Society & Social Justice · GS - II

Is the National Commission for Women able to strategize and tackle the problems that women face at both public and private spheres? Give reasons in support of your answer.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
2017	GS - II	Society & Social Justice

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
15	~250 words

Answer Hint

Gender justice; statutory mandate; complaints redressal; policy recommendations; domestic violence; institutional limitations

Model Answer

Introduction

The National Commission for Women (NCW), established under the National Commission for Women Act, 1990, is a statutory body mandated to protect women's constitutional and legal rights and recommend measures for gender justice.

Role in Addressing Women's Problems

- **Legal safeguards:** Reviews constitutional and legal provisions affecting women and recommends amendments.
- **Complaints redressal:** Receives complaints involving harassment, violence, discrimination and denial of rights.
- **Investigations:** Can investigate specific matters and summon individuals or require documents in exercising its civil-court-like powers.
- **Policy advocacy:** Advises governments on women's welfare, safety and empowerment.

- **Awareness and research:** Conducts consultations, studies and awareness programmes concerning gender-related issues.
- **Public and private spheres:** Addresses workplace harassment, trafficking, domestic violence, family disputes and discriminatory practices.

Limitations

- The NCW's recommendations are generally not binding.
- It lacks the independent prosecutorial and enforcement powers necessary to resolve every complaint directly.
- Limited resources and delays can constrain its reach.
- Patriarchal attitudes, under-reporting and inadequate support services complicate action against private-sphere violence.
- Coordination with police, courts and State Women's Commissions is sometimes inadequate.

Way Forward

Strengthen investigative capacity, ensure timely follow-up, improve coordination with law-enforcement agencies, expand regional outreach and provide accessible support services for survivors.

Conclusion

The NCW plays an important advisory and grievance-redressal role, but its effectiveness depends on stronger institutional capacity, coordinated enforcement and sustained social change.

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