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**PAKISTAN, CHINA
TO LAUNCH 3
NEW CORRIDORS
BESIDES CPEC**

*Do Not Blow Up
The Dam, says
Zelensky*

**Japan and Lithuania To
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**INDIAN, US
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Russia-Ukraine Conflict: A Glance

REUTERS <https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/russia-hits-ukraine-homes-evacuates-kherson-warns-escalation-2022-10> Saturday, October 29, 2022.

AP News. https://apnews.com/article/putin-europe-government-and-politics-c541449bf88999c117b033d2de08d26d?utm_medium=40digest.intl.20221028.carousel&utm_source=email&utm_content=&utm_campaign=campaign

SCENARIO

- Russian forces are digging in for the "heaviest of battles" in the strategic southern region of Kherson, a senior Ukrainian official said, as the Kremlin prepares to defend the largest city under its control in Ukraine.
- Without providing any evidence, the Kremlin publicly alleged that Ukraine was planning to detonate an explosive device mixed with radioactive material on its own territory with the intention of blaming Moscow. A few days ago, the Russian Minister of Defense, Sergei Shoigu, reached out to several NATO counterparts, including the U.S., United Kingdom, and France. The Russian Defense Ministry said its forces were being prepared to operate in conditions of radioactive contamination due to threats of this purported attack.
- On the other hand, Western countries also accused Russia on Monday of plotting to use a threat of a bomb laced with nuclear material (using such a device, colloquially called a "dirty bomb") as a pretext for escalation in Ukraine.
- Earlier, Russia had notified the United States about planned annual exercises of its nuclear forces, which Washington said lowers the risk of miscalculation at a time of "reckless" Russian nuclear rhetoric.
- On Oct 27, 2022 Russian President Vladimir Putin while speaking at a conference of international policy experts, denied having any intentions of using nuclear weapons in Ukraine but described the conflict there as part of alleged efforts by the West to secure its global domination, which he insisted are doomed to fail.
- Russia continues to push the nuclear-weapons question, saying that the accelerated deployment of modernized U.S. B61 tactical nuclear weapons on Europe's NATO bases lowers the "nuclear threshold."

BACKGROUND

Ukraine's ultimate goal is Kherson -- a gateway city to both Kremlin-annexed Crimea and the Sea of Azov shoreline, which fell under full Russian control during the war. The Ukrainians have about six weeks before the winter freeze makes any further advances much more difficult to pull off. But the Russians are digging in. Russia has intensified its strikes against Ukraine's electricity industry. Before Putin's 2022 invasion of Ukraine, Russia's interventions in Georgia in 2008 and Crimea in 2014, Russian forces simply overpowered an undermatched and surprised adversary. The creation of separatist pro-Russian beachheads in the Donetsk and Luhansk regions meanwhile gave Russia a means of trying to influence Kyiv's future political orientation—and preclude NATO from considering Ukraine for membership. Today, with the war in Ukraine moving in an increasingly dangerous and unpredictable direction. Detonation of a dirty bomb has been a concern for decades, the fear has centered on a terrorist obtaining highly radioactive materials from a hospital for medical imaging or other scientific purposes and packing it around an explosive charge. Kosovo war did have reports of use of depleted Uranium bullets and shells, which has resulted in increase in cases of diseases as an aftermath of war.[1]

[1] <https://www.dw.com/en/uranium-risks-haunt-kosovo-survivors/a-16366645#>

COMMENTS

- The Russian Ukrainian conflict has exposed the risks and dangers of managing a crisis in a world in which nuclear weapons are a significant part of strategy.
- A 'dirty bomb,' is a device that uses explosives to scatter radioactive waste, doesn't have the devastating effect of a nuclear explosion, but could expose broad areas to radioactive contamination. Though the dirty bomb claims are the next step on the escalation ladder, but, of course, anything nuclear-related makes people nervous.
- The war in Ukraine has indeed highlighted certain fragilities in nuclear deterrence. Policy makers will need to articulate how the concept works to manage escalation thresholds as well as how it provides options that can counter the Russian approach to coercion.



Source: NDTV

Do Not Blow Up The Dam, says Zelensky.

