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India’s National Anti-Narcotics Coordination Mechanism (NCORD)

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India’s National Anti-Narcotics Coordination Mechanism (NCORD)

No single agency can stop a drug shipment that crosses a district line, a state border and a national frontier in one run. So India built a coordination mechanism just for that problem. It is called NCORD. This lesson shows its four tiers, its tools, and the 2026 numbers that make it news.

> **Set up** 22 November 2016, Ministry of Home Affairs.
> **Restructured** 29 July 2019 into 4 tiers.
> **JCC chair** Director General, NCB.
> **Vision** Document on Drug Control 2026-2029.

NCORD: Narco-Coordination mechanism for central and state drug agencies.

JCC: Joint Coordination Committee.

PITNDPS Act: 1988 law targeting drug money.

Clandestine lab: A hidden place that makes synthetic drugs.

1 Chapter 1: What NCORD Is

Must Know

Origin

- The Narco-Coordination Centre (NCORD) mechanism coordinates India’s Central and State drug law enforcement agencies.

- It was constituted on **22 November 2016**, under the Ministry of Home Affairs.
- It was restructured into its current **4-tier** mechanism on **29 July 2019**.

The four tiers

- **Apex Level:** headed by the Union Home Secretary.
- **Executive Level:** headed by the Special Secretary, Ministry of Home Affairs.
- **State Level:** headed by Chief Secretaries.
- **District Level:** headed by District Magistrates.
- The top two tiers sit at the national level. The bottom two sit at the state and district level.

Tools

- The NCB built a **National Narcotics Coordination Portal** under NCORD.
- It supports training, sharing of narco-offender data, legal information and best practices.
- A **Joint Coordination Committee (JCC)**, chaired by the Director General of the Narcotics Control Bureau, monitors major cases.
- These include cases where drug money is suspected of funding terrorism.
- More than 15 central and state agencies operate under this mechanism.

Remember: 2016 set up. 2019 four tiers. Apex = Home Secretary. District = DM.

Quick check 1. The Apex Level NCORD Committee is headed by the Director General of the NCB. *(True or False?)* See answer ↓

2 Chapter 2: Following the Money and the Labs

Good to Know

A 1988 law

- The Prevention of Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, **1988** (PITNDPS Act) targets the money behind drug trafficking.
- It works alongside the underlying NDPS Act, 1985.
- It lets authorities trace, attach and confiscate the financial proceeds of the trade.
- Read more: The NDPS Act, 1985.

Spotting clandestine labs

- A clandestine lab is not a professional facility.
- It is often a rented house, a farm shed or a small industrial unit.
- It is set up secretly to cook synthetic drugs like Mephedrone or ATS from ordinary chemicals.
- Such labs are cheap and easy to move, unlike opium fields that need land and time.
- That is one reason synthetic-drug cases have grown faster than plant-based ones.
- All state Directors General of Police were asked to train field officers to spot **Red Flag Indicators (RFI)**.

- These are warning signs, like unusual chemical smells or bulk orders of certain equipment.

Joint work

- The NCB coordinates joint operations with the Excise Department, the Border Security Force and State Anti-Narcotics Task Forces (ANTFs).
- It also runs training with the US Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) on finding hidden labs and stopping chemicals from being secretly used to make drugs.
- Read more: Border Security Force (BSF), Assam Rifles and Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI).

> **Quick check 2.** The PITNDPS Act, 1988 targets the financial proceeds of drug trafficking. *(True or False?)* See answer ↓

3 Chapter 3: Diplomacy Alongside Enforcement

Great to Know

Talks and treaties

- India holds regular Director General-level and bilateral drug-control talks with several countries.
- These include Myanmar, Nepal, Thailand, Sri Lanka, Indonesia, Singapore and the United States.
- India has bilateral drug-control agreements with **27 countries**, plus MoUs with **19 more**.
- That makes a network of 46 countries.

Why the design fits

- Drug trafficking crosses district, state and international lines.
- So coordination has to work at every level at once.
- NCORD complements, rather than duplicates, the operational work of the NCB and the DRI.
- Read more: Counter-Narcotics Enforcement in India: NCB and Border Security: Management, Organizations and Regional Challenges.

