National Commission for Minorities (NCM)

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Why in News?

Over a month after the Delhi High Court sought the Centre's response on delayed appointments in the National Commission for Minorities, Union Ministry for Minority Affairs remained non-committal.

- It is established to ***safeguard and protect the interests of the country's minority communities.***
- **Established in –**1978 under a Ministry of Home Affairs resolution.
- **Headquarters** - New Delhi.
- **Purpose –** To address feelings of inequality and discrimination among minorities despite constitutional safeguards.
- **Statutory Status –** By enacting the ***National Commission for Minorities Act, 1992***, the commission became a ***statutory body***.
- In 1988, its jurisdiction was narrowed; ***linguistic minorities excluded*** by resolution of Ministry of Welfare.
- **Constitutional Provisions –** To safeguard the interests of minorities are mandated under
  - Preamble,
  - Fundamental Rights (Article 14, 15, 16, 25–30),
  - DPSP (Article 38, 46),
  - Fundamental duties, and
  - Other articles - Article 347, 350A, 350B.
- **Notified Minority Communities –**



- **Composition –** As per NCM Act, 1992, a ***total of 7 members*** - Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, 5 Members were nominated by the Central Government.
  - All the members are drawn from diverse minority communities.
- **Tenure –** Each member serves ***3 years*** term.
- **Removal –** The Chairperson and members are removed by the Central Government if they -
  - Are adjudged insolvent,
  - Take up paid employment outside their duties,
  - Refuse or become incapable of acting,
  - Are declared of unsound mind by a court,
  - Abuse their office, or
  - Are convicted of an offence involving moral turpitude.
- **Powers –** It has ***quasi-judicial power*** and enjoys powers equivalent to a ***civil court*** under the Code of Civil Procedure.
- **Functions –** It acts as an advisor, and researcher by evaluating progress, monitoring safeguards, addressing complaints, suggesting policies, and reporting to the government to protect minority rights.
- **Complaints handled –** Common complaints includes police atrocities, service matters, minority educational institutions and encroachments on religious properties.

References

1. The Hindu | Delay in appointments to NCM
2. NCM | National Commission for Minorities

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