



CENTRE FOR AIR POWER STUDIES (CAPS)

Forum for National Security Studies (FNSS)

INDO-PACIFIC NEWSLETTER



A Monthly Newsletter on Security and Strategic Issues on Indo-Pacific Region from
Centre for Air Power Studies

From the Editor's Desk

In the month of June, some events and meetings took place, which hold significance to the Indo-Pacific. This month's major highlight was the Shangri-la Dialogue held on 10th-12th June, wherein, focus was on strengthening alliances and partnerships in the Indo-Pacific. A special ASEAN-India Foreign Ministers' meeting was also held on 16-17 June to commemorate 30 years of ASEAN-India dialogue relations. India and ASEAN decided to cooperate towards a secure Indo-Pacific in areas of maritime security, blue economy and connectivity. Furthermore, the 48th G7 Summit was also held on 26th-28th June and all the member countries discussed securing rules-based order in the Indo-Pacific. Another highlight of this month was the NATO summit held on 29-30 June amidst the Ukraine crisis. The summit holds significance as the Indo-Pacific partners Australia, Japan, Newzealand and South Korea joined the NATO summit for the first time.

This month we present to you specially selected opinions and cherry-picks covering all this and more. Do check out our Social Media corner for some engaging and insightful content and interviews and podcasts from eminent experts.

Jai Hind

Vol II, No 02, 07 July 2022

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PEEP-IN

Australia, India discuss closer co-operation in Indo-Pacific

Read on more about it at :-

<https://www.afr.com/world/asia/australia-india-discuss-closer-co-operation-in-indo-pacific-20220621-p5avkh>

QUOTE

"The Indian Ocean has shaped much of India's history. It now holds the key to our future."

– Narendra Modi,
PM India

Shangri-la dialogue, Jun 2022

Opinions/Review/Expert View

Face it, NATO: The North Atlantic and Indo-Pacific are Linked

Source: Hans Binnendijk and Daniel S. Hamilton, *Defence News*

<https://www.defensenews.com/opinion/commentary/2022/06/21/face-it-nato-the-north-atlantic-and-indo-pacific-are-linked/> 11 June 2022.



Heads of state and government from NATO's member countries and key partners are meeting June 29-30, 2022, to discuss security concerns and the alliance's new Strategic Concept. (Emmanuel Dunand/AFP via Getty Images)

As NATO's Madrid summit approaches, some allies are pushing back against more robust language about China and Indo-Pacific security issues in the alliance's new "Strategic Concept." It is understandable that Europeans are more focused on the immediate security threats posed by Russian President Vladimir Putin's ongoing war on Ukraine than on what some may view as more abstract challenges emanating from half a world away. Nonetheless, even as NATO rightly addresses Russia's aggression, it must use its Strategic Concept to address a sobering new reality: The security of the North Atlantic and the Indo-Pacific are increasingly linked.

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European concerns are twofold: They do not want NATO to diffuse its strength by becoming a global alliance, and they do not want to label China as an adversary.

becoming a global alliance, and they do not want to label China as an adversary. Most European countries rely heavily on trade with China, as does the United States. The new Strategic Concept should be able to address the challenges posed by China robustly and implement some structural changes without undermining these European concerns.

NATO is not about to go global. There is no desire anywhere in the alliance to change the regional nature of its Article 5 defense commitment. And the Strategic Concept language on China should be balanced, stressing areas of competition, confrontation and cooperation.

First, the new concept should address the fact that Chinese technological advances and infrastructure investments create dependencies with direct security implications for NATO. For example, Huawei's presence in the telecommunications networks of some allied countries raises concerns over the future of allied information sharing and growing cyber dependence on Beijing.

Chinese investors target Europe's strategic assets, infrastructures, and research and development networks. For example, Chinese purchases of strategic ports in allied countries could complicate allied military mobility and reinforcement. Chinese purchases of tech companies can generate defense-related supply chain dependencies.

Allies can address this by exploring deeper coordination under Article 2 of the North Atlantic Treaty, an underutilized provision that commits allies to promote "conditions of

stability and well-being” and to “encourage economic collaboration.” Article 2 offers a frame through which allies could work to enhance the screening of foreign investments in security-related infrastructure, companies and technologies, as well as other steps to protect individual allied nations from security-related dependencies on China.

