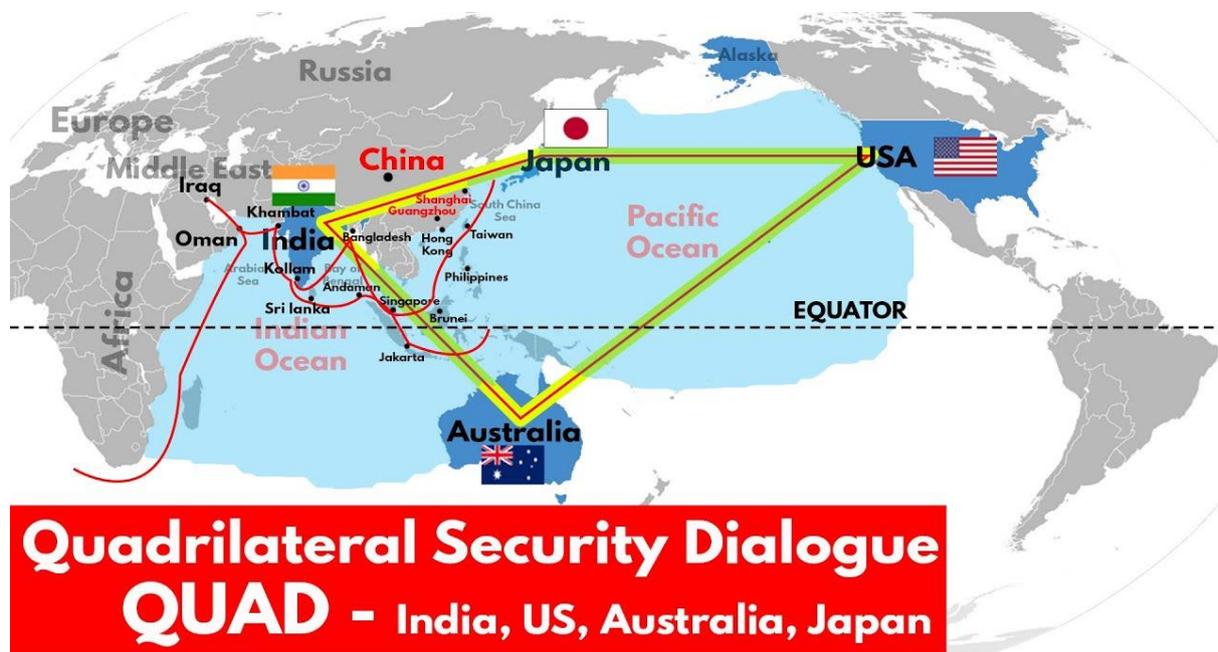


## THIRD MEETING OF QUAD FOREIGN MINISTERS

TAGS: GS-2: International Relation

### CONTEXT:

- Signalling a closer alignment with other partners, **India officially used the term “Quad” for the first time to describe its grouping** with the
  - US,
  - Australia and
  - Japan
- It is increasingly being seen as a possible **counterweight to China’s aggressive moves** in the region.
- This is the **third meeting of Quad Foreign Ministers**, after **September 2019** and **October 2020**, since the mechanism at the level of officials was revived in 2017.



### NEWS IN DETAILS:

- **New Delhi underlined:** India’s reference to “Quad” came in group’s Foreign Ministers where New Delhi underlined its “commitment to upholding a
  1. Rules-based international order,
  2. Respect for territorial integrity and sovereignty,
  3. Rule of law,
  4. Transparency,
  5. Freedom of navigation in the international seas and
  6. Peaceful resolution of disputes” — a line seen as a reference to China’s moves.
- **Reluctance of India using the term Quad:** While the **US and Australia** have always termed the grouping as “Quad”, the Ministry of External Affairs instead called such interactions as a “meeting of the four countries”.

- **Shared Identity:** In a statement that reflected the group's **concern over China**, the MEA said that the Ministers highlighted their "**shared attributes** as
  - Political democracies,
  - Market economies and
  - Pluralistic societies".
- **USA's Biden Continued Foreign Policy:** It was also significant because it was the first involving the new US administration under President Joe Biden and signalled continuity in its approach on dealing with an assertive China.

### GOOD NEWS FOR INDIA

- **Continuity in Washington's approach:** With the Biden administration yet to complete even a month in office, the first Quad meeting reflects **continuity in Washington's approach towards China**.
  - For Delhi, it's a **reassuring signal amid the border standoff** in eastern Ladakh,
- **India-Australia:** Hours before the meeting, PM Modi spoke with his Scott Morrison, and said that he looked forward to "**working together for peace, prosperity and security in the Indo-Pacific**".
- **ASEAN cohesion and centrality:** They reiterated of their common vision for a "**free, open and inclusive Indo-Pacific region**, with clear **support for ASEAN cohesion and centrality**".
- **International support to Quad:** "It was noted that the Indo-Pacific concept had gathered growing international support, **including in Europe**", it said, referring to
  - **France,**
  - **Germany and**
  - **UK.**
- **Regular Meeting:** "They reiterated their **commitment to the Quad meeting** at least **annually at the Ministerial level** and on a **regular basis at senior and working levels**."
- **Japan v. China:** Japan's Foreign Minister Motegi expressed "**serious concern with regard to the China's Coast Guard Law**" and said that "**the four Ministers concurred to strongly oppose unilateral and forceful attempts to change the status quo** in the context of the **East and South China Sea**".
- **Myanmar Coup:** Quad Foreign Ministers also spoke about the situation in Myanmar. While Jaishankar reiterated "**upholding of rule of law and the democratic transition**", Blinken spoke about "**the urgent need to restore the democratically elected government in Burma**", and Motegi "**expressed grave concern for deteriorating situation**" in Myanmar.
- **Covid-19 pandemic:** Ministers discussed ongoing efforts to combat the Covid-19 pandemic, including vaccination programmes. They reiterated its commitment in enhancing access to affordable vaccines, medicines and medical equipment.
  - "**India's efforts** at providing vaccines to 74 countries was **recognized and appreciated.**"
- **Other Area of Cooperation:** India also said that the Ministers exchanged views on responding to climate change and furthering cooperation in areas such as
  - Maritime security,
  - HADR,
  - Supply chain resilience and

- Counter-terrorism.

**SOURCE: Indian Express**