

**24-03-2022****National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST)****Why in Newspapers?**

A parliamentary committee has said in a recent report that the National Commission for Scheduled Tribes has not been functioning for the last four years and has not submitted a single report to the Parliament.

Quick Issue ?

- A study by the commission of the impact of the Indira Sagar Polavaram project in Andhra Pradesh on the tribal population in pending reports.
- A special report on rehabilitation and resettlement of tribals displaced due to Rourkela Steel Plant in pending report.

Historical Background?

- NCST was established by amending Article 338 and inserting a new Article 338A in the Constitution through the Constitution (89th Amendment) Act, 2003.
- By this amendment, the erstwhile National Commission for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes was replaced by two separate commissions- (i) National Commission for Scheduled Castes (NCSC), and (ii) National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST).
- Composition - The term of office of the President, Vice-Chairman and each member is three years from the date of assuming office.
- The Chairman has been given the status of a Union Cabinet Minister and the Vice-Chairman as a Minister of State and other members as Secretaries to the Government of India.
- He is appointed by the President by warrant under his signature and seal.
- At least one member must be a woman.
- The President, Vice-Chairman and other members hold office for a term of 3 years.
- Members are not eligible for appointment for more than two terms.
- Powers - NCST is empowered to investigate and monitor matters relating to safeguards provided for STs under the Constitution or under other laws or Govt. The commission is also empowered to inquire into specific complaints relating to the rights and safeguards of STs and to participate in the planning process relating to the socio-economic development of STs and to advise and evaluate the progress of their development under the Union and the States.
- Report - The Commission annually submits its report to the President on the working of safeguards and measures necessary for the effective implementation of programs/schemes relating to the welfare and socio-economic development of the Scheduled Tribes.



Likely question asked in preliminary exam

Question: Consider the following statements:

1. NCST was established by amending Article 338 and inserting a new Article 338A in the Constitution through the Constitution (89th Amendment) Act, 2003.
2. By this amendment, the erstwhile National Commission for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes was replaced by two separate commissions- (i) National Commission for Scheduled Castes (NCSC), and (ii) National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST).
3. Composition - The term of office of the President, Vice-Chairman and each member is three years from the date of assumption of office.

Which of the above statement(s) is true -?

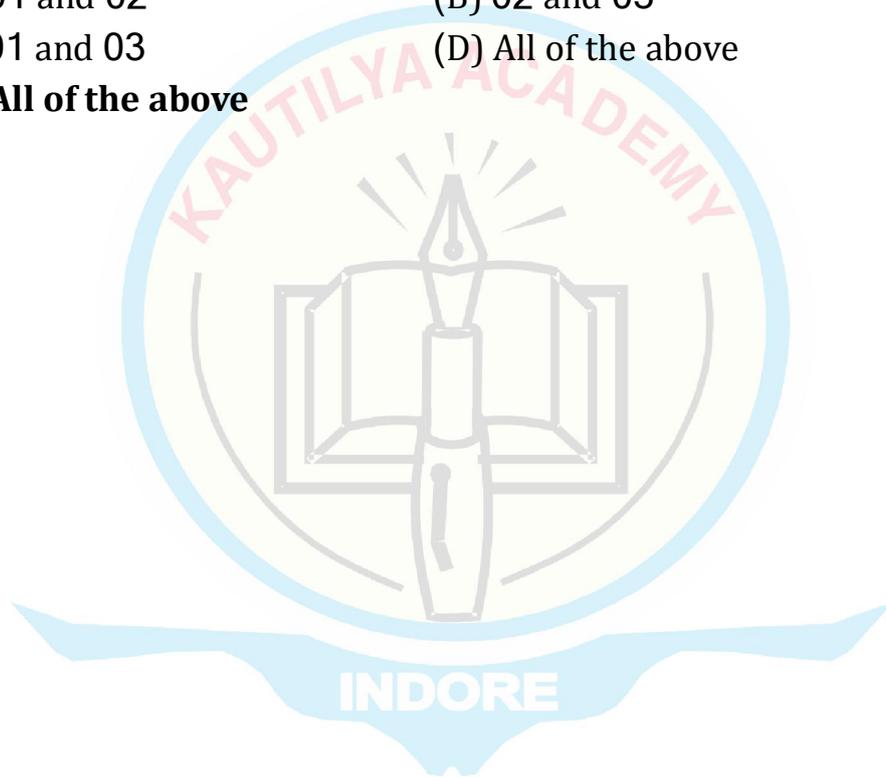
(A) 01 and 02

(B) 02 and 03

(C) 01 and 03

(D) All of the above

Answer - (D) All of the above





Common University Entrance Test (CUET)

Why in Newspapers?

From the academic session 2022-23, admission to undergraduate programs in all 45 central universities of the country will be through a common entrance test.

Quick Issue?

- Enrolment has been increasing over the years. At the undergraduate level, it has increased from 2.74 crore in 2015-16 to 3.06 crore in 2019-20.
- According to the All India Survey of Higher Education (AISHE) 2019-20, out of 3.85 crore students enrolled in all levels of higher education in India, the number of Class 12 candidates is more than 1 crore each year.

Historical Background?

