

Highlights from the region

20th March, 2023 | Volume - 02 - 02/03

The past week witnessed history being created in the Indo-Pacific region by key members of the Quad and their partners with the Australia, UK & US have unveiled details of their plan to create a new fleet of nuclear-powered submarines to countering China's influence. Understandably, China reacted. However, AUKUS divided opinion within Australia with former Australian PM Paul Keating calling it the "worst international decision" by a Labor government since conscription in World War I. Ahead of AUKUS, Australian PM was in India and called New Delhi a top-tier security partner for his country from the decks of aircraft carrier INS Vikrant. But it was not just AUKUS and India which took steps to create stable Indo-Pacific region. In a historic move Japan and South Korea agreed in their summit to resume reciprocal visits by their leaders, which had been suspended for 12 years, and bilateral security talks, to help get relations back on track. Simultaneously defense ministers of Japan, Britain and Italy in Tokyo vowed success in developing a next-generation fighter jet by 2035, a plan unveiled late last year. Japan also deployed Ground Self-Defense Force units including missile squads to a remote southern island near the disputed Senkaku Islands and Taiwan.

[Aukus deal: US, UK and Australia agree on nuclear submarine project](#)

BBC | 14th March 2023

The US, UK and Australia have unveiled details of their plan to create a new fleet of nuclear-powered submarines, aimed at countering China's influence in the Indo-Pacific region. Under the Aukus pact Australia is to get its first nuclear-powered subs - at least three - from the US. The allies will also work to create a new fleet using cutting-edge tech, including UK-made Rolls-Royce reactors. Beijing has strongly criticised the significant naval deal.

[Aukus, the Anglosphere and the return of great power rivalry](#)

The Financial Times | 13th March 2023

When an American president and a British prime minister stand side by side on a warship, it is hard to avoid the historical echoes. In August 1941, Franklin Roosevelt and Winston Churchill met off the coast of Newfoundland to sign the Atlantic Charter, setting out a joint vision for a postwar world.

[Paul Keating savages AUKUS nuclear submarine deal as Labor's worst since conscription](#)

Australian Broadcasting Corporation | 15th March 2023

Former Prime Minister Paul Keating has taken aim at Australia's AUKUS nuclear-powered submarine deal with the United States and the United Kingdom, calling it the "worst international decision" by a Labor government since conscription in World War I. The former Labor leader also offered a scathing assessment of the government's most senior politicians, including Prime Minister Anthony Albanese, Defence Minister Richard Marles, and Foreign Affairs Minister Penny Wong, dubbing Mr Marles and Senator Wong "seriously unwise ministers".

[India, Australia committed to open and inclusive Indo-Pacific: Albanese](#)

The Hindustan Times | 10th March 2023

Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese called India a top-tier security partner for his country while announcing that Australia will host this year's Malabar exercise for the first time even as he stressed that the Indian Ocean was key to the security and prosperity of both countries, which are committed to upholding the rules-based international order in the Indo-Pacific. He made those comments during a visit to India's first indigenous aircraft carrier, INS Vikrant, in Mumbai. Navy chief Admiral R Hari Kumar received him on board.

[Japanese, South Korean leaders improve ties, vow to resume mutual visits](#)

Kyodo News | 16th March 2023

Japan and South Korea agreed in their summit to resume reciprocal visits by their leaders, which had been suspended for 12 years, and bilateral security talks, to help get relations back on track by seeking to resolve a major row over a wartime labor dispute. During the talks in Tokyo, Prime Minister Fumio Kishida and Yoon Suk Yeol, the first South Korean president to visit Japan in four years, confirmed they will maintain "close communication" and boost political, economic and cultural exchanges.

[Japan, Britain, Italy vow to succeed in fighter jet project](#)

Kyodo News | 16th March 2023

The defense ministers of Japan, Britain and Italy in Tokyo vowed success in developing a next-generation fighter jet by 2035, a plan unveiled late last year. In the first trilateral defense ministerial meeting, Defense Minister Yasukazu Hamada and his British and Italian counterparts, Ben Wallace and Guido Crosetto, also discussed their cooperation in the Indo-Pacific region, where China has been intensifying its military activities, Japan's Defense Ministry said.

[Japan sends missile units to southwestern island to face China threat](#)

Japan Times | 16th March 2023

Japan has deployed Ground Self-Defense Force units including missile squads to a remote southern island near the disputed Senkaku Islands and Taiwan, apparently in response to China's intensifying military activities in nearby waters.

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