



International Human Rights Day

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Why in News

The International Human Rights Day is **observed every year on 10th December**. The day marks the adoption of the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)** by the **United Nations General Assembly (UNGA)** in **1948**.

- The **theme** for **2019** is **“Youth Standing up for Human Rights”**.
The campaign, **#StandUp4HumanRights** has also been launched by the **Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)**, to encourage, galvanise, and showcase how **youth** all over the world stand up for rights.
- Human rights are at the heart of the **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**, as in the absence of human dignity, sustainable development cannot be achieved.
Human Rights are driven by progress on all SDGs, and the SDGs are driven by advancements on human rights.

- India has enacted the Protection of Human Rights Act, 1993 to ensure the protection of human rights. Recently, **several amendments were made to the Protection of Human Rights Act, 1993 through Protection of Human Rights (Amendment) Bill, 2019**. These are:
 - **Eligibility:** Not only a person who has been Chief Justice of India but also a person who has been a **judge of the Supreme Court is also made eligible to be appointed** as Chairperson of the Commission in addition to the person who has been the Chief Justice of India.
 - **Strength:** It increases the members of the Commission from **two to three of which, one shall be a woman**.
 - **Members of National Commission:** Apart from Chairperson of **four National Commissions (Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, Women and Minorities)**, it also intends **to include** Chairperson of the National Commission for Backward Classes, Chairperson of the National Commission for the Protection of Child Rights and the Chief Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities as deemed members of the Commission.
 - **Tenure:** The amendment **reduces the term** of the Chairperson and Members of the Commission and the State Commissions **from five to three years and shall be eligible for re-appointment**.

Universal Declaration of Human Rights

- Universal Declaration of Human Rights was proclaimed under UNGA resolution 217 A in Paris. It set out, for the first time, fundamental human rights to be universally protected.
- It states that 'All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.'
- It entitles everyone to all the rights and freedoms and prohibits slavery and slave trade in all forms.
- Other rights recognized under the declaration are right to a nationality, right against arbitrary arrest, detention or exile, the right to seek asylum from prosecution, the right to freedom of movement and residence, etc.
- The Universal Declaration is **not a treaty**, so it does not directly create legal obligations for countries. However, it is an expression of the fundamental values which are shared by all members of the International community.
- The Universal Declaration of Human Rights holds the **Guinness World Record** as the **most translated document**.

Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)

- The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (**UN Human Rights**) is the leading **UN entity** on human rights.
- It was established in **1993** and is a **part of the United Nations Secretariat**.
- OHCHR is **headquartered** in **Geneva**.
- UN Human Rights plays a crucial role in safeguarding the integrity of the **three interconnected pillars of the United Nations** – peace and security, human rights and development.
- It also provides assistance in the form of technical expertise and capacity development in order to support the implementation of international human rights standards on the ground.

Source: UN