Next, China challenges the alliance’s commitment to a free and open global commons.

The vast majority of Europe’s trade with Asia flows through maritime passages that are contested by China. China’s maritime claims and related activities have limited the ability of its neighbors to access resources in their own waters in contravention of international law.

China now has the world’s largest navy, bolstering its capacity to challenge freedom of navigation operations. Over the next decade, China is likely to extend its maritime reach into the Atlantic. It is already working to establish Atlantic ports in Africa.

Similarly, China is militarizing outer space with anti-satellite capabilities. Chinese strategists regard the ability to use space-based systems and deny them to adversaries as central to digitally enabled warfare. China is also being assertive in the Arctic region, with a strong focus on research activities, which can easily have military effect.

Third, Chinese autocratic behavior now extends well beyond China proper. NATO leaders have agreed that China presents systemic challenges to the rules-based international order. Those challenges include gross human

rights abuses, widespread diplomatic coercion and disinformation campaigns, unfair trade and investment practices, and creation of economic and technological dependencies among a range of states across Eurasia and into Africa.

Fourth, these challenges to NATO are amplified by China’s “no limits” partnership with Russia. Beijing has adopted a stance of pro-Russian neutrality toward Putin’s aggression

China challenges the alliance’s commitment to a free and open global commons. The vast majority of Europe’s trade with Asia flows through maritime passages that are contested by China.

in Ukraine. It parrots Putin’s justification for attacking Ukraine but has not yet overtly violated sanctions. Beijing and Moscow have stepped up the frequency and scale of joint military exercises, including in the

Baltic and Mediterranean seas, complicating NATO defense planning.

Greater Russian-Chinese defense-industrial cooperation on sensitive technology — such as theater hypersonic weapons, counter-space capabilities or submarine technology — would present significant challenges for NATO allies.

Finally, the Strategic Concept should reflect the fact that conflict in the Indo-Pacific would have significant implications for the North Atlantic. Despite Russia’s aggression, China is America’s pacing factor in developing defense capabilities. China’s aggressive territorial claims in the South and East China seas, and its threats to the integrity of Taiwan, present real risks of conflict. In such situations, critical sea lanes of communication, maritime shipping and European commercial interactions with China — and with Asia more broadly — would be completely disrupted. The interests

of various European allies in the Indo-Pacific would be at risk. Opportunities would be created for Russia, as U.S. forces might not be available to adequately reinforce European allies against a simultaneous Russian military challenge. European allies would quickly need to fill those gaps. They need to plan now how they would do so.

To present a common trans-Atlantic approach with likeminded Asian partners, the Strategic Concept should pursue several institutional steps. For example, it should invite Japan and South Korea to join Australia as high-level NATO partners. Varying levels of enhanced military cooperation could be considered, from information sharing and joint exercises to joint operational planning and establishment of NATO liaison offices in Tokyo and Seoul.

An Indo-Pacific/NATO forum could identify cooperative activities and share assessments about evolving security challenges, including from China. The alliance could also explore a dialogue with India, which has not indicated interest in a deeper partnership with NATO, yet shares overlapping concerns regarding Chinese actions and intentions.

To maintain balance and satisfy European concerns that NATO not label China as an adversary, the Strategic Concept should present a dual-track approach toward China that focuses on competition and possible confrontation on the one hand, and cooperation where possible on the other hand. One way to

accomplish this is to establish a “NATO-China Council,” designed to maintain a constant dialogue with Beijing and address areas of mutual concern.

The Quad, China, and Maritime Domain Awareness in the Indo-Pacific

Source: Rebecca Zhang, AIIF

<https://www.internationalaffairs.org.au/australianoutlook/the-quad-china-and-maritime-domain-awareness-in-the-indo-pacific/> 26 May 2022.



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Perhaps the most substantial development of the third Quad Leaders’ Summit in Tokyo on 24 May was the launch of the maritime security initiative, the Indo-Pacific Partnership for Maritime Domain Awareness (IPMDA).

24 May was the launch of the maritime security initiative, the Indo-Pacific Partnership for Maritime Domain Awareness (IPMDA). In the eyes of the Quad nations, this collaboration can craft a public good that serves their shared interests and benefit smaller states in

the Indo-Pacific region in the security and environmental domains. However, China tends to believe that the IPMDA is created to target itself exclusively, viewing the initiative as an avatar of “small cliques” politics. That is, certain countries are intentionally grouped to produce a shared sense of “selfness” to disconnect and alienate the third parties (the otherness).

