



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 reply button for your feedback and comments.

U.S. and China's Military Generals Hold Talks



Figure 1: IMAGE: DOD

Why is it important to resume military-to-military talks between the United States and China?

U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff Air Force Gen. CQ Brown, Jr. and People's Liberation Army Gen. Liu Zhenli spoke to each other via [video teleconferencing](#) on Dec.21. The United States and China have not held higher-level military talks since July 2022. It is worth noting that China [suspended military talks](#) with the U.S. following a visit to Taiwan by then-U.S. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi in August 2022. Moreover, Chinese intercepts against U.S. aircraft in the region and the spy balloon incident contributed to a lack of trust, resulting in the denial of higher-level talks.

The General-level talks resulted from the follow-up calls to return to military-to-military communications from the U.S. and the [Biden-XI meeting](#) in San Francisco in November 2023. In his meeting General Brown emphasized the importance of 'responsible competition management,' 'avoiding miscalculations,' and 'maintaining open communication lines.' His words echoed with a powerful message: the criticality of the People's Liberation Army to proactively engage in constructive dialogues to mitigate the possibilities of any misinterpretations or confusions. A senior defense official [stated](#) that the initial talks between Brown and his counterpart are an "important step." However, there is still more work to be done to ensure open and reliable lines of communication between the military leaders of the United States and China. As they [plan to hold](#) the bilateral Defense Policy Coordination Talks, Military Maritime Consultative Agreement talks (MMC), and opening lines of communication between the Commander of United States Indo-Pacific Command and the commanders of the PLA Eastern and Southern Theater Commands.

Reviving military-to-military talks between the United States and China is of utmost importance. These talks have the potential to promote mutual understanding, reduce misunderstandings, and

enhance cooperation between the two superpowers. Therefore, it is crucial to prioritize the resumption of these talks. [Read More](#)

Japan Transfers Patriot Missile to U.S.

Japan transfers its Patriot interceptor missiles to the United States. As per the DoD press release “The decision will contribute to U.S. stockpiles of these critical air and missile defense articles, which will enhance stability in the Indo-Pacific region.” However, some news reports suggest that the weapon may be employed in Europe to [aid](#) Ukraine, leading to [surprise](#) among Indo-Pacific affairs observers regarding its move from the region. With that, it is noted that Japan has significantly altered its defense policy to allow the export of deadly military equipment. [Read More](#)

Maldives Terminates Water Pact with India

Maldives newly formed government, under President Mohamed Muizzu, has [opted out of renewing](#) the *Hydrographic Survey Pact* with India signed by its previous government in 2019. The survey enabled India to conduct a hydrographic survey of Maldivian territorial waters, mapping reefs, lagoons, coastlines, ocean currents, and tide levels. This is another major decision that discomfort India after the Maldives' new administration formally [requested India to withdraw its military personnel](#) from Maldives territory. Such incidents have the potential to harm the relationship between Maldives and India in the future.

It is worth mentioning that Maldives elected its new President in a [crucial run-off](#) in November 2023, and the new President has stronger ties with China as compared to its predecessor, Ibrahim Mohamed Solih, who was considered in favor of India. India and China are vying for

influence in the Indian Ocean states, where Maldives plays a crucial role in the Indo-Pacific region. [Read More](#)

Indo-Pacific Quiz

When was Timor-Leste internationally recognized as an independent state?

- a. 1999
- b. 2001
- c. 2002
- d. 2003

Where is Gulf of Mannar Located?

- a. Tasman Sea
 - b. Indian Ocean
 - c. South China Sea
 - d. East China Sea
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Consortium Highlights

Pakistan Braces for yet another Controversial Election? A blog-post by Consortium Member Naseem Khan [Read Here](#)

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