



Consortium of Indo-Pacific

Researchers

## **Indo-Pacific Weekly Mail May 11-May 17, 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.

### **Trump in Beijing: A High-Stakes Summit Between Two Giants**



Figure 1: US President Donald Trump and Chinese President Xi Jinping in Beijing, China May 14-15, 2026.

The 20-hour flight to Beijing was far from a routine diplomatic excursion for US President Donald Trump, undertaken against the backdrop of a precarious and volatile situation in the Middle East; the trip was less a matter of choice than of strategic compulsion. Trump arrived in the Chinese capital with an “America First” agenda, securing meaningful trade deals, extracting from Chinese President Xi Jinping a categorical assurance of no material assistance to Iran, and enlisting Beijing's diplomatic weight to facilitate the reopening of the Strait of Hormuz — the critical waterway through which 20 million barrels per day of crude oil supply flows.

Xi Jinping, characteristically measured and deliberate, extended a welcoming gesture rather than engaging in confrontation. He signaled openness — China, he indicated, stood ready to make substantial purchases of American soybeans, renew the expired facilities of beef, and resume imports of USDA-approved poultry. China will also buy 200 Boeing aircraft from the US and will address the concern of the shortage of rare earth materials in the US. It is noted that China dominates rare earth materials, which are essential for industries, defense, aerospace, etc., while committing to channeling significant investment flows into the United States economy. Accompanying Trump on the Beijing visit was an impressive constellation of American corporate titans: Cristiano Amon, CEO of Qualcomm, Elon Musk of Tesla & Space X, Tim Cook of Apple, Stephen Schwarzman of Blackstone, Larry Fink of BlackRock, David Solomon of Goldman Sachs, Jensen Huang of Nvidia — a delegation whose very composition signaled that this summit was as much about commerce as it was

about geopolitics. While Trump steered the America First agenda and a transactional approach at the high-stakes summit, he confined his visit to G-2 (America-China) topics. However, G-2 topics largely impact across the continent in today's interconnected world. The G-2 negotiation is never merely bilateral; its reverberations ripple across every continent and corridor of global trade and security. [Read More](#)

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## **BRICS Foreign Ministers Meet in New Delhi**

BRICS foreign ministers from Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa met in New Delhi. The summit comes at a sensitive time, as the conflict in Iran has triggered an energy crisis affecting both member states and other countries. Held under India's chairmanship, with the theme "Building for Resilience, Innovation, Cooperation and Sustainability," the meeting reaffirmed India's commitment to promoting a more diverse, democratic, and multilateral international order.

It is important to note that Iran, the UAE, and Saudi Arabia are also members of the BRICS grouping. Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi attended the event and condemned US-Israeli "aggression," calling upon BRICS members to unite against the "violations of international law" and "Western hegemony."

The two-day meeting concluded without a joint statement because some members held differing views on the situation in the Middle East. The Chinese Foreign Minister didn't attend the meeting due to the US President's visit to Beijing. US President Trump views BRICS as a threat to American interests and the dominance of the US dollar. Earlier, he threatened to impose 100 % tariffs on BRIC countries. [Read More](#)

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## **India and UAE Expand Strategic Partnership**

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited the United Arab Emirates (UAE) on 15 May 2026 and held discussions with UAE President Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan. India and the UAE have deepened their Comprehensive Strategic Partnership through major agreements on defense, energy security, advanced technology, and maritime cooperation. Bilateral trade is expected to double to \$200 billion by 2032. The two countries also signed several pacts, including a framework for a strategic defense partnership and an agreement to store 30 million barrels in India's strategic petroleum reserve.

The two sides signed the strategic defense partnership and have agreed on deepening defense industrial collaboration and cooperation on innovation and advanced technology, training, exercises, maritime security, and cyber defense. [Read More](#)

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## **US and South Korea Held Integrated Defense Dialogue**

The US Department of War and the Republic of Korea (ROK) Ministry of National Defense held the 28th Korea-U.S. Integrated Defense Dialogue (KIDD) in Washington. As per reports, during the meeting, both sides assessed the overall defense cooperation of the U.S.-ROK Alliance and exchanged perspectives on policy directions that enhance the Alliance's combined defense posture. The officials from both sides assessed that the KIDD laid a foundation for practical cooperation to further solidify the Alliance and looked forward to further deepening cooperation to achieve shared security goals on the Korean Peninsula and across the Indo-Pacific region. [Read More](#)

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## **Indo-Pacific Quiz**

In which country's parliament was a gunshot fired?

- a. Philippine
- b. South Korea
- c. Myanmar
- d. Pakistan

What is the capital city of Taiwan?

- a. Keelung
  - b. Tainan
  - c. Taipei
  - d. Shenzhen
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## **Consortium Highlights**

- ❖ [Video Recording](#) 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**, May 11, 9:00 AM EST
  - ❖ [Blogpost](#): How the Iran War is Reorienting the Indo-Pacific Security Arrangements
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## Indo-Pacific Quiz Key

Here are the **Answers** for May 10, 2026, Newsletter Quiz

Q. Which Asian country is US President Trump scheduled to visit from May 14-15?

a. China

Q. China has eliminated tariffs for all African countries, except for?

c. Estwini

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