

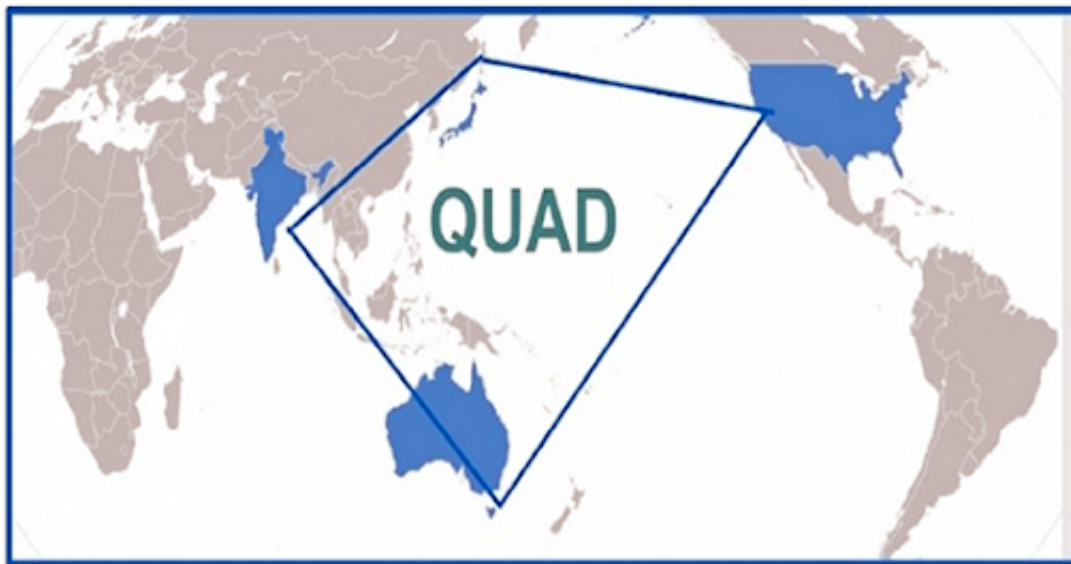


Upcoming Quad Meeting

Why in News

Recently, the US announced that the **first in-person meeting of the [Quad countries](#)** is going to be held in New York, US. The heads of all the **four countries** (India, Japan, Australia, and the US) are going to attend the meeting.

- Reacting to the upcoming summit, **China criticized the Quad** and said the formation of "exclusive cliques (circles)" targeting other countries runs counter to the trend of the times and is "doomed to fail".



Key Points

- **Formation of the Quad:**
 - Following the [Indian Ocean Tsunami](#) (2004), India, Japan, Australia, and the US created an informal alliance to collaborate on disaster relief efforts.
 - In **2007**, then PM of Japan, Shinzo Abe, formalised the alliance, as the **Quadrilateral Security Dialogue** or the Quad.
 - The Quad was **supposed to establish an Asian Arc of Democracy but was hampered** by a lack of cohesion amongst its members and accusations that the group was nothing more than an **anti-China bloc**.
 - In **2017**, faced again with the rising threat of China, the four countries **revived the Quad**, broadening its objectives and creating a mechanism that aimed to slowly establish a rules-based international order.
 - In **2020**, the trilateral **India-US-Japan [Malabar naval exercises](#) expanded to include Australia**, marking the first official grouping of the Quad since its resurgence in 2017.

- Further, it was the **first joint military exercises among the four countries** in over a decade.
 - In March **2021**, the [Quad leaders met virtually](#) and later released a joint statement titled '**The Spirit of the Quad**,' which outlined the group's approach and objectives.
- **Objectives of the Quad:**
 - According to the 'Spirit of the Quad', the group's primary objectives **include** maritime security, combating the Covid-19 crisis, especially vis-à-vis vaccine diplomacy, addressing the risks of climate change, creating an ecosystem for investment in the region and boosting technological innovation.
 - However, despite the Quad's seeming commitment to a broad range of issues, its **main focus area is still considered to be countering China**.
 - Quad members have also indicated a willingness to **expand the partnership through a so-called Quad Plus** that would include South Korea, New Zealand, and Vietnam amongst others.
- **Quad and its Linkage with China:**
 - **Each of the Quad members are threatened by** [China's actions in the South China Sea](#) and its attempts to extend its sphere of influence through initiatives such as the [One Belt One Road Project](#).
 - The US has long been concerned about the **global competition with China** and have maintained that China aims to subvert the international rules-based order.
 - Japan and Australia are likewise both concerned about China's expanding presence in the South and [East China Seas](#).
 - India has its own long pending [border issues with China](#).
 - On the other hand, **China sees the existence of the Quad as part of a larger strategy to encircle China** and has pressured countries like Bangladesh to avoid cooperating with the group.
 - The Chinese foreign ministry accused the group of openly **inciting discord among regional powers in Asia**.
- **Issues Related to Quad:**
 - **Undefined Vision:** Despite the potential for cooperation, the Quad remains a mechanism without a defined strategic mission.
 - The Quad is not structured like a typical multilateral organisation and lacks a secretariat and any permanent decision-making body.
 - Additionally, unlike [NATO](#), the Quad does not include provisions for collective defence, instead choosing to conduct joint military exercises as a show of unity and diplomatic cohesion.
 - **Maritime Grouping:** The entire focus on the Indo-Pacific makes the Quad a maritime, rather than a land-based grouping, raising questions whether the cooperation extends to the Asia-Pacific and Eurasian regions.
 - **India's Aversion of Alliance System:** The fact that India is the only member that is averse to a treaty alliance system, has slowed down the progress of building a stronger Quadrilateral engagement.

Way Forward

- **Need For Clear Vision:** The Quad nations need to better explain the Indo-Pacific Vision in an overarching framework with the objective of advancing everyone's economic and security interests.
 - This will reassure the littoral States that the Quad will be a factor for regional benefit, and a far cry from Chinese allegations that it is some sort of a military alliance.
 - The forthcoming Ministerial meetings can be an opportunity to define the idea and chart a future path.

- **Expanding Quad:** India has many other partners in the Indo-Pacific, therefore India should pitch for countries like Indonesia, Singapore to be invited to join in the future.
 - India should develop a comprehensive vision on the Indo-Pacific which would ideate on the current and future maritime challenges, consolidate its military and non-military tools, engage its strategic partners.

[Source: IE](#)

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