

National Security Council of India [UPSC Notes]

The Indian National Security Council (NSC) is a three-tiered organization that manages strategic political, economic, energy, and security problems. It works within the Prime Minister of India's executive office, coordinating between the executive arm of the government and the intelligence services and advising the leadership on intelligence and security problems. The Strategic Policy Group, the National Security Advisory Board, and a Joint Intelligence Committee secretariat make up the National Security Council. The NSC is presided over by the National Security Advisor, who is also the prime minister's top advisor. Shivshankar Menon is the current National Security Advisor.

The Indian National Security Council, unlike its American equivalent, keeps its inner workings hidden from the general public. This has been the case since its inception in 1998, when it was given a general framework of the organisation.

National Security Council of India: History

In 1988, as India's nuclear and missile programmes advanced, discussions on forming a National Security Council began in earnest. The armed forces did not have any long-term budget plans at the time, thus their structures were discarded for the defence budget. The need for a national security planning organisation was acknowledged by military officials and the Minister of Defense, K.C Pant. The structure of such a council was outlined in a proposal. The army chief of staff, V.N. Sharma, vigorously protested and contested this.

During nuclear talks with Pakistan in 1990, another suggestion for a national security council surfaced. This was an attempt to improve policymaking cooperation between the two countries. With additions to an existing Cabinet Committee on Political Affairs, a new body was constituted. Due to the ministers' and ministries' evident reluctance to transfer control and power, this was once again dropped. The establishment of the National Security Council was

further delayed due to a decade-long power struggle between the Bharatiya Janata Party and the Indian National Congress, foreign concerns about India's nuclear development initiatives, and an apparent bureaucratic ego-clash.

India's nuclear policy has long been a subject of contention among the country's political and military leaders. Many officials were afraid of giving the military too much influence, thus military commanders were long barred from formulating nuclear policy. The NSC was established by the Vajpayee administration (BJP) in 1998.

However, the prime minister has kept ultimate power over nuclear policy since then. Military objectives were linked with political and scientific goals two years after the NSC was established.

In reaction to nuclear tests undertaken by both India and Pakistan, which aroused international fears about the likelihood of a nuclear conflict on the subcontinent, the historic Lahore Summit was organised in 1999. During this summit, power remained in the hands of then-Indian Prime Minister A.B. Vajpayee, and the National Security Council was ignored, confirming that India's nuclear policy was still under his control. When the council was first proposed in 1995, it was met with opposition. The National Security Council and the job of National Security Advisor, which was first occupied by Brijesh Mishra, were founded in tandem.

National Security Council of India: Its Function

"Establish a National Security Council to regularly examine security, political, and economic concerns and provide ongoing advice to the Government," the BJP Election Manifesto 98 pledged. This council will conduct India's first-ever Strategic Military Review, which will examine and assess the threat environment and offer suggestions on all elements of defence requirements and structure."

Six decision-making members sit at the top of the National Security Council. The Joint Intelligence Committee and the National Security Advisor are represented by the Prime Minister, a Strategic Policy Group, a National Advisory Board, and a Secretariat. External and internal security, military affairs, conventional and non-conventional

defence, space and high technology, counter-insurgency, counter-terrorism, economy, and the environment are all on the NSC's agenda. This tier has no military representation.

The first level of the NSC hierarchy is the Strategic Policy Group. It is led by the Cabinet Secretary and includes the chiefs of staff of the Army, Navy, and Air Force, the governor of the Reserve Bank of India, Secretaries of the Ministries of Home, Defence, External Affairs, Finance, Foreign Affairs, Revenue, the Cabinet Secretariat's Research and Analysis Wing, the Department of Atomic Energy, the Department of Space, the Department of Defence Production and Supplies, the Scientific Advisor to the Defence Minister, and several other union ministers' secretaries. Additional invitees can be added if needed.

The National Security Advisory Board is the second level of the NSC hierarchy (NSAB). External security, strategic analysis, international affairs, defence, the armed forces, internal security, science and technology, and economics are among the forming members. The National Security Advisory Board (NSAB) is the council's think tank. On referral from the NSC, it holds monthly meetings to offer solutions and policy issues to policy makers.

The Joint Intelligence Committee is the third level (JIC). The JIC, which is modelled after the British counterpart, is in charge of overseeing national intelligence institutions and interpreting intelligence data. The JIC has its own Secretariat, which reports to the Cabinet Secretariat.

National Security Council: Vision and Mission

Mission of NSC

- Provide national security advice to the President.
- Provide oversight and guidance to the NICA, as well as general oversight of the intelligence community, and
- Organize national government activities to achieve national security goals and strategic objectives.

Vision of NSC:

The National Security Council aspires to be a national security institution that is responsive to changing challenges and

opportunities both within and outside the country, as well as a policy advisory body that will effectively contribute to the creation of an enabling environment that will improve socioeconomic development and national governance.