



AIR Discussions (October 2nd Week)

ALL INDIA RADIO SUMMARY (9 October -16 October 2020)

SPOTLIGHT (13 October 2020)

GS-II: INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE OF QUAD FOR INDO-PACIFIC REGION

Context: India, US, Japan, Australia hold meet on Indo-Pacific under Quad framework. The foreign ministers of the four-member nations of the "Quad" held talks in Tokyo to further boost their cooperation in the Indo-Pacific.

QUAD

- The framework of Quadrilateral coalition or "Quad", focus on ways to promote peace, security, stability and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific region.
- The 'Indo-Pacific' is an emerging geopolitical construct, which aims to promote peace, security and stability in the region. This particular region is also known as 'Asia-Pacific'.
- Due to changing geopolitical dynamics especially with China and security scenarios in the region; the focus has shifted from land centric to Ocean centric.
- Thus, Indo-Pacific is a kind of 'maritime geopolitical construct' of the 21st century.

Indo-Pacific region

- This region has tremendous potential for economic growth and stability of the region.
- Importance of the Indo-Pacific primarily highlighted by Japanese Prime-Minister Shinzo Abe in 2007 in his speech of '**Confluence of two seas**' at Indian Parliament.
- He also raised the concern of maritime security of this region.
- A major initiative was taken by major countries like the **USA, Japan, India, and Australia** who have discussed and now formulating the '**Quadrilateral Security dialogue**' which also popularly known as 'Quad' for sustainable peace and security in the region.
- These initiating countries have a keen interest in the security, rule of law and tranquillity in the Indo-Pacific region.

QUAD nature and its geopolitical & geo-economic dimensions

- The quadrilateral countries are major **democratic countries** in the region; the alliance of such democratic countries would strengthen democracy and respect for International law.
- Security issues in the region such as human/drugs/arms trafficking, piracy, terrorism/ maritime terrorism, Islamic radicalization etc. will get due importance.
- Cooperation in Indian and Pacific oceans is must to secure sea lines of communication.
- Security threats in the Indian Ocean region, Arabian are impacting sea trade.



India's role

- India can collaborate to strengthen collective security efforts with other Quad Countries by Information and intelligence sharing, maritime exercises, logistic exchanges, a technological partnership to build Science and technology capabilities in Defence Sector, Space initiative, Joint patrolling, Anti-piracy operations, Securing International shipping lanes to maintain security and to build peace in Indo-Pacific as well as to serve India's national interest.
- India has also signed a '**logistic exchange agreement**' also known as LEMOA, MLEA and ACSA with the USA, Australia and Japan respectively. Which will be beneficial to Indian forces for its presence, interoperability and logistical support in the region.
- India can strengthen its military capabilities and improve the interoperability of forces by doing bilateral military exercises with quad countries.
- India has been doing bilateral military exercises with Quad countries.
- India can be a collective partner in research and development of defence technologies, Cyber and space capabilities.

Transition and concept of Indo-Pacific

- Now the geopolitical transition has taken place from the term 'Asia-Pacific' to the 'Indo-Pacific'.
- The earlier Asia-Pacific region used to consider from the Strait of Malacca to the Western Pacific.
- Indo-Pacific is comparatively broad as it is the confluence of the Indian and Pacific Ocean.
- India considers it from the Eastern shores of Africa to the West coast of America due to which its strategic geography is too vast.
- It means the area covers the all littoral countries of the Indian and Pacific Ocean.

Transition timeline

- The concept of the Indo-Pacific can be traced back to the 1920s, to the term 'Indopazifischen Raum' coined and elucidated by 'Karl Haushofer'.
- In 1944, 'Nikolas Spykman' termed the Indo-Pacific as the 'circumferential maritime highway which links the whole area together in terms of sea power.'
- The transition from the Asia-Pacific to Indo-Pacific first officially started when Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe visited India in 2007.
- He proposed the formation of '**The arc of freedom and prosperity**' in broader Asia, comprising an immense network, incorporating the United States of America and Australia, alluding to the **formation of a 'broader Asia'**.
- In 2011, Hillary Clinton, former US Secretary of State wrote about the significant connection between Indian and Pacific Oceans and announced the **United States' pivot to this region**.
- In 2013, Australian defence white paper 2013, officially used the term Indo-Pacific.
- In 2018, at **Shangri-la dialogue**, Indian prime minister Narendra Modi used term Indo-Pacific and in November 2019, he proposed an 'Indo-Pacific Ocean's Initiative'.

