



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.

Secretary Blinken Visits China

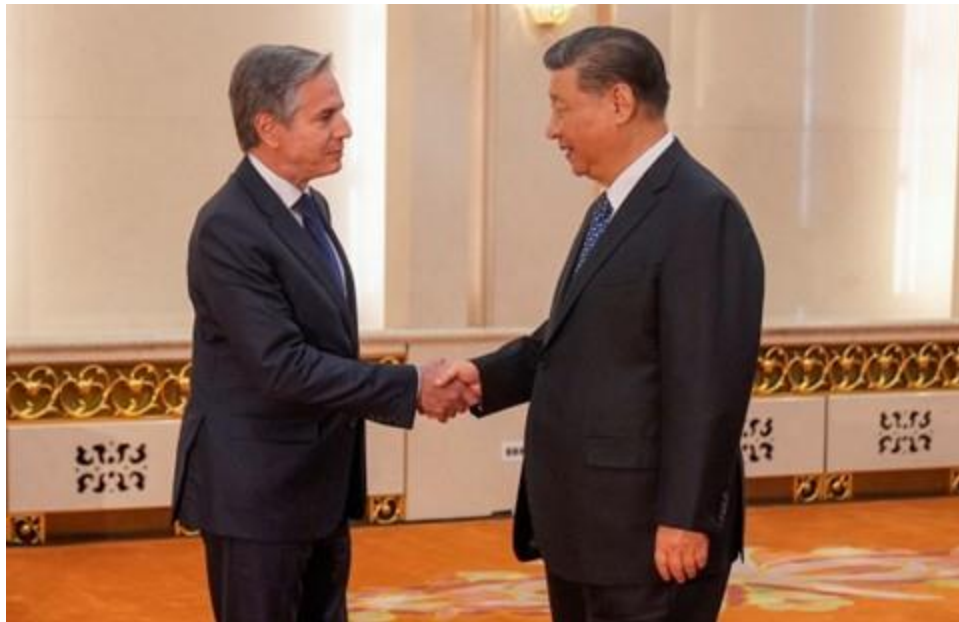


Figure 1: Secretary Blinken with President Xi Jinping in Beijing /IMAGE/X @SecBlinken

U.S. Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken [met with Chinese President Xi Jinping](#) during his visit to China from April 23-26, 2024. Xi noted that this year marks 45 years of U.S.-China diplomatic relations and that "both countries should be partners rather than rivals." He further said, "The planet is big enough to accommodate the common development and respective prosperity of China and the U.S." He stated that U.S.-China relations will stabilize when the U.S. sees "China's development in a positive light."

Secretary [Blinken also met with Foreign Minister Wang Yi in Beijing](#). Mr. Wang said that the China-U.S. relationship is beginning to stabilize through various dialogues and cooperation talks on both sides. However, he also said, "China's legitimate development rights have been unreasonably suppressed" and warned that the increasing negative factors can derail the relationship.

Mr. Blinken said, "There is no substitute, in our judgment, for face-to-face diplomacy in order to try to move forward, but also to make sure that we're as clear as possible about the areas where we have differences, at the very least to avoid misunderstandings, to avoid miscalculations." Secretary conveyed his apprehension about China's bolstering of Russia's defense industry, supplying dual-use items, given Russia's potential threat to Ukraine and the stability of Europe. He has warned China to stop its assistance to Russia, cautioning that the U.S. may need to take action. Many Chinese entities have already faced

sanctions, and Blinken stresses that further repercussions may ensue if support for Russia persists.

It is worth mentioning that U.S. Defense Secretary Austin [held a video teleconference](#) with his Chinese counterpart last week to maintain an open line of communication. This meeting follows ongoing discussions about resuming military-to-military talks between the United States and China, which were initiated during the Biden-Xi Summit in California in Nov. 2023.

