

# National Human Rights Commission

September 18, 2020

The National Human Rights Commission is a **statutory (and not a constitutional)** body. It was **established in 1993** under a legislation enacted by the Parliament, namely, the **Protection of Human Rights Act, 1993**.

## Features of the Commission

The commission is the watchdog of human rights in the country, that is, the **rights relating to life, liberty, equality and dignity of the individual guaranteed by the Constitution or embodied in the International covenants and enforceable by courts in India**.

## Composition of the Commission

- NHRC is composed of a **Chairman and seven other members**.
  - Out of the seven members, three are ex-officio members.
  - The Chairman and members of NHRC are appointed by the President of India on the recommendation of a high-powered committee headed by the Prime Minister.
- . Chairman- Retired Chief Justice of India
  - . Member 1- Retired Judge of Supreme Court of India
  - . Member 2- Retired Judge of any High Court of India
  - . 2 Members- Practical experience in the matters of human rights
  - . Ex-officio Members- Chairpersons of National Commission for Minorities, National Commission for Women, National Commission for SC/ ST.
- The chairman and members hold office for a **term of five**

**years or until they attain the age of 70 years,** whichever is earlier.

### Functions of NHRC

- To **inquire into any violation of human rights or negligence** in the prevention of such violation by a public servant, either suo motu or on a petition presented to it or on an order of a court
- To **intervene in any proceeding involving allegations of violation of human rights** pending before a court
- To visit jails and detention places to **study the living conditions of inmates and make recommendations**
- To **review the constitutional and other legal safeguards** for the protection of human rights and recommend measures for their effective implementation
- To review the factors including acts of terrorism that inhibit the enjoyment of human rights and recommend remedial measures
- To **study treaties and other international instruments** on human rights and make recommendations for their effective implementation
- To **undertake and promote research** in the field of human rights
- To spread human rights literacy among the people and **promote awareness of the safeguards** available for the protection of these rights

### Achievements of NHRC

- Abolition of bonded labour
- Brought out a manual for gender sensitisation for judiciary, in cases of trafficking in women and children
- Combating sexual harassment of women at workplace
- Abolition of manual scavenging
- Rights of disabled people
- The **Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI)**, a UN body based in Geneva, re-

accredited India's apex rights watchdog with the 'A' status.

- Disposal of more than 17 lakh cases
- Payment of more than Rs 1 billion to victims of human rights violations
- Carrying out over 750 spot enquiries of human rights violations
- Conducting over 200 conferences to spread awareness of human rights across the country