

Human Rights Day: Notes for IAS Exam

The International Human Rights Day on 10th December annually marks the occasion of the signing of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948. . In this article, we will read about the background of Human Rights Day, and some of the notable actions taken in the context of the Civil Services Exam.

Background of Human Rights Day

It was on 10th December 1948, the United Nations General Assembly ratified and adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Human rights day was officially started on the 4th December in the 1950 meeting of the United Nations General Assembly. In South Africa, the Human Rights Day is celebrated on 21 March, in remembrance of the Sharpeville massacre which occurred as a result of protests against the Apartheid regime.

According to United Nations, Human rights are inalienable for all human beings, whatever our place of residence, sex, ethnic origin, nationality, colour, language, religion, or any other status. These rights are all interrelated, interdependent and indivisible.

Human Rights Day is an important day for the Government of India as India is one of the founding members of the UN as well as an original signatory of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

India also abides by the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals as benchmarks for human development. Human Rights are the core of the Sustainable Development goals as in the absence of human rights and dignity, no sustainable development is possible. Sustainable development and human rights are interdependent as human rights are dependent on progress and progress in turn depends on advancement in human rights. In this context India strives to be a role model by guaranteeing human rights to all.

Notable events of Human Rights Day

The below table highlights some of the notable actions that have taken place during Human Rights Day

Notable Action Taken During Human Rights Day	
Year	Actions

2004	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International PEN announced the launch of a new campaign to secure the release from prison of "cyber-dissidents" in PR China, Maldives and Vietnam. • The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, the UN's Special Representative for Human Rights Defenders and the African Union's Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights issued a joint communiqué in which they commended the European Union for its recent adoption of a set of guidelines for protecting human rights defenders and urged the world's other regions to take similar steps in that direction.
2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Several people were detained in China after around 300 people signed an online petition titled Charter 08 for the government to improve human rights in the country. In Beijing, a small protest was broken up that took place outside the foreign ministry. • UNYA Australia celebrated Human Rights Day with the write 4 rights campaign, asking young people to contribute a message about human rights by phone or on a website for display in Australian State capital cities.
2011	Following a year of protest in many countries, from Tunisia to Cairo to the Occupy movement, the theme of 2011 recognized the significance of social media and technology in assisting human rights defenders in new ways
2015	The theme for 2015 is "Our Rights, Our Freedoms, Always."
2016	The theme for 2016 is "Stand up for someone's rights today!"
2017	The theme for 2017 is "Let's stand up for equality, justice and human dignity"
2018	The theme for 2018 is "stand up for the human rights"
2019	The Civil Human Rights Front organized a rally in Hong Kong on Sunday, December 8 to mark Human Rights Day two days away. The organizer estimated about 800,000 people took part, while the police had an estimate of 183,000 people. The march started from Victoria Park in Causeway Bay and was the biggest of its kind since the march in mid-August as part of the 2019 Hong Kong protests