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Q5(d)

Write about the growing significance of QUAD.

UPSC Civil Services Mains 2021 · PSIR GS 2 · 10 marks · Comparative Politics

Comparative Politics: Nature and major approaches; political economy and political sociology perspectives; limitations of the comparative method.

Core demand of the question

- Write a short note on the growing significance of the Quad
- Keep the answer within a 10-mark length

Revision summary

Quad is Australia, India, Japan, and the United States.

Revival after 2017 and leaders' meetings in 2021 raised its weight.

It aggregates maritime capability without a mutual-defence treaty.

Vaccines and technology are the public-goods face.

India uses it as a hedge, not as an alliance label.

Introduction

The Quadrilateral Security Dialogue joins Australia, India, Japan, and the United States. Its significance grew when leaders met in 2021 and when China loomed larger in the Indo-Pacific. It is a consultative minilateral, not a treaty alliance.

Body**Growth of significance**

- Shinzo Abe's 2007 idea faded after Australia's pullback. 2017 revived the officials' track after Doklam-era China anxiety.
- The 2021 leaders' summits, including a virtual meeting and a later in-person one, raised the political level.
- Vaccines, climate, critical technology, and maritime domain awareness widened the menu beyond naval signalling.

Why it matters

- It is the most visible balancing coalition India will join without calling it an alliance.
- **It links Act East to US and Japanese capability in Waltzian terms:** capability aggregation under anarchy.
- **For ASEAN it is a test:** will Quad respect centrality or split the region?

Limits

- No **Article 5**. India still buys Russian arms and talks strategic autonomy.
- Significance is political and maritime, not a NATO in Asia.

Flow diagram

Quad AU IN JP US -> Leaders 2021
Quad AU IN JP US -> Maritime China hedge
Quad AU IN JP US -> Vaccines tech climate
Leaders 2021 -> Growing significance
Maritime China hedge -> Growing significance
Vaccines tech climate -> Growing significance

Conclusion

The Quad's growing significance is leader-level habit, a China-related Indo-Pacific balance, and a public-goods cover. It matters because India is in it. It is not a military pact.

Facts & figures

Abe 2007

Early Quad idea after the 2004 tsunami core; it lapsed before the later revival.

2017 revival

Senior-official Quad restarted amid a sharper China problem.

2021 leaders' summit

Elevated the grouping from officials to heads of government.

Not NATO

No collective-defence clause; India insists on strategic autonomy inside the consultative format.

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