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## National Human Rights Commission

### Severe Criticisms

- The Human Rights Commission is duty-bound to perform various functions, such as protecting and promoting human rights, investigating human rights violations, monitoring government and public administration, ensuring relief and justice for victims, and working in collaboration with national, state, and international human rights organizations for the advancement of human rights.
- However, in recent years, severe criticisms have been raised regarding its independence, diversity, and effectiveness.
- The Sub-Committee on Accreditation (SCA) of the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI) recommended downgrading the status of the Indian Commission from 'A' to 'B' last April.
- The Human Rights Commission's attempt to appeal this decision was unsuccessful, and the recommendation for the downgrade was confirmed on December 4, 2025.
- This will come into effect from April 2026.

### Background of the Downgrade

- The 'Paris Principles' define the international criteria that National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs) must follow in their work of protecting human rights.

- The Sub-Committee on Accreditation of the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions evaluates the extent to which a country's human rights commission adheres to these principles.

### Shortcomings

- The downgrade of the Commission's accreditation is primarily attributed to long-standing deficiencies in three key areas: **Independence, Structure, and Diversity**.
- The independence of the Commission is its primary strength. However, the reports of the SCA (Sub-Committee on Accreditation) express concern regarding the Commission's actual and perceived independence.

#### 1. Independence and Structure:

- The law, which mandates that high-ranking positions such as the Secretary-General and Director of Investigation must be filled only by civil servants and police officers currently serving in the central government, calls the Commission's independence into question.
- The dominance of such personnel reduces the ability of the Commission to function freely without government interference.
- **Lack of diversity in appointments:** The mandatory rule that the Chairperson must be a former Chief Justice or a former judge of the Supreme Court severely limits the number of potential candidates.
- Because most members are appointed from the judiciary, there is a lack of diversity in the Commission's decision-making body.

- The representation of women among the total staff of the Commission is insufficient.
- There is no transparent selection process.

## 2. Effectiveness and Accountability:

- The procedures and mechanisms for handling complaints within the Commission do not provide immediate relief, leading to delays.
- In situations where the police are accused of human rights violations, involving police officers from the same department in the investigation affects the credibility of the Commission.

## 3. Relationship with Civil Society:

- The Commission lacks an effective and constructive partnership with civil society organizations that work for human rights
- Although the Commission has advisory committees, maintaining contact only with a few organizations that do not criticize the Commission's functions is not conducive to optimal performance.

## Consequences

- If the accreditation status of the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) is downgraded from 'A' to 'B', it will have significant repercussions on the international stage.

- The Commission will lose its authority and the opportunity to function and participate independently in UN human rights meetings.

## The Path Forward

- The downgrade of the National Human Rights Commission reflects the depth and intensity of the criticisms leveled against it.
- The Commission still has a long way to go in areas such as maintaining independence in appointments, ensuring diversity, handling complaints effectively, and boldly speaking out against systemic violations
- This downgrade should be viewed as a "warning bell."
- It provides an opportunity to ensure full compliance with the Paris Principles and to protect human rights and ensure justice for all people in India.
- I have now completed the translation of the entire passage you provided.
- Is there any specific part of this issue, such as the Paris Principles themselves or the specific reforms needed, that you would like to explore further?



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