

National Commission for Women (NCW)

[UPSC Notes]

What is the National Commission for Women?

National Commission for Women can be considered an apex body that looks after the Welfare and will be of women in society. Reports have been released by the commissions, which collectively displayed the concern for setting up a body to review and address women's grievances in the country.

National Commission for Women is a part of the National Commission for Women Act, passed in 1990, and the National Commission on Women was set up in 1992. Apart from dealing with domestic violence or just violence against women, it also acts as an advisor to the government in making policies to safeguard women's rights. It enjoys all the powers of a civil court.

The vision carried out by National Commission for Women is to provide security to Indian women inside-out, empower them, and give them access to all the rights to her in their domestic and professional life.

National Commission for Women: History

The National Commission for Women was established in 1992 under the National Commission for Women Act 1990 to facilitate grievances and safeguard women's legal rights.

- A Committee on the status of women in India recommended setting up a National Commission for Women about 20 years ago that would work only in the dimensions of surveillance and facilitating the redressals of women's grievances.
- Later, many committees, plans, and commissions also recommended constituting a specific body for the Welfare of women between 1988 to 2000.
- Keeping the constant urge of different commissions, including the national perspective plan for women, the union government in the 1990s consulted several social workers, NGOs, and other experts regarding the powers, structure, and function of the commission that needed to be set up.
- Finally, a bill was introduced in Lok Sabha in May, 1990.
- The same 1990 human resource development ministry held a national conference regarding the bill. In August, 1990 the central government introduced new provisions and amendments to waste the constituted Commission with powers equal to that of a Civil Court.
- Finally, the bill was passed on 30th August, 1990 and received assent from the President of India.

- The commission constituted on 31st January 1992 had Mrs. Jayanthi Patnaik as the first chairperson of the Commission.

National Commission for Women: Composition

The Commission is composed of-

- Chairperson appointed by the central government who can remain committed and dedicated to safeguarding women's causes.
- The central government nominates 5 members from the people who have already worked in fields related to legislation, trade unionism law, and management of female-oriented industry also, the people related to NGOs and social welfare can be part of it.
- At least one member from the scheduled caste and scheduled tribes are nominated by the central government and the membership secretary, who also belongs to the scheduled caste and scheduled tribe, respectively.
- A person who is experienced and expert in management and knows about sociological movements.
- An officer with appropriate experience being employed in a civil post under the union or an all-India service.

Tenure of members of the National Commission for Women

The members of the National Commission for Women hold a tenure of 3 years or, as specified by the central government, a particular duration.

Removal of members of the National Commission for Women

The following is the grounds for removal of the members of the NCW:

- A person may be removed from the position of chairperson or a member of the commission if they become undischarged insolvent.
- The central government considered a crime morally repugnant if the offender is convicted and sentenced to prison.
- If the member of the chairperson is declared mentally unstable by the full court.
- The government can cancel the candidate of a member if he or she refuses to act according to guidelines or has lost the ability to act accordingly.
- When a commission member misses 3 Commission meetings, he or she can be removed from the commission.
- Considering if the chairperson or the member has been abusing their position in undue manners, the central government can outright reject their existence in the commission.
- However, it is not permissible to remove an individual until he or she has been heard fairly in the concerned case.

Functions of the National Commission for Women

It is the mission of the National Commission for Women to enable domestic women to achieve equality in living standards and participation in every sphere of life by securing

their rights and entitlement through suitable policies. Also, it aims to reduce the problems arising from discrimination and violence against women.

- The primary function of the commission is to set up inquiries and evaluate the issues related to the constitution and laws related to women.
- Bring in the cases related to discrimination and violation of women's rights before the government and related authorities and take action against them.
- To report to the central government on the effectiveness of safeguards operations.
- To provide recommendations in such reports for enhancing the women's conditions by the concerned state or the union.
- To regularly report the women's issues, including all the obstacles they face at the domestic level or in the workplace, to the government.
- Ensuring that the provisions in the constitution and laws for safeguarding women are reviewed and revised regularly. Also, to propose the legislation to address bridging gaps and deficiencies, if any.

Powers of the National Commission for Women

It is a brownie point for the National Commission Of Women as it enjoys powers equal to that of the Civil Court.

- It can take the oath of allegiance from any person from any part of India along with issuing the summon or enforcing its attendance.
- It ensures that all the documents are properly discovered and produced through the affidavits as a shred of evidence.
- It can demand copies of public records from any Court or government office.
- It can examine the witnesses and documents and the issuance of commissions.
- It can consider the prescribed matters from the commission and the government.

Issues related to National Commission for Women

There are many issues that the National Commission for Women faces. The important ones are-

- To meet the commission's needs, it receives a very small amount of financial assistance from the government.
- Consequently, the National Commission for Women lacks the authority to choose its members because the government appoints them.
- The National Commission for Women does not have legislative authority. Its traditional boundaries are limited to making decisions, providing suggestions, and creating reports.

List of Chairperson for National Commission for Women

In keeping with its mandate, the Commission initiated various steps to improve the status of women and worked for their economic empowerment. The Commission completed its visits to all the States/UTs except Lakshadweep and prepared Gender Profiles to assess women's status and empowerment. The Chairperson list of the Commission since its inception is given below:

Chairperson	Year
Jayanti Patnayak	1992
Mohini Giri	1995
Vivah Parthasarathy	1999
Purnima Advani	2002
Girija Vyas	2005
Mamta Sharma	2011
Lalitha Kumaramangalam	2014
Rekha Sharma	2017

Latest News regarding National Commission for Women

Let's discuss some of the latest happenings related to NCW:

- A dairy industry training and capacity-building initiative have been established by the National Commission for Women.
- Women working in dairy farming and adjacent industries are being identified and given training by NCW in the areas like quality enhancement, packaging, value addition, and marketing of dairy products.
- The organizers of the first session were the Haryana state rural livelihood mission held at the Lala Lajpat Rai University of Veterinary and Animal Sciences in Hisar on 'value-added dairy products'.