Expaning the Indo-Pacific Quadrilatral Dialogue

Why in news?

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Japan intends to associate the European powers with Indo-Pacific quadrilateral dialogue.

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What is Indo-Pacific quadrilateral dialogue?

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- It is a closed group consisting of India, Australia, Japan & USA.
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- Japan pioneered the initiative about a decade ago.
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- It perceives this forum as a coalition of maritime democracies.
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- Securing a rules-based global order, liberal trading system and freedom of navigation are believed to the guiding principles.
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What is the need for additional members?

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- The growing power imbalance in Asia due to the rapid rise of China needs a robust alliance to counter balance.
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- Getting the European allies on board is part of that vision.
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- Exploratory talks among the group members are likely on the margins of the upcoming ‘East Asia Summit’ in The Philippines.
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- Japan is already said to be in loop with France and Britain regarding the same.
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What are the implications?

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- **Legacy -** Colonial pasts have helped Britain & France retain networks of political and military influence in the region.
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- The British-led Commonwealth too has many small island states scattered all across the Indo-Pacific.
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- France also has many military facilities in the Indo-Pacific that include the Reunion, Djibouti and the UAE.
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- These networks would immensely benefit the alliance.
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- **Personal Interests -** More than 70% of EU trade passes through the Indo-Pacific.
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- Considering its trade volumes, Germany too has a special interest in the Indo-Pacific navigation channels.
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- Also, there is conderable European interests in the present rush among Asian Navies to modernise their fleets & build submarines.
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What are the advantages for India?

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- This a signal from India that Chinese aggression and animosity serves to push India closer to a rival camp, thus incurring a cost for Beijing.
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- It will deepen New Delhi’s ties with US, Australia and Japan with attendant benefits in diplomatic leverage and burden sharing in defence.
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- Working with America and US allies in the Asia-Pacific will provide New Delhi significant leverage in shaping US policies in Afghanistan-Pakistan to the benefit of India.
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What is India’s Position?

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- India already has a strong bilateral security engagement with most European Powers and maritime security has held high priority.
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- Recently, France and India decided to expand information sharing and explore operational cooperation between their navies.
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- Newer agreements for maritime intelligence sharing, augmenting naval infrastructure and logistical support are being pushed.
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- China’s rapid naval advances in the Indian Ocean only highlight the importance of evolving a comprehensive strategic framework.
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Source: The Indian Express

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