



Consortium of Indo-Pacific

Researchers

## **Indo-Pacific Weekly Mail Dec.2-8, 2024**

Greetings Colleagues,

The Consortium is pleased to share its latest newsletter for the Indo-Pacific.

Press the reply button for your feedback and comments.

### **South Koreans Navigates the Post- Martial Law Debacle**



Figure 1: South Korean Protesters in Seoul /IMAGE/ CNN/ Dec.4,2024

South Korea has been facing significant political uncertainty after the short-term [imposition of military rule by South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol](#) on Nov. 3, 2024. It has sparked significant uncertainty and has intensified the ongoing political crisis in South Korea. Post controversial move of martial law, the attempted impeachment vote against him ultimately failed, further complicating the situation in the country. The series of events has raised concerns among citizens and in the region as it not only undermines the stability of the government but also raises questions about the future of democratic governance in the country.

The Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken [expressed](#) his concern on martial law and welcomed the removal of it as he spoke with Republic of Korea (ROK) Foreign Minister Cho Tae-yul. He reaffirmed the progress made in the bilateral relationship, including the robust trilateral partnership with Japan, which promotes our shared values and the prosperity and stability of the Indo-Pacific.

The martial law debacle sent shockwaves not only in South Korea but also in the entire region, marking the first such occurrence since the coup in 1979. The underlying reason was the external and internal threat posed by "anti-forces." The opposition leaders have accused Yoon of betrayal, as he said he would not avoid legal and political action when he apologized for imposing martial law in a televised speech on Nov.6.

The loss of trust looms large among the citizens in South Korea as observers and analysts assume that it is impossible for Yoon to complete his remaining term as President. It is yet to be critical of what developments will unfold and their impact on South Korea's political environment moving forward.

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## **Nepal and China Enhance Bi-lateral Relations**

Nepal Prime Minister Mr. K P Sharma Oli visited China this week. Nepalese Prime Minister met with Chinese President Xi and also conferred with the Guard of Honor in a ceremonial welcome by the Li Qiang, Premier of the State Council at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing. The [two countries agreed to work together to enhance cooperation](#) in the field of connectivity, industrial production, hydropower, health, education, infrastructure and people to people relations. China will provide assistance of RMB 500 million to Nepal and signed the Belt Road Initiative (BRI) for Infrastructure cooperation. China's BRI is massive development known as "debt-trap" diplomacy that covers South Asia, Southeast Asia, Russia, Europe, and Central Asia.

Oli's choice to visit China before Delhi raises concerns for India, as it disrupts the longstanding tradition of Nepal's new Prime Minister to visit India first before any high-level visit. This move could signal a shift in tradition and Nepal's inclination to China's orbit under Oli. [Read More](#)

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## **Trilateral Military Exercise Commence in Japan**

Japan, Australia and the United States Kick-off Yama Sakura 87 to enhance of interoperability and cooperation between military forces. According to the press release this iteration will also include the war fighting exercise, first time held in Japan. The exercise serves as a cornerstone of Operation Pathways, the U.S. Army Pacific's premier series of exercises demonstrating America's commitment to a free and open Indo-Pacific region. [Read More](#)

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## **China Bans on Export of Critical Mineral to U.S., Escalates**

### **Trade War**

China [banned the export of minerals](#) such as antimony, gallium, and germanium to the U.S. for military and technology applications. It also restricts the export of graphite. These critical minerals have been used in a wide range of things, including semiconductors, infrared technologies, fiber optic cables, bullets, and electric vehicle batteries. China's ban came after U.S. restricted exports to 140 semiconductor companies in China.

It is worth mentioning that President-elect Trump has already announced 10% tariff on imports from China as he assumes office next month. Additionally, what strategies will China implement to (de)escalate the trade conflict between the two superpowers as President Trump begins his term?

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## Indo-Pacific Quiz

David Perdue (R-Ga.) has been nominated by President-elect Donald Trump to be the next U.S. ambassador to which country?

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

Which Country has abruptly announced and lifted the martial law this week?

- a. North Korea
- b. Myanmar
- c. South Korea
- d. Thailand

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## Consortium Highlights

- ❖ View: North Korean Troops to Ukraine: Outsourcing the Axis. [Read Here.](#)

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## Contributions

Indu Saxena

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