

# Inter-State Council: Notes for UPSC Polity

Article 263 of Indian constitution give provision for the establishment of an Inter-State Council. This is to enhance the coordination between the Center and States. It is the most dynamic platform to discuss policies, strengthen the Centre-State relations and act as a bridge to the trust deficit between the Center and the States. This article briefly explains the functions and various other aspects of the Inter-State Council.

## Inter-State Council - Introduction

The nation can progress only if the Union and State Governments work hand in hand. There are many challenges to maintain the federation. For a soothing functioning of the system, it is necessary to conduct periodic debates and discussions.

Inter-State Council is not a permanent constitutional body, which can be created at any time if it seems to the President that the public interest would be served by the establishment of such council. It was set up in 1990 through a presidential ordinance for the first time as per the recommendations of the Sarkaria Commission under the Ministry of Home affairs. The secretarial functions of the Zonal Councils have been reassigned to the Inter-State Council Secretariat from 1st April 2011.

Inter-State Council works as an instrument for cooperation, coordination and the evolution of common policies. The interstate council is proposed to meet thrice a year. But in 26 years, it has met only 11 times. Recently the meeting was held after a gap of 10 years in Delhi in July 2016.

## Inter-State Council Composition

Prime Minister acts as the chairman of the council.

### Members of Inter-State Council

1. Union Ministers of Cabinet rank in the Union
2. Council of Ministers nominated by the Prime Minister.
3. Chief Ministers of all states.
4. Chief Ministers of Union Territories having a Legislative Assembly
5. Administrators of UTs not having a Legislative Assembly.
6. Governors of the states being administered under President's rule.

### Functions of Inter-State Council

1. Inquiring and advising upon disputes which may have emerged between the States:

2. Investigating and discussing subjects in which the States of the Union has a common interest.
3. Making suggestions on any such subject, for the better coordination of policy and action with respect to that subject.

### **Highlights of 11th Inter-State Council Meeting**

1. Consideration of Punchhi commission recommendations on Centre-State Relations.
2. Use of Aadhaar and DBT for providing Subsidies, benefits, and Public Services
3. Enhancing the quality of education with a focus on improving learning outcomes, incentivizing better performance, etc.
4. Internal Security with a focus on intelligence sharing and synchronization for fighting Terrorism and Insurgency and Police Reforms and Police Modernization.