



Consortium of Indo-Pacific

Researchers

## **Indo-Pacific Weekly Mail April 13-19, 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.

### **Spanish Prime Minister Visits China as Tensions with US Rise**

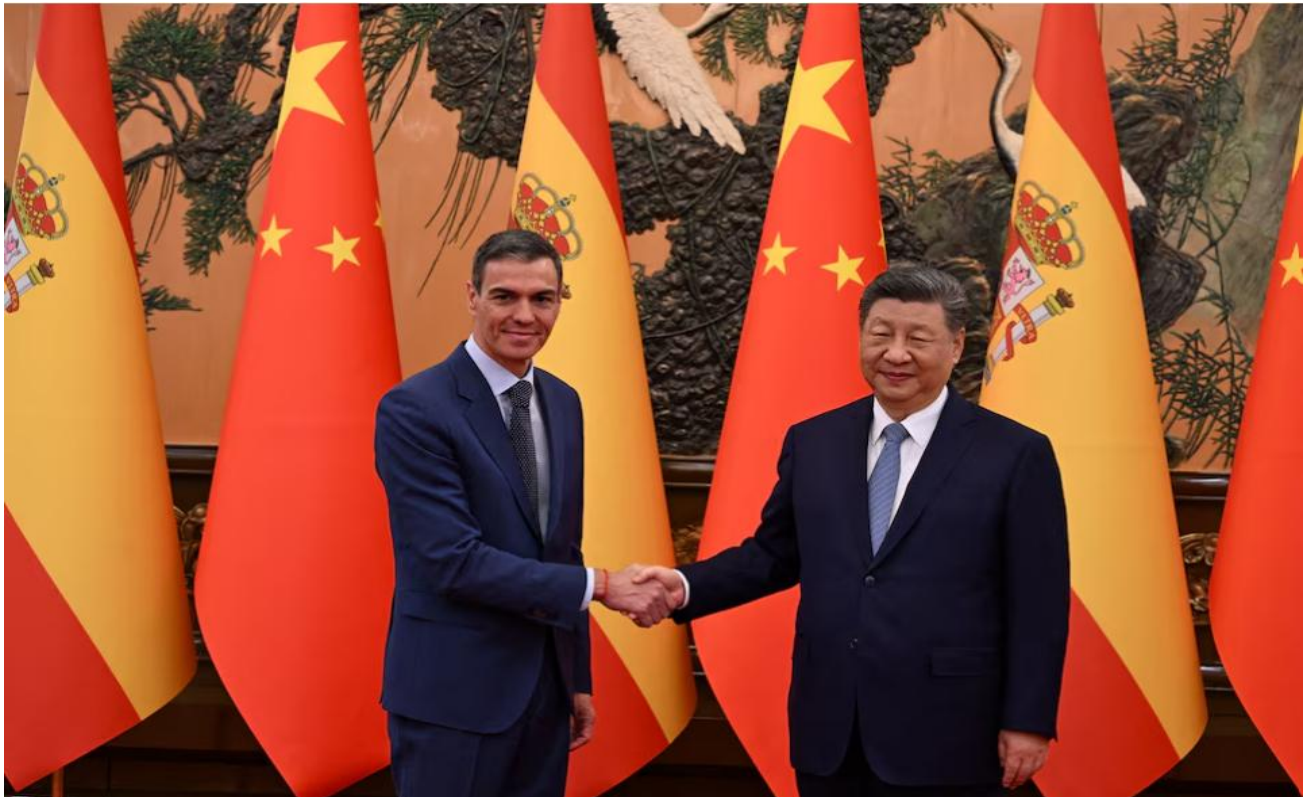


Figure 1: Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez meets with Chinese President Xi Jinping at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing

Spain's Prime Minister [Pedro Sanchez met Chinese President Xi Jinping](#) in Beijing to expand bilateral relations. Spain has secured deals with China in infrastructure, investment, and agriculture, as per reports. Chinese investment in Spain has surged by 50% between 2024 and 2025, reaching \$3 billion. Chinese firms invested €643m in Spain in 2025 only. Spain ran a notable trade deficit of €42.3bn with China. Spain has positioned itself as a welcoming partner to China within the European Union (EU), with Sanchez having made four visits to China in three years.