TIME, <https://time.com/6224434/russia-dirty-bomb-ukraine/>

BACKGROUND

- Ukraine says the Russians planted explosives in the Nova Kakhova dam, which could send a deluge down the Dnipro in the direction of Kherson.
- The Russians say the Ukrainians want to destroy it. General Sergei Surovikin, Russia's new chief commander in Ukraine, warned last week that Ukraine could attack the dam and imperil his troops, many of whom are retreating from Kherson. The retreat is just one of several embarrassing military setbacks for Moscow.
- This comes as Kyiv's forces prepare to push Moscow's troops from Kherson in one of the war's most important battles, as the Ukrainian forces are advancing near dam on west bank of Dnipro. If an attack on the dam did take place, it would flood areas around the southern region of Kherson, cut water supplies to people living there and threaten the cooling system for Europe's largest nuclear plant.
- The vast Dnipro bisects Ukraine and is several kilometres wide in places. Bursting the dam could send a wall of water flooding settlements below it, towards Kherson, which Ukrainian forces hope to recapture in a major advance. Bursting the dam could send a wall of water flooding settlements below it, towards Kherson, which Ukrainian forces hope to recapture in a major advance. It would also wreck the canal system that irrigates much of southern Ukraine, including Crimea, which Moscow seized in 2014.

COMMENT

The alarm has echoes of a World War II disaster at another huge dam further upriver, which Ukrainian historians said was dynamited by Soviet sappers as their troops retreated, causing floods that swept away villages and killed thousands of people. Russia-Ukraine conflict has seen involvement of all types of conventional as well as non-conventional elements of warfare being used for coercion and steps of escalation ladder .

Raksha Mantri Invites US Companies to Set Up Manufacturing Units in India & Develop Technology Collaborations to Create a Global Supply Chain Free from Vulnerabilities

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1869472>

Raksha Mantri (RM) Shri Rajnath Singh has invited US companies to set up manufacturing units in India and develop technology collaborations with Indian industries to create a global supply chain free from vulnerabilities and uncertainties. He was addressing a seminar jointly organised by US-India Business Council (UIBC) and Society of Indian Defence Manufacturers (SIDM) as part of the 12th DefExpo in Gandhinagar, Gujarat on October 20, 2022. The seminar was organised on the theme 'New Frontiers in US-India Defence Cooperation: Next Generation Technology, Innovation & Make in India'.

Shri Rajnath Singh stated that the Indian defence industry has been witnessing transformative reforms which have created a conducive environment for the growth of the Indian Industry through transparency, predictability and institutionalisation of several measures for Ease of Doing Business. The RM emphasised that the path to 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat' is a comprehensive set of policy frameworks that seeks to build indigenous technological and production capacity & capability with cooperation, participation and collaborations with reputed institutions and Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs) from friendly nations. He said that the idea is to manufacture in India for the Indian market as well as export to the friendly countries, i.e., 'Make in India, Make for the World'.

"India looks forward to collaborating for a secure and resilient global supply chain for the free world to ensure uninterrupted and reliable access to defence equipment and other strategic materials for our nation and our partners, including the US. As India's defence base grows, private sector companies from the US can explore the vast potential for 'Creating in India' and 'Exporting from India'," Shri Rajnath Singh said.

He added, "We are delighted to work with US, our valued partner, to strengthen our commercial and strategic relationship and to attract US investment for creating a high-technology defence production ecosystem in India. For India, collaboration with US companies would be an important strategic force multiplier, apart from being wealth and job creator."

Shri Rajnath Singh termed the easing of FDI regulations and introduction of Buy (Global-Manufacturer in India) in Defence Acquisition Procedure 2020 as an invitation for the US businesses to participate in the opportunities offered by the Indian defence industry. He asserted that US companies can now set up manufacturing facilities, individually or in partnership with Indian companies, through a Joint Venture or technology agreement etc., to capitalise on the 'Make in India' opportunity. He exuded confidence that the firms will find India to be an attractive investment destination for defence manufacturing.

The RM described the project agreement to co-develop Air-Launched UAVs, under the auspices of the India-US Defence Technology and Trade Initiative, as a welcome development. He stated that industries from both sides can explore additional Defence Technology and Trade Initiative (DTTI) projects, such as a counter unmanned aerial systems and an Intelligence, Surveillance, Target Acquisition and Reconnaissance platform.