- There are 7.2 lakh students studying in 48 central universities in 2019-20, of which 5.4 lakh were pursuing undergraduate programmes.
- Equity in Central Universities -
 - 13.73 percent SC
 - 4.5 percent for ST
 - 17.9 percent for OBC
 - 8.41 percent were Muslim
- Out of 19,366 faculty positions sanctioned in central universities, 6,558 are vacant.
- The National Testing Agency (NTA), which conducts entrance exams like JEE (Main) and UGC-NET, will also conduct CUET for all central universities in the first week of July.
- It is a computer based test of three and a half hours which will be conducted in two shifts and can be taken in 13 languages.
- There will be multiple choice questions based on the content of NCERT textbooks only.
- There will be essentially three parts in CUET -
 - The first part tests the language which will include questions on reading comprehension, vocabulary.
 - The second part of CUET focuses on testing a candidate's domain-specific knowledge (of the 27 domains on offer, the student chooses at least one and a maximum of six)
 - The third part will be a general test with questions on General Knowledge, Current Affairs, General Mental Ability, Numerical Ability, Quantitative Reasoning. A candidate shall appear only if so desired by the University of his/her choice.
- Even state, private and deemed-to-be universities are free to adopt CUET-.
- For now, admission to postgraduate courses under any common admission is not mandatory.



- But unlike JEE (Main), there will be no general counselling for admission to central universities on the basis of CUET scores. Each university is free to define its own admission process on the basis of merit list prepared by NTA.
- However, the UGC chairman did not rule out joint consultations in future.

Likely question asked in preliminary exam

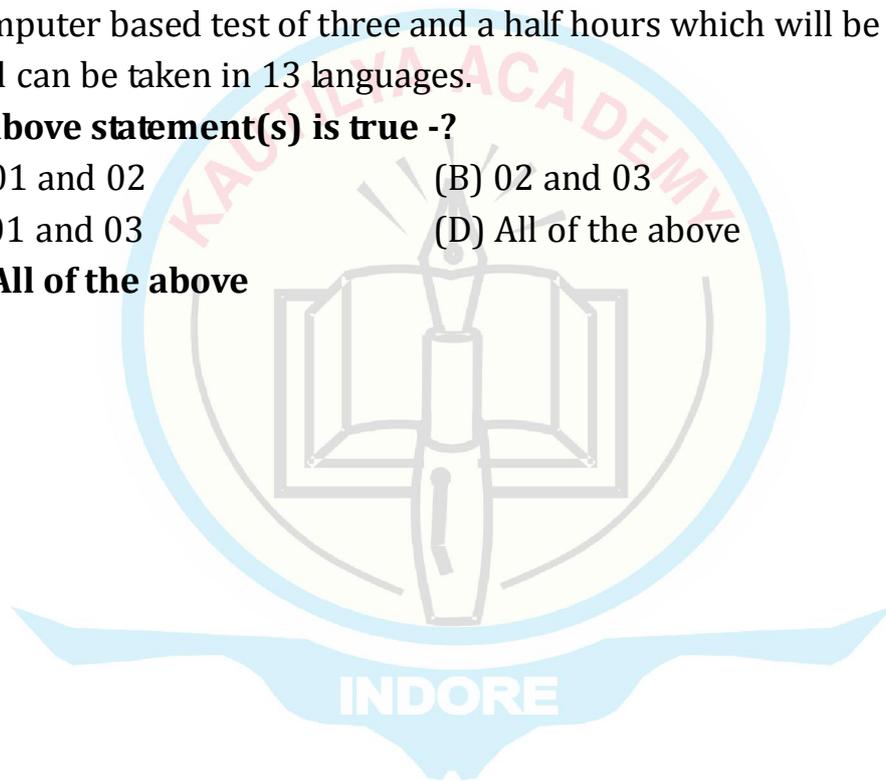
Question: Consider the following statements:

1. According to the All India Survey of Higher Education (AISHE) 2019-20, out of 3.85 crore students enrolled in all levels of higher education in India, the number of Class 12 candidates is more than 1 crore each year.
2. The National Testing Agency (NTA), which conducts entrance exams like JEE (Main) and UGC-NET, will also conduct CUET for all central universities in the first week of July.
3. It is a computer based test of three and a half hours which will be conducted in two shifts and can be taken in 13 languages.

Which of the above statement(s) is true -?

- (A) 01 and 02 (B) 02 and 03
(C) 01 and 03 (D) All of the above

Answer - (D) All of the above





Common University Entrance Test (CUET)

- Replacing more than one entrance examination to reduce the burden on the candidates of higher education.
- Students can choose to write CUET in any of the 13 languages, which flattens the field significantly.
- The sky-high cut-off marks will now become history as was the case with some reputed universities like Delhi University.
- A student's board scores will have no role in determining his/her admission to a college or a programme. It will be based on his CUET score only. This explains the difference in evaluation practices across different boards.

Other Key Facts?

CUCET -

- CUET is nothing new. It was launched under the UPA-II government in 2010 as the Central Universities Common Entrance Test (CUCET).
- However, it had failed to gather steam as only 14 central universities had adopted it by 2021.
- CUET is a new variant of CUCET and now it is mandatory for all 45 central universities to adopt it.
- CUCET comes after the announcement of the new National Education Policy (NEP), which advocates the need for an entrance test for university admissions.

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