



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.-China Leaders Hold Talks on Military and Economic Affairs



Figure 1: U.S. and Chinese military officials hold talks in Hawaii /IMAGE/DOD

Leaders from the United States and China are engaged in productive discussions on military and economic matters during their official visits, hoping to cooperate and maintaining good relations.

Military officials in Hawaii-U.S. and Chinese [military officials met in Honolulu](#) to discuss operational safety as the resumption of the Military Maritime Consultative Agreement Working Group. Representatives from the the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command, U.S. Pacific Fleet, and U.S. Pacific Air Forces met with China's People's Liberation Army. Representatives from the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command, U.S. Pacific Fleet, and U.S. Pacific Air Forces met with China's People's Liberation Army.

Indo-PACOM's director of Northeast Asia policy, Col. Ian Francis, said, "The Military Maritime Consultative Agreement is U.S. Indo-PACOM's primary means to directly discuss air and maritime operational safety with the PLA." He further said, "The United States will continue to operate safely and professionally in the Indo-Pacific wherever international law allows, and we take this responsibility seriously." The United States believes these talks are crucial in maintaining an open line of communication and avoiding misconceptions.

Notably, China expressed concern over House Speaker Nancy Pelosi's visit to Taiwan in August 2022, which led to the cancellation of these talks. After the summit between President Biden and President Xi in November 2023, these discussions were resumed.

On the economic front, U.S. Treasury Secretary Yellen's visit to Beijing (April 3-9) holds much talk on maintain a balanced relationship as

she stated that two economic superpowers have put their economic ties on "surer footing" with the ongoing critical conversations. She had a series of [meetings and roundtable discussions](#) with business groups, academics, students, economic experts, and local leaders and exchanged ideas on economic policy responsibilities. She met with Chinese Premier, Vice Premier Li Qiang, and the finance minister.



Figure 2: Secretary Yellen with Chinese Premier Li Qiang / CNBC / News / April 7, 2024/

Both sides [announced](#) the launch of two new initiatives: the Exchange on Balanced Growth in the Domestic and Global Economies and the Joint Treasury-PBOC Cooperation and Exchange on Anti-Money Laundering. "As the world's two largest economies, we have a duty to our own countries and to the world to responsibly manage our complex relationship and to cooperate and show leadership on addressing pressing global challenges," she said. However, she expressed concern about China's increasing

overcapacity in EV, solar, and Lithium batteries. She also warns against the supply of material to Russia's defense industrial base.

It is evident that both nations express positivity in initiating constructive talks with economic and financial working groups in the future. However, it is crucial to keep a close eye on how both superpowers handle their economic and military relations while considering the issues in the South China Sea and the security concerns in the wider Indo-Pacific. [Read More](#)

Multilateral Military Exercise Begins in South China Sea

U.S., Japan, Australia, and Philippines combined defense/armed forces have set to conduct a Maritime Cooperative Activity (MCA) within the Philippine Exclusive Economic Zone. A joint statement states, "We stand with all nations in safeguarding the international order based on the rule of law that is the foundation for a peaceful and stable Indo-Pacific region. Our four nations reaffirm the position regarding the 2016 South China Sea Arbitral Tribunal Award as a final and legally binding decision on the parties to the dispute." It is worth noting that in [2016 Arbitral Tribunal](#) constituted under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) gave the ruling in favor of the Philippines in case against China. In response, China invalidated the ruling and maintained it "null and void."

The leaders of the four nations emphasized the importance of respecting international law and freedom of navigation to maintain a free and open Indo-Pacific region. [Read More](#)

South Korea Sets for its General Election

South Korea is gearing up for its upcoming general election this week. The electoral process for the National Assembly involves a proportional representation system where voters have a say in allocating all 300 seats. The National Assembly is the unicameral legislative body of the country, and the members serve a four-year term. The Democratic Party (DP) and People Power Party (PPP) are the two main political parties that are in the running for these elections. The DP is a liberal party that advocates for progressive policies and social equality, while the PPP is a conservative party. [Read More](#)

Wisconsin Guard and Papua New Guinea Enhance Partnership

Wisconsin National Guard soldiers collaborated with the Papua New Guinea Defence Force in Port Moresby under the State Partnership Program. This program started in 2020 to strengthen the partnership with the Pacific nation. On the exchange of training and resource

management partnership, Wisconsin's adjutant general, Maj. Gen. Paul Knapp said, "It is great to be able to bring our Soldiers and Airmen over here to experience the country and culture, while laying groundwork and building relationships with the Papua New Guinea Defence Force as well as the people of Papua New Guinea." [Read More](#)

Indo-Pacific Quiz

Which Country will conduct a vote for its General Election on April 10th, 2024?

- a. India
- b. South Korea
- c. Japan
- d. Maldives

Kanchanzanga, the third highest mountain in the world, is located at the border of?

- a. India-Nepal
 - b. India-Tibet
 - c. India-Bhutan
 - d. India-Pakistan
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❖ **Consortium Highlights**



- ❖ **Learning From Legends: Analysis of Gen. Henry H. “Hap” Arnold and the Impact to Current Strategic Thinking**, Feature Article by Consortium Fellow, Capt. Brendan J. Donnelly. [Read Here](#)

 - ❖ **Southeast Asia and the Indo-Pacific Construct**, [Book your copy!](#) limited-time offer, please enter code prepub30 during checkout.
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