



Consortium of Indo-Pacific  
Researchers

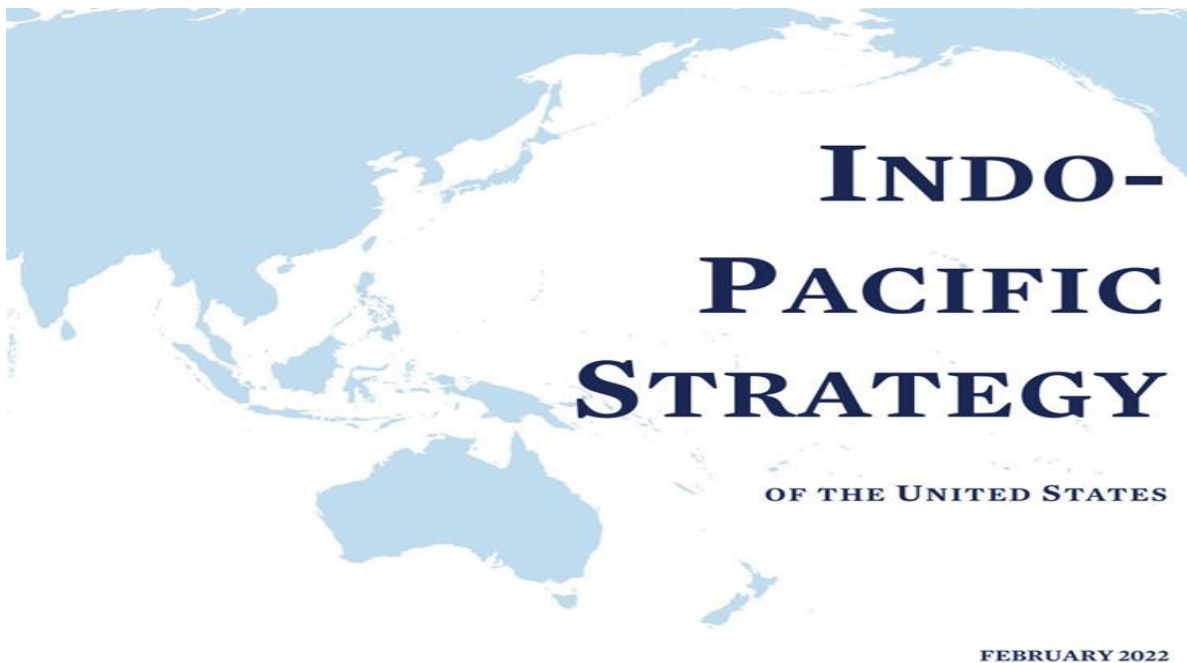
## **Indo-Pacific Weekly Mail Feb. 5 - 11, 2024**

---

Greetings Colleagues,

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

### **U.S. Administration Marks Two Years of its Indo-Pacific Strategy**



Biden administration [marks the second anniversary](#) of unveiling the Indo-Pacific Strategy, which was released in February 2022. The strategy projects a future of a free and open Indo-Pacific with the U.S. leadership and a commitment to enhancing regional capacity and resilience and working closely with allies and partners. Furthermore, the strategy focuses on "every corner of the region from Northeast Asia to Southeast Asia, South Asia, and Oceania, including the Pacific Islands" to pursue its five objectives: Advance a free and open Indo-Pacific, build connections within and beyond the region, drive regional prosperity, bolster Indo-Pacific security, and build regional resilience to transnational threats.

As per the [fact sheet](#), over the past two years, the State Department has been actively engaged in advancing a free and open Indo-Pacific region. Their efforts have been focused on strengthening and empowering democratic institutions and human rights initiatives, supporting the development of free and fair elections, protecting freedom of speech and press, and justice.

In addition to promoting democratic values, the United States has also strengthened its relationships in the region through comprehensive strategic partnerships (U.S.-ASEAN), trilateral cooperation (U.S.-South Korea-Japan), Partners in the Blue Pacific (PBP), and bilateral cooperation (U.S.-India, U.S.-Australia, U.S.-Vietnam, U.S.-Philippines, U.S.-Indonesia). These relationships have resulted in significant progress, including impactful deliverables through Quad working groups. The United States has also opened new avenues of economic prosperity through the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework (IPEF) and the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), as well as increasing foreign direct investment (FDI) to drive regional prosperity.