> **Think it through: Think it through: why have four tiers instead of one central office?**
>
> A shipment starts in a district, moves through a state and leaves the country. A single office in Delhi cannot see the first two steps. District Magistrates and Chief Secretaries see them first. Each tier handles the part of the route it controls.

Quick check 3. India has drug-control agreements with 27 countries and MoUs with 19 more. *(True or False?)* See answer ↓

4 Chapter 4: In the News, 2026

Current Affairs

The 2026-2029 Vision Document

- On **26 June 2026**, Union Home Minister Amit Shah chaired the **10th NCORD apex-level meeting**.
- He released the **Vision Document on Drug Control (2026-2029)**, a three-year roadmap built on a "Whole-of-Government" and "Whole-of-Society" approach.
- It rests on four pillars: Enforcement/Intelligence/Operations; Precursor and Synthetic Drug Control; Demand Reduction and Rehabilitation; and Capacity Building and Coordination.
- Its release brought together 44 central ministries and departments and 108 state-level representatives.
- (Source: PIB.)

JCC meetings

- So far in 2026, the JCC mechanism has held **11** Central-level and **75** State-level meetings, 86 in all.
- (Source: MHA, Rajya Sabha reply.)

Seizure data

- Agencies across India seized narcotics worth about **₹25,330 crore in 2024**, over 55% more than ₹16,100 crore in 2023.

- Methamphetamine seizures more than doubled, from 34 quintals in 2023 to 80 quintals in 2024.
- Cocaine seizures rose from 292 kg to 1,426 kg.
- (Source: PIB.)
- Maritime-route seizures reached **10,564 kg in 2024**, a nearly 500-fold surge over 2019.
- (Source: NCB Annual Report 2024.)

India-US meeting

- On **6 August 2026**, the NCB hosted the India-US Counter Narcotics Working Group (CNWG) Pillar I meeting, in hybrid format.
- The goal: stronger cooperation against trafficking and precursor-chemical diversion.
- (Source: The Hawk.)

> **Quick check 4.** The Vision Document on Drug Control (2026-2029) was released at the 10th NCORD apex-level meeting. *(True or False?)* See answer ↓

> **Quick check 5.** Maritime-route drug seizures in 2024 were about the same as in 2019. *(True or False?)* See answer ↓

Quick Q&A

- **NCORD set up?** 22 Nov 2016.
- **Four tiers from?** 29 July 2019.
- **JCC chaired by?** DG, NCB.
- **Treaty countries?** 27 + 19 = 46.
- **Vision Document years?** 2026-2029.

Practice MCQs

1. When was the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) constituted?

A. 1953

B. 4 December 1957

C. 17 March 1986

D. 1985

See answer ↓

2. NCB is headquartered where, and under which ministry's administrative control?

A. New Delhi; Ministry of Home Affairs

B. Mumbai; Ministry of Finance

C. New Delhi; Ministry of Finance

D. Chandigarh; Ministry of Home Affairs

See answer ↓

3. Who heads the Apex Level NCORD Committee?

A. Union Home Secretary

B. Cabinet Secretary

C. Prime Minister

D. Director General of NCB

See answer ↓

4. The Narco-Coordination Centre (NCORD) mechanism, which coordinates Central and State drug-enforcement agencies, operates through how many tiers?

A. Two

B. Four

C. Three

D. Five

See answer ↓

Answer Key

1. **C.** NCB was constituted on 17 March 1986, under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act, 1985. ↑ Q1
2. **A.** NCB is headquartered in New Delhi, under the administrative control of the Ministry of Home Affairs. ↑ Q2
3. **A.** The Apex Level NCORD Committee is headed by the Union Home Secretary. ↑ Q3
4. **B.** NCORD is a four-tier mechanism, running from Apex/Executive Committee meetings down to monthly district-level meetings. ↑ Q4

Quick-check answers

1. **False.** ↑ 1
2. **True.** ↑ 2
3. **True.** ↑ 3
4. **True.** ↑ 4
5. **False.** ↑ 5

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