One of the key objectives of the IPMDA is to keep track of suspicious vessels that turn off

their tracking transponders for conducting illicit activities. To achieve this, the Quad will use an Automatic Identification System and radio-frequency technologies to collect commercially-available data that can be provided to potential partners. Four existing information fusion centres will be integrated and extended, which are located in India, Singapore, the Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu. Though unstated, the main target of this initiative appears to be China, which America has accused of being the largest exploiter of global fishing that is responsible for 95 percent of IUU fishing in the Indo-Pacific region.

The Chinese Response

Unsurprisingly, this allegation was quickly rebutted by both Chinese government and academics. In the Regular Press Conference, Chinese Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Wang Wenbin responded that China “actively upholds the UN-centred international system” and abides by “relevant international law”. Chinese academics contend that the US is using disinformation to delegitimise China’s maritime actions in the Indo-Pacific region.

China’s reactions can be understood in two aspects: one emotional and one rational. From an emotional perspective, either the state or society in China shows an aversion toward “small cliques” politics, which they think might generate an unjust binary image between the West and China. This division endows the West with a sense of superiority but exclusively categorises China as an inferior position. This dichotomy is mutually dangerous because the West may misjudge China based on who it is rather than what it did, and

China may dismiss constructive criticisms from the West.

From a practical viewpoint, China worries about two real-world impacts resulting from the IPMDA. First, framing China as a threat further stains China’s international reputation, which can negatively shape how others view and behave toward China. Second, the data-sharing mechanism that the IPMDA enables has security concerns. Though at this stage, only commercial data will be shared, this mechanism is technically applicable in the political and military arena. This has the potential to undermine China’s strategic interests, particularly regarding China’s maritime militia issue.

Although the US’s accusations and China’s rebuttals both encompass a certain degree of politicised rhetoric, the statistics present that China has a poor performance in fishing activities. A report by the Congressional Research Service indicated that according to the Global Initiative Against Transnational Crime, a non-government organisation, China was identified as the worst-scoring coastal country in IUU fishing. However, a media analysis project conducted by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) showed that China’s performance might not be the most notorious: among 329 verified media-reported illegal-fishing incidents in the Asian Pacific region from 1 January 2015 until 15 August 2019, persons of Chinese nationality were only involved in 19 cases, ranking fourth in the region.

Working with like-minded is fine, but working openly is more important. The Quad’s attempt to promote Maritime Domain Awareness and reduce illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing in the Indo-Pacific region should involve an inclusive conversation with China.

The Rationale of Chinese Participation

Undeniably, China has the world's largest fishing fleet, and so it might logically follow that they are responsible for a substantial portion of IUU fishing. However, China's substantial maritime presence also makes them a key actor in combatting IUU fishing. China is likely to join not because it is benign or moral, but because of a demand for modernisation and a desire to improve its international image. In reality, Beijing has taken concrete steps to combat IUU fishing, such as reducing government subsidies, mandating the installation of vessel monitoring systems, providing crew and skippers' training, and imposing fishing bans. These practices, as the FAO reported, have apparently reduced China's catches and fishing vessels and generated a global impact. But there are problems around under-reporting and regional disputes over some Chinese measures, which require multilateral negotiations.

China has no reason to refuse a neutral invitation to jointly resolve IUU fishing, even if it comes from the Quad. "If the IPMDA is a public good, why does it exclusively target China?" said Hu Bo, Professor for Maritime Strategy Studies at Peking University and Director of the South China Sea Strategic Situation Probing Initiative. Indeed, working with like-minded states is normal, but tackling international problems and promoting global peace requires leaping out of the comfort zone to work open-mindedly and creatively.

