



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.

India Embarks a Pivotal Multinational Naval Exercise MILAN 2024



Figure 1: IMAGE/ Indian Navy/

India hosts a multilateral naval exercise [MILAN](#) in Vishakhapatnam, in the Bay of Bengal, from Feb.19-27. The navies of 50 countries, spanning from East Africa to East Asia, the Pacific, North America, and Europe, including U.S., Canada, Mexico, France, Germany, Japan, Australia, Djibouti, and Comoros, have been participating in the water drill.

As per the reports, the biennial exercise aims to “enhance maritime security cooperation and to strengthen regional cooperation, foster interoperability and understanding between participating navies, and provide a platform for sharing best practices and expertise.” The pivotal maritime exercise is a great opportunity for the partner navies to display their advanced capabilities in various areas, including air defense, anti-submarine warfare, and anti-surface warfare. The operation will encompass different phases, such as harbor, sea, international maritime seminar, tabletop exercise, and maritime technical exposition, comprehensively evaluating and exchanging maritime skills, tactics, interoperability, and teamwork.

In his [opening remarks](#), India's defense minister, Mr. Rajnath Singh, emphasized the importance of achieving "positive Peace," "shared peace of one and all, with the cooperation of one and all." He reiterated Indian Prime Minister Modi's remarks, "This is not an era of war. But it is one of dialogue and diplomacy." While positing peace, he stated, "India continues its proactive engagement and has been maintaining a sustained presence in the region to ensure safety and security of all shipping, irrespective of the flag on the ship and the nationality of the

crew." He also stressed, "It is our steadfast resolve to be the first responder and the preferred security partner in the Indian Ocean Region and for the peace, stability, and prosperity of the wider Indo-Pacific."

Chief of India's Naval Staff, Admiral R Hari Kumar, noted that the MILAN initiative has grown remarkably since 1995, from five Indian Ocean Region (IOR) navies to fifty navies across the Indo-Pacific today. He further stated, "These are not merely naval exercises, but a testament to the collective expertise and strength we bring to the fore as maritime nations."

U.S. Capt. Ryan Leary, Commanding Officer, leading the US Navy with USS Halsey in the MILAN naval operation, [said](#), "India is a like-minded partner and leader in South Asia and the Indian Ocean, active in and connected to Southeast Asia, a driving force of regional fora, and an engine for regional growth and development."

India is actively increasing its naval posture and presence in the Indian Ocean to ensure freedom of navigation and a rule-based order, as well as countering any aggression in the region. Recently, the Indian navy has been the first to respond to situations in the Indian Ocean, deploying a dozen navy ships to conduct [anti-piracy drills](#) in the Arabian Sea rescuing the foreign national.

In conclusion, India's focus on enhancing its maritime security cooperation with like-minded partners is a testament to its commitment

to ensuring a free, open, secure, and prosperous Indo-Pacific region. [Read More](#)

U.S.-Japan-South Korea Diplomats Trilateral Meeting

U.S. Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken held a meeting with his Japanese and South Korean counterparts, Kamikawa Yoko and Cho Tae-yul, respectively, in [Rio De Janeiro, Brazil, during the G-20's Foreign Minister meetings](#). The three leaders discussed the progress on key commitments and work on the historical [Camp David Agreement](#), which was adopted in August 2023 by the top leaders of their countries. They also talked about North Korea's provocative actions and China's assertive actions in the region.

Furthermore, they shared their apprehensions regarding the military cooperation between Russia and North Korea and emphasized the importance of fostering stronger strategic partnerships with other allies and partners. It's worth noting that February 24th marks the [second anniversary](#) of Russia's invasion of Ukraine. [Read More](#)

U.S. Congressional Leaders Visit Taiwan

U.S. Congressional delegate led by Rep. Mike Gallagher (R-WI), Chair, House China Select Committee [visited](#) Taiwan from Feb.22-24. They met with the new president of Taiwan and other leaders to discuss U.S.-Taiwan relations, regional security, trade and investment, and other significant issues of mutual interest. They admired Taiwan's democratic stance and demonstrated their support for human rights, democracy, and maintaining regional peace and stability in the region. As per reports, China slams the U.S. delegation's visit to Taiwan, as happened earlier too at the time of Speaker Nancy Pelosi's visit in August 2022, which resulted in strained relations between the U.S. and China until the San Francisco summit in Nov. 2023. However, China [plans to send a pair of Pandas to the San Diego Zoo](#) to enhance cooperation and people-to-people tie between the two countries, and it seems that PRC wants to continue its "Panda Diplomacy." [Read More](#)

U.S.-India Convenes INDUS-X in New Delhi

The U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) and Indian Ministry of Defense (MoD) participated in the [second India-U.S. Defense Acceleration Ecosystem \(INDUS-X\) Summit in New Delhi](#). At the Summit, experts delved into the possibilities of collaborating to produce advanced military capabilities, building robust defense supply chains, and strengthening U.S.-India military interoperability. These initiatives align with the shared vision of promoting a free and open Indo-Pacific region

and offer promising avenues for constructive cooperation between the two nations. [Read More](#)

Indo-Pacific Quiz

Which country hosted the Air Show from Feb.20-24, 2024?

- a. Singapore
- b. Thailand
- c. Malaysia
- d. Saudi Arabia

In which year did the MILAN naval operation start?

- a. 1933
 - b. 1994
 - c. 1995
 - d. 2000
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Consortium Highlights

- ❖ CIPR podcast Episode on **Red Sea Crisis and Regional Implications**, held on Feb 19th, 2024. [Listen Here](#)
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