

Protection of Human Rights (Amendment) Bill, 2018

Why in news?

\n\n

The Protection of Human Rights (Amendment) Bill, 2018 was recently introduced in the Lok Sabha.

\n\n

What are the key features?

\n\n

\n

- The Bill amends the Protection of Human Rights Act, 1993.

\n

- The Act provides for a National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), State Human Rights Commissions (SHRC), as well as Human Rights Courts.

\n

- **Composition** - Now, the chairperson of NHRC is to be a person who has been a Chief Justice of the Supreme Court.

\n

- The Bill provides for the chairperson to be a person who has been Chief Justice of India, or a Judge of the Supreme Court.

\n

- Similarly, for SHRC, a person who has been Chief Justice or Judge of a High Court can be the chairperson.

\n

- The Act provides for two persons having knowledge of human rights to be appointed as members of the NHRC.

\n

- The Bill amends this to allow three members to be appointed, of which at least one will be a woman.

\n

- Also, the chairpersons of various commissions such as the National Commissions for Scheduled Castes, for Scheduled Tribes, and for Women are members of the NHRC.

\n

- The Bill widens this to National Commissions for Backward Classes, for Protection of Child Rights, and the Chief Commissioner for Persons with

Disabilities.

\n

- **Term of office** - Now, the chairperson and members of the NHRC and SHRC are to hold office for 5 years or till the age of 70 years, whichever is earlier.

\n

- The Bill reduces this to 3 years or till the age of 70 years, whichever is earlier.

\n

- The Bill also allows for the reappointment of chairpersons of the NHRC and SHRCs.

\n

- **Powers** - Now, the Secretary-General of the NHRC and a Secretary of a SHRC exercise powers as may be delegated to them.

\n

- The Bill amends this and allows the Secretary-General and Secretary to exercise all administrative and financial powers.

\n

- This is, however, except the judicial functions, and also subject to the respective chairperson's control.

\n

- **Union Territories** - The Bill provides for the central government to confer on a SHRC the human rights functions being discharged by Union Territories.

\n

- Functions relating to human rights in the case of Delhi will be dealt by the NHRC.

\n

\n\n

\n\n

Source: PRS India

\n