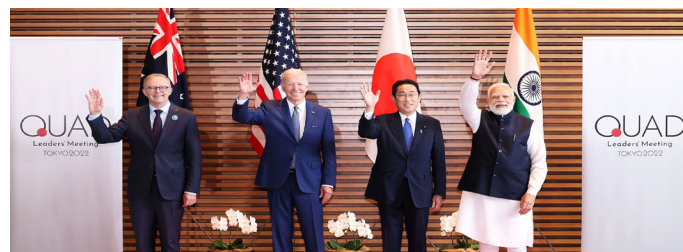
If the Quad creates a public good that contributes to regional polarisation, smaller

powers are unlikely to actively engage because hedging between great powers is safer for them to survive. This is evident in the case of the Solomon Islands, which has one of the data fusion centres under the IPMDA initiative but also signed a security pact with China. With an open mindset, Solomon Islands can be the middle ground to strike a dialogue between the Quad and China. From a normative lens, the Quad is wiser to facilitate conversation rather than intensify confrontation. A conversation is an antidote to preconceived ideas and can coexist with competition.

China, the Indo-Pacific and NATO: Staying relevant in a Shifting World Order

Source: Jagannath Panda, IIIPS

<https://www.ispionline.it/en/pubblicazione/china-indo-pacific-and-nato-staying-relevant-shifting-world-order-35565>. 28 June 2022



Today, as the geopolitical tensions are heating up from the West across the East into the Indo-Pacific, the Cold War sentiments and terminology are getting a new lease of life across regions. Even as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) recognizes Russia as the "most significant and direct threat" to European security, it is China's dynamic rise – from quiet to ultra-belligerent – that is challenging the US primacy, which it has held since the end of the Cold War ironically. The US-China rivalry has not

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only changed the geostrategic landscape but also fueled speculations about the return of an “iron curtain.” Concurrently, China’s convergence with authoritarian and quasi-authoritarian (but politically weak) states of Russia, North Korea, and Pakistan – all nuclear states – has only resurrected the sleeping devil. Particularly, the “limitless friendship” and consequent invasion of Ukraine by its subordinate partner Russia in early 2022 has prompted the solidification of the “New Cold War” (or Cold War 2.0) narrative.

The Ukraine war, however, has not just been a crystallization of the long-standing Russia-NATO conflict but also a catalyst in bringing to the fore the (necessary) debates about NATO’s relevance in a “radically changed security environment.” Assertions about NATO’s death have been long around; even French President Emmanuel Macron was not immune from calling NATO brain dead. Before Putin changed the game, the Americans were divesting their interests and Europe was demanding autonomy: certainly, collective defense and cooperative security were still valid but NATO seemed conspicuous even in its existence. It did not help that the world’s center of gravity was now in Asia, Europe was relatively at peace as well as restless in its geopolitical ambitions, and the prime mover/enabler for NATO, the US, was consolidating where its strategic interests lay – the Indo-Pacific.

In this part of the world, conditions were ripe for the reconstitution of another strategic regional grouping, more in tune with the present

challenges, called the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad), which has been a repeated subject of an (ill-conceived but understandable) analogy with NATO. That the US was creating an analogous system in Asia has been an oft-repeated refrain among Quad critics and promulgators alike.

But if NATO is “dead,” or needs reinvention after its expansion with Sweden and Finland, what purpose does a similar or parallel framework serve? How far is there truth to the Cold War inferences, considering that a lot of the criticism, as also the metaphor, is fostered by China? Notwithstanding the debates, can there be a partnership between the Quad and NATO?

Beyond Cold War (Word) Games

China has likened the Quad as a “mini-NATO,” or an “Asian NATO,” because of what it perceives as “closed and exclusive cliques,” a reference to the US-led democratic, universal

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values-based construct of the free and open Indo-Pacific. China sees NATO as the embodiment of the US-propagated “selective multilateral (collective) security system,” and Quad as an extension of the same design. Such rhetoric has

found an increased urgency post the Ukraine invasion amid concerns about the “principle of indivisible security,” notwithstanding Chinese maneuvers in Asia (where China itself indulges in “salami slicing”).

The NATO epithets also found traction when in 2020 then US Deputy Secretary of State Stephen Biegun talked about formalizing the Quad as a NATO-like structure against China “to

create a critical mass around the shared values and interests,” stressing that even NATO began with “modest expectations” and fewer countries. Continuous debate and reference on the Quad as a “21st century Asian-NATO” (a “big boys’ club”) designed to detract from its military ambitions by showcasing itself as a provider working for the greater common good.

