



## Quad Foreign Ministers Meeting

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### Why in News?

Recently, the **Quad** foreign ministers' meeting in Tokyo saw Australia, India, Japan, and the US emphasise ending **violence in Ukraine**, **Gaza**, and **Myanmar**, and expressed their intention to expand the **Indo-Pacific Partnership for Maritime Domain Awareness (IPMDA)** into the Indian Ocean Region.

### What is QUAD?

- The Quad is an **informal diplomatic partnership between Australia, India, Japan, and the United States** committed to **supporting an open, stable and prosperous Indo-Pacific** that is inclusive and resilient.
- It was first proposed by Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe in 2007, it became a formal group in 2017 after overcoming initial setbacks, including Australia's withdrawal due to Chinese pressure.
- Finally in 2017, India, Australia, the US and Japan, came together and formed this “**quadrilateral**” coalition.



### What is the Indo-Pacific Partnership for Maritime Domain Awareness (IPMDA)?

- The IPMDA Initiative was announced at the **Quad Leaders' Summit in Tokyo in 2022**. It focuses on integrating the **Pacific Islands**, **Southeast Asia**, and the **Indian Ocean region (IOR)** in the **Indo-Pacific**.
- Its primary aim is to track dark shipping vessels that turn off their **Automatic Identification System (AIS)** to avoid detection.
  - Additionally, it focuses on **monitoring tactical-level activities to respond to climate**

and humanitarian events and protect fisheries, which are crucial to many Indo-Pacific economies.

- **Significance for India:** The IPMDA represents a significant effort to enhance security and stability in the Indo-Pacific, a region of major global geopolitical importance.
  - India's Navy, currently with over 140 ships and submarines, is set to expand to a formidable fleet of 170 to 180 vessels by 2028.

## What is the Indian Ocean Region (IOR)?

- The Indian Ocean Region (IOR) spans over 36 littoral and island countries and is crucial due to its trade routes, natural resources, and geopolitical importance.
  - It includes **busy sea-lanes** like the **Straits of Hormuz** and **Malacca**.
- The region is **rich in marine biodiversity** but faces challenges like piracy, illegal fishing, and environmental degradation.
- India plays a key role in the IOR, alongside China, the US, and regional organisations, emphasising the need for cooperation to tackle common challenges and ensure sustainable development.



- **Other Groupings in Indian Ocean Region (IOR):**
  - **Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA):** It is an intergovernmental organisation established to promote economic cooperation and regional integration among countries bordering the **Indian Ocean**.



- **AUKUS**: It is a trilateral security partnership formed in 2021 between Australia, the UK, and the US, focused on the Indo-Pacific. It includes sharing US nuclear submarine technology with Australia and aims to counterbalance China's actions in the South China Sea. The partnership also promotes cooperation in emerging technologies like AI, quantum technologies, and undersea capabilities.

### UPSC Civil Services Examination Previous Year Question (PYQ)

#### Prelims

**Q. With reference to the 'Trans-Pacific Partnership', consider the following statements: (2016)**

1. It is an agreement among all the Pacific Rim countries except China and Russia.
2. It is a strategic alliance for the purpose of maritime security only.

**Which of the statements given above is/are correct?**

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

**Ans: D**