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Gen. Rawat pushes for Quad

- India wants the Quad to become a system to “ensure freedom of navigation (FoN) and freedom of navigation operations (FONOPS)” in the Indian Ocean and around, Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) General Bipin Rawat said on Thursday, while highlighting the threat of a combined challenge from Pakistan and China on two fronts, and cautioning Pakistan against taking any advantage of the tensions with China.
- “As far as Quad is concerned, we feel this is a good arrangement which will ensure that the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) and all other oceans around... there is complete FoN without fear of any other nation singularly trying to dominate the oceans,” Gen. Rawat said at a webinar organised by the U.S. India Strategic Partnership Forum, when asked about the Quad grouping consisting of India, Australia, Japan and the U.S.

Value Added Information

What is Quad?

- Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad) is the informal strategic dialogue between India, USA, Japan and Australia 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.
- In December 2012, Shinzo Abe again floated the concept of Asia's “Democratic Security Diamond” involving Australia, India, Japan and the US to safeguard the maritime commons from the Indian Ocean to the western Pacific.
- In November 2017, India, the US, Australia and Japan gave shape to the long-pending "Quad" Coalition to develop a new strategy to keep the critical sea routes in the Indo-Pacific free of any influence (especially China).

Significance of the grouping:

- Quad is an opportunity for like-minded countries to share notes and collaborate on projects of mutual interest.



- Members share a vision of an open and free Indo-Pacific.
- It is one of the many avenues for interaction among India, Australia, Japan and the US and should not be seen in an exclusive context.

Quad Nations and China:

- **USA:** USA had followed a policy to contain China's increasing influence in East Asia. Therefore, USA sees the coalition as an opportunity to regain its influence in the Indo-Pacific region.
- The US has described China, along with Russia, as a strategic rival in its National Security Strategy, National Defence Strategy and the Pentagon's report on Indo-Pacific Strategy.
- **Australia:** Australia is concerned about China's growing interest in its land, infrastructure and politics, and influence on its universities.
- Taking into account its overwhelming economic dependence on China for prosperity, Australia has continued its commitment to a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership with China.
- **Japan:** In the last decade, Japan has expressed concerns related to China's territorial transgression in the region.
- Trade volume with China remains the key lifeline to the Japanese economy, where net exports contributed exactly one-third of Japan's economic growth since the beginning of 2017.
- Therefore, considering its importance, Japan is balancing its economic needs and territorial concerns with China
- Japan has also agreed to involve in the Belt and Road Initiative by participating in infrastructure programs in third country. In this way, Japan can mitigate Chinese influence in those countries while improving relations with China.
- **India:** In recent years, China's violation of international norms, particularly its construction of military facilities on reclaimed islands in the South China Sea, and its growing military and economic power, pose a strategic challenge to India.



- Considering China's strategic importance, India is carefully balancing China on one hand and the US on the other, by remaining committed to strategic autonomy to China, which has generally proved reassuring to China.
- India has also not permitted Australia to participate in Malabar Trilateral Maritime exercises between India, US and Japan, concerned about what message it would send to China, which is wary of the exercise.
- The recent Mamallapuram summit between President Xi Jinping and PM Modi is a positive development, valued by both sides as key to giving strategic guidance to stakeholders on both sides.

Challenges:

- China's Territorial Claims: China claims that it has historical ownership over nearly the entire region of South China Sea, which gives it the right to manufacture islands. However, the International Court of Arbitration rejected the claim in 2016.
- China's Closeness to ASEAN: The ASEAN countries also have a well-knit relationship with China. The Regional Cooperation Economic Partnership (RCEP) is a recent example of China's increasing influence over ASEAN nations.
- Economic Power of China: Considering the economic might of China and the dependence of Quad nations like Japan and Australia on China, the Quad nations cannot afford to have strained relations with it.
- Convergence among Quad Nations: The nations in the Quad grouping have different aspirations, aims at balancing their own interest. Therefore, coherence in the vision of Quad nation as a grouping is absent.

'60% of Question Hour lost'

- In an attempt to nullify the Opposition parties' objection to the suspension of Question hour, the Rajya Sabha's research wing has pulled out statistics from the past five years which reveal that nearly 60% of the time allotted for the hour has been lost due to disruptions.
- Between 2015 and 2019, the Rajya Sabha held 332 sittings. Of the 332 hours available for Question Hour (one hour per sitting), only 133 hours and 17

minutes were spent raising questions and obtaining oral replies from the concerned Ministers.

