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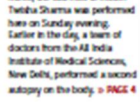
INSIDE



Oreshnik missile used in attack on Kyiv; four killed KYIV Russia pounded Kyiv with a missile bombardment that killed four people, authorities said on Sunday, with Moscow unveiling its nuclear capable hypersonic Oreshnik missile in one of the largest bargains in the more than four-year-long war. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy called Russia "genitally damaged" on Telegram. » PAGE 14



Twisha's last rites performed after second autopsy BHOPAL Twelve days after she was found dead at her matrimonial home, the last rites of model Twisha Sharma was performed here on Sunday evening. Earlier in the day, a team of doctors from the All India Institute of Medical Sciences, New Delhi, performed a second autopsy on the body. » PAGE 4



Bengal govt. is to set up camps for arrested illegals KOLKATA The West Bengal government has directed the District Magistrate across the State to set up holding centres for detained illegal immigrants and released foreign prisoners awaiting deportation. A notification by the Home and Hill Areas Department of the State government cited guidelines issued by the Union Home Ministry. » PAGE 4

U.S. and India call for 'unimpeded' sea trade

'Tactical' ties with other countries not at India's 'expense': U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio | Trump speaks over the telephone at an event, says India can 100% count on the U.S. President | In day-long meeting with Jaishankar, the top U.S. diplomat discusses energy, trade, and visa issues

Kalid Bhattacharjee NEW DELHI The United States works with many countries at a "tactical" level, but those relations will not disturb the strategic partnership with India, U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio said here on Sunday. Addressing a joint press conference at the Hyderabad House lawns, Mr. Rubio said the idea of a "free and open Indo-Pacific" went beyond the Indo-Pacific to other "international waters" and accused Iran of blocking the Strait of Hormuz while sponsoring proxy terror groups. Speaking on the occasion, External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar acknowledged the disruption to supply chains because of the U.S.-based war on Iran, and said that both India and the U.S. had "very strong interests" to ensure "safe and unimpeded maritime commerce". "As far as our relations with other countries, yeah, we have relations and we work at the tactical level, for example, and in many other ways with countries



Pivotal talks: External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar and U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio address the press at Hyderabad House in New Delhi after their meeting on Sunday. (see cover story on page 14)

Congress targets Modi over Rubio's trade claim

The Hindu Bureau NEW DELHI Targeting Prime Minister Narendra Modi over U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio's statement that India has committed to purchasing \$200 billion worth of U.S. goods over five years, the Congress on Sunday alleged the "compromised PM" was giving the extra mile to please his "good friend". Congress leader Jagan Ramesh questioned why key announcements over India's foreign policy were emanating from U.S. Noting imports from the U.S. stood at \$52.9 billion, he said this would have to be doubled to honour the commitment by Mr. Rubio. FULL REPORT ON » PAGE 4

all over the world. So does India. That's what responsible nation states do but I don't view our relation with any country in the world as coming at the expense of our strategic alliance with India..." Mr. Rubio said. He was responding to a question on the Pakistan-U.S. ties that are being discussed worldwide because of the prominent role that Pakistan has been playing in bringing the conflict in the Gulf to a pause. Mr. Rubio, who arrived

in India for a four-day visit on Saturday, held a day-long meeting with Mr. Jaishankar and other officials of the Indian side including Foreign Secretary Vikram Maru, in which energy, bilateral trade, and visa issues for skilled Indian workers were among the items discussed. Trump speaks Later on Sunday night, U.S. President Donald Trump called Prime Minister Narendra Modi a "great friend" and said India can

"count on me 100%". In a telephone call with U.S. Ambassador Sergio Goro, which was held prior to the launch of the war on Iran on February 28, he claimed that the war had "clear goals" and accordingly, the U.S. campaign had destroyed Iran's Navy and "long-range" missile capability, saying "Iran can never possess a nuclear weapons program". He focused on the threshold that Iran has sus-

tained on the Strait of Hormuz. "And look what they're doing now. They are holding hostage civilian vessels, including ships that have been stuck in the Persian Gulf. They have had mines in an international waterway. And yet, despite all of that, the United States remains committed to finding a peaceful, a diplomatic solution to this crisis," said Mr. Rubio. The visiting dignitary and Mr. Jaishankar both referred to the challenges

that have emerged before the energy market to recent months and sought an end to the stalemate. "We are working on having an open Strait of Hormuz without India," Mr. Rubio said, contradicting Iranian officials who had claimed in Delhi that Iran would start charging money from the shipping ships for the services that it provides in the Strait. India is among "very few countries" that have "very strong relations" with the U.S., based, Iran and the Gulf countries, Mr. Jaishankar said. However, he cited the "current situation in Hormuz and said that to deal with such prevailing risks, it is necessary to diversify India's energy supplies.