However, while NATO was borne out of the ruins of the Second World War, and clearly identifies Russia as its foremost (and currently, a critical) security threat, the Quad is a rather recent development, with origins in the humanitarian response during the 2000s in the Tsunami-ravaged Asia, that is more pro-free, open, and inclusive Indo-Pacific than it is “anti-China” (although China is certainly an important, yet implicit concern). Additionally, NATO comprises a well-defined structure and a standing secretariat. On the other hand, although the resurgent Quad 2.0 is moving steadily toward institutionalization, it is still essentially a dialogue – albeit one considered a genuine necessity to promote peace and stability in the region, as also to strengthen deterrence.

Moreover, the increased ambit of Quad 2.0 – from economic and technological security to climate action – that has ensured a China-centric but not China-obsessed vision, and the presence of additional US security alliances with Australia, South Korea, and Japan along with AUKUS security pact render the evolution of the present Quad into a NATO-likened grouping unnecessary. Also, India’s long-standing objections to being part of clear-cut alliances

will make such a move difficult. Therefore, the stark dissimilarities between the Quad and NATO limit the lessons that the Quad can draw.

For Quad, following NATO’s trajectory and moving toward a collective security arrangement, or even an expansion, could in fact detract from its primary goal of regional stability by provoking all-out hostilities with China. Case has been argued that the Quad should move away from a diplomatic grouping to avoid making the same error as NATO did by militarily downgrading post the Cold War. It should instead look to strengthen its military/security focus as a deterrence measure against Chinese adventurism. However, due to the volatile nature of the regional security environment, any effort to bring traditional security initiatives into the equation could in fact provoke China and cause conflict along with flashpoints like the disputed China-India border, Taiwan, and the contested territories in the South and East China Seas.

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Since its formation in 1949, NATO has increased its membership from 12 to 30 countries, via its “open door” policy. At present, it is contemplating a further expansion to include five partner countries – Bosnia and Herzegovina, Finland, Georgia, Sweden, and Ukraine – which have formally applied for membership. Yet, for Quad, any such expansion remains a distant option. Although it is critical for the group to enhance its exchanges with Indo-Pacific partners like South Korea, Vietnam, and ASEAN at large, a formal expansion would detract from the quicker decision-making process and convergence that

the Quad countries have reached over the past few years. In other words, it would take away from the benefits that the Quad enjoys as a minilateral Indo-Pacific framework.

NATO & Quad: Marked by Geography, Joined by Intent?

The Indo-Pacific and Europe are two distinct regions with markedly different geographies and structures. While NATO prevails in continental Europe defined by a single landmass, the Indo-Pacific spans the vast Indian and Pacific Oceans and encompasses socio-economically, culturally, politically, and militarily varied states. Even in terms of a conflict landscape, while the war in Europe is primarily a land-based affair, the warfare in the Indo-Pacific will be characterized by the maritime and aerospace domains.

At the same time, however, both share common global threats, including autocratic regimes unilaterally changing the status quo – Russia in Europe and China in the Indo-Pacific. Here, the NATO charter and the “Spirit of the Quad” can find vital synergy in their main goal of defending the rules-based liberal order, especially as NATO is looking to go global, with already an “extensive network of partnerships, including in the Asia-Pacific region.” Through the broadening of the security agenda for both, issues like supply chain resilience, infrastructure (also digital), emerging technologies, economic security, and climate change are some of the most critical avenues of cooperation, apart from capacity building, military exercises, and training.

In the years since the last NATO Strategic
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Concept was released, the geopolitical code has changed dramatically: the 2010 Concept imagines Russia as a “true” strategic partner and China is not mentioned despite their historic tensions. Though Russia’s threat status was restored with room for constructive dialogue (no longer viable or sought), China was seen through a lens of “opportunities and challenges” even until 2019. Only in the last year has the latter’s perception changed to a systemic challenge and a future threat, though still not an adversary.

However, this apparent sense of ease with China belies NATO’s increasing engagements with the Asia-Pacific states. Australia, Japan, New Zealand, and South Korea are its global partners (also invited to the upcoming summit in Madrid).

All four are “Quad Plus” states; two are in the core Quad. Even with India, there are calls for a “pragmatic engagement” and the two have “consulted” on regional security dynamics (e.g., counter-piracy). Thus, India aside, the Quad may appear to some as a quasi-partner of what could be, in deference to the analogy word-board, labeled the “NATO Plus.” Yet the parts do not make up the whole. NATO is and will remain a regional alliance, and comparisons between the Quad and NATO seem exaggerated (premature, at best) – from origins to their present forms.

