

AUKUS pact

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In news– In order to counter China, the **US, the UK and Australia** announced a trilateral security partnership called AUKUS recently.

About AUKUS pact

- **AUKUS, an acronym for “Australia, United Kingdom, United States”,** is a trilateral security pact.
- **The AUKUS pact will strive over the next 18 months to equip Australia with nuclear propulsion technology,** which the United States has shared only with the United Kingdom under a decades-old arrangement put together in the face of the threat from the then Soviet Union.
- **The pact will enable Canberra to deploy nuclear-powered submarines in the Indo-Pacific** in a major challenge to China and its claims in the region.
- Australia’s nuclear-powered submarines, when they deploy, will be armed with conventional weapons only and not nuclear weapons.
- The leaders of the three countries also made it clear that **the new alliance does not and will not supersede or outrank existing arrangements in the Indo-Pacific region such as the Quad** and Asean, and that it will complement these groups and others.
- **The AUKUS will also enhance their contribution to their growing network of partnerships in the Indo-Pacific region: ANZUS** (Australia, New Zealand and the US); their **Asian friends**; their bilateral strategic partners, the **Quad; Five Eyes** (US, UK, Australia, Canada and New Zealand) countries; and, the Pacific family.
- **The leaders have clarified that the new pact is not aimed (at) or about any one country but it is about advancing their strategic interests,** upholding the international rules-based order, and promoting peace and

stability in the Indo-Pacific.

- The pact will **focus on military capability, separating it from the Five Eyes intelligence-sharing alliance** which also includes New Zealand and Canada.
- While Australia's submarines are the big-ticket item, Aukus will also involve the **sharing of cyber capabilities and other undersea technologies.**

The QUAD Group-

- The Quad – which is a shortened version of its formal name Quadrilateral Security Dialogue – has been focused thus far on non-security issues in its escalating interactions.
- There is a military component to it though, as reflected in the Malabar exercises hosted annually by India.
- All four countries participated in 2020, with Australia returning to the exercises 14 years after the last time in 2007.
- Australia had backed out of the Quad around then, putting it in suspended animation.
- The Quad was resurrected in 2017 with the return of Australia and it has grown rapidly since, from meetings of officials on the sidelines of Asean to ministers to leaders in a virtual summit in March and now to an in-person summit later this month.