Stating that the US provides a conducive environment for talent to perform and has reaped the benefits thereof, he urged US business and technology leaders to collaborate with Indian industries to create a similar growth miracle in India. He stressed that developing new avenues to work together at the industrial, scientific and academic levels will be key to ensuring that India-US defence ties remain dynamic.

COMMENTS

DefExpo 2022 has set the tone for the increased participation of the Indian private sector industry in enhancing the indigenous defence manufacturing ecosystem. The ambitious targets being envisioned by the leadership would realistically require collaborations with leading global defence technology manufacturers. The participation of the RM in the special seminar held on the sidelines of the DefExpo highlighted the importance of engaging with US companies to achieve these.



Source: Spinonews

The Defence Minister in his talk brought out the salient points of the evolved Indian policy of Atmanirbhar Bharat and the incentives for foreign investors. This included not just making it for the Indian market but also exporting to the global market. As is evident, Indian government is seeking partnerships and investments not only in defence manufacturing but also in R&D.

INDO-US

The initial scepticism of the Make in India initiatives has given way to ever more entities looking at partnering with Indian industry as was evident from the large foreign participation at the DefExpo 2022. This bodes well for the indigenous defence sector. The US has also been more accepting of these changes in the highly controlled defence equipment landscape. The US defence firm Lockheed Martin has plans to establish MRO and Multi-Role Fighter Aircraft facilities in the country and integrate Indian companies into its global supply chain for platforms such as the C-130J transport aircraft, MH-60R maritime helicopter and the F-21 fighter aircraft. Indian industry will also be part of an agreement under the India-US DTTI to co-develop air-launched UAVs and explore opportunities in additional DTTI projects, such as counter unmanned aerial systems and an Intelligence, Surveillance, Target Acquisition and Reconnaissance (ISTAR) platform.

As India embarks more confidently on the path to more 'Make in India', the US participation would be critical. However, the future success would be dependent on how the bureaucratic red tape is handled by both sides, how well the Indian companies absorb the technologies and processes and how well the global markets respond to the ensuing products.



Source: Industry-Update

Indian, US Militaries Conduct ‘Tiger Triumph’ Exercise

<https://indiannavy.nic.in/content/tiger-triumph-2022>

<https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/india-indispensable-partner-for-stability-in-south-asia-us-general-101666273341249.html>

The second edition of the Indo-US Tri-Services Amphibious HADR Exercise, 'Tiger Triumph 2022' was conducted at Visakhapatnam from 18 to 20 October 2022. The aim of the exercise was to consolidate interoperability and validate procedures for conducting amphibious HADR operations in the aftermath of a natural calamity. The three-day exercise was a tabletop simulation during which Indian and US, military and diplomatic, representatives coordinated a joint response to provide disaster relief services to a notional third country hit by a super-cyclone. This year's exercise involved 50 combined participants, and was focused on staff planning, with an emphasis on processes for streamlining diplomatic, operational and logistical coordination, according to a US readout.

"Tiger Triumph is a perfect illustration of how the US and India are working together to strengthen security in the Indo-Pacific," said Jennifer Larson, US consul general in Hyderabad. Major General Christopher McPhillips, director of strategic planning and policy at US Indo-Pacific Command, speaking after the exercise said, "I am encouraged by the team's work on increasing interoperability and exercising bilateral agreements to develop and validate a multinational command and control model for humanitarian assistance in this region," he said. He further added, "India is an indispensable partner and leader in advancing stability and security throughout South Asia and the greater Indian Ocean Region."

COMMENTS

The 'Tiger Triumph' exercise was the second collaboration between the Indian and US militaries to coordinate disaster relief in the region. The first such exercise – also conducted at Visakhapatnam – was held over nine days in November 2019 and featured more than 500 US Marines and sailors, with approximately 1,200 Indian sailors, soldiers, and airmen. Tiger Triumph marked the third time in 2022 when the Indian and US militaries worked together in Visakhapatnam. In February, the US joined India and more than 30 other countries for India's bi-annual Milan exercise – the first time the US participated in the drill. In August, the USS Frank Cable visited Visakhapatnam, during which American sailors joined Indian counterparts for briefings. Such exercises are essential for Indo-US defence partnerships as the armed forces of the two nations operate together, understand each other's protocols and work to sort out interoperability issues.

