



Consortium of Indo-Pacific

Researchers

## **Indo-Pacific Weekly Mail April 6-12, 2026**

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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.

### **Peace Talks in Islamabad Collapse; the Future of the Strait of Hormuz**



Figure 1: Vice President JD Vance, Special Envoy Steve Witkoff, and Jared Kushner at a press conference held in Islamabad, Pakistan.

During a two-week ceasefire announced by President Trump, peace talks between the US and Iran were held in Islamabad with the mediation of Pakistan. The discussions lasted for [21 hours but did not result in any agreement](#). The United States presented 15 points for peace, while Iran offered 10 points. According to reports, some progress was made, but not on all issues. One of the main points of failing the talk is Iran's refusal to its nuclear program, and the other is the Strait of Hormuz. Iran stated that the US team's lack of trust is the reason for the failure.

The US delegation, led by Vice President J.D. Vance, included Special Envoy Steve Witkoff and Trump's son-in-law, Jared Kushner, who held the dialogue with Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi and Parliament Speaker Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf. Vance said, "We put forward the 'best offer' to Iran, and it chose not to accept our terms." He added, "I think that's bad news for Iran much more than it's bad news for the United States of America," Vance told reporters after the talks ended. "So, we go back to the United States having not come to an agreement."

Among Iran's 10-point proposal was the release of frozen assets in Qatar and abroad, sovereignty over the Strait of Hormuz, payment of war reparations, and a ceasefire across the region, including in Lebanon. Interestingly, Iran has been taking advantage of blocking the Strait of Hormuz, which is used to transport 20–21 million barrels of crude oil and petroleum products every day,

risking the global economy. Furthermore, Iran has laid mines under the water and is unable to locate them. Before the negotiations, Supreme Leader Ayatollah Mojtaba Khamenei said in a written statement that Iran would move the [management of the strategic Strait of Hormuz](#) into a "new phase."

Now, following the collapse of peace talks in Islamabad, [President Trump announced](#) that the United States Navy will be blocking the Strait of Hormuz and warned Iran against extorting ships passing through the international waterway. As the US's European allies have distanced themselves from the US-Israel war against Iran, again, European countries, particularly the United Kingdom stated that they would not participate in the blockade.

Now the key question is what will it take for US to restore the pre-war situation in the Strait of Hormuz: a messier tomorrow or another round of talks? [Read More](#)

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## **China's Foreign Minister Visits North Korea**

China's Foreign Minister Wang Yi visited North Korea and met with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un to further enhance bilateral ties and coordination in major international and regional affairs. North Korea's state media reported that Kim emphasized the need for the two countries to enhance exchanges and contacts at various levels, stating that stronger ties are essential to protect shared interests.

It is important to mention that earlier this week, North Korea [tested ballistic missiles](#) armed with cluster-bomb warheads, which underscores the regional tensions, particularly in South Korea. North Korea's Kim shored up relations with Moscow, and approximately 12000-14000 North Korean soldiers were deployed in Russia in combat against Ukraine.

His visit to Pyongyang occurs just before US President Donald Trump's planned trip to China in mid-May for discussions with President Xi. There is ongoing speculation that Trump might seek a meeting with Kim during his visit to China, as he has shown interest in re-engaging with the North Korean leader. [Read More](#)

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## **Keir Starmer Visits Gulf Nations**

UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer visited Middle East countries-UAE, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and Bahrain amid ceasefire between US and Iran. Starmer's visit, planned before the ceasefire was announced, comes as he faces mounting pressure to limit US access to British airbases to attack on Iran. Previously, Britain, alongside France and their allies, established a coalition aimed at reopening the Strait of Hormuz upon the cessation of violence from both sides.

The US president had repeatedly criticized the UK and other members of NATO for not getting involved in the conflict and has suggested the US could withdraw from the military alliance. Furthermore, Trump criticized Starmer

multiple time and stated he is “no Wiston Churchill” and equalize him with “Neville Chamberlain.”

The United Kingdom operates several military facilities in the region, including the Naval Support Facility in Bahrain, the Joint Logistics Support Base in Oman, Al Minhad Air Base in the UAE, Al Udeid Air Base in Qatar, and an air base in Saudi Arabia. Starmer's diplomatic visit demonstrates the United Kingdom's commitment to engaging with Gulf nations. However, the Gulf countries have expressed concerns regarding the UK's military readiness and its approach to addressing challenges posed by Iran. [Read More](#)

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## **United States and India Convene Trade & Defense Talks**

Indian foreign secretary Vikram Misri met with US Secretary of State Marco Rubio during his visit to Washington, where both sides reviewed key aspects of the bilateral partnership, including trade, defense, and the Quad. US Ambassador to India Sergio Gor was also present at the meeting and said it was productive.

At the Pentagon, Misri met senior officials, Elbridge Colby and Mike Duffey, to discuss defense exchanges and industrial cooperation. Discussions were also held with the Department of Commerce to strengthen cooperation on critical technologies and resilient supply chains. They also discussed Middle East and regional issues.

Earlier undersecretary of war Elbridge Colby visited India in March and emphasized on expanding US-India relation in defense, trade, and technology. He said, "The United States and India do not need to agree on everything to cooperate effectively. What matters is that our interests and objectives increasingly converge on the most fundamental issues. Differences and even disputes are fully compatible with deepening alignment and cooperation on strategic matters." As per reports, Marco Rubio is expected to visit India next month. [Read More](#)

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## Indo-Pacific Quiz

In which City of Pakistan US and Iran Peace Talk are held?

- |              |            |
|--------------|------------|
| a. Islamabad | c. Karachi |
| b. Lahore    | d. Quetta  |

Which country did Cheng Li-wun, Chairwoman of the KMT and Taiwan's Opposition Leader, visit?

- |                |          |
|----------------|----------|
| a. Japan       | c. China |
| b. South Korea | d. USA   |
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## Consortium Highlights

- ❖ Upcoming Book-Talk **Japan's Grand Strategy: Liminal Power in an Uncertain World**, May 4, 2026, 9:00 AM EST

- ❖ Upcoming podcast on **Meiji Japan and what it teaches about rising Asian powers**
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## **Indo-Pacific Quiz Key**

Here are the **Answers** for April 5, 2026, Newsletter Quiz

Q. South Korea was invaded by North Korea on?

b. June 25, 1950

Q. What was the name of the Indian naval ship that took part in relief efforts following the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami?

d. INS Kirch

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