

National Commission for Minorities (NCM)
(11 September, 2021)

Background

- Ministry of Home Affairs established the National Minorities Commission of India in a resolution on January 12, 1978. Once the National Commission for Minorities Act was enacted in 1992, the Minorities Commission became a statutory body and was renamed as **National Commission for Minorities**.
- [Click here to read everything related to Minorities in India.](#)

ASPIRE IAS

- The Union Government set up the National Commission for Minorities (NCM) under the National Commission for Minorities Act, 1992.
- Union Government constituted National Commission for Minorities, New Delhi and State Government constituted State Minorities Commissions in their respective State Capitals.
- These organisations are set-up to safeguard and protect the interests of minorities as provided in the Constitution of India and laws enacted by the

Parliament and the State Legislatures.

Composition of National Minorities Commission:

The Act states that the Commission (NCM) shall consist of

- A Chairperson.
- a Vice-Chairperson
- and five Members.
- The five Members including the Chairperson shall be from amongst persons of eminence, ability and integrity; provided that five members including the Chairperson shall be from amongst the minority communities.

Definition of Minority

- The Constitution of India does not define minorities.
- The **National Commission for Minorities Act, 1992** defines a minority as "a community notified as such by the Central government."
- The NCM adheres to the United Nations Declaration of 18 December 1992 which states that "States shall protect the existence of the National or Ethnic, Cultural, Religious and Linguistic identity of minorities within their respective territories and encourage conditions for the promotion of that identity."

How many minorities are there in India?

- Initially five religious communities, **Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists and Zoroastrians (Parsis)** were notified as minority communities by the Union Government.
- Further vide notification dated 27th January 2014, **Jains** were also notified as another minority community.

Objectives of National Commission for Minorities

- Evaluate the progress of the development of Minorities under the Union and States.
- Monitor the working of the safeguards provided in the Constitution and in laws enacted by Parliament and the State Legislatures.
- Make recommendations for the effective implementation of safeguards for the protection of the interests of Minorities by the Central Government or the State Governments.
- Look into specific complaints regarding deprivation of rights and safeguards of the Minorities and take up such matters with the appropriate authorities.
- Cause studies to be undertaken into problems arising out of any discrimination against Minorities and recommend measures for their removal.
- Conduct studies, research and analysis on the issues relating to socio-economic and educational development of Minorities.
- Suggest appropriate measures in respect of any Minority to be undertaken by

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the Central Government or the State Governments.

- Make periodical or special reports to the Central Government on any matter pertaining to Minorities and in particular the difficulties confronted by them.
- Any other matter which may be referred to it by the Central Government.

Powers of National Commission for Minorities

- Summoning and enforcing the attendance of any person from any part of India and examining him on oath.
- Requiring the discovery and production of any document.
- Receiving evidence on affidavit.
- Requisitioning any public record or copy thereof from any court or office.
- Issuing commissions for the examination of witnesses and documents.

Why in news? Chairman of National Commission for Minorities (NCM)

- **Sardar Iqbal Singh Lalpura** took charge as the Chairman, National Commission for Minorities in the presence of Union Minister for Minority Affairs Shri Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi in New Delhi.
- He said that the Government's efforts for empowerment of all sections have shown results on ground.
- Shri Naqvi said that the Government has ensured justice to the victims of 1984 riots by constituting an SIT.
- The Minister stated that the long-pending demand of Kartarpur Corridor has been fulfilled and the Government has also decided to start the "Gurudwara Circuit Train" that will take passengers on a pilgrimage across the country.
- Mr Lalpura said that the Prime Minister has given him an opportunity to serve the people and he would try his best to serve the society.