

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 sub-regional 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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