Conclusion:

- The promotion and respect of International law is the ultimate aim of Quad.
- Quad 2.0 aims to maintain peace and prosperity in the region. It also has economic, geopolitical and strategic aspects.



- The emergence of Quad was clearly for the Humanitarian Assistance and disaster relief operations in the Indo-Pacific region.
- In contemporary times, it is seen from the perspective of '**Balance of power in the Indo-pacific region**'. As India and other powers are facing assertions of China in the region.
- The Quad, **not informal stage**, it is still in informal stage however talks, discussions and debates are going on between the four countries on track 1, 1.5 and Track 2 dialogues.

<https://thekootneeti.in/2020/09/18/indo-pacific-quad-and-india/#:~:text=Indo%2DPacific%20is%20a%20geopolitical,and%20prosperity%20in%20the%20region.>

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/defence/india-us-japan-australia-hold-meet-on-indo-pacific-under-quad-framework/articleshow/78323639.cms?from=mdr>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Quadrilateral_Security_Dialogue

National news

First Har Ghar Jal State

Context: Goa becomes first Har Ghar Jal State in the country by providing tap water connection to every rural household.

- The state has provided tap water connection to two lakh 30 thousand rural households.
- Goa's achievement is an example for other States to emulate and ensure every rural home gets tap connection.
- The state is also planning for a sensor-based service delivery monitoring system to monitor the functionality of the water supply.

Har Ghar Jal Scheme

- This scheme was initiated by the Government of India in 2019 to provide tap water to every rural household by 2024.
- Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman announced the scheme in 2019 union budget

<http://newsonair.com/News?title=Goa-becomes-first-Har-Ghar-Jal-State-in-country-by-providing-tap-water-connection-to-every-rural-household&id=401823>

SVAMITVA scheme

Context: PM Modi launched the physical distribution of property cards under SVAMITVA scheme.

- 6.62 lakh villages to be covered under the Scheme in a phased manner over four years
- It enables around one lakh property holders to download their Property Cards through the SMS link delivered on their mobile phones.
- It would be followed by the physical distribution of the Property Cards by the respective State governments.
- It paves the way for using the property as a financial asset by villagers for taking loans and other financial benefits.



- It is the first time that such a large-scale exercise involving the most modern means of technology is being carried out to benefit millions of rural property owners.

About SVAMITVA

- SVAMITVA is a Central Sector Scheme of the Ministry of Panchayati Raj, which was launched by the Prime Minister on National Panchayati Raj Day, 24th April 2020.
- The scheme aims to provide the 'record of rights' to village household owners in rural areas and issue Property Cards.
- The Scheme is being implemented across the country in a phased manner over four years (2020-2024) and would eventually cover around 6.62 lakh villages of the country.
- About 1 lakh villages in the States of Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Uttarakhand and Karnataka, and few border villages of Punjab & Rajasthan, along with the establishment of Continuous Operating System (CORS) stations' network across Punjab & Rajasthan, are being covered in the Pilot phase (2020-21).
- These States have finalised the digital property card format and the villages to be covered for the drone-based survey.
- States of Punjab and Rajasthan have signed MoU with Survey of India for the establishment of CORS network to assist in future drone flying activities.

Digitalising Land Records, Empowering Rural India

PM Modi Launches Physical Distribution of Property Cards under SVAMITVA Scheme



- "Record of Rights" accorded to village landowners through issuance of Property cards
- Being implemented across the country in a phased manner over 4 years (2020-2024) to cover approx. 6.62 lakh villages
- Nearly 1 lakh Property holders from the following 763 villages can now download their Property cards (physical copies)

221 Haryana	02 Karnataka	100 Maharashtra	50 Uttarakhand
44 Madhya Pradesh	346 Uttar Pradesh		

Digitalising Land Records, Empowering Rural India

PM Modi Launches Physical Distribution of Property Cards under SVAMITVA Scheme



- Drone surveying technology used for demarcating inhabitant land
- Land ownership protected through issuance of Property Card to household owners
- Enhanced credibility & induced greater devolution of funds to Panchayats
- It will provide a basis for planning of rural areas with a view to provide better amenities & living conditions



E-GRAMSWARAJ

- Prepare & execute Gram Panchayat Development Plans
- Real time monitoring & accountability
- Major step towards digitization down to Gram Panchayat level



<http://newsonair.com/News?title=PM-Modi-to-launch-physical-distribution-of-property-cards-under-SVAMITVA-scheme-tomorrow&id=401827>

Centre permits export of Bangalore Rose Onions & Krishnapuram Onions

Context: Government has permitted export of Bangalore Rose Onions and Krishnapuram Onions of up to ten thousand metric tonnes each.

