What Quad can learn from NATO’s Blunders

What is the issue?

The mistake of West failing to read Putin's ambitions and downgrading NATO should not be repeated.

What is the background of formation of Quad?

> *Quad refers to the grouping of 4 countries of India, Japan, Australia, and the US*

- Following the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami, the four countries created an informal alliance to collaborate on disaster relief efforts.
- In 2007, then PM of Japan, Shinzo Abe, formalised the alliance as the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue.
- In 2017, with the rising threat of China, the four countries revived the Quad broadening the objectives to establish a rules-based international order.
- **Objectives of Quad**

  - Maritime security recommitting to a shared vision for a free, open, resilient and inclusive Indo-Pacific region
  - Combating the Covid-19 crisis, especially vaccine diplomacy
  - Addressing the risks of climate change
  - Creating an ecosystem for investment in the region
  - Boosting technological innovation

What is NATO?

- NATO is an intergovernmental political and military alliance among 29 independent member countries across North American and European states.
- Headquarters - Brussels, Belgium.
- It was founded in 1949 for the collective defence of its members, linking the security of the United States with its European allies against the Soviet Union.
- **Principle of Collective Defence** – It is enshrined in Article 5 of the Washington treaty which states that an attack against one or several of its members is considered as an attack against all.

What did the West fail to recognise?

- Vladimir Putin’s version of the war is that it was a “special military operation”, similiar to India’s police action against Hyderabad in 1948.
- Putin has had a dramatic rise in the political hierarchy of Moscow, with many of his successes unexplained.
- What should have brought Putin to the notice of the West were his first two achievements

    - the stabilisation and increase in oil production and export that hugely increased the Russian GDP,
    - his successful suppression of the Chechnya revolt.
- Unfortunately, it was ignored in the West which was busy with civilianising and militarily downgrading NATO.
- As Eastern European nations clamoured to join the EU, the western leaders dismantled the military intellectual content of NATO headquarters, reducing NATO forces to a rapid reaction force under the political control of a civilian secretary-general.
- The West, therefore, failed to connect Putin's invasion of Georgia with his continuing vision to fight the regime change in Ukraine in 2015.

What can the Quad learn from this unnecessary war?

- The Indo-Pacific is not continental Europe and war in the Indo-Pacific will be a maritime war fought in accordance with maritime strategy and space assets.
- The rules of engagement are vastly different.
- To call the Quad a "diplomatic grouping" is a catastrophic error.
- Each member of the Quad has a different enmity with China and what binds these nations is their determination to dominate the Indo-Pacific and use maritime power to enforce the rules of governance.

What is the way forward for Quad to function effectively?

- The Quad needs to be represented by the owners of the maritime assets used to obtain domain awareness and a staff with command communications and a depth of intellectual planning.
- The great maritime strength of the Quad is its force of Maritime Patrol Aircraft and with that, a maritime domain awareness can be built up that prevents the Chinese navy the chance to hide in the vastness of the ocean.
- It would be useful to establish an Indo-Pacific situation plot at Visakhapatnam, backed by an elite naval staff, to watch the transformation of China from a regional power into a world-class navy.
- Quad meetings should be headed by naval officers, with diplomatic support, so that they don't produce irrelevant agenda like the recent one that spoke of Covid, climate change and natural disasters.

Reference

1. https://indianexpress.com/article/opinion/columns/quad-putin-nato-blunders-quad-indo-pacific-7825220/

SHANKAR IAS PARLIAMENT
Information is Empowering