



Consortium of Indo-Pacific
Researchers

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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.

Indo-Pacific Nations Join the Strait of Hormuz Coalition Amid Energy Crisis



Figure 1: Coalition Representatives attend virtual summit with Britain's Foreign Secretary Yvette Cooper in London

Japan, Australia, South Korea, and India are among more than 40 countries that have joined the [Coalition led by the UK and France](#) to secure the Strait of Hormuz against the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC). The UK and France, led coalition, announced that they would step up efforts to open the Strait of Hormuz if the violence ends on both sides. Earlier, Bahrain and other Gulf countries submitted a proposal to the United Nations to "use all necessary means" to open the Strait.

The countries in the Indo-Pacific region have been significantly affected by the closure of the Strait of Hormuz. The oil crisis hit harder in the larger, growing economies of Japan, South Korea, India, Vietnam, Thailand, the Philippines, and Bangladesh. As data indicate that 80% of the oil and 90% of the gas supplied to Asia transit through this strategic waterway.

Japan has released its strategic reserves, amid concern of continued hindrances to the oil flow from the waterways, since it imports 90% of its crude oil from the Middle East. On her visit to the Oval Office, Japanese Prime Minister Takaichi stressed the impact of war in the wider region and discussed ending the war. South Korea depends on the Middle East for 70% of its crude oil demand. Seoul has capped fuel prices, ordered energy-saving measures, and activated strategic reserves to manage dwindling supplies.

India, the world's most populous and 3rd-largest oil consumer, consumes approximately 5.6 million barrels per day and is the worst-hit by the conflict. India had been largely dependent on Russian oil before Trump's tariffs;

however, the US President offered a 30-day waiver to allow the purchase of Russian oil during the Iran war. Furthermore, news report that [India buys Iranian oil](#) after seven years, as the United States temporarily removed sanctions on Iranian oil and refined products to ease supply shortages.

In Southeast Asia, the [Philippines](#) has declared “national energy emergency” becoming the first country in the world to do so. Vietnam, a manufacturing and tourism hub, has almost doubled the prices of oil, gas, and diesel and is seeking Russian oil to power its growing economy. Tourism in Thailand is struggling, and aviation fuel surcharges have increased flight costs to Bangkok. [Read More](#)

Macron Visits Japan & South Korea

Japanese Prime Minister Takaichi welcomed [French President Macron in Tokyo](#) amid an intense security environment. Amid escalating war between the US, Israel, and Iran and the closure of the Strait of Hormuz, the energy crisis spans from East Asia to Europe. Both leaders agreed to expand cooperation in various domains such as critical minerals, defense and security, space technology, and nuclear energy.

Additionally, Takaichi asserted that, in the wake of an increasingly challenging security environment, the security of the Euro-Atlantic and Indo-Pacific regions is interconnected, and that cooperation among like-minded partners is more important than ever. Both leaders discussed the situation in

the region, including China, North Korea's missile and abduction issues. They reiterate the significance of maintaining safe navigation in the Strait of Hormuz and agreed to sustain close communication to secure a stable supply of essential materials and expedite de-escalation efforts. During his visit to Seoul, President Macron highlighted the importance of strengthening bilateral relations and advocated for the formation of a coalition of independent states, noting the increasing divergence between the United States and China. [Read More](#)

China's Global Leadership Bid with an Iran Peace Plan

China is ramping up its diplomatic engagement on the Iran war by introducing a five-point proposal in collaboration with Pakistan. The initiative aims to consolidate support from Gulf nations while opposing a United Nations resolution that seeks to employ force to facilitate navigation through the Strait of Hormuz. China aims to leverage the ongoing security and energy crisis in the region by presenting itself as a constructive partner, especially since the US has struggled to engage Iran in meaningful negotiations. Even the US President Trump warned Iran to make a deal by Tuesday, "Remember when I gave Iran ten days to MAKE A DEAL or OPEN UP THE HORMUZ STRAIT," He wrote. "Time is running out – 48 hours before all Hell will reign down on them. Glory be to GOD!"

Interestingly, the Trump administration is less enthusiastic about China's potential involvement in mediation efforts. There seems to be increasing skepticism toward third-party mediation, and the United States is approaching initiatives to elevate China's international standing with caution and to avoid a situation where China can claim a significant diplomatic victory in the Middle East. [Read More](#)

US and Allies countries Participate in Sea Dragon 2026

US, with Australia, Japan, South Korea, and India concludes Sea Dragon antisubmarine warfare training at Andersen Air Force Base, Guam. Sea Dragon 2026 used structured training with the MK-30 “Sled” as a mobile ASW target for tracking drills. The exercise included a U.S. Navy anti-submarine warfare exercise (ASWEX), where participants searched for an active submarine. Each nation’s performance was graded in a competition for the Dragon Belt award, testing ASW tactics and response in realistic scenarios.

Exercises like Sea Dragon 2026 demonstrate the U.S. Navy’s commitment to regional security and strengthening maritime partnerships with allied and partner nations. Exercise Sea Dragon has been held annually since 2019. [Read More](#)

Indo-Pacific Quiz

Which South Korea was invaded by North Korea on?

- a. May 27, 1950
- b. June 25, 1950
- c. June 3, 1950
- d. July 31, 1950

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

- a. INS Samudra
 - b. INS Virat
 - c. INS Talwar
 - d. INS Kirch
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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 March 29 Newsletter Quiz

Q. Which country is hosting G-7 Summit in 2026?

- d. France

Q. Who has sworn Nepal's New Prime Minister?

- c. Balendra Shah

Contributions: Indu Saxena