



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.

US Sec. Rubio in New Delhi; What it holds for bi-lateral Ties and for the Quad

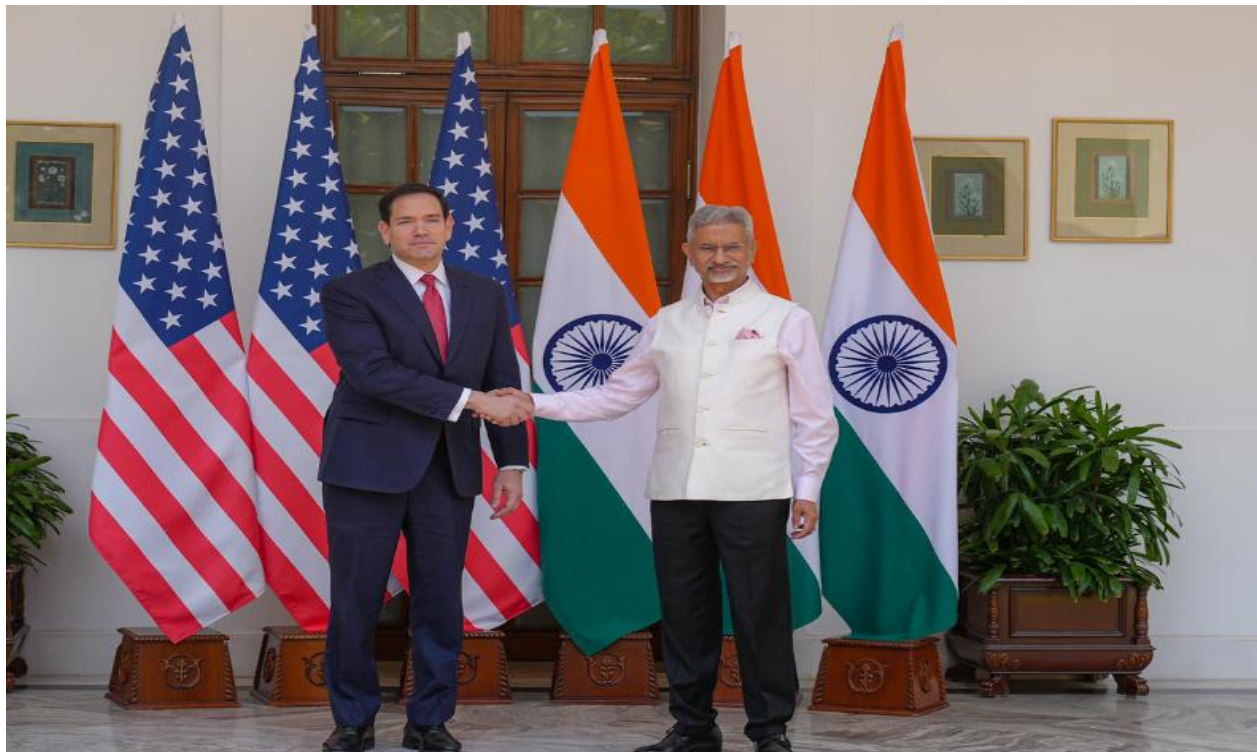


Figure 1: US Secretary of State Marco Rubio and Indian External Affairs Minister Jaishankar Subramanyam in New Delhi, India, May 24, 2026.

The United States Secretary of State Marco Rubio arrived in New Delhi for a high-stakes diplomatic engagement, holding substantive discussions with Prime Minister Narendra Modi, External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar, National Security Advisor Ajit Doval, and other senior Indian officials. The visit — purposeful in its agenda, a partnership in yielding high American interest, and striving to stabilize the US-India bilateral ties that have been slow on track since President Trump's reciprocal tariff, punitive tariff for buying Russian oil, and the four-day India-Pakistan conflict in 2025.

Sec. Rubio aims to build momentum for the US-India partnership and ease the pressure from Trump's transactionalism approach. The US-India "global comprehensive strategic partnership" is constructive and could play a wider role amid Middle East tension and beyond. The Talks on [energy, trade, defense cooperation, and the future setting of the Quad](#) are in Rubio's diplomatic playbook.

