



Consortium of Indo-Pacific  
Researchers

## **Indo-Pacific Weekly Mail Dec 25 - 31, 2023**

---

Greetings Colleagues,

The Consortium is pleased to share its latest newsletter for the Indo-Pacific. Press reply button for your feedback and comments.

**Year 2023, “Decisive Year” in the Indo-Pacific Region-  
DoD**



*Figure 1: Pentagon Aerial / DOD/ IMAGES*

In a report [released](#) by the Pentagon, U.S. Defense Secretary Austin said, “In this decisive decade, 2023 will be remembered as a decisive year for implementing U.S. defense strategy in Asia.” Counting on working with allies and partners, the U.S. has delivered “groundbreaking achievements for peace, stability, and deterrence in support of a free and open Indo-Pacific region.” The Pentagon report further states that the U.S. regional force posture has transformed to more mobile, distributed, resilient, and lethal in the region by deploying military units in Japan, visits of submarines, and rotation of fighters & bombers to Australia. Moreover, it strengthened the defense cooperation with the Philippines and Papua New Guinea. The report highlights strengthening capabilities by investing in the India-U.S. Defense Acceleration Ecosystem (INDUS-EX) and industrial defense cooperation with India, Australia, and Japan.

The report further emphasizes that the U.S. has operated with allies and partners in multiple ways, e.g., capacity building and training programs in the ASEAN countries and multilateral high-range military exercises to advance a shared vision of establishing peace and security in the region. [Read More](#)

---

## **India’s EAM Visits Russia**

India’s Foreign Minister visited Russia from December 25-29. In a [release by the Ministry of External Affairs](#), three documents are signed, “relating to the Kudan Kulam Nuclear Power Plants, an MoU on cooperation in pharmaceuticals and healthcare and a Protocol on Foreign Office Consultations.” He also exchanged views on bilateral relations, regional developments, and multilateral cooperation. He also met with the Russian Deputy Prime Minister, the Foreign Minister, and the Ministry of Trade and Industry. Furthermore, President Putin extended the invitation to Prime Minister Modi to visit Moscow this year.

It is worth mentioning that historically, India and Russia have strong defense and strategic relations, and Moscow has been a ‘time-tested friend.’ As per [the report](#), Russia is still India’s largest arms supplier. [Read More](#)

---

## **North Korea’s Kim Vows to Boost National Defense in 2024**

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un vows to boost reconnaissance and nuclear capabilities to bolster its national defense to prepare for the "U.S.-led confrontation". He aspires to develop more military spy satellites, nuclear materials, and attack drones to reinforce his strategy against hostile countries. According to the [reports](#), Kim said, “Because of reckless moves by the enemies to invade us, it is a fait accompli that a war can break out at any time on the Korean Peninsula,” speaking in the ruling party meeting to set economic, military, and foreign policy goals in 2024. [Read More](#)

---

## **Indo-Pacific Quiz**

When was democracy established in Japan?

- a. 1945
- b. 1947
- c. 1950
- d. 1953

Where is Bora Bora Island located?

a. East Pacific Ocean

b. Indian Ocean

c. South Pacific Ocean

d. Sumatra Sea

---

Contributions: Indu Saxena