

## Headlines:

- **Russia Condemns UK Plan to Increase Nuclear Weapons as Threat to International Stability**
- **Stable Indo-Pak Relations Key to Unlocking Region's Potential: COAS**
- **Quad Summit Strengthens America's Hand Before Talks with China: U.S. Official**

## Details:

### **Russia Condemns UK Plan to Increase Nuclear Weapons as Threat to International Stability**

Russia has condemned the decision by the UK government to boost its arsenal of nuclear weapons, saying the move would harm international stability. The UK will increase the cap on its nuclear warhead stockpile by more than 40 per cent, prime minister Boris Johnson revealed as part of his foreign and defence policy review on Tuesday. Moscow described the British plans – which ends decades of gradual disarmament since the fall of the Soviet Union – as a serious blow to arms control. “We are very sorry that Britain has chosen the path of increasing the number of nuclear warheads,” said Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov. “This decision will harm international stability and strategic security.” Russia said it would take Downing Street’s move into account when working on its own military planning, the RIA state news agency reported the country’s foreign ministry as saying on Wednesday. The UK had previously been committed to cutting its stockpile to 180 Trident programme warheads by the mid-2020s. However, the review by Mr Johnson’s government said the policy would now be to increase capacity to 260 warheads. Increasing the stockpile would be a violation of international law, campaigners and experts have warned – pointing to the UK commitment to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. Mr Johnson’s review also stated that the UK reserves the right to withdraw assurances that it will not use nuclear weapons against a non-nuclear armed state “if the future threat of weapons of mass destruction ... or emerging technologies that could have a comparable impact makes it necessary”. British foreign secretary Dominic Raab claimed the UK’s stockpile of Trident programme warheads were the “ultimate insurance policy” against threats from hostile states. [Source: The Independent]

**The great powers care little for international law or global zero— a world which is free of nuclear weapons. Security competition between great powers is causing a recalibration in nuclear and conventional weapons so that parity is achieved. The same great powers (permanent members of the Security Council) are free to acquire nuclear warheads while restricting emerging powers from obtaining them. This duplicity is behind the disorder in the world, and could lead to another great war.**

### **Stable Indo-Pak Relations Key to Unlocking Region's Potential: COAS**

Chief of Army Staff General Qamar Javed Bajwa said on Thursday that stable Indo-Pak relations are the key to unlocking the potential of South and Central Asia by ensuring connectivity between East and West Asia. Addressing the audience on day two of the first-ever Islamabad Security Dialogue, Gen Bajwa noted that this potential has always remained hostage to the disputes and issues between the two "nuclear neighbours". "The Kashmir issue is obviously at the heart of this. It is important to understand that without the resolution of the Kashmir dispute through peaceful means, the process [...] will always remain susceptible to derailment to politically motivated bellicosity." "We feel it is time to bury the

past and move forward," he said, adding that the onus for meaningful dialogue rested with India. "Our neighbour will have to create a conducive environment, particularly in occupied Kashmir." Bajwa's comments come a day after Prime Minister Imran Khan said that India would have to make the first move to normalise ties with Pakistan. [Source: The Dawn]

**The Bajwa-Khan regime is eager to bury the atrocities committed by the Modi regime in Kashmir, and renew peace negotiations. This is unacceptable - Kashmir has to be liberated!**

### **Quad Summit Strengthens America's Hand Before Talks with China: U.S. Official**

The U.S. has sought to build strength before engaging China later this week and the Quad Summit is an example of this, a senior administration official said on Tuesday night during a briefing call with reporters. Secretary of State Antony Blinken and National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan are scheduled to meet China's Director of the Office of the Central Commission for Foreign Affairs Yang Jiechi and State Councilor Wang Yi on Thursday and Friday. Both U.S. officials have been extensively engaged with allies, primarily in Europe and the Indo Pacific, since the administration kicked off on January 20. Mr. Blinken is currently visiting Tokyo and Seoul along with Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin. "I think sometimes folks think of our allies and partners piece here as just being about choreography that somehow we just need to talk to our allies before we talk to China," the official, who did not want to be named, said. "I want to stress that that's actually not the case. Obviously that sequencing is part of the equation here, but we're working actually with allies and partners to strengthen our hand," the official said. "The Quad [summit] last week was probably the most important very clear illustration in practical terms of exactly what we're trying to achieve here, bringing together the four leaders in a virtual summit for the first time to actually do something together that we couldn't do individually, particularly on the vaccine distribution deliverable that was big and affirmative for the region," the official said. "This isn't just about something that is here to counter China. This is about something that's actually about doing something that enhances our leverage enhances the quality of life in the region in meaningful ways," they said. U.S. President Joe Biden hosted the first ever summit level meeting of the Quad grouping – the U.S., India, Australia and Japan last Friday. The group announced a plan to produce and distribute up to 1 billion vaccines to overcome shortages in Southeast Asia and the Pacific. The official said it was important for Beijing to hear directly from Mr. Blinken and Mr. Sullivan and that sometimes there is a "hope in Beijing that our public message is somehow different" from private message. "And we think it's really important that we dispel that idea very early, and that we're very clear with delivering the same messages in private that you have heard from us in public," they said. The U.S. has said it will discuss a long list of concerns with China – these include human rights abuses, Chinese aggression in the neighbourhood, an erosion of democratic norms in Hong Kong and predatory economic practices of Beijing. A meeting that involved both the Secretary of State and the National Security Advisor is also expected to send a message to Beijing that different parts of the administration were singing from the same song sheet. The official said that Beijing had a track record of "attempting to try to play favourites within an administration and in particular to play the Secretary of State and National Security Advisor off each other." The official also said that there will not be a joint statement from the U.S. and China following this week's meetings and that the U.S. is also not expecting "specific negotiated deliverables" from the talks. [Source: The Hindu]

**It is evident that India has become an active member of the Quad—an organisation designed to curb China's regional ambitions. This raises serious questions about India's role in BRICS.**