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## **Indo-Pacific Weekly Mail Aug 19 - 25, 2024**

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Greetings Colleagues,

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

### **U.S. and India Deepen Defense Ties**



*Figure 1: U.S. Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin and India's Defense Minister Rajnath Singh in Washington/ IMAGE/ <https://www.defense.gov/News/DoD>*

Indian Defense Minister is on a [four-day visit](#) of the United States. He met his counterpart U.S. Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin at Pentagon. Both officials discussed the ongoing efforts to deepen the Major Defense Partnership between the United States and India in support of a free and open Indo-Pacific region. The two leaders talked about continuing to strengthen the defense partnership between the United States and India in supporting a free and open Indo-Pacific region. They also expressed optimism about the expanding U.S.-India defense-industrial partnership and the development of co-production capabilities to enhance supply chain resilience through the [India-U.S. Defense Acceleration Ecosystem](#) (INDUS-X) launched in June 2023.

In a joint meeting Secretary Austin praised Indian Navy's operational success and [said](#), "Indian Navy remains an important security provider in the Indian Ocean. Furthermore, he applauds the role of Indian sailors in rescuing mariners in distress and safeguarding global commerce. The Secretary reaffirmed the importance of bolstering naval cooperation with India across different levels. Mr. Singh emphasized that the partnership between the United States and India is underpinned by shared democratic principles, burgeoning strategic interests, and robust people-to-people linkages. He further underscored

that the collaboration between the two countries extends to addressing diverse global challenges beyond the scope of their bilateral relations.

Later, officials from both sides signed a non-binding Security of Supply Arrangement (SOSA). As per the agreement the United States and India agree to provide reciprocal priority support for goods and services that promote national defense. The Arrangement will enable both countries to acquire the industrial resources they need from one another to resolve unanticipated supply chain disruptions to meet national security needs. Also, India will appoint its first Liaison Officer to the Headquarters Special Operations Command in Florida as per the [Memorandum of Understanding signed](#) (MoU) by both countries.

Additionally, The United States has approved the sale of Anti-Submarine Warfare Sonobuoys and related equipment to India, bolstering its operational capabilities in the seas. This strategic move aims to enhance India's maritime security and defense capabilities, fostering stronger ties between the two countries. The sale comes at an estimated cost of \$52.8 million, signifying a significant investment in India's defense infrastructure. The proposed sale will improve India's capability to meet current and future threats by enhancing its capacity to conduct anti-submarine warfare operations from its MH-60R helicopters. As per the press release, "This proposed sale will support

the foreign policy and national security objectives of the United States by helping to strengthen the United States-India strategic relationship and improving the security of a major defense partner which continues to be an important force for political stability, peace, and economic progress in the Indo-Pacific and South Asia regions.” It also mentions that this sale won’t alter the basic military balance in the region.

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## **U.S. and Italy Forces Conduct Joint Operation**

The U.S. Navy and Italian Navy [kick off a bilateral operation in the Philippine Sea](#) in support of a free and open Indo-Pacific from Aug. 18-22. The participating ships the USS Dewey (DDG 105), the Italian navy aircraft carrier ITS Cavour (CVH 550), and the Italian Navy Carlo Bergamini-class frigate ITS Alpino (F 594) aim to enhance cooperation, interoperability, and strengthen combined naval operations to deter any threats in the region. Also, the two navies conducted fixed-wing air defense training and combined anti-submarine warfare exercises, as well as subject matter expert exchanges across the participating ships. Vice Adm. Fred Kacher, commander, U.S. 7th Fleet said, “Both our

nations recognize the importance of a free and open Indo-Pacific and the role our navies play in preserving the peace and stability here."

It is important to mention that the Philippines and China have a long-time dispute over territories, including the Spratly Islands, portions of North Borneo, and the Scarborough Shoal in the South China Sea. Recently, there has been [escalating concern](#) regarding the recurring encounters between Chinese military vessels and the Philippines coast guard. [Read More](#)

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## **Japan and India Held 2+2 Dialogue with a Focus on Free and Open Indo-Pacific**

Japan's Minister for Foreign Affairs, Ms. KAMIKAWA Yoko, and Minister of Defense, Mr. KIHARA, [visited](#) India and met their Indian counterparts, Dr. S. Jaishankar and Defense Minister Rajnath Singh. The third edition of the 2+2 Ministerial Meeting was held between the two countries, marking the 10th anniversary of the establishment of the "Japan-India Special Strategic and Global Partnership." Both sides discussed defense and security cooperation and expressed their commitment to support rule-based international order in the Indo-Pacific. The ministers discussed various regional and global issues, with

a focus on the shared Indo-Pacific region and emphasized their collaboration in Quad. They also reasserted their dedication to advancing it further. [Read More](#)

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### **Rohingya Genocide, Seven Years on**

Myanmar's military Junta started its violent operation against Muslim ethnic minority Rohingya in 2017. Approximately 1 million people have sought refuge in Bangladesh, with most of them residing in the Cox Bazar's region, which is home to the world's largest refugee camp. The United Nations has described the Rohingya as "the most persecuted minority in the world."

The United States [supports the survivors of the Rohingya genocide](#) and is committed to providing life-saving assistance to affected Rohingya communities in Burma, Bangladesh, and the surrounding region. It has provided nearly \$2.4 billion in humanitarian aid in the past seven years. [Read More](#)

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## Indo-Pacific Quiz

In what year did the Myanmar military start violent operations against Rohingyas in Myanmar?

- a. 2016
- b. 2018
- c. 2017
- d. 2019

Which fleet is the largest in the U.S. Navy?

- a. Third
- b. Fifth
- c. Fourth
- d. Seventh

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## Consortium Highlights

- ❖ A view by Consortium Fellow, 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Grant T. Willis, on **Spatz's Air Ambush Operation Flax and Air Interdiction Lessons for Joint Warfare in the Indo-Pacific**. [Read Here](#)
  - ❖ Upcoming webinars
    - o Bangladesh Political Turmoil: Analyzing Instability in South Asia
    - o India's Carbon Neutrality Target: Policies and Strategies.
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