



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 the reply button for your feedback and comments.

ASEAN Leaders Summit Convened in Laos



Figure 1: ASEAN Leaders at the opening ceremony of summit / IMAGE/

The Association of Southeast Asian (ASEAN) leaders convened its 44th and 45th Summits and Related Summits in Vientiane, Lao PDR under the theme **ASEAN: Enhancing Connectivity and Resilience**. In its vision document ASEAN countries emphasized building the supply chain connectivity and sustainable future for all. The ASEAN Leaders adopted the ASEAN Community Vision 2045 that is built on four pillars - *Resilient, Innovative, Dynamic, and People-Centered ASEAN*.

ASEAN countries expressed their concern on the flaring up of geopolitical tensions in the region and underscored the value and relevance of the ASEAN Outlook for Indo-Pacific (AOIP) to ASEAN's peace, security, stability and prosperity. ASEAN countries reaffirmed their commitment to enhancing their engagement in the wider Asia-Pacific and Indian Ocean regions. The Chairman stated, "We looked forward to the implementation of memoranda of understanding between ASEAN and the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA), and between ASEAN and the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF).

ASEAN leaders discussed the South China Sea situation that intensifies the tension between countries for the territory claims and call to exercise self-restraint in the conduct of activities that would complicate or escalate disputes and affect peace and stability and avoid actions that may further complicate the situation. ASEAN leaders also expressed their deep concern on escalating conflicts and humanitarian crisis in Myanmar. The leaders reaffirmed implementing the Five-Point Consensus to bring peace and stability to the country. Additionally, situation in Ukraine and Middle East were also discussed and the

leaders call an immediate cessation of hostilities to end the deteriorating humanitarian situation.

ASEAN also had its dialogue partners summit with the United States, Japan, China, Australia, India, the Republic of Korea, and the special summit with Canada. [Read More](#)

Philippines and the U.S. Navies Conducts Operation in South China Sea

Sama Sama 2024, a Philippine-U.S. bilateral exercise with invited allies and partners, includes participants from Australia, Japan, Canada, France, and Japan, representing a collective commitment to stability and security in the Indo-Pacific region. Sama Sama, part of the Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training (CARAT) series, builds on the legacy of previous maritime collaboration, expanding its scope of operations with both shore and sea phases. “Sama Sama,” which means “togetherness” in Tagalog, reflects the spirit of the decades-long partnership between allies in the region.

The U.S. Head of Delegation, Rear Adm. Todd Cimicata said, “This exercise has evolved significantly since its inception. What began as a bilateral event between the United States and the Philippines has grown into a multilateral and multiplatform operation, bringing together like-minded partners from across the Indo-Pacific.” [Read More](#)

Maldives and India Boost Bi-lateral Relations

Maldives President Mohamed Muizzu visited India and held a bilateral meeting with Indian Prime Minister Mr. Narendra Modi. Both leaders adopted the [*India-Maldives: A Vision for Comprehensive Economic and Maritime Security Partnership*](#). India provides financial assistance to Malé, that includes USD 400 million in bilateral currency swap agreement and rolling over T-bills amounting USD 100 million to tackle the financial challenges. Modi underscored the importance attached by India to its relationship with Maldives under its ‘Neighborhood First’ Policy and Vision SAGAR. On the other hand, Muizzu acknowledged India’s continued role as the ‘First Responder’ of Maldives in time of need as India’s earlier response to 2014 water crisis in Malé and the Covid-19 pandemic. Also, India and Maldives will work together for the shared challenges in the Indian Ocean Region.

It is important to highlight that this is a resetting of India-Maldives relations following Muizzu’s election campaign last year, which was built on the “India Out” campaign. He is known as a ‘Pro-China’ leader by some observer, as after winning the election 2023, he visited China and signed a defense pact with his counterpart Xi Jinping. Furthermore, the derogatory remarks by two of Maldivian ministers for Mr. Modi caused an uproar in relations between both countries. [Read More](#)

Modi Addresses 21st ASEAN-India Summit

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed ASEAN-India Summit in Laos and reiterated India’s commitment to strengthen the

Comprehensive Strategic Partnership between India and ASEAN countries. He [said](#) that India and ASEAN are neighbors, partners in the Global South, and a rapidly growing region in the world. He further stated that “the 21st century is the "Asian Century," a century for India and ASEAN countries.”

In the Joint statement both parties appreciate and welcome the cooperation on the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific for Peace, Stability, and Prosperity in the region through the shared values and the principles of the United Nations Charter. ASEAN and India reaffirm their commitment to upholding multilateralism while the increasing global relevance of ASEAN in multipolar world and India’s rising and growing participation in prominent political and economic platforms at international level.

It is worth mentioning that India’s Act East Policy is focused on revitalizing and reconnecting its relations with ASEAN countries based on their shared historical and cultural legacy to build a peaceful and secure region. [Read More](#)

Indo-Pacific Quiz

Where will the next ASEAN Summit 2025 have held?

- a. Vietnam
- b. Singapore
- c. Cambodia
- d. Malaysia

Where is Subic Bay Located?

- a. Sea of Japan
- b. Yellow Sea
- c. Bohai Sea
- d. South China Sea

Consortium Highlights

Upcoming Events:

Quad Summit 2024: An Analysis with geopolitical experts.

Book-Talk: Southeast Asia and the Indo-Pacific Construct.

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