Pakistan Removed From FATF Grey List On Terror Financing

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/world/pakistan/pakistan-removed-from-fatf-grey-list-on-terror-financing/articleshow/95021064.cms>

The global money laundering and financing watchdog has removed Pakistan from its list of countries under “increased monitoring” after four years. Pakistan has been on the “grey list” of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) since 2018 because of “strategic counter-terrorist financing-related deficiencies”. Islamabad will have to continue its work to improve mechanisms for countering terrorist financing and money laundering.



Source: Pakistan Politico

COMMENTS

Pakistan, being on the greylist, it was increasingly become difficult for Pakistan to get financial aid from IMF, the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the EU, thus further enhancing problems for the cash-strapped country.

The removal from the FATF list may be good news for Pakistan but for India and the world community, it will remain important to keep an eye on Pakistan’s ability to curb the widespread activities of terrorist groups to both raise finances and acquire assets. In the past, Pakistan’s double-speak has been exposed repeatedly on the world stage. Pakistan arrested and prosecuted several LeT leaders, including the group’s founder Hafiz Saeed and Sajid Mir, one of the terrorists who helped plan and execute the 2008 Mumbai Attacks, in the weeks before crucial FATF meetings in recent years. These actions were taken to influence deliberations at FATF meetings and there is no evidence that Pakistan is undertaking or has mounted any sustained drive to freeze assets and stop fundraising by terrorist groups such as LeT and JeM that maintain impressive countrywide networks. These networks may currently be dormant, but they can be reactivated whenever the terror groups, or their benefactors in Pakistan’s military, want to do so. India has called for the international community to continue pressing Pakistan to take credible, verifiable and irreversible action against terrorists and their financing networks.

For India though, the presence of UN-proscribed terror groups and their leaders in Pakistan remains a major concern.

Pakistan, China Decide To Execute \$10bn Railway Project

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/world/pakistan/pakistan-china-decide-to-execute-10bn-railway-project/articleshow/95139077.cms>

Pakistan and China have agreed to execute the Mainline-1 (ML-1) railway project at an estimated cost of \$10 billion. Joint Coordination Committee (JCC) decided to undertake business-to-business deals under the CPEC. Pakistan will also request for the rollover of deposits and rescheduling of its \$27 billion debt. Pakistan assured China of taking several initiatives for the security of Chinese working under CPEC projects. Both sides have agreed to expand their cooperation in information technology and it was decided that Chinese companies will establish research centres in Pakistan to explore new avenues in this sector.

Pakistan, China To Launch 3 New Corridors Besides CPEC: Report

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/world/pakistan/pakistan-china-to-launch-3-new-corridors-besides-cpec-report/articleshow/95037258.cms>



Source: Xihuanet

Pakistan and China have decided to jointly launch three new projects in addition to the existing multi-billion-dollar China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) as the all-weather allies seek to ramp up bilateral ties in various sectors, including agriculture, health and science and technology. The first will focus on agricultural environment, food security and green development and the second will help Pakistan get efficiency in the medical field, while the third will boost Pakistan's IT industry, it said. The report said that the formal launching of the projects could take place during the next month's visit of Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif to China who has been invited by Chinese President Xi Jinping.



Source: Daily Pioneer



Source: Economic Times

COMMENTS

The new corridors would become sources of strengthening Pakistan-China ties and will provide a new unshakable bond of the proximity of the two nations. The scope of Pakistan-China friendship and cooperation would help Pakistan to overcome its economic complexities.

India has objected to CPEC as it is being laid through Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK). India had also opposed the proposed extension of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor to Afghanistan. Any such actions by any party directly infringe on India's sovereignty and territorial integrity. Such activities are inherently illegal, illegitimate and unacceptable to India. India's position on CPEC has been clear and consistent. The CPEC passes through parts of the Union Territories of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh which are under illegal and forcible occupation of Pakistan and hence impinges on the issue of sovereignty and territorial integrity of India. These projects in a disputed land are not advisable as per International norms. In the event of a military confrontation between with India and Pakistan or if China decides to come to Islamabad's aid in an India-Pakistan war, CPEC infrastructure will facilitate likely deployment of Chinese troops rapidly to India's western front.

