***Class-notes prepared and uploaded by-Dr Adidur Rahman***

***Dept. of Pol. Science, HAAC***

***For 6th sem. (Major), paper-6.6.***

### TOPIC: National Commission for Scheduled Castes (NCSC):

National Commission for Scheduled Castes is a [constitutional body](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Constitutional_body) established with a view to provide safeguards against the exploitation of [Scheduled Castes](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Scheduled_Castes) and to promote and protect their social, educational, economic and cultural interests. Art. 366(24) defines Scheduled Castes as ‘such castes, races or tribes or parts of groups within such castes, races or tribes as are deemed under Art.341 to be the Scheduled Castes for the purpose of this constitution’.

**Brief history:**

* The first Commission for [SC and ST](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/SC_and_ST) was set up in August 1978 with Shri Bhola Paswan Shastri as chairman and other four Members.
* In 1990 the Commission for SCs and STs was renamed as the National Commission for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and it was set up as a National Level Advisory Body to advise the Government on broad policy issues and levels of development of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.
* The first Commission was constituted in 1992 with Shri S.H. Ramdhan as chairman. The second Commission was constituted in October 1995 with Shri H. Hanumanthappa as chairman.
* Consequent upon the Constitution (89th Amendment) Act, 2003 the erstwhile National Commission for Scheduled Castes & Scheduled Tribes has been replaced by (i) National Commission for Scheduled Castes and (ii) [National Commission for Scheduled Tribes](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Commission_for_Scheduled_Tribes).

**Composition:**

1. Subject to the provisions of any law made in this behalf by Parliament, the Commission shall consist of a Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and three other Members and the conditions of service and tenure of office of the Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and other Members so appointed shall be such as the President may by rule determine.
2. The Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and other Members of the Commission shall be appointed by the President by warrant under his hand and seal.

## Functions:

## It shall be the duty of the Commission -

1. To investigate and monitor all matters relating to the safeguards provided for the SCs under this 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;
2. To inquire into specific complaints with respect to the deprivation of rights and safeguards of the SCs;
3. To participate and advise on the planning process of socio-economic development of the SCs and to evaluate the progress of their development under the Union and any State;
4. To present to the President, annually and at such other times as the Commission may deem fit, reports upon the working of those safeguards;
5. To make in such reports recommendations as to the measures that should be taken by the Union or any State for the effective implementation of those safeguards and other measures for the protection, welfare and socio-economic development of the SCs; and
6. To discharge such other functions in relation to the protection, welfare and development and advancement of the Scheduled Castes as the President may, subject to the provisions of any law made by Parliament, by rule specify.
7. To make in such reports recommendations as to the measures that should be taken by the Union or any State for the effective implementation of those safeguards and other measures for the protection, welfare and socio-economic development of the SCs; and
8. Functions in relation to the protection, welfare and development and advancement of the SCs as the President may, subject to the provisions of any law made by Parliament, by rule specify.

The President shall cause all such reports to be laid before each House of Parliament along with a memorandum explaining the action taken or proposed to be taken on the recommendations relating to and the reasons for the non-acceptance, if any, of any of such recommendations.

**Powers:** The Commission shall, while investigating any matter referred to in sub-clause (a) or inquiring into any complaint referred to in sub-clause (b) of clause (5), have all the powers of a Civil Court trying a suit and in particular in respect of the following matters, such as:

1. summoning and enforcing the attendance of any person from any part of India and examining him on oath;
2. requiring the discovery and production of any documents;
3. receiving evidence on affidavits;
4. requisitioning any public record or copy thereof from any court or office;
5. issuing commissions for the examination of witnesses and documents;
6. any other matter which the President may, by rule, determine.

The Union and every State Government shall consult the Commission on all major policy matters affecting Scheduled Castes.

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