



Quad Meeting

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Why in News

Recently, **India joined Australia, Japan and the United States** for a ministerial meeting under the **Quadrilateral grouping** (Quad) and discussed issues across Indo-Pacific and the **military takeover in Myanmar**.

Key Points

- **Meeting Highlights:**

- Discussed contemporary challenges, especially the **impact of Covid-19** and agreed to enhance access to affordable vaccines, medicines and medical equipment.
- Discussed countering **disinformation, counter-terrorism, maritime security**, and the “priority of **strengthening democratic resilience** in the broader region”.
- Emphasised their commitment to **upholding a rules-based international order**, underpinned by **respect for territorial integrity and sovereignty, rule of law, transparency, freedom of navigation in the international seas and peaceful resolution of disputes**.
- Reiterated their “common vision for a free, open and inclusive Indo-Pacific region, with clear support for **ASEAN cohesion and centrality**”, and noted that the **Indo-Pacific concept** had “gathered growing international support, including in Europe”.
- Discussed **climate change** and cooperation in **humanitarian assistance and disaster relief and supply chain resilience**.
- Agreed on **holding ministerial meetings of the Quad at least once a year** and meetings at senior and working levels on a regular basis to bolster cooperation on advancing a free and open Indo-Pacific.

- **Significance:**

- The meeting, held in the backdrop of the ongoing **withdrawal of Chinese forces from positions** along the Line of Actual Control, underlines that India's interest in the Quad is not tactical but profoundly strategic.

For India, the Quad is also about **addressing the growing power imbalance with China** that has manifold consequences for India's security and prosperity as well its regional and international standing.

- It signalled the **new USA administration's commitment to the Quad** as a key formation in the Indo-Pacific.

The momentum behind the Quad picked up in 2020 in the wake of the **Covid-19 crisis, China's growing assertiveness**, and deterioration of **China's bilateral relations with all Quad partners**.

- Chinese officials have likened the **Quad to a “mini NATO”** and said its activities are aimed at **targeting third parties**, a charge rejected by the four members of the group.

NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organisation) is a **political and military alliance** whose primary goals are the collective defence of its members and the maintenance of a democratic peace in the North Atlantic area.

Quad

- Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad) is **an informal strategic dialogue between India, USA, Japan and Australia** with a shared objective to ensure and support a “free, open and prosperous” Indo-Pacific region.
- The **idea of Quad was first mooted by former Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe in 2007**. However, the idea couldn't move ahead with Australia pulling out of it, apparently due to Chinese pressure.
- In **December 2012**, Shinzo Abe again floated the concept of **Asia's “Democratic Security Diamond”** involving Australia, India, Japan and the USA to safeguard the maritime commons from the Indian Ocean to the western Pacific.
- In **November 2017**, India, the USA, Australia and Japan **gave shape to the long-pending "Quad" Coalition** to develop a new strategy to **keep the critical sea routes in the Indo-Pacific free of any influence (especially China)**.
- In **2020**, all four Quad Countries - Japan, India, Australia and the USA **took part in the Malabar exercise**.

Malabar exercise is **an annual trilateral naval exercise** between the navies of **India, Japan, and the USA** which is held alternately in the Indian and Pacific Oceans.

Source:TH