



**KAMARAJ IAS ACADEMY**  
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# 23rd Law Commission

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## Why in news?

**President Droupadi Murmu** has approved the **formation of the 23rd Law Commission of India** for a **three-year term**, effective from 1 September 2024 to 31 August 2027.

- The **22nd Law Commission's term** ended on 31 August 2024.
- It had been functioning without a chairperson for several months, delaying critical reports on issues such as the **Uniform Civil Code and simultaneous elections**.

The previous chairperson: **Justice Ritu Raj Awasthi**.

- He resigned in March 2024 after a 17-month tenure

## Law Commission:

- The Law Commission is an **non-statutory body constituted by the GoI**, every **three years**.
- Its major function is to **work for legal reform** and to act as an **advisory body** to the Ministry of Law and Justice.
- The **first Law Commission** was established during the British era in **1834** by the **Charter Act of 1833** and was presided over by **Lord Macaulay**.
- It recommended **codification of the Penal Code** and the **Criminal Procedure Code**.
- The **second, third and fourth Law Commissions** were constituted in **1853, 1861 and 1879** respectively
- **The Indian Code of Civil Procedure, the Indian Contract Act, the Indian Evidence Act, the Transfer of Property Act**, etc. are products of **the first four Law Commissions**.
- However, the first Law Commission of Independent India was constituted in **1955** with **M. C. Setalvad**, as its Chairman.
- It has so far submitted **277 reports**.

A law commission is **created when the Union government passes a resolution for the formation a new commission after the expiry of the last one**.

- After the resolution is passed, and the **President gives assent to it**, the government has the liberty to choose the chairperson for the new commission.

## Composition

- **A full-time Chairperson** (usually a **retired SUPREME COURT judge or Chief Justice of a HIGH COURT**);
- **Four full-time Members** (including Member- Secretary)
- **Secretary, Department of Legal Affairs**, as **ex-officio Member**;
- **Secretary, Legislative Department** as **ex-officio Member**; and

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- *Not more than five part-time Members.*

### Terms of Reference for the 23rd Law Commission

**Review and Repeal of Obsolete Laws:** Identify laws for repeal, develop a Standard Operating Procedure (SoP) for periodic reviews, and suggest necessary amendments.

**Law and Poverty:** Examine laws affecting the poor and conduct audits of socio-economic legislation.

**Judicial Administration:** Address delays, reduce costs, and simplify court processes to enhance case disposal efficiency.

**Directive Principles and Constitutional Objectives:** Review laws in light of Directive Principles and suggest improvements to achieve constitutional objectives.

**Gender Equality:** Review existing laws and suggest amendments to promote gender equality.

**Revision of Central Acts:** Revise significant Central Acts to address anomalies and ambiguities.

**Government References:** Consider and convey views on law and judicial administration topics referred by the Government.

**International Research Assistance:** Provide research assistance to foreign countries as referred by the Government.

**Globalization Impact:** Examine the impact of globalization on food security and unemployment, and recommend measures to protect marginalized interests.