

## Quad countries hold talks on Indo-Pacific region issues

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SENIOR OFFICIALS of the Quad countries – India, the US, Japan and Australia – on Thursday held consultations in Singapore on “issues of common interest” in the Indo-Pacific region such as counter-terrorism and non-proliferation, the Ministry of External Affairs said on Thursday.

The participants reaffirmed their support for a “free, open, prosperous and inclusive” Indo-Pacific Region, it said.

The officials deliberated on ways to pursue shared objectives in the areas of connectivity and development, regional security, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HARD) and maritime cooperation.

Ministry of External Affairs’ official spokesperson Raveesh Kumar said there was a regular ASEAN-related senior officers meeting. Another meeting on the sidelines was also held between the Quad countries. The meeting was attended by joint secretaries in-charge of East Asia and America.

The Indian side highlighted New Delhi’s vision for the Indo-Pacific region as outlined in Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s keynote address at Shangri-La Dialogue, the Ministry of External Affairs said in a statement.

“The participants reaffirmed their support for a free, open, prosperous and inclusive Indo-Pacific Region. They also confirmed their common commitment, based on shared values and principles, to promote a rules-based order in the Indo-Pacific,” the statement said.

They also reaffirmed their strong support for ASEAN centrality and ASEAN-led mechanisms and agreed to partner with all countries and institutions in the region “to promote the shared vision of a peaceful, secure and prosperous Indo-Pacific”.