

# 'QUAD' HAS COME OF AGE, WILL BE KEY PILLAR OF STABILITY IN INDO-PACIFIC REGION: PM MODI

Relevant for: International Relations | Topic: QUAD and India

US President Joe Biden, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison and Japanese Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga are attending the 'Quad summit, which is the first summit of the Quad leaders held virtually this evening.

Known as the 'Quadrilateral Security Dialogue,' representatives for the four-member nations have met periodically since its establishment in 2007.

In his opening remarks, PM Modi said, "Our agenda today covering areas like vaccines, climate change and emerging technologies makes the Quad, a force for global good."

He also added, "Quad has come of age and will remain an important pillar of stability in the Indo-Pacific region."

Talking about the regional and global issues of shared interest, and exchange views on practical areas of cooperation towards maintaining a free, open and inclusive Indo-Pacific region, Modi said, "I see this positive vision as an extension of India's ancient philosophy of 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam' which regards the world as one family. We will work together closely as ever before for advancing shared values & promoting secular, stable and prosperous Indo-Pacific."

Meanwhile, US President Biden, who inaugurated the virtual meeting, said, "Quad is going to be a vital arena for cooperation in Indo-Pacific, says US President Joe Biden at first Quad summit." He also added that he will focus on generating domestic demand and global growth

Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison said, "It's the Indo-Pacific that'll now shape the destiny of the world in the 21st Century. As four leaders of great democracies in Indo-Pacific, let our partnership be an enabler of peace, stability & prosperity and to do so inclusively with many nations in the region."

The salience of the Quad has run in parallel with the emergence of the Indo-Pacific as a key strategic region. With a growing similarity of assessments about geopolitical dynamics in the region, in 2017, the Quad dialogue resumed at the official level.

In November 2017, the four countries gave shape to the long-pending proposal of setting up the Quad to develop a new strategy to keep the critical sea routes in the Indo-Pacific free of any influence.

The four Quad member countries have been resolving to uphold a rules-based international order in the Indo-Pacific amid growing Chinese assertiveness in the region.

India's approach to the Indo-Pacific was enunciated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in his address at the Shangri-La Dialogue in Singapore in 2018.

Inclusiveness, openness and ASEAN centrality and unity lie at the heart of India's Indo-Pacific vision. The 10-nation Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) is a key stakeholder in the Indo-Pacific region.

The strategic significance of the Indo-Pacific was also acknowledged by the US in 2018 when it renamed the US Pacific Command (PACOM) as INDO-PACOM.

Several European countries too have published their Indo-Pacific strategies, in recognition of the political and economic weight of the region.

The first foreign ministerial meeting of Quad countries was held in New York on September 26, 2019 on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly.

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar participated in the second Quad foreign ministerial meeting in Tokyo on October 6.

The third Quad foreign ministerial meeting took place virtually on February 18. The meeting took place within a month of the Biden administration assuming office.

Earlier this year, for the first time the four countries appointed Sherpas to coordinate Quad-related issues. Foreign Secretary Harsh Vardhan Shringla is India's Sherpa.

The Biden administration recognised the significance of the Indo-Pacific region in its Interim National Security Strategic Guidance document.

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