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NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR BACKWARD CLASSES (NCBC)

This article covers "Daily Current Affairs" and the topic details "National Commission for Backward Classes (NCBC)". The topic "National Commission for Backward Classes (NCBC)" has relevance in the Social Justice section of the UPSC CSE exam.

Relevance:

For Prelims:

Facts about NCBC?

For Mains:

GS 2: Social Justice

Powers and Functions of NCBC?

Procedure for Adding Castes to OBC List?

Limitations of NCBC?

Measures to Make NCBC more potent?

Why in the news

Approximately 80 more castes in six States are now likely to be added to the Central List of Other Backward Classes (OBCs) in the coming months, with the National Commission for Backward Classes (NCBC) already processing the approval for most of them, says the panel chairperson Hansraj Gangaram Ahir.

Facts about NCBC?

- **Establishment:** The NCBC was established on 14th August 1993 under the National Commission for Backward Classes Act, 1993. The Constitution (102nd Amendment) Act, 2018 granted constitutional status to the National Commission for Backward Castes
- **Constitutional Status:** The NCBC is a constitutional body and operates under the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of India.
- **Composition:** The commission consists of a chairperson, a vice-chairperson, and three other members. The chairperson and members are appointed by the President of India.

Powers and Functions of NCBC?

- **Identifying socially and educationally backward classes:** The commission identifies and classifies communities or castes as socially and educationally backward classes based on various factors such as social, economic, and educational indicators.

- **Inquiry and investigation:** The NCBC conducts inquiries and investigations into specific complaints regarding the non-implementation or violation of reservation policies, discrimination, and deprivation of rights and privileges of backward classes.
- **Recommending inclusion or exclusion:** The commission recommends to the central government the inclusion or exclusion of communities in the list of socially and educationally backward classes.
- **Safeguarding the rights of backward classes:** NCBC safeguards the rights and interests of backward classes and works towards eliminating discrimination and ensuring their equitable representation in various sectors, including education and employment.
- **Advise on policy matters:** The commission advises the central government on policy matters related to the welfare and development of backward classes, including the formulation and implementation of reservation policies and other affirmative actions.
- **Power of Civil Court:** The NCBC has the powers of a civil court while investigating and inquiring into complaints. It can summon witnesses, issue summonses, receive evidence, and enforce attendance.
- **Annual Reports:** The commission submits annual reports to the President and the Parliament on the implementation of reservation policies, the welfare of backward classes, and the progress made in achieving social justice.
- **Limited Jurisdiction:** It's important to note that the NCBC's jurisdiction is limited to matters related to backward classes. It does not cover issues related to Scheduled Castes (SCs), Scheduled Tribes (STs), or other minority communities.

Procedure for Adding Castes to OBC List?

- **Demand for Inclusion:** The first step is for a community or caste to make a formal demand for inclusion in the OBC list.
- **State Government Recommendation:** The demand for inclusion is initially evaluated by the concerned state government.
- **State Backward Classes Commission:** The state government forwards the recommendation to the State Backward Classes Commission or a similar authority.
- **NCBC Evaluation:** The NCBC examines the report submitted by the State Backward Classes Commission and conducts its own investigation. It may visit the concerned community, conduct surveys, gather data, and analyze various socio-economic indicators to assess the backwardness of the community.
- **Public Notice and Feedback:** After the NCBC's evaluation, a public notice is issued to seek opinions and objections from the general public, other castes, and stakeholders.
- **NCBC Recommendation to Central Government:** Based on the evaluation, public feedback, and its own findings, the NCBC formulates a recommendation on whether the community should be included in the OBC list. The recommendation is then submitted to the central government.
- **Central Government Decision:** The central government reviews the recommendation made by the NCBC and takes a final decision on the inclusion of the caste in the OBC list. The government can accept or reject the recommendation, and its decision is communicated to the concerned state government.
- **Amendment of OBC List:** If the central government approves the inclusion of a caste in the OBC list, it amends the existing list and includes the newly added caste. The caste is then eligible for availing the benefits and reservations available to OBC communities.

Limitations of NCBC?

- **Advisory Nature:** The recommendations and suggestions made by the NCBC are advisory in nature. The government is not bound to implement them, and their implementation depends on the discretion of the authorities.
- **Lack of Binding Power:** The NCBC does not have the power to enforce its decisions or recommendations. It can investigate complaints and make recommendations, but it does not possess the authority to take legal action or ensure the implementation of its recommendations.
- **Limited Coverage:** The NCBC's jurisdiction is limited to matters related to backward classes. It does not have the mandate to address issues concerning Scheduled Castes (SCs), Scheduled Tribes (STs), or other minority communities. These groups have separate commissions to address their specific concerns.
- **Dependence on Government Support:** The functioning of the NCBC is dependent on the support and cooperation of the government. Its effectiveness and impact can be influenced by the government's willingness to implement its recommendations and allocate resources accordingly.
- **Inadequate Representation:** The representation of backward classes within the commission itself has been a subject of debate. Critics argue that there may be a lack of diverse representation, which could impact the commission's understanding and assessment of the issues faced by various backward communities.
- **Challenges in Identification:** Determining the backwardness of communities can be a complex and contentious process. There can be challenges in accurately identifying and classifying socially and educationally backward classes, leading to disagreements and controversies.
- **Delayed Resolutions:** The resolution of complaints and grievances can often be time-consuming, leading to delays in justice and redressal. This can be frustrating for individuals and communities seeking prompt action on their concerns.

Source:

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/around-80-more-communities-likely-to-be-added-to-central-obc-list/article66972886.ece>

Q.1 Which of the following statements regarding the National Commission for Backward Classes (NCBC) is/are correct?

1. The NCBC is a constitutional body established under the National Commission for Backward Classes Act, 1993.
2. The NCBC has the authority to enforce its recommendations and decisions.
3. The NCBC is responsible for identifying and classifying socially and educationally backward classes.
4. The NCBC has jurisdiction over matters related to Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs) in addition to backward classes.

Select the correct option using the codes given below:

- (a) 1 and 3 only
- (b) 2 and 4 only
- (c) 1, 3, and 4 only
- (d) 1, 2, 3, and 4

Answer: (a)

Q.2 The National Commission for Backward Classes (NCBC) was given constitutional status by which of the following constitutional amendments?

- (a) 100th Constitutional Amendment
- (b) 101st Constitutional Amendment
- (c) 102nd Constitutional Amendment
- (d) 103rd Constitutional Amendment

Answer: (c)

Q.3 Discuss the role and significance of the National Commission for Backward Classes (NCBC) in addressing the issues of socially and educationally backward classes in India. Also, critically analyze the effectiveness of the NCBC in promoting social justice and empowerment of backward classes.

Rishabh