Responding to a question on the administration taking a tough line on trade relations with India, Mr. Rubio said it was not aimed at India alone and that it was a general trade policy that the Trump administration came up with to counter the "misconduct-based" economy of previous U.S. administrations. (With inputs from PTI)

Summer gauntlet



Staying cool: Water sprinklers on a farm to take over the blazing summer add a spring to the steps of a girl at Rappalavem village in Prakasam district of Andhra Pradesh on Sunday. (see cover story)

Quad grouping remains a 'vital framework', says Japan's Foreign Minister

Subhashini Bhatnagar NEW DELHI Responding to concerns that the Quad has lost its relevance, Japanese Foreign Minister Toshimitsu Motegi has said that the four-nation grouping remains a "vital framework". In a written interview with The Hindu ahead of the Quadrilateral Foreign Ministers' Meeting in New Delhi on Tuesday, Mr. Motegi indicated that "cooperation over critical minerals" needed for green energy and high technology would be at the top of the meeting agenda. Japan is working on critical minerals' projects in India, he said while calling for improved infrastructure, more tax subsidies, and protection for intellectual property rights. The Quad meeting, which will see External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar host Mr. Motegi, U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio, and Australian Foreign Minister Penny Wong, is expected to take stock of the conflict in West Asia, the Strait of Hormuz blockade, and U.S. President Donald Trump's visit this month to China. It will also set the agenda for the Quad Summit that has not taken place since 2024 and India-U.S. tensions on a number of issues. "The Quad remains a vital framework among countries that share funda-

mental values and strategic interests. It has delivered concrete results across a wide range of areas, including maritime security, economic security, and cyber-security," Mr. Motegi said, but also stepped queries on why the mechanism India kills mention in strategy documents of member countries. He declined to respond to a question on whether the U.S. trip of the Iranian ship AIS Dena in the Indian Ocean on March 4 would be raised by fellow Quad members, given their agenda of ensuring peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific region.

Free and open Pacific Although the Quad Foreign Ministers met twice in 2025, setting a new agenda, the grouping has found little of no traction in recent strategic documents issued by the U.S., Australia, and Japanese governments. The U.S. National Security Strategy, released in November 2025, says

the country will "encourage New Delhi to contribute to Indo-Pacific security", including through the Quad, but did not detail its plans for the grouping any further. On May 2, Japanese Prime Minister Satsuki Katase announced Japan's "Updated Free and Open Indo-Pacific" policy during a visit to Vietnam, a document that mentions the Quad just once, in the context of the critical minerals initiative.

The Japanese Foreign Minister said Tuesday's meeting would discuss "regional and global situations" and send "an unwavering message that the Quad would continue to robustly advance practical cooperation toward the realisation of a Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP)". In April, Ms. Takachi had also proposed a "Partnership On Wide Energy and Resources Resilience (POWERER Asia)", an energy security pact with the energy crisis as a result of the Iran conflict. "The countries most affected by disruptions in the supply of energy and resources passing through the Strait of Hormuz are those in Asia, and those impacts extend to all countries closely connected through supply chains," Mr. Motegi said.