- It has been allowed for the period up to 31st of March next year to empower farmers and increasing their income.
- **Bangalore rose onion**, locally called gulabi eerulli, is a variety of onion grown in and around Bangalore in Karnataka. It got the **Geographical Indication tag** in 2015

<http://newsonair.com/News?title=Centre-permits-export-of-Bangalore-Rose-Onions-%26-Krishnapuram-Onions&id=401777>

PM Modi pays tributes to Lok Nayak JP Narayan, Nanaji Deshmukh on their birth anniversary

Context: Tributes paid to the socialist leader and freedom fighter Lok Nayak Jayaprakash Narayan on his birth anniversary.

Lok Nayak Jayaprakash Narayan

- He worked to protect democracy and fight corruption.
- He called youth to fight against injustice and atrocities
- He was a student leader.

Nanaji Deshmukh

- He was a great social worker and visionary leader.
- He devoted his entire life in the service of the nation.
- He was compassionate for the downtrodden and had a passion for rural development.
- He was Bharat Ratna
- The great Nanaji Deshmukh was one of Loknayak JP's most devout followers.
- He worked tirelessly to popularise JP's thoughts and ideals.

<http://newsonair.com/Main-News-Details.aspx?id=401909>

Bangladesh cabinet approves capital punishment for rape

Context: Bangladesh Cabinet approved a draft law to include the death penalty as the highest punishment for rape.

- Bangladesh has been witnessing widespread protests over the last several days against the gang rape of a woman in Noakhali which came to light on 4th of October.

<http://newsonair.com/News?title=Bangladesh-cabinet-approves-capital-punishment-for-rape&id=401989>



National Super Computing Mission

Context: National Institute of Technology, Tiruchirappalli has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC), Pune for installing a state of the art supercomputer in the process of becoming part of the National Super Computing Mission of the Government of India.

National Super Computing Mission

- A total of 10 Centrally Funded Institutions have been inducted into NSM including IISc, Bangalore and seven IITs in addition to NIT, Trichy.
- The objective of the NSM is to empower technology institutions with high-performance computing capabilities that can be used for solving socially relevant, computationally intensive problems.

<http://newsonair.com/News?title=NIT-Tiruchirappalli-signs-MoU-with-C-DAC-Pune-for-installing-state-of-art-super-computer&id=401994>

Operation Green

Context: Ministry of Food Processing and Ministry of Railways directly providing a subsidised rate of 50 per cent in freight for transportation of perishable surplus agriculture produce like Oranges and Vegetables by Railway.

- Under this scheme, 50 per cent subsidy is given to the farmers for transporting the surplus produce of agricultural commodities like oranges and vegetables to the markets by rail.

Operation Green

- It is being implemented as part of Atmanirbhar Abhiyan under the aegis of Union Ministry of Food Processing.
- 50 per cent subsidy is given for cold chain storage of agricultural commodities.
- However, to get this subsidy, farmers have to attach self-certified documents online on 'Sampada' portal of the Ministry of Food Processing.
- Operation Greens is a project approved by the Ministry of Food Processing Industries with the target to stabilise the supply of tomato, onion and potato crops (TOP crops) in India, as well as to ensure their availability around the country, year-round without price volatility.
- It was first introduced in the 2018-2019 Union budget of India and has been allocated Rs 500 crores to promote farmer producers' organisations (FPOs), agri-logistics, processing facilities and professional management.

<http://newsonair.com/News?title=Operation-Green-provides-50-pc-subsidy-on-transportation-of-eligible-crops-including-storage&id=402111>

ZojiLa Tunnel

Context: Union Minister Nitin Gadkari initiated Asia's longest ZojiLa Tunnel works.

- At a height of 3000 meters in the Peerpanjal mountain range, construction of Zojila tunnel is a historic necessity to provide all-weather road connectivity between Ladakh and the rest of the world.
- The National Highway Infrastructure Development Corporation Limited (NHIDCL) and the contractor has to complete the construction before 2024.