Despite several dialogues between U.S. and Chinese officials since the California Summit last year, there remains a significant amount of uncertainty and differences regarding various issues. These include China's trade practices and industrial overcapacity, maritime matters in the South China Sea, the U.S. increasing tariffs on Chinese goods, and the TikTok social media app ban. [Read More](#)

U.S.-Philippines Strategic Dialogue Held in Washington

Philippines (PH) and U.S. officials gathered in Washington for the 11th Philippines-United States Bilateral Strategic Dialogue (BSD). Both sides discuss a wide range of topics on political, security, and economic cooperation and initiatives. Both countries are set to enhance their partnership and modernize the security alliance with the new initiatives in defense, technology, space, cyber, and security. It is noted that U.S.

and PH had leaders-level trilateral summit with Japan in the second week of April in Washington. [Read More](#)

North Korea Delegation Visits Iran

According to [recent reports](#), North Korean officials have visited Iran in order to strengthen their bi-lateral cooperation. The North Korean regime is reportedly seeking to enhance its military and economic ties with countries that are in confrontation with the United States as a way to counteract the pressure and sanctions imposed by the U.S. and its allies.

In recent years, North Korea has intensified its missile tests, which have prompted the U.S. and its allies in East Asia to increase their military drills and defense spending. It has also been reported that North Korea and Iran are among the countries that supply materials to Russia in the ongoing conflict in Ukraine. This further highlights the complex web of alliances and conflicts that exist in the global geopolitical landscape.

North Korean leader Kim Jong-un visited Russia last year, where he met with Russian President Vladimir Putin to bolster their countries' bilateral relations. The situation in North Korea remains tense and unpredictable, with the country continuing to pursue its nuclear and missile programs despite international sanctions and pressure. The visit to Iran and the ongoing cooperation between North Korea, Iran, and

Russia only add to the complexity of the situation and the challenges facing the U.S. and allies in the region and beyond, given the intensifying conflict between Israel and Iran in West Asia. [Read More](#)

World's Largest Democracy on Ballot-Phase 2

On April 26, 2024, India [held the second phase of its election for 88 seats](#), and the canvassing for this phase was marked by a heated debate on several issues, including **Religion, Reservation, and Redistribution of wealth**. Both alliances, the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the INDIA Alliance informally led by Rahul Gandhi, actively participated in the debate.

The discussion took a new turn when [Sam Pitroda](#), the Head of the Overseas Congress, a political party informally led by Rahul Gandhi, expressed the need for a policy on [inheritance tax as a means of wealth redistribution](#) similar to the American system. This statement triggered a strong reaction from both sides to the political divide, with the Congress party distancing itself from Pitroda's statement, stating that it was his personal opinion and not the party's official stance. PM Modi and the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) seized the opportunity to criticize the Congress party for its stance on wealth redistribution, portraying it as a threat to private property and implementing the socialist model system in the country.

Overall, the second phase of the 2024 Indian election was marked by a profoundly polarizing debate on issues of religion, reservation, and wealth redistribution, with both sides presenting starkly different visions for India's future. [Read More](#)

Australia Deepens Ties with Papua New Guinea (PNG)

Australian Prime Minister [Anthony Albanese visited PNG](#) to commemorate the historic ANZAC Day and walk on the Kokoda track with Papua New Guinea Prime Minister James Marape. The leaders' participation in the walk is a testament to the shared history, mutual respect, and trust between the two nations. The longest walk by Albanese with the PNG leader has strategic significance to solidifying the ties and commitment of support for peace and stability in the region. It is to note that PNG's Marape is the first Pacific Island leader who addressed the Australian Parliament in Feb. 2024 and described Australia a "Primary Partner." Australia signed the security agreement with PNG in 2023, and it is [the biggest trading partner, with over \\$6 billion in trade](#).

It is important to note that China's growing influence in the Pacific Island nations has strategic and regional implications. [Read More](#)

USINDOPACOM Commander Visits Japan

During his recent visit to Japan, Adm. John C. Aquilino discussed advanced capabilities cooperation under AUKUS Pillar II and reinforced commitments to trilateral operations, building upon the Biden-Kishida summit in Washington. [Read More](#)

Indo-Pacific Quiz

Where is Bougainville Island located?

- a. Solomon Islands
- b. Australia
- c. Papua New Guinea
- d. New Zealand

ANZAC (Australia New Zealand Army Corps) Day Marks the anniversary of?

- a. Boxer Rebellion
 - b. Korean War
 - c. World War II
 - d. World War I
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Consortium Highlights

CIPR Military History Team Podcast, Amphibious Assaults in Pacific War. [Tune In Here.](#)

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