Nonetheless, there is, above all, the question of NATO’s desire to stay relevant, which Putin’s war has helped manifest: Not only is its Strategic Concept 2022 eagerly awaited, and two long-standing neutral states (Finland and Sweden) have taken the leap into the alliance, but NATO is also looking beyond its boundaries into the East, potentially foreshadowing one of China’s

Even with India, there are calls for a “pragmatic engagement” and the two have “consulted” on regional security dynamics (e.g., counter-piracy).

inherent fears: a Quad-NATO confluence..

region.

How Indo-Pacific agreement stands to lose due to Biden’s approach, US’ mindset

Source: Matthew Goodman, *The Print*

<https://theprint.in/opinion/how-indo-pacific-agreement-stands-to-lose-due-to-bidens-approach-us-mindset/1005180/>

21 June 2022



(From left) US President Joe Biden, Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and US Secretary of State Antony Blinken at the launch of the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework (IPEF) for Prosperity, in Tokyo, 23 May 2022 | Credit: ANI Photo/ PIB

Responding to widespread criticism of the Biden administration’s paltry offer of funding for Southeast Asian partners at a recent summit, a wise friend offered a colorful metaphor: “If we’re dating and I sense that you’re being transactional, then I want you to take me to the best restaurant in town and get the priciest bottle of wine. If you want a long-term relationship, buy me a cheap bottle of Chianti and we can sit on the roof and watch the sunset.”

My friend is right: no amount of money will win hearts and minds in the vital Indo-Pacific region unless it comes with a credible demonstration of long-term commitment to the

Without sufficient incentives, countries that have joined IPEF are unlikely to agree to high US-preferred standards in areas like digital economy and anti-corruption.

This is the thinking that should guide the Biden administration as it takes forward its new “Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity” (IPEF). President Biden rolled out the initiative at a hybrid event in Tokyo with leaders of 12 other Indo-Pacific countries. In a joint statement, the leaders committed to a “free, open, fair, inclusive, interconnected, resilient, secure, and prosperous Indo-Pacific region” and agreed to “launch collective discussions toward future negotiations” on four pillars of work: trade; supply chains; clean energy, decarbonization, and infrastructure; and tax and anti-corruption.

The high turnout of countries at the IPEF launch was encouraging. Close US allies and partners in the region, such as Japan, Australia, and Singapore, had been expected to join, but there was widespread skepticism about the willingness of India and members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) to participate; in the

end, India and 7 of the 10 ASEAN countries joined. (The Pacific nation of Fiji later signed up, bringing the tally of initial IPEF participants to 14.) The

White House appears to have persuaded those on the fence by scaling back its earlier insistence that participating countries commit upfront to specific negotiating objectives for the initiative and each of its four pillars.

The menu of topics in IPEF is promising;

as noted before, it covers many key US interests and is largely aligned with the stated policy priorities of regional partners. Moreover, there are indications that the Biden administration is ready to make some tangible financial commitments to win partner buy-in and advance US-preferred standards, including greater investments in project-preparation facilities to encourage more private infrastructure investment, and in building up partner capacity in the digital economy. These are the kind of unheralded but important offerings from the United States that countries in the region want and could help strengthen long-term relationships there.

But questions continue to swirl around IPEF, particularly concerning its durability. Will most of the countries that signed on at the launch—including India, Indonesia, and other ASEAN countries critical to the initiative’s success—stay constructively engaged once the negotiations start and the United States presses for binding commitments to high standards? Will the White House be able to hold the multiple strands of IPEF together as a coherent strategy? Will a possible new US administration in 2025 tear up the initiative and offer its own preferred approach?

Frankly, this points to one of the major drawbacks of the Biden administration’s current approach: its reluctance to seek formal congressional approval of the initiative and of IPEF’s ultimate outcomes. As discussed before, this is a problem for two reasons: First, only Congress can grant what trading partners really want economically from the United States—

namely, tariff reductions and other legislated changes ensuring greater access to the large US market. And second, if the final IPEF outcomes are simply “executive agreements” not approved by Congress, they will lack the force of U.S. law, raising doubts in partner countries’ minds about the durability of U.S. commitments beyond the current administration.