India's Military Revamp Is Angering Nepal

<https://foreignpolicy.com/2022/10/20/india-nepal-military-gurkha-recruitment-agnipath/><https://foreignpolicy.com/2022/10/20/india-nepal-military-gurkha-recruitment-agnipath/>- 20 October 2022.

BACKGROUND

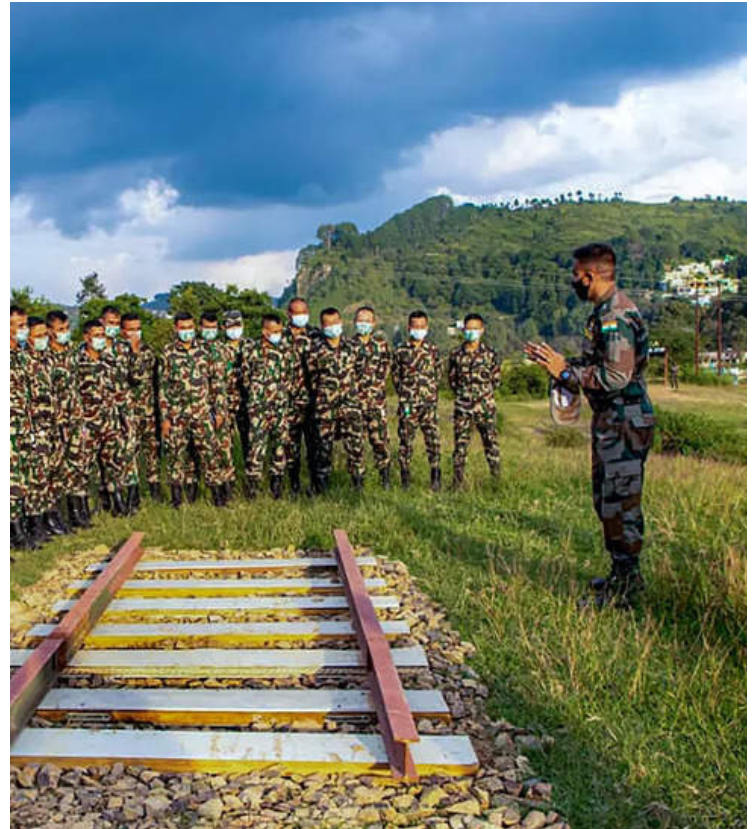
A new recruitment system could endanger Gurkha regiments - the "umbilical bond" between the two countries.

When India revamped its military recruitment program in June, protests erupted across the country. The repercussions of Agnipath are also being felt beyond India's borders, in the tiny Himalayan nation of Nepal.

Every year, hundreds of Nepali men join the armies of India and Britain - in an arrangement dating to the early 19th century. They are called Gurkhas, an umbrella term for Himalayan ethnic groups known for their fighting skill.

Today, there are about 30,000 Gurkhas serving in the Indian Army and the total number of veterans of the force exceeds 100,000. The remittances Gurkhas send home have given Nepal an economic cushion during difficult times. Their contribution to Nepal's GDP is comparable to that of the country's fishing or transport sectors, at around 3.7 percent in 2015.

The salaries and pensions of Gurkhas serving in India alone total more than Nepal's own defence budget.



Source: The Economic Times

Just as in India, there are now worries in Nepal that most of the 1,400 or so Gurkha recruits who join the Indian Army each year will be shortchanged by Agnipath. "The concern is that these young lads will return in a few years ... without the wherewithal of what to do next in their lives. They can go into alcoholism, drugs and even join some sort of insurgency as they will be trained in combat." Nishchal Nath Pandey, Director at the Center for South Asian Studies in Kathmandu, wrote in an email to Foreign Policy.

REGIONAL SCAN: NEPAL

Earlier this month, Nepal's government said that it would temporarily halt recruitment of Gurkhas to the Indian Army. Nepal holds parliamentary elections in November and its new government will make the final call. Nepal's reluctance to get on board with India's new military scheme could be another setback in the already complicated relationship between these two neighbours. It has also resurrected a longstanding debate about whether Nepali citizens should even be fighting for other countries in the first place.

(Nepal also wants to renegotiate the 1947 tripartite agreement to have a bigger say in Gurkha recruitment. Britain and India control candidate selection for their respective forces and Nepal has long sought a more active role in the process. A few years ago, Britain announced - without consulting Nepal - that it would open up Gurkha recruitment to Nepali women. And Nepal was not involved in any discussions preceding Agnipath. That has led to Nepal feeling sidelined. It wants to have a certain grip in controlling migration.



