

Security Implications of Quad and BRI in South Asia

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As the growth shift from West to East, and as China emerge as the rising power that is challenging the existing status quo, security architecture of the Indo-Pacific region is changing rapidly. China proposed the ambitious Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), hoping it would lead to common prosperity. Instead of improving connectivity, it has mounted criticism and scepticism of possible Chinese territorial expansion. In response, other players in the Indian Ocean introduced new initiatives and different strategies, the latest being the Quadrilateral Dialogue or the Quad. This has intensified the power struggle in the Indian Ocean region. It also suggests emerging security architecture that would challenge and transform the existing systems. Using publicly available qualitative data including the policy documents, official statements and information, this paper examines how BRI and Quad redefine regional security architecture in the Indian Ocean region. It will look into the externalities derived from the security challenges in the area and look into how small countries in the Indian Ocean region should respond and mitigate them.

Keywords: *Belt and Road initiative, quadrilateral dialogue, Indian Ocean security, maritime security architecture*