



[Consortium of Indo-Pacific](#)

[Researchers](#)

Indo-Pacific Weekly Mail February 16-22, 2026

Greetings Colleagues,

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

Munich Security Conference 2026: The End of US-Led Order?



Figure 1: The Munich Security Report (MSR) 2026, titled "Under Destruction" / <https://securityconference.org/>

One month after the Davos Summit, world leaders gathered for the Munich Security Conference (MSC), amid a chaotic global landscape. The 62nd Munich Security Conference was attended by more than 40 Heads of State and Government, over 65 Foreign Ministers, more than 30 Defense Ministers, and leaders from more than 40 international organizations. US Secretary of State [Marco Rubio's speech](#) took center stage and received applause from European leaders. However, some European officials were skeptical about the patch up in ruptured US-Europe relations.

In comparison to last year's MSC, where US Vice President JD Vance delivered a cocky speech, Rubio's address had a quieter tone but conveyed a similar message to Europe. He calls upon European leaders to exit from the principles of liberal democracy and be proud of the “common inheritance” of Europe and the US. Additionally, he proudly acknowledges the groundbreaking contributions of European philosophers and thinkers, who laid the foundation for intellectual thought that remains unparalleled. Furthermore, he argues that the principle of rule-based order made the US and Europe dependent on other countries and led to the loss of sovereignty in the supply chain. He remarked that the ideas of “the end of history” and the world without borders have cost the US and Europe hugely. Moreover, these ideas were impractical and lacked common sense, ignoring human nature and national interests.

On the contrary, EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Kaja Kallas has issued a strong warning about the erosion of the rules-based international order, underscoring the need for enhanced European defense capabilities. Kallas emphasized the imperative to reformulate the security architecture within Europe, advocating for accountability in global governance, the fortification of defense production, and the necessity to counter the prevailing narrative of European decline.

The Munich Security Report, “Under Destruction,” states that US rejection from the core elements of the current international order is causing global disruptions. According to the report, in the Indo-Pacific, confidence in US security guarantees is fading, with regional players perceiving US actions as inconsistent with countering China. Consequently, these countries are balancing efforts to secure US engagement while simultaneously diversifying their options, by enhancing relations with China. [Read More](#)

China Issues Restriction to 40 Japanese Entities

China has imposed export controls on 40 Japanese companies and organizations, targeting dual-use goods with potential military applications, according to announcements by China's Ministry of Commerce and Japanese media reports.

Japanese newspapers reported the move appears to be a response to recent remarks by Prime Minister Takaichi Sanae regarding a possible Taiwan contingency since November 2025.

As the disagreement between Japan and China intensifies, geopolitical tensions are becoming increasingly prominent. It is reported that Japanese Defense Minister Shinjiro Koizumi has said the government is considering deploying an air defense missile unit on Yonaguni Island in the southernmost prefecture of Okinawa in fiscal 2030. [Read More](#)

India and Brazil Sign Rare Earth Agreement

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi hosted the President of the Federative Republic of Brazil, His Excellency Mr. Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, in India. Modi and Lula agree to double India-Brazil trade to \$30B by 2030, sign rare-earth and mining pacts, boost defense and energy, and promote multilateralism in the era of uncertainty.

Lula, accompanied by a delegation that includes 300 business representatives, seeks to deepen bilateral cooperation, encompassing five pillars: (1) defense and security; (2) food and nutritional security; (3) energy transition and climate change; (4) digital transformation and emerging technologies; and (5) industrial partnerships in strategic areas. President Lula also participated in the AI Impact Summit 2026 in India.

It is worth mentioning that India will host the 18th BRICS Summit 2026, guided by the theme "Building for Resilience, Innovation, Cooperation and Sustainability", reflecting a people-centric and humanity-first approach. [Read More](#)

Nationalist Party Secures Victory in Bangladesh Elections

The Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) has returned to power after winning a landslide victory in the country's recent parliamentary elections, led by Tarique Rahman. Rahman is the son of former Bangladeshi prime minister and former BNP leader Khaleda Zia, who died in December 2025, and Ziaur Rahman, the sixth President of Bangladesh.

This election is the first following the 2024 July youth uprising that led to the ouster of the country's longest-serving prime minister, Sheikh Hasina. The new government inherits the tumultuous domestic landscape during the Mohammed Yunus interim govt. and the rough ties with its closet neighbor India. The principal challenge to the incoming govt. includes advancing reforms, improving youth employment opportunities, managing inflation, and fostering communal harmony. [Read more](#)

Indo-Pacific Quiz

Which conflict has reached its fifth year as of February 24?

a. Israel-Hamas

c. Pakistan-Afghanistan

b. Russia-Ukraine

d. Sudanese civil war

In which city was the India AI Impact Summit 2026 held?

a. New Delhi

b. Mumbai

c. Bangaluru

d. Hyderabad

Consortium Highlights

- ❖ Upcoming webinar **Dynasty, Power, and Stability: Post Election Bangladesh and South Asia**
- ❖ Upcoming podcast on **Meiji Japan and what it teaches about rising Asian powers**
- ❖ CIPR is now accepting applications for internship positions.

Indo-Pacific Quiz Key

Here are the **Answers** for February 1 Newsletter Quiz

Q. To which country does the province of Balochistan belong?

c. Pakistan

Q. For which reason was the Tibetan spiritual leader, the Dalai Lama, awarded a Grammy?

b. Spiritual audiobook

Contributions: Indu Saxena