

### Highlights from the region

25th July, 2023 | Volume - 02 - 02/07

**Despite Henry Kissinger's landmark visit to Beijing at age of 100 to create working ties with the Chinese leadership, the USA continued to put in place measures to deter China's aggressive moves in the Indo-Pacific region. The United States commissioned a warship in Sydney on July 22), the first time a U.S. Navy vessel joined active service at a foreign port, as the two close allies step up their military ties. Japan, a close ally of the USA, put restrictions on exports of advanced chip-manufacturing equipment took effect on July 23, in line with U.S.-led efforts to stymie China's ability to develop high-end semiconductors capable of being used for military purposes. In response China hosted a semiconductor conference in Nanjing last week, in the shadow of US export restrictions on the country's chip making industry. Meanwhile, Prime Minister Anthony Albanese's proposed trip to China is the subject of open debate within the Australian government. Even as logjam continues in Bangkok over the formation of the next government, Cambodia is all set to reelect Hun Sen.**

#### [U.S. commissions warship in Sydney, marking first for a foreign port](#)

Nikkei Asia | 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2023

The United States commissioned a warship in Sydney, Australia, on Saturday (July 22), the first time a U.S. Navy vessel joined active service at a foreign port, as the two close allies step up their military ties in response to China's expanding regional reach. The Independence-class littoral combat ship -- named after a Royal Australian Navy cruiser that was sunk while supporting the U.S. Marine landings on Guadalcanal in 1942 -- was commissioned at a ceremony at an Australian naval base on Sydney Harbour, officially joining the U.S. Navy's active fleet.

#### [Japan's export curbs on chip-making equipment to China take effect](#)

Kyodo News | 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2023

Japanese restrictions on exports of advanced chip-manufacturing equipment took effect Sunday (July 23), in line with U.S.-led efforts to stymie China's ability to develop high-end semiconductors capable of being used for military purposes. With the revision of a trade ministry ordinance under the foreign exchange law,

Japan added 23 chip-manufacturing items that require approval for export. The move has triggered a backlash from China, though Japan did not specify that the world's second-largest economy is the main target of the export restrictions.

### [Chinese chip experts debate way forward in the shadow of Sino-US tech war](#)

South China Morning Post | 20<sup>th</sup> July 2023

China hosted a semiconductor conference in Nanjing last week, in the shadow of US export restrictions on the country's chip making industry, where local experts shared their views on how to cope with the challenges. Yu Xiekang, chairman of the China Semiconductor Industry Association, told the World Semiconductor Conference Expo on Thursday (July 20) that US-led export controls have disrupted China's advanced chip making capabilities. He called for "enhanced cooperation", repeating his association's stance that the industry should join hands to oppose Washington's curbs on China's chip industry.

### [Xi Jinping meets Henry Kissinger as US seeks to defrost China ties](#)

BBC | 21<sup>st</sup> July 2023

Chinese president Xi Jinping has given a warm welcome to former top diplomat Henry Kissinger, as the US pursues closer ties with China. Mr Kissinger's surprise trip to the Chinese capital comes amid a flurry of visits by top US officials. The former secretary of state, who is 100 years old, played a crucial role in helping China emerge from diplomatic isolation in the 1970s. The US has stressed he is visiting in his capacity as a private citizen.

### [For Australia, China's olive branch has proved trickier than the freezer](#)

Sydney Morning Herald | 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2023

Prime Minister Anthony Albanese's proposed trip to China is the subject of open debate within the Australian government, as speculation builds that his visit will be delayed to next year. In a further sign that relations between Beijing and Canberra are thawing, Treasurer Jim Chalmers held in-person talks with his counterpart, Liu Kun, on the sidelines of the G20 meeting of finance ministers in India this month.

### [Hun Sen votes as polls open in Cambodia election](#)

The Strait Times | 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2023

Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen on Sunday (July 23) voted as polls opened, AFP journalists said, in an election he is all but certain to win as he looks to hand the reins to his son. The 70-year-old former Khmer Rouge cadre voted in the capital Phnom Penh shortly after the election began, but he [faces no real contest in the ballot, with opposition parties banned](#), challenger candidates forced to flee and freedom of expression stifled. His Cambodian People's Party (CPP) is likely to retain all 125 seats in the lower house, prolonging his grip on power and paving the way for a dynastic succession some critics have compared to North Korean politics.

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