

The Indo-Pacific Bulletin

The latest weekly developments in and around the region

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United States hosts the first US-Pacific Islands Summit

On 28th-29th September 2022, the United States hosted the first US-Pacific Islands Country Summit in Washington DC. During the Summit, President Biden announced the Pacific Partnership Strategy and stated that this is part of the broader Indo-Pacific Strategy. Along with this, the White House announced a funding of around \$810 million, which includes \$130 million for projects on climate resilience and \$600 million will be in the form of a 10-year package to clean up and develop dirty waters to support the tuna industry. The US reaffirmed its commitment to strengthen Pacific regionalism through its support to Pacific Islands Forum (PIF). It was also announced that USAID will be expanding their presence in the region by re-establishing its regional mission for the Pacific in Fiji and elevating its presence in Papua New Guinea to a Country Representative Office. The United States, along with the fourteen leaders from the Pacific countries, including Solomon Islands, Fiji and Papua New Guinea signed a 11-point Declaration of US-Pacific Partnership, which reiterated their joint vision for the partnership.





North Korea launches Missile over Japan

On October 4th 2022, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea launched an intermediate-range ballistic missile over Japan. This is the first time in five years that North Korea has launched a missile over Japan. The missile travelled 4500 km and fell into the Pacific Ocean, near Guam, a US island territory. This is the longest distance ever travelled by a North Korean missile. Two days after this, North Korea launched two short range missiles towards Japan. According to the South Korean Joint Chiefs of Staff, these missiles were launched 22 minutes apart. The first missile travelled 350 km and the second missile travelled 900 km. Alerts were issued for the public, by officials, in certain parts of Japan

US and South Korea Respond to DPRK Missiles

In response to the 4th October missile launch, the United States and South Korea launched four missiles into the Sea of Japan from the east coast of the Korean Peninsula and also repositioned a American supercarrier towards North Korea. According to US National Security Council spokesperson John Kirby, the drills are conducted to "make sure that we have the military capabilities at the ready to respond to provocations by the North if it comes to that." However, a South Korean missile Hyumoo-2 exploded and crashed inside an air force base on the outskirts of Gangeung. An official from the South Korean Joint Chiefs of Staff stated that the missile's warhead didn't explode during the crash and that the fire was caused by burning rocket propellant. The missile fell shortly after the lift-off and no civilian facilities were affected.



Philippines And United States Conduct Exercise

On October 3rd 2022, United States and the Philippines, along with Japan and South Korea as observers, launched a joint naval exercise, named Kamandag, which is Filipino for Cooperation of the Warriors at Sea. The exercise will run until October 14th and will consist of 2,550 American and 630 Filipino troops. The exercise will include island-based exercises in amphibious landings, live fire and humanitarian assistance. According to the news release from the US Marines, the exercises will be held in the western island province of Palawan that faces the South China Sea, and in Batanes, a province on Luzon island that lies across the Luzon Strait from Taiwan. During the opening ceremony of the joint exercise, Philippine Navy chief Rear Admiral Caesar Bernard Valencia said that “the exercise is not only a two-way collaboration between the U.S. and the Philippines but an effort to engage allies Japan and South Korea, whose participation is crucial “in a volatile security environment.”



Taiwan: China 'Violated' Agreement On Taiwan Strait

According to Taiwanese Defence Minister Chiu Kuo-Cheung, China destroyed a tacit agreement on military movements in the Taiwan Strait by crossing an unofficial “median line” running down the waterway. In addition to this, Chiu stated that due to China’s recent aggressive policy towards Taiwan, the definition of first strike had completely changed for Taiwan.

