



## Consortium of Indo-Pacific Researchers

### **Indo-Pacific Weekly Mail Jan 1 - 7, 2024**

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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.

#### **Washington Convenes Trilateral Indo-Pacific Dialogue**



*Figure 1: Assistant Secretary of State Daniel J. Kritenbrink, with his counterparts Japan's Kobe Yasuhiro, and S. Korea's Chung. Image/ Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs.*

The Inaugural United States-Japan-Republic of Korea, Indo-Pacific Dialogue, was held in Washington, D.C., on January 5, 2024. The meeting was led by the U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs, Daniel J. Kritenbrink, with his counterparts Japan's deputy minister Kobe Yasuhiro and Chung Byung-won from S. Korea. Their dialogue built on the commitment of the [Camp David Agreement](#) that President Biden initiated and hosted in August 2023.

As per the [joint statement released](#) during the meeting, the three representatives discussed 'their country's approach towards the Indo-Pacific region and opportunities for cooperation. They emphasized the importance of partnering with Southeast Asian and Pacific Island countries. They also shared their individual assessments of the geopolitical trends shaping the Indo-Pacific, highlighting the need for enhanced trilateral cooperation'. They further discussed the commitment and cooperation with regional groups like ASEAN, Mekong Friends, the Partners of the Blue Pacific, and the Pacific Island Forum.

Along with this, the representatives also expressed their concern on the challenges and tensions in the Indo-Pacific region. They noted "recent dangerous and escalatory behavior by the People's Republic of China (PRC), North Korea's continued development of its unlawful nuclear and ballistic missile programs and growing military cooperation with Russia." Moreover, delegates are increasingly concerned about the worsening humanitarian, political, and economic crises in Myanmar.

The three countries look forward to working more closely and robustly on several multilateral platforms like the U.N. Security Council, the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation Summit (APEC), the Women's Economic Empowerment Conference, Global A.I. Summit, and the Trilateral Global Youth Leadership Summit, which will be hosted in 2024 by either country. [Read More](#)

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## India and Nepal Bolster ties

India's External Affairs Minister (EAM) Jaishankar [visited](#) Nepal in the first week of the new year 2024 on the invitation of Nepal's Foreign Minister N.P. Saud. During his visit, he co-chaired the meeting of the India-Nepal joint commission. The leaders [signed major agreements](#) in High Impact Community Development Projects, trade, energy, and power, and also inaugurated the cross-border transmission lines between India and Nepal. India will import 10,000 MGW electricity from Nepal in the next ten years. Both leaders discussed various avenues of bilateral cooperation.

It is worth mentioning that India and Nepal have deep-rooted historical and cultural relations. The [Treaty of Peace and Friendship](#), signed between two the countries in 1950, is a testament to this bond. India shares a border with Nepal of over 1,850 KM, including its five states– Sikkim, West Bengal, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, and Uttarakhand. Delhi considers Kathmandu a "priority partner under its Neighborhood First Policy." It seeks to play a strategic role in light of China's growing influence in the Himalayan region despite the border issue between the two countries in *Kalapani* region. [Read More](#)

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## U.S.-China Marks 45 Years of Diplomatic Relations

This week the United States and China have [completed 45 years](#) of their diplomatic ties. Speaking at the event, China's Foreign Minister Wang Yi [said](#), "It can be said that China-United States cooperation is no longer a dispensable choice for the two countries or even for the world, but a mandatory question that must be seriously addressed." It is noted that the intense tension between the two countries cooled down after the Biden-Xi meeting in Nov. 2023 on the sidelines at the APEC Summit

held in California, USA. However, the South China Sea, Taiwan, trade, and technology are still the sustained issues between the two countries.

On January 1, 1979, the United States recognized the PRC and established diplomatic relations while suspending its diplomatic ties with Taiwan. [Read More](#)

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## **Sri Lanka Bans Chinese Vessel in the Indian Ocean**

Sri Lanka bans a Chinese research vessel from operating in its Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) that was docked at its port in the Indian Ocean in October 2023. Analysts and observers suggest Sri Lanka took action due to India's consistent [security concerns](#) over a survey ship in its backyard. [Read More](#)

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## **Indo-Pacific Quiz**

Which country has appointed Dong Jung as its new Defense Minister?

- a. Singapore
- b. Vietnam
- c. China
- d. Mongolia

Which country does the 'Himalayan Declaration' belong to?

- a. Nepal
- b. Bhutan

c. India

d. Sri Lanka

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## **Consortium Highlights**

CIPR welcomes its Spring 2024 interns NGUYEN Van Anh & ERIN Katrina Titiheruw from Asia Pacific University, Beppu, Japan.

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