Suicide bombing kills at least 24 in Pak.'s Baloch

Associated Press QUETTA The attack, in an area usually having security forces present, badly damaged several nearby buildings and smashed more than a dozen vehicles parked along the road, according to eyewitnesses. Doctors at local hospitals said more than 20 people were under treatment in critical condition. Pakistan's President Asif Ali Zardari, who denounced the bombing, said militants and their backers sought to undermine Pakistan's role in regional and international peace efforts. Strongly condemning the attack, Pakistan's Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, in a post on X, called it a "cowardly act of terrorism" and offered



Scene of blast: Security personnel and locals attempt to organise the rescue efforts at the blast site in Quetta, Pakistan, on Sunday. (see cover story)

condemnation to the families of the victims. Mr. Zardari promised in a statement that his country "will defeat terrorists, their facilitators, financiers and those providing them safe havens". Balochistan Chief Minister Sarfraz Bhatti said the Balochistan provincial government spokesperson Sharif said. "Hostile region The oil and mineral-rich region in southwestern Pakistan has long been the scene of a low-level insurgency with security forces government installations and civilians in the province and elsewhere in the country being frequently targeted. Although Pakistan authorities say they have quelled the insurgency violence in Balochistan has persisted. In November 2024, at least 26 people security personnel among them, were killed in a strike on a train station in Quetta, which was also claimed by the ISL.

# Quad grouping remains a ‘vital framework’, says Japan’s Foreign Minister

**Suhasini Haidar**  
NEW DELHI

Responding to concerns that the Quad has lost its relevance, Japanese Foreign Minister Toshimitsu Motegi has said that the four-nation grouping remains a “vital framework”. In a written interview with *The Hindu* ahead of the Quadrilateral Foreign Ministers’ Meeting in New Delhi on Tuesday, Mr. Motegi indicated that “cooperation over critical minerals” needed for green energy and high technology would be at the top of the meeting agenda.

Japan is working on critical minerals’ projects in India, he said while calling for improved infrastructure, more tax subsidies, and protection for intellectual property rights.

The Quad meeting, which will see External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar host Mr. Motegi, U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio, and Australian Foreign Minister Penny Wong, is expected to take stock of the conflict in West Asia, the Strait of Hormuz blockade, and U.S. President Donald Trump’s visit this month to China. It will also set the agenda for the Quad Summit that has not taken place since 2024 amid India-U.S. tensions on a number of issues.

“The Quad remains a vital framework among countries that share funda-



Toshimitsu Motegi

mental values and strategic interests. It has delivered concrete results across a wide range of areas, including maritime security, economic security, and cybersecurity,” Mr. Motegi said, but side-stepped queries on why the mechanism finds little mention in strategy documents of member countries.

He declined to respond to a question on whether the U.S.’s torpedoing of the Iranian ship *IRIS Dena* in the Indian Ocean on March 4 would be raised by fellow Quad members, given their agenda of ensuring peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific region.

## **Free and open Pacific**

Although the Quad Foreign Ministers met twice in 2025, setting a new agenda, the grouping has found little or no mention in recent strategic documents issued by the U.S., Australian, and Japanese governments. The U.S. National Security Strategy, released in November 2025, says

the country will “encourage New Delhi to contribute to Indo-Pacific security”, including through the Quad, but did not detail its plans for the grouping any further. On May 2, Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi announced Japan’s ‘Updated Free and Open Indo-Pacific’ policy during a visit to Vietnam, a document that mentions the Quad just once, in the context of the critical minerals initiative.

The Japanese Foreign Minister said Tuesday’s meeting would discuss “regional and global situations” and send “an unwavering message that the Quad would continue to robustly advance practical cooperation toward the realisation of a Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP)”.

In April, Ms. Takaichi had also proposed a “Partnership On Wide Energy and Resources Resilience (POWERR Asia)”, at an event attended virtually by Mr. Jaishankar that will coordinate on oil, gas and renewables procurement, financing and storage mechanisms to deal with the energy crisis as a result of the Iran conflict. “The countries most affected by disruptions in the supply of energy and resources passing through the Strait of Hormuz are those in Asia, and these impacts extend to all countries closely connected through supply chains,” Mr. Motegi said.

