

Highlights from the region

12th July, 2023 | Volume - 02 - 01/07

India is slowly but steadily expanding its defence engagements in SE Asia in China's backyard. Besides Vietnam, Singapore and Malaysia, Philippines has emerged as a key defence partner for New Delhi. Late last month and early July, Philippines Defence Minister was on visit to New Delhi and discussed through the regular or upgraded official-level interaction among defence agencies, opening of a resident Defence Attaché office in Manila, consideration of India's offer for concessional Line of Credit to meet Philippines' defence requirements, acquisition of naval assets. Meanwhile, the USA has sought to transform India into a center for resupplying and maintenance of naval vessels in the South Asia region, where it has been stretched thin with such capabilities. During the past week USA and China sought to keep their lines of communication open with Treasury Secretary [Janet Yellen](#) visiting Beijing. Elsewhere in the Indo-Pacific region South Korea and Japan sought to develop close ties through soft power and New Zealand and EU signed a pathbreaking trade deal.

[Scope for joint sales, patrols through maritime cooperation between India and Philippines](#)

The Hindu | 29th June 2023

There is lot of scope for expansion of defence cooperation between India and the Philippines, especially in maritime security, including the potential for joint sales as well as joint patrols, diplomatic sources said, as the Philippines Secretary for Foreign Affairs Enrique A. Manalo held bilateral talks with his Indian counterpart S. Jaishankar on Thursday. Mr. Manalo is [on an official visit in India](#) from June 27 to 30. A joint statement issued after the 5th meeting of the Joint Commission on Bilateral Cooperation said that both Ministers expressed keen interest to continue to work together on defence cooperation, including through the regular or upgraded official-level interaction among defence agencies, opening of a resident Defence Attaché office in Manila, consideration of India's offer for concessional Line of Credit to meet Philippines' defence requirements, acquisition of naval assets, and expansion of training and joint exercises on maritime security and disaster response, among others.

[US-China relations: Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen says close cooperation vital for economy and to fight 'existential threat' of climate change](#)

The South China Morning Post | 8th July 2023

Visiting Treasury Secretary [Janet Yellen](#) stressed the need for the United States and China to keep communicating on Saturday and cooperate to fight the "existential threat" of [climate change](#). Speaking at Beijing's Diaoyutai state guest house, Yellen told Chinese vice-premier He Lifeng that the two countries should interact "directly" when they have concerns about each other's economic practices. She said they must continue talking to avoid misunderstandings and "help both sides more fully understand the global economic outlook and make better decisions to strengthen our economies".

[U.S. plans naval logistics hubs in India to counter China](#)

Nikkei Asia | 7th July 2023

The U.S. seeks to transform India into a center for resupplying and maintenance of naval vessels in the South Asia region, where it has been stretched thin with such capabilities. U.S. President Joe Biden and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi agreed to comprehensive defense and economic partnerships when Modi visited the White House in late June for a summit with Biden.

[Cultural properties can be Japan-South Korea diplomatic opportunity](#)

Nikkei Asia | 9th July 2023

TOKYO -- Tokyo National Museum's Toyokan (Asian Gallery) has a section dedicated to cultural properties from the Korean Peninsula, including an extensive collection of ceramics, ancient ornaments and accessories neatly exhibited on display shelves. The Ogura Collection of the Toyokan Room 10 embodies the rich tradition of Japanese archaeological research and the history of the arts in the Korean Peninsula. But the collection, named after Japanese businessman and art collector Takenosuke Ogura (1870-1964), also symbolizes the simmering question of the restitution or return of cultural properties brought to Japan from the peninsula during the period of Japanese colonial rule.

[New Zealand signs free-trade deal with European Union after years of 'hard negotiation'](#)

Stuff.co.nz | 10th July 2023

New Zealand has signed a long-negotiated free-trade deal with the European Union, promising tariff-free access to 27 countries for many exports. Prime Minister Chris Hipkins and Trade Minister Damien O'Connor were in Brussels, Belgium, overnight on Monday for the signing of the agreement, which is expected to come into effect in mid-2024.

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