The Secretary pressed New Delhi to substantially expand its purchases of American crude oil and liquefied natural gas. Rubio additionally raised the prospect of Indian procurement from Venezuela, where the oil industry has come under effective American control following the dismantlement of the Maduro government. Venezuela's acting President, Rodriguez, is scheduled to visit India to finalize the oil purchase.

Rubio's visit also advanced the bilateral conversation on a comprehensive trade agreement — one of the most consequential and protracted negotiations

on President Trump's agenda. The deal is yet to be finalized, but not certain when it will be.

Rubio's visit to the Missionaries of Charity headquarters in Kolkata underscores the protection of the Christian faith, which is also a political priority of President Trump's foreign policy. Mother Teresa's Charity's was under scrutiny, and its Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA) license was not renewed by the Modi government in 2021 but restored in 2022 after international and domestic pushback.

On the Quad, Rubio stated that its four members are "strong allies, strong economies, and have strong global reach, can make a huge difference in the world" calling for summits that produce "tangible results" rather than "a social meeting of friends." The Quad Foreign Ministers meeting will be held in Delhi on May 26, 2026. [Read More](#)

Putin Visits Beijing; Expand “No Limit Partnership” with China

Chinese President Xi Jinping hosted Russian President Vladimir Putin in Beijing just a few days after US President Trump concluded his visit to Beijing. Russia and China signed 20 major agreements on oil and natural gas, nuclear energy, and the exchange of technology cooperation. China is the Primary buyer of Russian energy after the Ukraine War, as the European Union suspended the purchase of Russian oil and gas. Putin plans to advance the Siberia 2 gas pipeline, which would carry Russian gas through Mongolia into

China. However, the leaders didn't reach a final timeline for it. On technology cooperation, China has assisted Russia with dual-use products that have found application in the Ukraine war — an arrangement that has drawn sharp criticism from Western governments.

Both leaders also share warm relations with Iran, reinforcing a trilateral alignment that poses a sustained challenge to the West. Putin and Xi signed a joint declaration to establish a "multipolar world," criticizing the West for its hegemonic stance. [Read More](#)

Japan and South Korea Seek to Enhance Partnership

Japan's Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi visited South Korea and met with his counterpart, South Korean President Lee Jae Myung, amid concerns about energy supply due to the ongoing escalation in the Strait of Hormuz. Both leaders understood the need for greater cooperation on supply chains and discussed stabilizing energy demand and critical mineral supply.

This is the fourth meeting between the two East Asian leaders in six months. South Korea and Japan are vibrant democracies and the US allies. The two leaders also discussed the importance of trilateral cooperation between Seoul, Tokyo, and Washington.

Japan and South Korea have reset their relationship since 2023, when top leaders from both countries took steps beyond historical disputes to

strengthen bilateral cooperation and trilateral cooperation with the US in the face of China's assertive behavior and US-China strategic competition. [Read More](#)

Multinational Exercise Salaknib 2026 Enhance Interoperability

Military forces from the United States, the Philippines, Australia, New Zealand, and Japan took part in Exercise Salaknib, a key event in the Joint Pacific Multinational Readiness Center-Exportable (JPMRC-X) training rotation. The exercise tested the coalition's ability to rapidly deploy and integrate capabilities to secure key terrain in a contested archipelagic environment.

As part of Exercise Salaknib, JPMRC-X brings together U.S., Philippine, and partner forces in realistic scenarios to improve combined operations, refine multi-domain tactics, and strengthen Indo-Pacific readiness.

The 25th Infantry Division is America's Pacific Division focuses on strengthening relationships with allies and partners to support a free and open Indo-Pacific. [Read More](#)

Indo-Pacific Quiz

In which country's coal mine blast killed 90 people?

- a. Philippines
- b. South Korea
- c. China
- d. Pakistan

Fort Magsaysay is the largest military base of which country?

- a. South Korea
 - b. Philippines
 - c. Taiwan
 - d. Singapore
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Consortium Highlights

- ❖ [Commentary](#): What Operation EPIC FURY Taught about Access, Basing, and Overflight
 - ❖ [Commentary](#): Tehran to Taiwan: How will the Two Superpowers Negotiate
 - ❖ [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 17, 2026, Newsletter Quiz

Q. In which country's parliament was a gunshot fired?

- a. Philippine

Q. What is the capital city of Taiwan?

- c. Taipei
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