



Consortium of Indo-Pacific

Researchers

Indo-Pacific Weekly Mail June 22-June 28, 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.

World's Largest Military Exercise RIMPAC 2026 Kicks off



Figure 1: Sailors on the aircraft carrier USS Theodore Roosevelt at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii, June 23, 2026, to participate in Exercise Rim of the Pacific 2026 /image /US Dept. of War/

The biennial Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) exercise starts in and around the Hawaiian Islands from June 24 to July 31, 2026. This is the 30th iteration of the RIMPAC exercise series that began in 1971. As the United States celebrates its 250th anniversary, the exercise symbolizes the shared values and cooperation among allies and partners for the free world. The theme of RIMPAC 2026 is “Partners: Integrated and Prepared.”

US Theodore Roosevelt is participating in RIMPAC to enhance readiness, strengthen partnerships and support regional security across the Indo-Pacific. Approximately twenty-nine nations, over 30 surface ships, five submarines, 15 national land forces, more than 206 aircraft and 30,000 personnel are participating in RIMPAC this year. The world’s largest international maritime exercise, RIMPAC provides a unique training opportunity while fostering and sustaining cooperative relationships among participants critical to ensuring safety of sea lanes and security on the world’s oceans.

The exercise is hosted by the Commander of the U.S. Pacific Fleet, RIMPAC 2026 will be led by the Commander of U.S. 3rd Fleet as Combined Task Force commander. Chile will serve as deputy commander, Japan as vice commander, and the Republic of Korea will command the maritime component.

As per the press release, “the exercise will cover a wide range of capabilities including amphibious operations, gunnery and missile proficiency, anti-submarine warfare, air defense exercises, military medicine, humanitarian assistance and disaster response, counter-piracy, mine clearance, explosive

ordnance disposal, and diving and salvage operations. Throughout the exercise, partners train and operate together to strengthen our collective forces and promote a free and open Indo-Pacific.” [Read More](#)

Bangladesh’s China Tilt and its Strategic Concerns for India

Bangladesh Prime Minister Tarique Rahman's official visit to China this week marks the strengthening of relations between the two countries. Xi Jinping welcomed the Bangladeshi Premier at the Great Hall of the People, and the Chinese counterpart Li Qiang signed 13 MOUs to expand cooperation between the two countries. The two countries will enhance cooperation in trade, investment, infrastructure projects, energy, employment, education, and people-to-people exchange.

China is actively pushing its Belt and Road Initiative projects, focusing on the modernization of major seaports and the development of the China-Myanmar-Bangladesh Economic Corridor to enhance regional connectivity. China has also extended its support for Bangladesh’s multibillion-dollar [Teesta River project](#), a development that has long been subject to treaty negotiations with India. Given that this Himalayan-originated river flows from India into Bangladesh, China’s involvement could present significant strategic concerns for India’s northeastern states. Furthermore, China’s advancing foothold

through its influence in Bay of Bengal seaports will likely pose an overwhelming strategic challenge for India to manage. [Read More](#)

China and Russia Hold Joint Air Drill near Japan

China and Russia conducted a joint air patrol featuring Russian Tu-95 strategic bombers, Chinese H-6 bombers, and escort fighters, including the Chinese J-16 and Russian Su-35, near the Sea of Japan, the East China Sea, and the western Pacific. While Japan and South Korea expressed concern regarding the proximity of the exercise to their Air Defense Identification Zones (ADIZ), there were no reported violations of sovereign airspace; meanwhile, the Chinese Ministry of Defense stated the 11th joint exercise as a routine maneuver intended to uphold regional stability.

The joint patrol signals a deepening military alignment between Beijing and Moscow, deliberately challenging the U.S.-led security architecture in the Indo-Pacific by demonstrating their joint power-projection capabilities in critical maritime theater. Hence, the evolving partnership threatens to complicate the regional security calculus for U.S. allies, forcing them to divert defense resources to monitor an increasingly assertive Sino-Russian presence.

[Read More](#)

Trilateral Cooperation to Disrupt Cyber Operations

Delegates from the United States, Japan, and South Korea met in Washington, D.C., to coordinate their responses to North Korea's (DPRK) illicit activities, including cryptocurrency theft, money laundering, and the deployment of IT worker schemes designed to fund malicious cyber operations. During the Trilateral Diplomatic Working Group on DPRK Cyber Threats, the representatives expressed deep concern regarding the scale of these heists. The participants committed to strengthening international efforts to expose North Korean cryptocurrency theft and to increase global awareness of these threats, specifically targeting regions including Europe, Southeast Asia, and Africa.

Furthermore, the delegation agreed to eliminate nuclear weapons in North Korea (DPRK) and to prevent it from obtaining funds for illegal activities, including developing weapons of mass destruction and missiles. [Read More](#)

Indo-Pacific Quiz

Which U.S. president was the only one unanimously elected by the Electoral College?

- | | |
|----------------------|--------------------|
| a. George Washington | c. Abraham Lincoln |
| b. Woodrow Wilson | d. Barak Obama |

What is Valiant Shield?

- | | |
|----------------|------------------------|
| a. a sea drone | c. a military exercise |
|----------------|------------------------|

b. a missile system

d. US operation in Venezuela

Consortium Highlights

- ❖ Podcast [Recording Link](#): "Sustaining Primacy; the future of American Strategic Interest in South Asia" 2:00 PM EST, June 23, 2026
 - ❖ Upcoming Webinar: Deterrence to Dealmaking: Assessing America's China Strategy, July 6, 9:00 AM EST
 - ❖ Upcoming Webinar: Fractured Proximity: India-Bangladesh relations
 - ❖ [New Read](#): Operation Desert Fox 1998 & The Age of American Air Power Diplomacy
 - ❖ Commentary: Pentagon's Renaming Gambit: Does Indo-Pacom's Demise Diminish India? [Read More](#)
-

Indo-Pacific Quiz Key

Here are the **Answers** for June 21, 2026, Newsletter Quiz

Q. In which year US President Donald Trump renamed US Pacific Command (PACOM) to Indo-Pacific Command (INDOPACOM)?

c. 2018

Q. In which country is the G7 summit scheduled to be held in 2027?

d. USA

Contributions: Indu Saxena