# Indo-Pacific contest

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Alliances are an important part of the international cooperation system between states. They define trade and military cooperation, and they are important as deterrents for possible external military threats. If there is a disorder in the broader international system, states are compelled to rely on each other in regional cooperation. All alliances have some rules and regulations that all member states must follow.

After the Indian Ocean tsunami in 2004, India, Japan, Australia, and the US created an informal alliance to collaborate on disaster relief efforts. In 2007, the PM of Japan, Shinzo Abe, formalised the alliance as the “Quadrilateral Security Dialogue” or “Quad”. The basic purpose of Quad was to work for a free, open, prosperous, and inclusive development in the Indo-Pacific region. In the early years of its creation, Quad focused on maritime security and threats but later, after the rising Chinese threats in 2017, the member countries of Quad shifted their objectives to create a mechanism that aimed to slowly establish a rules-based international order.

[Dubai-bound flyers offloaded twice from plane over technical fault](https://nation.com.pk/20-Nov-2021/dubai-bound-flyers-offloaded-twice-from-plane-over-technical-fault)

Quad is not a multilateral organisation, like the United Nations or the European Union. Quad has focused on expanding existing agreements between member countries, highlighting their shared values and interests. Additionally, unlike NATO, Quad does not include the provision of collective forms of defence but has chosen to conduct joint military exercises, showing diplomatic unity.

In 2020, the trilateral India-US-Japan Malabar naval exercises expanded to include Australia, marking the first official grouping of Quad since 2017, being the first joint military exercise among the four countries in over a decade. In March 2021, Quad leaders met virtually and later released a joint statement titled ‘The Spirit of the Quad,’ which outlined the group’s approach and objectives.

After the withdrawal of the USA from Afghanistan, policies show that the core focus of the USA is to counter China in all domains. After the 9/11, the USA invaded Afghanistan and started work on counter-terrorism and certain state-building efforts. China utilised that opportunity and started inter-and intra-regional cooperation, mainly with Pakistan. Now bonds between Pakistan and China are very strong and are important for any threat from the US and Quad states. Pakistan was once the US’ close ally in the region.

[26 dengue cases reported in Islamabad in a day](https://nation.com.pk/20-Nov-2021/26-dengue-cases-reported-in-islamabad-in-a-day)

Quad has enhanced the capabilities of India in South Asia. After the end of the Quad summit, India has made a deal of $700 million with Sri Lanka and bought their port to counter China. Australia also ended its deal with France and entered into a new deal with the US. This also shows that Quad countries will increase their influence in the world, and counter China and the US, shifting the West to East focus.

The Quad is trying to cause trouble for China in Asia, and is at the same time itself also facing some retaliation from the rising power. China has increased its foothold in Asia through economic policies, be it in Pakistan, Iran, or Afghanistan that is now controlled by the Taliban.

China has given a tough time to India with regards to the Chabahar Port in Iran, making a $400 billion deal and countering the Indian investment in Afghanistan. India has given a tough time to China in Sri Lanka.

Pakistan was a close ally of the United States during the ‘war on terror’, and at the same time, China turned its back on the US. China now looks very strong in Asia. We may ask as to what extent Quad will be able to counter China and we watch the developments of the Arab countries, including their cooperation with Israel closely. We also know that China and the USA have problems in trade. But then, the US and the United Arab Emirates have close cooperation with India as well. The coming years will show how the countries in our region align with the world’s largest economies.