National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST)

Syllabus subtopic: Appointment to various Constitutional Posts, Powers, Functions and Responsibilities of various Constitutional Bodies.

Prelims and Mains focus: about NCST: composition and functions

Context: The Union Minister for Tribal Affairs inaugurated the function to celebrate 16th Foundation Day of National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST) organised by National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST) in Delhi.

About NCST

It was set up with effect from 19th February, 2004 by amending Article 338 and by inserting a new article 338A in the Constitution through the Constitution (89th Amendment Act, 2003) which inter-alia enjoins upon the Commission to oversee the implementation of various safeguards provided to Scheduled Tribes under the Constitution or under any other law for time being in force or under any other order to the Govt. and to evaluate the working of such safeguards.

Composition: The Commission comprise a Chairperson, a Vice Chairperson and three full time members (including one female member).

- The term of office Chairperson, Vice Chairperson and Members of NCST is three years from the date of assumption of charge.

- The Chairperson has been given the rank of Union Cabinet Ministries, the Vice Chairperson have the rank of a Minister of State and other Members have the rank of a Secretary to the Government of India.
Functions

Constitution of India under Clause (5) of Article 338A has assigned the following duties and functions to the Commission:

1. To investigate and monitor all matters relating to the safeguards provided for the Schedule Tribes under the 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 Scheduled Tribes.

3. To participate and advice in the planning process of socio-economic development of the Scheduled Tribes 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, report 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 effective implementation of those safeguards and other measures for the protection, welfare and socio-economic development of the Scheduled Tribes.

6. To discharge such other function in relation to the protection, welfare and development and advancement of the Scheduled Tribes as the President may subject to the provisions of any law made by Parliament by rule specify.