

4th Quad Foreign Ministers' Meeting

For Prelims: QUAD, NATO, Indo-Pacific, Quad Vaccine initiative, 5G, COVOVAX, CORBEVAX

For Mains: Groupings & Agreements Involving India and/or Affecting India's Interests, Bilateral Groupings & Agreements, QUAD and its Significance.

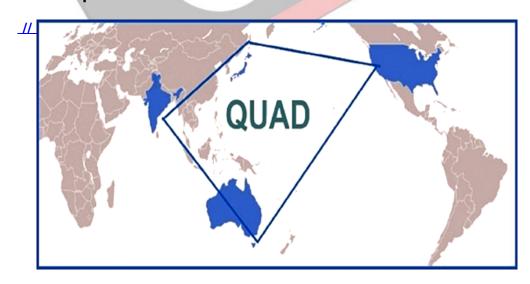
Why in News?

Recently, the fourth meeting of the foreign ministers of the QUAD grouping (India, the US, Australia and Japan) was held in Melbourne, Australia.

The meeting was held amid escalating tension between Russia and North Atlantic Treaty
 Organization (NATO) countries over Ukraine, the Afghan crisis and increasing concerns
 over China's "coercion" in the Indo-Pacific region.

What is QUAD?

- It is the **grouping of four democracies** -India, Australia, the US, and Japan.
- All four nations find a common ground of being democratic nations and also support the common interest of unhindered maritime trade and security.
- The Quad is billed as four democracies with a shared objective to ensure and support a
 "free, open and prosperous" Indo-Pacific region.
- The idea of Quad was first mooted by 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.
- Finally in 2017, India, Australia, the US and Japan, came together and formed this "quadrilateral" coalition.



What were the Discussions on Security and Intelligence?

- Called for justice for the 26/11 terror attacks in Mumbai (2008) and the Pathankot airbase attack (2016) for the first time since the group was formed.
- QUAD is already cooperating on sharing intelligence on threats in the Indo-Pacific region.
 Called on all countries to ensure that territory under their control is not used to launch terror attacks and to expeditiously bring to justice the perpetrators of such attacks.
- They made a veiled reference to China's actions in the South and East China seas, reaffirming a commitment to a free and open Indo-Pacific, "in which states strive to protect the interests of their people, free from coercion."

What was their Stand on the Vaccine Initiative?

- Renewed commitment to the "flagship" Quad Vaccine initiative to deliver at least one billion vaccines produced in India by the end of 2022 to Indo-Pacific countries, and to a pledge to donate
 1.3 billion vaccine doses globally.
 - The Quad vaccine partnership was announced in March 2021.

What is QUAD's Stand on Myanmar Crisis?

- It remains gravely concerned about the crisis in Myanmar and calls for an end to violence, the release of all those arbitrarily detained, including foreigners, and unhindered humanitarian access.
- It reaffirmed its support for the <u>Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)</u> efforts to seek a solution in Myanmar and called on the military regime to urgently implement <u>ASEAN's Five-Point Consensus</u> and swiftly return Myanmar to the path of democracy.
- It encouraged the international community to work together to support an end to the violence.

What did the Leaders Say on Emerging Technologies?

- Recorded progress on the other fields for cooperation identified during the QUAD summit in 2021, including <u>climate change</u>, critical and emerging technologies, counter-terrorism, infrastructure, Humanitarian-Assistance and Disaster-Relief (HADR) and maritime domain awareness.
- The QUAD is pursuing work on <u>5G technology</u> and vendor diversification to maintain a diverse, open and interoperable telecommunication ecosystem through collaboration with like-minded partners.

What was India's Stand in the Meeting?

- India is open to supplying safe and affordable Made in India vaccines, such as <u>COVOVAX</u> and <u>CORBEVAX</u>, under the QUAD vaccine partnership.
- QUAD is building an agenda which seeks to further India's shared vision of a free, open and inclusive Indo-Pacific.
 - India and Australia have pledged to work together for building more trusted and resilient supply chains and ensuring broad and inclusive growth in the strategic Indo-Pacific region.
 - Earlier in 2021, the Trade Ministers of India, Japan and Australia have formally launched the **Supply Chain Resilience Initiative (SCRI)**.
 - As liberal democracies, India and Australia would continue to work towards a rule-based international order, freedom of navigation in international waters, promoting connectivity, growth and security for all while respecting the territorial integrity and sovereignty of all states.
- It is keen to work together to further peace and stability and economic prosperity in the

Indo-Pacific.

- On Myanmar, India pointed to the challenge of insurgency along the Indo-Myanmar border. It also stressed that it is against "national sanctions". The US has imposed sanctions on a number of leaders of the Myanmar Military.
- It maintained complete diplomatic silence on the Russian threat to invade Ukraine.

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