Source: The Kathmandu Post

COMMENTS

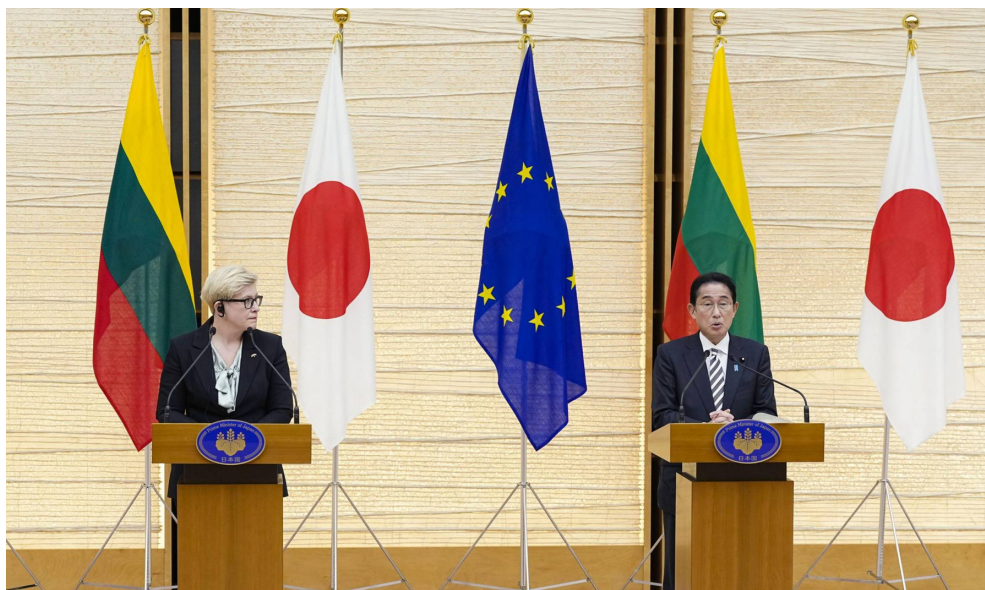
India and Nepal have cultural, religious and linguistic commonalities and share an open border. But many disagreements have cropped up in recent years. However, throughout the ups and downs, the Gurkha connection has acted as a stabilizing force between India and Nepal. Considering the Gurkha bond between India and Nepal, Nepal will eventually take a positive decision on this matter.

Japan and Lithuania To Set Up Bilateral Framework On Security Issues

<https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2022/10/27/national/politics-diplomacy/japan-lithuania-framework/>

Japan and Lithuania said Wednesday they will set up a bilateral framework to discuss security issues, amid Russia's prolonged war in Ukraine as well as China's growing military and economic clout in the Indo-Pacific region.

After their meeting in Tokyo, Prime Minister Fumio Kishida and his Lithuanian counterpart Ingrida Simonyte issued a joint statement in which they vowed to strengthen ties between the two nations by sharing knowledge of international security issues under the new dialogue framework, although without showing any time frame.



Source: The Japan Times

COMMENTS

Lithuania is an East European country which shares border with the Kaliningrad Oblast, a city which is the westernmost federal subject of Russia. Considering the nine month old Russia-Ukraine war which has already shaken the global security environment, Lithuania can't afford to disregard the prevailing scenario. A point of discontent was already observed between Russia and Lithuania when the latter implemented sanctions on Russia by halting the freight trains and trucks carrying banned goods from Russia to Kaliningrad via its territory. In response to such behavior Russia threatened Lithuania with several countermeasures mostly in the economic and energy sectors. The fear also persists in relation to the use of military action from the Russian side.

In the above backdrop, Lithuania is seen engaging in developing strategic relationship with major powers of the world. The Prime Minister of Lithuania met her Japanese counterpart Fumio Kishida on 26 October 2022 to establish a bilateral framework which would mostly emphasis on the security issues. All this while, Japan had been mostly focusing on establishing relationship with the West European countries that developed their respective Indo-Pacific strategies. The East European countries didn't receive much of an attention from Tokyo. The Russia-Ukraine crisis along with China's growing military actions in the Indo-Pacific has encouraged Japan to play a proactive security role. This eventually led to the signing of a joint statement between Lithuania and Japan in which they vowed to strengthen ties by sharing knowledge of international security issues under the new dialogue framework. Such a joint statement is nothing but exhibition of co-operation and support among the like-minded countries to deal with the challenges such as China's assertiveness, Russia-Ukraine war and North Korea's missile launches.

