

National Security Advisor

June 7, 2019

Manifest Pedagogy

The role and significance of NSA has varied with changing regime. In recent time it has emerged as powerful body for policy matters related to security. Being in news it could be asked both at prelims and mains.

In news

Ajit doval re appointed NSA

Placing it in the syllabus

Internal security

Static dimensions

- NSA origin, powers and functions
- Three tier structure NSA, NSAB, NSC and their functions

Current dimensions

Role of NSC and NSA in future

Content

About National Security Advisor

- It consists of a group of eminent national security experts outside of the government.
- Members are usually senior retired officials, civilian as well as military, academics and distinguished members of civil society drawn from and having expertise in Internal and External Security, Foreign Affairs, Defence, Science & Technology and Economic Affairs.
- The board meets at least once a month, and more frequently as required.

- It provides a long-term prognosis and analysis to the NSC and recommends solutions and address policy issues referred to it.

Origin

- The post of NSA was created in 1998 during Atal Bihari Vajpayee government. and has become increasingly influential and powerful over the years with the rise of India on the world stage.

Functions

- The NSA is the senior official on the National Security Council (NSC) of India, and the chief **adviser to the Prime Minister of India on national and international security policy**. Presently NSA is most powerful bureaucrat in the Government of India.
- The National Security Adviser (NSA) is tasked with regularly **advising the Prime Minister of India on all matters relating to internal and external threats and opportunities to India**, and oversees strategic and sensitive issues on behalf of the Prime Minister.
- The NSA of India also serves as the **Prime Minister's Special Interlocutor with China as well as the envoy to Pakistan and Israel on security affairs**.
- The NSA **receives all intelligence reports and co-ordinates them** to present before the Prime Minister. NSA is assisted by the Deputy National Security Advisers.

Three tier structure SPG, NSAB, NSC and their functions

Background

In 1998 the BJP-led coalition set up a **special task force headed by K.C.Pant**, Jaswant Singh, who served as the Foreign Minister and subsequently Finance Minister of the outgoing Government, and Air Commodore Jasjit Singh, the then Director

of the Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses (IDSA), to examine the workings of the national security management system in the USA, the UK and other countries and to make recommendations on the setting-up of a new national security management (NSM) infrastructure.

In December 1998, on the recommendations of this task force, a three-tier structure was set up, consisting of ;

1. The National Security Council (NSC)(NSA as its secretary).
2. Strategic Policy Group (SPG) and
3. National Security Advisory Board (NSAB).

About the National Security Council (NSC)

- The National Security Council (NSC) of India is a three-tiered organization that oversees political, economic, energy and security issues of strategic concern.
- NSC is chaired by the Prime Minister and consisting of important members of his Cabinet directly concerned with national security issues and NSA is its Secretary.
- It operates within the executive office of the prime minister of India, liaising between the government's executive branch and the intelligence services, advising leadership on intelligence and security issues.
- The National Security Council comprises the Strategic Policy Group, the National Security Advisory Board and a secretariat from the Joint Intelligence Committee.
- It is an executive government agency tasked with advising the Prime Minister's Office on matters of national security and strategic interest.

About Strategy Policy Group (SPG)

- The SPG , which is chaired National Security Advisor(earlier chaired by Cabinet secretary), consists of serving senior officials responsible for policy-making and follow-up action in matters concerning

national security plus the chiefs of the Army, the Navy and the Air Force and the Intelligence Bureau (IB) and the Research and Analysis Wing (R&AW), the external intelligence agency. Its main task is to make policy recommendations to the NSC.

- The Strategic Policy Group (SPG), formed to assist the National Security Council (NSC), has been reconstituted with National Security Advisor as its chief to strategise on matters dealing with internal and economic security.
- The National Security Advisor will convene the meetings of the SPG and the cabinet secretary will coordinate implementation of the group's decisions by Union Ministries and Departments, and State Governments.

Functions of SPG

1. The SPG will assist the NSC and undertake among other tasks a long term strategic Defence review.
2. The SPG shall be the principal mechanism for inter-ministerial coordination and integration of relevant inputs in the formulation of national security policies

National Security Advisory Board(NSAB)

- **The first NSAB was set up in 1998 with K Subrahmanyam as its convener.** It was the brainchild of the first National Security Advisor(NSA), Brajesh Mishra, a former member of Indian Foreign Service.
- Its principal objective is to undertake long-term analysis of and provide perspectives on issues of national security.
- The policy recommendations and options proposed by the NSAB are conveyed to the National Security Council for its consideration.
- Over the years, the NSAB has contributed a large number of studies on both current and long-term issues of strategic significance.

- It produced a Draft Nuclear Doctrine in 2001, a Strategic Defence Review in 2002 and a National Security Review in 2007 .
- It consists of a group of eminent national security experts outside of the government. Members are usually senior retired officials, civilian as well as military, academics and distinguished members of civil society drawn from and having expertise in Internal and External Security, Foreign Affairs, Defence, Science & Technology and Economic Affairs.
- It provides a long-term prognosis and analysis to the NSC and recommends solutions and address policy issues referred to it
- The NSAB deals with internal and external security, foreign affairs, defence, science and technology and economic affairs and normally meets at least once a month.
- Recently the NSAB has been reconstituted with P Raghavan, former Ambassador to Russia as its head. The new NSAB will succeed the previous Board headed by former Foreign Secretary Shyam Saran, whose tenure ended in January 2015.