Seychelles Joins Colombo Security Conclave (CSC)

1.Introduction

- On 20 November 2025, during the 7th NSA-level meeting in New Delhi, Seychelles formally became a full member of the Colombo Security Conclave (CSC).
- The meeting was chaired by India's NSA Ajit Doval.
- CSC is emerging as one of the most important security cooperation platforms in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR).

2. What is Colombo Security Conclave?

A multilateral regional security grouping originally initiated by India, Sri Lanka and Maldives to deal with common Indian Ocean challenges.

Aim:

To improve **maritime security**, **regional stability**, and **cooperation** among Indian Ocean countries.

Five Core Pillars of CSC

1. Maritime Safety and Security

Anti-piracy, search and rescue, joint naval operations.

2. Countering Terrorism & Radicalisation

Intelligence sharing, capacity building, de-radicalisation programmes.

3. Combating Trafficking & Transnational Organised Crime

Against narcotics, arms smuggling, human trafficking.

4. Cyber Security & Protection of Critical Infrastructure

Cyber drills, digital forensics, protection of government networks.

5. Humanitarian Assistance & Disaster Relief (HADR)

Joint disaster management and emergency response.

3. Evolution of CSC

- **2011:** Initiated as "Trilateral Maritime Security Cooperation" (India-Sri Lanka-Maldives).
- 2020 onwards: Expanded and renamed Colombo Security Conclave.
- Mauritius became a member (2020).
- Bangladesh formally joined later.
- 2025: Seychelles becomes the newest member, showing growing institutionalisation.

4. Highlights of the 7th NSA-Level Meeting (2025)

Participants

Country Representative
India Ajit Doval (Chair)
Maldives NSA Ibrahim Latheef
Mauritius NSA Rahul Rasgotra

Sri Lanka Defence Secretary AVM (Retd.) Sampath

Thuyacontha

Bangladesh NSA Khalil-ur-Rehman

Seychelles Chief of Defence Forces Maj Gen Michael

Rosette

Malaysia Attended as Guest Country

Key Outcomes

- Seychelles admitted as full member.
- First-ever participation of **Malaysia** as a **Guest Country**, showing increasing Indo-Pacific interest in CSC.
- Stress on maritime cooperation, cyber security, and joint exercises.
- Ajit Doval highlighted that the **Indian Ocean is a shared strategic heritage** and stability requires **collective security efforts**.

5. Significance of Seychelles' Membership

A. Geostrategic Importance

 Located in the western Indian Ocean, at a crucial point near key shipping routes. • Strengthens the **western flank** of CSC's security network.

B. Boost to Maritime Domain Awareness

- Helps enhance real-time surveillance against:
 - Piracy
 - · Illegal fishing
 - Drug trafficking
 - Human smuggling

C. Enhances Anti-Piracy & Maritime Security

 Seychelles has strong coastal surveillance and experience in anti-piracy operations in the western IOR.

D. Strengthens India-Seychelles Strategic Ties

- Deepens India's influence as a **net security provider** in the Indian Ocean.
- Complements India's efforts such as:
 - Mission SAGAR
 - IORA collaboration
 - IONS (Indian Ocean Naval Symposium)

E. Expands CSC's Institutional Capacity

- Shows CSC's growing relevance and expansion potential.
- Makes CSC a broader Indo-Pacific security platform rather than just a subregional mechanism.

6. Why CSC is Important for India (UPSC Point of View)

• Strengthens India's leadership in IOR security.

- Creates a **counter-balance** to China's naval penetration in the Indian Ocean.
- Offers a platform for intelligence sharing, joint operations, and capacity building.
- Important for safeguarding India's maritime interests:
 - Sea Lines of Communication (SLOCs)
 - Energy imports
 - Trade security

7. Static / Factual Details (Prelims Pointers)

• Event: 7th NSA-level Colombo Security Conclave

• **Date:** 20 November 2025

• Venue: New Delhi, India

• Chairperson: Ajit Doval

New Member: Seychelles

• Guest Country: Malaysia

• Other Members: India, Maldives, Mauritius, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh

- 5 Pillars of CSC:
 - 1. Maritime Safety
 - 2. Counter-Terrorism
 - 3. Transnational Crime
 - 4. Cyber Security
 - 5. HADR

8. Why This Topic Is Important for UPSC?

- High relevance for **Prelims** (factual questions on CSC/Members/Pillars).
- Significant for **GS Paper 2** (India and neighbourhood; regional groupings).

- Useful for **GS Paper 3** (maritime security, cyber security, national security).
- Themes of Indo-Pacific, Indian Ocean geopolitics, island nations, India as net security provider.

9. Possible UPSC Prelims Questions

- 1. Which of the following are members of the Colombo Security Conclave?
 - India
 - Sri Lanka
 - Bangladesh
 - Seychelles
- 2. Which of the following is NOT a pillar of the Colombo Security Conclave?
 - a) Maritime Safety
 - b) Climate Change Mitigation
 - c) Counter-Terrorism
 - d) Cyber Security
- 3. Which country attended the 7th NSA-level CSC meeting as a Guest Country in 2025?
 - Malaysia

10. Possible UPSC Mains Question

"Discuss the significance of the Colombo Security Conclave (CSC) in India's maritime security architecture. How does Seychelles' membership enhance CSC's strategic relevance?"

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