5月24日(日) 19時27分 The Hindu ウェブ版

# Quad remains 'vital', says Japanese Foreign Minister, rejecting concerns over the grouping's importance in the Indo-Pacific 💎

Ahead of Quad Foreign Ministers' Meeting, Toshimitsu Motegi says critical mineral cooperation is at the top of the agenda, calls for better infrastructure, protection for intellectual property rights in India

Updated - May 25, 2026 07:46 am IST - NEW DELHI



SUHASINI HAIDAR



Japanese Foreign Minister Toshimitsu Motegi. | Photo Credit: Special Arrangement

The **Quad** remains a "vital framework", Japanese Foreign Minister Toshimitsu Motegi said, responding to concerns that the four-nation grouping had lost its relevance, and indicated in an interview that 'Cooperation over Critical Minerals' needed for green energy and hi-tech would be at the top of the agenda for the Quadrilateral Foreign Ministers' Meeting (FMM) on Tuesday (May 25, 2026). Japan is working on critical minerals' projects in India, Mr. Motegi also said, but called for improved infrastructure, more tax subsidies, and protection for intellectual property rights.

The Quad meeting, which will be hosted by External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar, and will include Mr. Motegi, U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio, and Australian Foreign Minister Penny Wong, is expected to take stock of the conflict in Iran, the Hormuz Strait blockade, and U.S. President Donald Trump's visit this month to China, as well as set the agenda for the Quad Summit that has not taken place since 2024 amidst India-U.S. tensions on a number of issues.

Although the Quad FMs met twice in 2025, setting a new agenda, the Quad grouping finds little or no mention in recent strategic documents issued by the American, Australian and Japanese governments. The U.S.'s National Security Strategy, released in November 2025, says the U.S. would "encourage New Delhi to contribute to Indo-Pacific security", including through the Quad, but did not detail its plans for the grouping any further. On May 2, Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi announced Japan's 'Updated Free and Open Indo-Pacific' policy during a visit to Hanoi, a document that mentions the Quad just once, in the context of the critical minerals initiative.

"The Quad remains a vital framework among countries that share fundamental values and strategic interests. It has delivered concrete results across a wide range of areas, including maritime security, economic security, and cybersecurity," Mr. Motegi said, in written responses to questions from *The Hindu* ahead of the FMM, but side-stepped queries on why the mechanism finds little mention in the strategy documents.

He declined to respond to a specific question on whether the U.S.'s torpedoing of the Iranian ship *IRIS Dena* in the Indian Ocean on March 4, 2026 would be raised by fellow Quad members, given their agenda of ensuring a peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific region. Mr. Motegi said the meeting would discuss "regional and global situations" and send "an unwavering message that the Quad will continue to robustly advance practical cooperation toward the realization of a Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP)".

In April, Ms. Takaichi had also proposed a 'Partnership On Wide Energy and Resources Resilience (POWER Asia)', attended virtually by Mr. Jaishankar, that will coordinate on oil, gas and renewables procurement, financing and storage mechanisms to deal with the energy crisis as a result of the Iran conflict.

"The countries most affected by disruptions in the supply of energy and resources passing through the Strait of Hormuz are those in Asia, and these impacts extend to all countries closely connected through supply chains," Mr. Motegi told *The Hindu*.

Mr. Motegi said that during Tuesday's meeting he looks forward to "deepen concrete cooperation building on the Critical Minerals Initiative, while sharing a vision toward a fair, diversified critical minerals market".

"Amid the increasingly challenging international situation we now face, diversifying sources of procurement and ensuring the stable supply of critical minerals have become ever more critical issues," the Japanese Foreign Minister explained. The focus on critical minerals signals concerns over China's dominant position on the rare earth markets, where it holds massive reserves, processes about 90% of the minerals, and frequently restricts exports to various countries.

## 5月25日（月）大臣書面インタビュー

Japan and India had also launched a separate bilateral partnership on critical minerals during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Tokyo in August 2025. Japan has worked on rare earth refining operations in India since 2010s, and that there is "strong interest" from Japanese companies in the semiconductor sector, Mr. Motegi said. However, he said it remains "crucial" the Indian government takes measures for the "protection of intellectual property rights and trade secrets, expansion of the scale and scope of subsidies, and improvement of infrastructure", in order to take these business initiatives forward. Reaffirming Japanese FOIP plans for infrastructure projects in Bangladesh and northeast India, Mr. Motegi said Japan had confirmed with recently-elected Bangladesh Prime Minister Tarique Rahman that it would continue work on the development of the Matarbari deep-sea port, and promote connectivity to northeast India, Bhutan, and Nepal.

Published - May 24, 2026 07:27 pm IST