Lowest in 2018:

- The lowest time on Question Hour was spent in 2018 when only 22% of the allotted time was utilised for asking and answering questions.
- The best performance in the five years was in 2017 when 57.73% of the available time was used.
- In widespread outrage, Opposition parties had accused the government of using the COVID-19 pandemic as an excuse to do away with all instruments of accountability.

5 CSIR labs got no money from technology transfer

- Some labs of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) — India's premier laboratory research network — have earned no money from technology transfer since at least 2015, according to data by the Council accessed by The Hindu via the Right to Information Act.
- Not all research labs of the CSIR are for technology development and several have a mandate of developing technologies for poorer sections of society.

Unequal distribution

Among the 11 labs under the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research that responded to *The Hindu's* queries, the Advanced Materials and Processes Research Institute received the most money from technology transfer

Institute	Technology fee
Indian Institute of Petroleum	0
Central Building Research Institute	0
Fourth Paradigm Institute	0
Advanced Materials and Processes Research Institute	0
Institute of Microbial Technology	0
Structural Engineering Research Centre	1.07
Institute of Minerals and Mines Technology	5
Central Electronics Engineering Research Institute	169
Central Food and Technological Research Institute	277.2
Central Leather Research Institute	403
Advanced Materials and Processes Research Institute	707
	(in ₹ lakh)

Value Added Information

Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR):

- Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) is the largest research and development (R&D) organisation in India. CSIR has a pan-India presence and has a dynamic network of 38 national laboratories, 39 outreach centres, 3 Innovation Complexes and 5 units.
- Established: September 1942
- Located: New Delhi
- CSIR is funded by the Ministry of Science and Technology and it operates as an autonomous body through the Societies Registration Act, 1860.
- CSIR covers a wide spectrum of streams – from radio and space physics, oceanography, geophysics, chemicals, drugs, genomics, biotechnology and nanotechnology to mining, aeronautics, instrumentation, environmental engineering and information technology.
- It provides significant technological intervention in many areas with regard to societal efforts which include the environment, health, drinking water, food, housing, energy, farm and non-farm sectors.

Organisation Structure:

- President: Prime Minister of India (Ex-officio)
- Vice President: Union Minister of Science and Technology (Ex-officio)
- Governing Body: The Director-General is the head of the governing body.
- The other ex-officio member is the finance secretary (expenditures).
- Other members' terms are of three years.
- CSIR Advisory Board: 15-member body composed of prominent members from respective fields of science and technology.
- Its function is to provide science and technology inputs to the governing body.
- Member terms are are of three years.

Objectives:

- The objectives of the Council are scientific and industrial/applied research of national importance.

The activities include:

- Promotion, guidance and coordination of scientific and industrial research in India including the institution and the financing of specific researchers.
- Establishment and assistance to special institutions or departments of existing institutions for the scientific study of problems affecting particular industries and trade.
- Establishment and award of research studentships and fellowships.
- Utilization of the results of the research conducted under the auspices of the Council towards the development of industries in the country.
- Payment of a share of royalties arising out of the development of the results of research to those who are considered as having contributed towards the pursuit of such research.
- Establishment, maintenance and management of laboratories, workshops, institutes and organisations to further scientific and industrial research.
- Collection and dissemination of information in regard not only to research but to industrial matters generally.
- Publication of scientific papers and a journal of industrial research and development.

Vision & Strategy 2022

- **Vision:** Pursue science which strives for global impact, the technology that enables innovation-driven industry and nurtures trans-disciplinary leadership thereby catalyzing inclusive economic development for the people of India.

Sri Lankan Cabinet appoints panel to draft new Constitution

- The Cabinet has set up an experts' committee to draft Sri Lanka's new Constitution, even as the government gazetted the draft of the 20th Amendment that would reverse the preceding 19th Amendment, a 2015 legislation that clipped certain executive powers of the President.



- The move follows the ruling Rajapaksa brothers' poll pledge to abolish the 19th Amendment, introduced by the former government. After securing a comfortable two-thirds majority in the August general elections, the government took up the promise swiftly.
- In his inaugural address to Parliament on August 20, President Gotabaya Rajapaksa announced that Sri Lanka would draft a new Constitution, jettisoning the 19th Amendment that sought to strengthen Parliament and independent institutions, besides curbing presidential powers.