Furthermore, the United States is committed to supporting its regional partners and allies to build capacity and address regional threats through security alliances (AUKUS), security cooperation (Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, Philippines), and joint exercises (Cobra Gold, Super Garuda Shield, and MALABAR). This includes working to address issues related to

terrorism, maritime security, and non-proliferation. Additionally, they are working towards advancing resilience to transnational threats, such as climate change and cyber security, by supporting initiatives such as disaster risk reduction and information sharing.

Comprehensively, the United States is committed to promoting a free, open, and prosperous Indo-Pacific region and will continue working with regional partners and allies to achieve this goal. [Read More](#)

---

## **Pakistan Elections 2024, More than One Party Claims Victory**

Pakistan held its general election on February 8, 2024, for 266 seats in the lower house of parliament. However, there was an air of uncertainty surrounding the election date and whether it would be free and fair, leading to concerns regarding the formation of the government in a hung parliament.

To everyone's surprise, former Prime Minister Imran Khan's party, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), backed independents, [have won 102 the highest number](#) of seats. On the other hand, the former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's party (PML-N) won 77 seats and claimed victory. Both Sharif and Khan delivered victory speeches, and it remains to be seen who the kingmaker will be, and who will lead the coalition government.

Again, the other major party, the Pakistan People's Party (PPP), led by former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto's son Bilawal Bhutto, has secured [54 seats](#), making it the third-largest party in the election. [Any party needs to win 133 seats of the 265 seats of direct voting and has to show 169 in the National Assembly out of a total of 336 seats, where 70 seats are reserved](#). However, it is expected that it will take some time to

form a government in Pakistan due to the complexity of the political situation.

Whoever leads the country after the election results will face numerous challenges in running a hung parliament. One of the most pressing issues is Pakistan's economic crisis and instability, which will require significant attention and resources. It is imperative that the new government address these issues effectively to ensure a stable and prosperous future for the country. [Read More](#)

---

## **Military Exercise Conducted in South China Sea**

U.S.-Japan- Australia navies conduct a joint operation in the South China Sea from Feb. 7-8. As per reports, this regular operation aims to enhance interoperability and boost deterrence in a combined operation with allies and partners. In this exercise, the USS John Finn and littoral combat ship and USS Gabrielle Giffords joined with Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force (JMSDF) and Royal Australian Navy (RAN). The Commanding officer of John Finn Cmdr. Earvin Taylor said, “We promote transparency, rule of law, freedom of navigation and all principles that underscore security and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific.” [Read More](#)

---

## **North Korea Tests New Rocket Launcher, Security Concerns in Korean Peninsula**

North Korea has [tested a multiple rocket launcher](#) amid heightening tension of conflict in the region as the Kim Jong Un administration tore down a unification monument and declared South Korea its “principal

enemy.” He recently stated that his military would take aggressive steps to “put an end” to South Korea if provoked. [Read More](#)

---

## **Myanmar Military Regime Enforces Conscription Law**

Since October 2023, the military regime in Myanmar has faced a significant defeat at the hands of the resistance forces and democracy alliance, resulting in devastating consequences. In recent months, the ethnic insurgent armies have gained control over major cities and towns. As a response, the military has announced compulsory military service for young men and women. Notably, it has been three years since the military coup in Myanmar occurred, marked its anniversary on Feb.1. [Read More](#)

---

## **Indo-Pacific Quiz**

Which countries are separated by the Strait of Johore?

- |                      |                       |
|----------------------|-----------------------|
| a. N. Korea-S. Korea | b. Singapore-Malaysia |
| c. Myanmar-Thailand  | d. Myanmar-Laos       |

In which year did Pakistan adopt its current constitution?

- |         |         |
|---------|---------|
| a. 1956 | b. 1971 |
| c. 1972 | d. 1973 |
-

## **Consortium Highlights**

❖ **Cyber Security Means National Security**, By: Nassim Abbas

Khan, CIPR Sr. Researcher & Chief Strategy

Officer, Privia Security, NATO and Allied forces, Istanbul,

Türkiye. [Read Here](#)

---

Contributions: Indu Saxena