- ZojiLa is a challenging and dangerous route, especially during the winters. This pass on national Highway One gets closed nearly six months in a year.
- The tunnel will have all necessary safety features and avalanche protection structures, catch dams, snow galleries and deflector dams to give all-weather and safe road connectivity.
- The Rs. 4,430 crore Tunnel will reduce the travel time in the stretch from three and a half hours to just 15 minutes.
- ZojiLa tunnel will be a signature infrastructure in Ladakh region.
- Along with the socio-economic development of the region, the tunnel also provides facility for swift movement of armed forces from other parts of the country as and when required.

<http://newsonair.com/News?title=Nitin-Gadkari-to-initiate-simultaneous-blasting-for-ZojiLa-Tunnel-in-J%26K%2c-Ladakh&id=402208>

International Solar Alliance

Context: India has been re-elected as the President of the International Solar Alliance (ISA) and France as the Co-President for a term of two years.

- Four new Vice-Presidents were also chosen to represent the four regions of ISA.
- The assembly also approved the initiatives of the ISA Secretariat in institutionalizing ISA's engagement with the private and public corporate sector through the **Coalition for Sustainable Climate Action**.
- Solar energy is already contributing around 2.8 per cent of global electricity and if trends were to continue, by 2030 solar will become the most important source of energy for electricity production in large part of the world.

International Solar Alliance

- It is an alliance of 121 countries initiated by India, most of them being sunshine countries, which lie either completely or partly between the Tropic of Cancer and the Tropic of Capricorn.
- The primary objective of the alliance is to work for efficient consumption of solar energy to reduce dependence on fossil fuels.
- The alliance is a treaty-based inter-governmental organization.
- Countries that do not fall within the Tropics can join the alliance and enjoy all benefits as other members, with the exception of voting rights.
- After the United Nations, it is the largest grouping of states worldwide.

<http://newsonair.com/News?title=India-gets-re-elected-as-President-of-International-Solar-Alliance&id=402177>

MACS-6478

Context: New wheat variety MACS-6478 helps farmers in Maharashtra village to double their yield

- The wheat variety was developed by Scientists from Agharkar Research Institute, an autonomous institute of the Department of Science and Technology.
- The farmers of the village in Koregaon tehsil of Satara district in Maharashtra are now getting a yield of 45 to 60 quintal per hectare with the new variety as against earlier average yield ranging 25 to 30 quintal per hectare.
- The newly developed common wheat or bread wheat, also called high yielding **Aestivum**, matures in 110 days and is resistant to most races of leaf and stem rust.



<http://newsonair.com/News?title=New-wheat-variety-MACS-6478-helps-farmers-in-Maharashtra-village-to-double-their-yield&id=402153>

UN Human Rights Council

Context: Pakistan along with China, Russia and Cuba have been elected on the United Nations Human Rights Council despite their abysmal human rights records.

- United States slammed the UN body tasked with defending human rights for this election.
- A coalition of human rights groups from Europe, the US and Canada called on UN member states to oppose the election of China, Pakistan, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Cuba and Uzbekistan, saying their human rights records make them unqualified.

United Nations Human Rights Council

- The United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) is a United Nations body whose mission is to promote and protect human rights around the world.
- The UNHRC has 47 members elected for staggered three-year terms on a regional group basis.
- The headquarters of UNHRC is in Geneva, Switzerland.
- The UNHRC investigates allegations of breaches of human rights in United Nations member states and addresses important thematic human rights issues such as freedom of association and assembly, freedom of expression, freedom of belief and religion, women's rights, LGBT rights, and the rights of racial and ethnic minorities.
- The UNHRC was established by the UN General Assembly on 15 March 2006 to replace the UN Commission on Human Rights that had been strongly criticised for allowing countries with poor human rights records to be members.
- The UNHRC works closely with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and engages the UN's special procedures.

<http://newsonair.com/News?title=US-slams-UN-Human-Rights-Council-after-Pakistan%2c-China%2c-Russia-%26-Cuba-win-seats&id=402211>

National Authority for Recycling of Ships

Context: The government has notified Director General of Shipping as National Authority for Recycling of Ships.

- DG Shipping is designated as apex authority under the Recycling of Ships Act, 2019 for the ship recycling industry of the country and the office of the national authority will be set up in Gandhinagar, Gujarat.
- As an apex body, DG Shipping is authorised to administer, supervise and monitor all activities relating to ship recycling.

<http://newsonair.com/News?title=Govt--notifies-DG-Shipping-as-National-Authority-for-Recycling-of-Ships&id=402253>