Like the other major powers, India's concern is also increasing with the upcoming global security challenges. Although India abstained itself from imposing sanctions on Russia but that doesn't mean India's concern over the Russia-Ukraine war faded away. Russia's growing closeness towards China remains a challenge to India's national security. Since New Delhi is already playing an active security role in the Indo-Pacific region, it embraces cooperation with the like-minded countries across the globe. Like Japan, India has also developed strategic ties with the West European countries. However, it is also to be noted that Lithuania is the first European Union member who announced the opening of a Taiwanese representative office in its capital, Vilnius. This greatly agitated China which affirmed that it was an intolerable declaration of diplomatic hostility. China being a common concern, India too should act as a visionary and develop ties with countries that share common interests and expand its influence across the globe.



Source: Reuters

Quad Needs 'Standing Force' In Indo-Pacific: Ex-U.S. Navy Chief

https://asia.nikkei.com/Politics/International-relations/Indo-Pacific/Quad-needs-standing-force-inIndoPacificexU.S.Navychief?utm_campaign=IC_indo_pacific_free&utm_medium=email&utm_source=NA_newsletter&utm_content=article_link

TOKYO -- The Quad security grouping of the U.S., Japan, Australia and India should have a standing maritime force, the former U.S. chief of naval operations said on Friday, calling for stronger engagement in the Indo-Pacific region to counter China. The Quad, formally the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue, is widely seen as a buffer against Beijing's growing economic and military influence. Unlike NATO, however, it is not a military alliance. In a panel discussion at the 19th CSIS/Nikkei Symposium in Tokyo on Friday, retired Adm. Gary Roughead pointed out that the Indo-Pacific region is "really a maritime environment" stretching from the Indian Ocean to the South China Sea, arguing that a permanent presence would be beneficial.



Source: ASPI Strategist

COMMENTS

QUAD has been a minilateral dialogue forum which was formed to deal with issues beyond China's assertiveness and coercion. In most of its summit meetings the QUAD members have emphasised on cyber security, COVID vaccine, environmental issues etc. More cohesiveness among the members has been witnessed on those issues. This however portrayed a different image for QUAD, as compared to NATO which is a full-fledged military alliance. But keeping in mind the Chinese assertiveness and that the Indo-Pacific is a maritime region, a permanent presence of a maritime force is considered beneficial. This kind of a force has already been created by NATO known as the "Standing NATO Maritime Groups" which are integrated multinational maritime force made up of vessels from the various allied nations. They are permanently available to NATO and perform various tasks whenever necessity arises.



Source: BBC

Keeping the current security situation in mind QUAD could debate the need for a standing force on these lines. The QUAD members already have an immense experience of coordinating at the sea. Malabar has been a world class naval exercise initiated by India with US and Japan being its permanent members and has been rejoined by Australia.

Despite being minilateral in nature, QUAD members envision involving more like-minded Southeast Asian countries and other minilateral frameworks.

India's role as a QUAD member in the formation of such a standing maritime force would be immense. As mentioned earlier, India has already been conducting joint naval exercises including Malabar. Under the 'Act East Policy', India is trying to establish cordial strategic relationship with its maritime neighbours through joint training and joint exercises. Under the Modi administration, Indian Navy is expected to gain complete "Atmanirbharta" from production of ships, unmanned systems, weapons to entire complex systems and platforms. Thus India's position geo-strategically and its maritime capabilities could be of great salience in the formation of such a standing maritime force. However, India's stand on this still needs to be watched because India's leanings are being constantly observed by the international community. India's objectives of being a QUAD member are beyond China's expansionist behavior and detract from being perceived as a military alliance. Since the statement has been made by a retired US Navy chief in a panel discussion at the 19th CSIS/Nikkei Symposium in Tokyo, and is not a statement issued by the U.S. government, QUAD members could initiate an informed debate on this concept, going forward.