Note that the focus on partner perspectives in the points above is grounded in U.S. interests. Without sufficient incentives, other countries are unlikely to agree to high U.S.-preferred standards in areas like the digital economy and anti-corruption. (The reason Vietnam agreed to disciplines on labor, the environment, and state-owned enterprises in the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) negotiations is that Hanoi won greater access to the U.S. market for its exports of apparel, footwear, and basa fish.) Moreover, as with the United States, whatever commitments other countries do make in IPEF will be more binding if approved by their own legislatures.

The administration’s reluctance to engage Congress is based on the view that trade politics is “too hard.” To be sure, manufacturing labor unions still have a powerful hold on the Democratic party, and former president Trump’s anti-trade posture has gained traction on the Republican side of the aisle. Yet a number of data points cast doubt on the conventional wisdom in Washington on trade. As recently as January 2020, the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) was comfortably approved by Congress in bipartisan votes. And opinion polls consistently show that

a solid majority of Americans see trade as a positive force for economic growth. The Biden administration's theory that there is no appetite for trade on Capitol Hill has not been tested; now may be the time to try, to give IPEF a better chance for success.

The high turnout at last month's IPEF launch shows that there is a strong demand signal for U.S. economic engagement in the region. The key now is for the Biden administration to demonstrate that it is committed to a long-term, strategic economic relationship with partners in the region.

Cherry-Picks of the Month

1. *Takshashila Doctrine Document: A techno Strategic doctrine of India* - <https://takshashila.org.in/research/a-techno-strategic-doctrine-for-india>
2. *American Diary: Reflections on the State of World Order and the Future of the US-India Strategic Relationship* - https://www.delhipolicygroup.org/uploads_dpg/publication_file/american-diary-reflections-on-the-state-of-world-order-and-the-future-of-the-us-india-strategic-relationship-3879.pdf
3. *Russia-Ukraine War: Military Modernization and Operational Challenges for India* - https://southasianvoices.org/russia-ukraine-war-military-modernization-and-operational-challenges-for-india/?utm_source=Stimson+Center&utm_campaign=600b43adee-SAV-Digest%2FSAV+Digest+June&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_15c3e20f70-600b43adee-405964402
4. *The Indo-Pacific Economic Framework (IPEF): An Asean perspective* - <https://www.orfonline.org/research/the-indo-pacific-economic-framework/>
5. *IPEF: Trade in policy, not in pact* - <https://www.orfonline.org/expert-speak/ipef-trade-in-policy-not-in-pact/>
6. *America and china present dueling narratives at shangri-la dialogue* - <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/order-from-chaos/2022/06/14/america-and-china-present-dueling-narratives-at-shangri-la-dialogue/>

CAPS Experts In Focus

1. *U.S. Indo-Pacific Economic Framework: Can India Become the New Technology Leader?* - <https://capsindia.org/u-s-indo-pacific-economic-framework-can-india-become-the-new-technology-leader/>
2. *Renewables and Rare Earth Elements: A key to India's Coal Dependent Power System* - <https://capsindia.org/renewable-and-rare-earth-elements-a-key-to-indias-coal-dependent-power-system/>
3. *Bolstering India-Australia Relations* - <https://capsindia.org/bolstering-india-australia-relations/>
4. *Global Initiatives to Secure Critical Minerals Supply Chain* - <https://capsindia.org/global-initiatives-to-secure-critical-minerals-supply-chain/>
5. *Amphibious Aircraft – Significant Operational Roles* - <https://capsindia.org/amphibious-aircraft-significant-operational-roles/>

6. Tokyo QUAD Summit 2022: Impact of India's Centrality - <https://capsindia.org/tokyo-quad-summit-2022-impact-of-indias-centrality/>

Debates/Panel Discussions

1. Rivalry and Resilience: ASEAN and Regional Order in the Indo-Pacific - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=luuSNOleJEU>
2. Challenges, opportunities in Indo Pacific region - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fJfEJuxNqI>

Interview/View Points

1. It's Back: IISS Shangri-La Dialogue 2022 - <https://podcasts.apple.com/gb/podcast/its-back-iiss-shangri-la-dialogue-2022/id1451193671?i=1000564854061>

Podcasts

1. Takeaways From the 2022 Shangri-La Dialogue : Podcast by Ankit Panda and Catherine Putz - <https://thediplomat.com/2022/06/takeaways-from-the-2022-shangri-la-dialogue/>



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