- Any matter which President, by rule, may determine.