



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. CEOs' Visit China, Hopes for Improved U.S.-China Relations



Figure 1: U.S. CEOs and Academics with Xi Jinping /AP News/ March 27/2024

China's President Xi Jinping held a meeting with several American business leaders and Academics who recently visited China. Xi seeks better economic relations to build upon an opportunity to boost China's declining economy. Some of the prominent figures at the meeting included Stephen Schwarzman from Blackstone, Cristiano Amon from Qualcomm Inc., and Raj Subramaniam of FedEx (FDX)

China is keen to explore ways to revitalize its economy, attract more investments from the United States, and improve bilateral relations. During the meeting, XI said, "The relationship cannot go back to the old days, but it can embrace a brighter future Prospects." The [U.S.-China Business council](#) said, "USCBC was honored to be invited to participate in the dialogue with President Xi to discuss our concerns over the decline in trade, investment, and business confidence, as well as our desire to help improve engagement and commercial exchange between our two countries."

It's worth noting that China is currently experiencing an economic downturn, and its [debt-to-GDP ratio hit a record high of 288% in 2023](#). Additionally, the International Monetary Fund has [predicted that China will barely miss its target of 5% GDP growth in 2024](#), with an estimated growth rate of only 4.6%. The IMF also expects this growth rate to further decline to 3.5% by 2028. International investors have lacked confidence due to excessive scrutiny.

U.S.-China ties have stabilized after Xi -Biden summit in San Francisco in November 2023 on the sideline of the APEC summit. Post-

leaders meeting, there has been positive developments on resumption on military-to-military communication and [cooperation on counternarcotics](#). However, they continue to dispute various geopolitical, cybersecurity, and trade issues. Recently, the [U.S. has taken a series of actions against APT 31, a cyber threat group](#). It has imposed new visa restrictions on multiple Hong Kong officials responsible for the intensifying crackdown on rights and freedoms, as per the [Hong Kong Policy Act Report](#). Moreover, China's assertiveness in the South China Sea and [heightened tensions with the Philippines in maritime territorial disputes](#) have put the U.S.-Philippines defense agreement to the test, as the U.S. is committed to maintaining a free and open Indo-Pacific region. During a recent [call to China's Vice Foreign Minister Ma Zhaoxu, Deputy Secretary Campbell](#) emphasized the significance of preserving peace and stability in the South China Sea, across the Taiwan Strait, and on the Korean Peninsula. He also expressed concerns regarding China's assistance to the Russian defense industry.

Taiwan is a flash point in U.S.-China relations, and China claims it as a breakaway province. The U.S. recently pledged \$300m in military aid to Taiwan and sent a [bipartisan congressional delegation led by Rep. Jack Bergman](#) to demonstrate its continued support.

Given the current state of affairs between the United States and China, assessing the investment flow from the former to the latter has become quite complex. The ongoing tensions, particularly in the realm of international trade and technology have created an environment that is

not exactly conducive to foreign companies, making it difficult for them to operate in China. [Read More](#)

Japan Concludes Pacific Islands Defense Dialogues

Japan [held](#) a ministerial-level defense meeting with Pacific Island nations in Tokyo. The representatives from the fourteen island countries attended the dialogue. Japan has expanded its partnership with Pacific Island countries, viewing China's increasing influence in the Pacific. With his counterparts, Japanese Defense Minister Minoru Kihara underscores the importance of a [free and open maritime-based rule of law](#). Andrew Winternitz, the U.S. acting deputy assistant secretary of defense (A/DASD) for East Asia, attended the meeting. He stated, "This dialogue marked an important opportunity to connect with a wide range of Pacific Island partners and exchange views on shared defense and security issues in the region." [Read More](#)

India Expand Partnership with Southeast Asia

India's External Affairs Minister Mr. Jaishankar [visited](#) Philippines, Malaysia, and Singapore to strengthen bilateral relations and regional cooperation. Mr. Jaishankar [exchanged](#) his views to his [counterparts on](#)

[deepening relations](#) in the field of digitalization, green economy, food security, skill development, trade, and maritime. India has been proactively seeking to enhance its cooperation with ASEAN nations, especially in the wider Indo-Pacific region. India's Act East Policy has played a significant role in strengthening ties with these countries. [Read More](#)

Resistance Forces Gain Grounds Against Junta in Myanmar

Resistance Forces in Myanmar has taken control on more areas in the forceful fight with military Junta in Myanmar. As per report, the Kachin Independence Army (KIA) launched an offensive and controlled 11 junta bases along the trade route and the trade hub of Loije on the border with China. [Read More](#)

China Lifts Tariff Ban on Australian Wine

China scraps ban on Australian wine as the two countries are repairing relations after the controversy on the origin of Corona virus in 2020. Australia also intends to progress on the export of banned items to China. [Read More](#)

Indo-Pacific Quiz

Which city has one country two system?

- a. Taiwan
- b. Lhasa
- c. Hong Kong
- d. Inner Mangolia

Where is Katchatheevu island located?

- a. India
- b. Sri Lanka
- c. Mauritius
- d. Maldives

Consortium Highlights

- ❖ BlogPost by Consortium Fellow 1st Lt. Grant Willis, **The U.S. Must Produce UAV ASW Escort Carriers to Counter PLAN Subs.** [Read Here.](#)

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