Furthermore, both leaders discussed international law and multilateralism. Sanchez stated that Europe and China should strengthen relations to address threats to multilateralism while meeting with Xi, who said the world order is "crumbling." It is noted that the US President has repeatedly criticized Spain for not increasing its defense spending as a NATO member, while other members have agreed to do so.

Additionally, Trump slams Europe on policy matters such as immigration and climate, rifted US and Europe. Also, Trump slams Europe on policy issues such as immigration and climate change, straining the US-Europe relationship. In all that, Spain's Sanchez has emerged as a leading critic of US President Trump, who didn't support the Iran War and refused to allow US to use its bases for attacking Iran.

Sanchez is the latest of a string of leaders from Britain, Canada, Finland and Ireland to visit China this year. According to [Reuters](#), he stated that middle

powers such as Spain should advocate for the preservation of the multilateral order, reflecting a principle articulated by Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney earlier this year at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland.

As European countries increasingly turn to China to support their supply chains and maintain economic stability amid tensions with their key ally, the United States, questions remain regarding the emerging global order.

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## **US and Indonesia Announce Major Defense Cooperation**

Secretary of War Pete Hegseth hosted Indonesian Defense Minister Sjafrie Sjamsoeddin at the Pentagon, where both leaders announced the establishment of the Major Defense Cooperation Partnership (MDCP) between the United States and Indonesia. The MDCP is intended to serve as a guiding framework to advance bilateral defense cooperation.

The MDCP features three “foundational pillars” implemented based on mutual respect and national sovereignty: military modernization and capacity building; training and professional military education; and exercises and operational cooperation. The two leaders issued a joint statement on the occasion. The joint statement states, “the United States and Indonesia will explore mutually agreed cutting-edge initiatives, including co-developing sophisticated asymmetric capabilities, pioneering next-generation defense technologies in the maritime, subsurface, and autonomous systems domains,

and cooperating on maintenance, repair, and overhaul support to improve operational readiness.” With this announcement, both nations reaffirm their shared commitment to maintaining peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific.

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## **US and Philippines Announce the First AI-Native Industrial Acceleration Hub Under Pax Silica**

Under the framework of Pax Silica, the United States and the Philippines announced their plans to establish a 4,000-acre industrial hub in the Luzon Economic Corridor of the Republic of the Philippines. The site – the first of its kind – is being offered by the Philippines as an Economic Security Zone, to surge production for inputs vital to U.S. supply chains. It is intended to serve as a staging point for a purpose-built platform for allied manufacturing, an investment acceleration hub where specific industrial activities can be shaped by market demand, host-country comparative advantages, and the evolving needs of the Pax Silica network. [Read More](#)

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## **Japan and Poland Expand Cooperation**

Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk visits Japan and met his Japanese counterpart Sanae Takaichi. The two leaders reaffirm strengthening bilateral relations and upgrading the relations to a level of Comprehensive Strategic

Partnerships. Both leaders agreed to work in areas including the space sector, agriculture, nuclear energy, artificial intelligence, high-speed rail, and infrastructure.

In a joint statement, both leaders reaffirmed their steadfast commitment to a rules-based international order, emphasizing the principles outlined in the United Nations (UN) Charter and the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). They expressed firm opposition to any unilateral attempts to alter the status quo by force or coercion, whether in the Euro-Atlantic, the Indo-Pacific, or other regions worldwide.

Additionally, both leaders denounce Russia's ongoing aggression in Ukraine, identifying them as a serious breach of international law and the principles outlined in the UN Charter. They reaffirm their firm commitment to supporting Ukraine in its efforts to safeguard its freedom, sovereignty, and territorial integrity, and express their firm support in achieving a just and lasting peace in Ukraine. The leaders also note their significant concern regarding the heightened military cooperation between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) and Russia. The statement goes on to explain that both leaders confirmed the need to deepen cooperation between Japan and NATO, as well as similar cooperation between Europe and Indo-Pacific region,

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**Indo-Pacific Quiz**

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

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

From which nation did Indonesia gain its independence?

- a. Japan
- b. Netherland
- c. Spain
- d. The Great Britan

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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 12, 2026, Newsletter Quiz

Q. In which City of Pakistan, US and Iran Peace Talks are held?

- a. Islamabad

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

- c. China

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Contributions: Indu Saxena