



Consortium of Indo-Pacific  
Researchers

## **Indo-Pacific Weekly Mail May 20 - 26, 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.

### **U.S.-Philippines Co-host Indo-Pacific Business Forum (IPBF)**



Figure 1: U.S. Embassy in in the Philippines /IMAGE/X

The Sixth Indo-Pacific Business Forum (IPBF) meeting was [held in Manila](#). It is the foremost economic diplomacy initiative of the United States. This forum serves as a crucial platform for fostering connections among governments, private enterprises, and business organizations, with the overarching goal of expediting investment and financing across diverse sectors within the Indo-Pacific economies. The United States remains steadfast in its commitment to bolstering economic engagement and advancing supply chain resiliency as part of its broader vision for a free, open, secure, and prosperous Indo-Pacific region.

It is worth noting that to counter China's Border Road Initiative (BRI), Indo Pacific Economic Forum (IPEF), launched in May 2022, the Philippines, Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam are among 14 countries that partner with the US in the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity (IPEF). The trade pillar has taken off as the first Partnership for Global Infrastructure and Investment (PGII) by the launch of the Luzon Economic Corridor in the Indo-Pacific in the first-ever trilateral summit last month.

The key themes of this year's forum were clean energy, digital transformation, supply chain resiliency, transportation infrastructure, and emerging technologies, building on the priorities of the U.S. Indo-Pacific Strategy. The U.S. and the partner countries have undertaken a wide range of commercial deals and new initiatives. [Read More](#)

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## **Nepal's Deputy Prime Minister Visited China's Tibet Autonomous Region**

Nepal's Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs Mr. Narayan Kaji Shrestha [visited](#) to Chentang Town, Shigatse City, Tibet Autonomous Region this week. During this visit, he honored the event as the Chief guest for reopening trade routes. On the occasion, he stated, "This landmark decision will greatly contribute to make the daily lives of the bordering peoples easier and comfortable, facilitate cross-border trade, foster economic ties, and further elevate the exemplary bilateral relations." China's strategic move in the Tibet Autonomous Region and the development of infrastructure along the border will likely enhance India's security concerns in the region.

Additionally, the recent re-opening of all fourteen traditional border trading points between Nepal and China in the Tibet autonomous region will have a huge implication for the Himalayan region. China seeks to increase its influence in the region through trade and connectivity, building port and developing infrastructure. China's increasing closeness to India's border area will further add complexity for India as the two countries have strain relations post Galwan Valley clash in 2020. [Read More](#)

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## **Unrest Erupts in New Caledonia- France and Indo-Pacific**

The French Pacific archipelago of New Caledonia experienced a surge in [violence and unrest](#) following the passage of a new electoral change by the French parliament. The pro-independence Indigenous Kanaks are deeply concerned that the newly enacted legislation, which has been approved by both houses of the French Parliament, will significantly undermine their rights and freedoms. Consequently, France declared a state of emergency in the region on May 15, 2024. [Read More](#)

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### **World's Largest Democracy on Ballot-Phase 5 & 6**

On May 21 and 26, 2024, [the fifth](#) and sixth phases of voting for India's parliamentary election were held. The fifth phase encompassed 49 constituencies across six states and 2 Union Territories, while the [sixth phase involved 58 seats across seven states and one Union Territory](#) (UT). The voter turnout for both phases was recorded between 60% and 63%. The last phase of the election will be held on June 1. [Read More](#)

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### **Indo-Pacific Quiz**

New Caledonia is a territory of which country?

- |        |              |
|--------|--------------|
| a. USA | c. France    |
| b. UK  | d. Australia |

Which countries participated in the Golden Dragon Exercise 2024?

- a. China-Vietnam
- b. China-Mongolia
- c. China-Cambodia
- d. China-Russia

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### **Consortium Highlights**

- ❖ Upcoming roundtable discussion: **India Elections 2024: Analyzing the Geopolitical Dynamics in South Asia**, May 27<sup>th</sup> 2024 @ 9:00 AM EST [Zoom Link](#)
- ❖ A Commentary titled ***The Geo-Strategic Himalayas: Navigating Nepal's Path to Stability and Sovereignty Amid China and India's Influence*** by Irfan Ul Haq. [Read Here](#)

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