



Defense News Conclave

Stories of U.S.-India Defense and Security Partnership

QUARTERLY NEWS WRAP

Issue #10, January-March 2024

Incredible momentum in India-U.S. defence partnership

To deliver comprehensive coverage of the latest significant developments between India and the US, we present our tenth in series, Quarterly News Wrap. This quarter's edition features the 'Tiger Triumph-24' tri-service exercise held at Kakinada Beach, the visit of the French President as chief guest on India's Republic Day, the conclusion of the INDUS-X 2nd edition, and a roundtable discussion co-organised by CUTS International on future of India-US defense partnership in Washington D.C. on March 13th 2024, showcasing a dynamic period in Indo-U.S. relations.

India and the United States conducted a tri-service humanitarian and disaster relief exercise, 'Tiger Triumph-24', held in Visakhapatnam from March 18 to 31. This exercise aimed at boosting readiness and cooperation, the exercise featured an amphibious landing and field hospital setup, underscoring the ongoing strategic partnership between the two countries.

In the recent quarter, CUTS International successfully conducted the fourth and fifth workshops in the series under the ongoing US-India defense partnership related project, supported by the US Department of State and the US Consulate, Kolkata, titled "Dialogues on Deliverables to Deliveries" in Hyderabad on January 5th and Chennai on February 6th, respectively. These sessions featured eminent speakers and were designed to foster in-depth discussions, offering expansive insights into the U.S.-India Defense Partnership.

- [Dialogues on 'Deliverables to Deliveries' | Hyderabad](#)
- [Dialogues on 'Deliverables to Deliveries' | Chennai](#)

Among other highlights, as part of CUTS International's 40th-anniversary celebrations, CUTS along with the U.S.-India Strategic Partnership Forum (USISPF) co-organised a roundtable discussion on the future of the U.S.-India defence partnership titled, "[From Handshakes to Outcomes](#)". This took place on March 13, 2024, in Washington D.C., drawing attention to the evolving dynamics and strengthening ties between the two countries in the aerospace & defence sector. The event provided a platform for high-level discussions and strategic exchanges, underlining the deep-rooted partnership and collaborative achievements in defense and security between the United States and India.

HIGHLIGHTS

<p>‘Exercise Tiger Triumph’: India, U.S. Navies Commence Sea Phase in Visakhapatnam <i>The Print</i> March 27, 2024</p>	<p>The Sea Phase of Exercise Tiger Triumph 2024 commenced, with Indian Navy and U.S. Navy ships sailing out together. This phase in Visakhapatnam will witness Service personnel from both countries going through various facets of amphibious operations, including coordinated HADR and MEDEVAC.</p>
<p>Incredible Momentum in India-U.S. Defence Partnership: Pentagon Official <i>Business Standard</i> March 14 2024</p>	<p>There is a paradigm change and incredible momentum in the U.S.-India defence relationship which is now defined more by the overall trajectory rather than by differences on key issues, a senior Pentagon official has said. The remarks by Siddharth Iyer, Director for South Asia, Office of the Secretary of Defence (Policy), Department of Defence, came at a roundtable on the future of the U.S.-India Defence Partnership with a focus on technology collaboration and maritime strategy.</p>
<p>U.S. Consulate and CUTS International organised a workshop on defence news in Chennai <i>Chennai Vision</i> February 07, 2024</p>	<p>The U.S. Consulate General Chennai, the U.S. Consulate General Kolkata, and CUTS International organised a day-long workshop in Chennai today entitled “Defense News Conclave: Stories of U.S.-India Defense and Security Partnership” to highlight the strength of the bilateral defense and security partnership between the United States and India, and the growing U.S.-India strategic relationship in the Indo-Pacific region.</p> <p>In the welcome remarks, Pradeep S. Mehta, Secretary General, CUTS International, began by highlighting the dynamic U.S.-India cooperation, where the two countries have evolved as the most valued partners in today’s geopolitical scenario.</p>
<p>Revolutionary Changes Taking Place in India-U.S. Relationship: Amb Sandhu <i>Business Standard</i> January 28, 2024</p>	<p>Revolutionary changes are taking place in the India-U.S. relationship, the outgoing Indian Ambassador, Taranjit Singh Sandhu has said, stressing that the bilateral ties have only covered the tip of the iceberg and are going to go far and wide. Addressing a gathering of Indian Americans at the Republic Day celebration, he said it is important that their second generation remains connected to India.</p>
<p>French President Macron Joins India’s Republic Day Celebration as Chief Guest <i>The Washington Times</i> January 26, 2024</p>	<p>Thousands of people lined a ceremonial boulevard in the heart of India’s capital to watch a colourful parade showcasing the country’s military power and cultural heritage to mark its 75th Republic Day. French President Emmanuel Macron attended the parade as the chief guest at the celebration of the adoption of the country’s Constitution on January 26, 1950, following India’s independence from British colonial rule.</p>
<p>Top U.S. Officials to Head to India, to Discuss Bilateral Ties and QUAD Dates <i>The Hindu</i> January 25, 2024</p>	<p>Top U.S. diplomats will travel to Delhi to discuss bilateral issues and energy cooperation and are also expected to discuss possible dates for the QUAD Summit with U.S.-Australia-Japan-India leaders as well as shore up ties amidst speculation of a ‘pause’ in the past few months.</p>

OFFICIAL STATEMENTS

Readout of Secretary of Defence Lloyd J. Austin III's Call with Indian Minister of Defence Rajnath Singh <i>U.S. Department of Defense</i> March 18, 2024	Secretary of Defense Lloyd J. Austin III held a call with India's Minister of Defence Rajnath Singh to discuss growing momentum in the Major Defence Partnership between the U.S. and India in support of a free and open Indo-Pacific region.
Joint Statement of the 20th U.S.- India Counterterrorism Joint Working Group <i>U.S. Department of State</i> March 07, 2024	The U.S. and India held the 20th meeting of the U.S.-India Counter Terrorism Joint Working Group and 6th Designations Dialogue on March 5, 2024, in Washington, D.C. Ambassador Elizabeth Richard, Coordinator for Counterterrorism at the Department of State, and Ambassador K.D. Dewal, Joint Secretary Counter Terrorism at the Ministry of External Affairs, led their respective inter-agency delegations.
Secretary Antony J. Blinken, German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock, And Indian External Affairs Minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar at the Munich Security Conference <i>U.S. Department of State</i> February 17, 2024	Do you find that increasingly people are questioning more when it comes to – let's stick to Ukraine and we'll get to Gaza in a minute? But in Ukraine, are people coming around to your point of view or are they distancing themselves more?
Joint Statement on the U.S.-India Trade Policy Forum <i>Office of the U.S. Trade Representative</i> January 12, 2024	The 14th Ministerial-level meeting of the India-U.S. Trade Policy Forum (TPF) was held in New Delhi, India on January 12, 2024. Minister of Commerce and Industry, India, Shri Piyush Goyal and U.S. Trade Representative, Ambassador Katherine Tai co-chaired the TPF meeting.

POLICY MATTERS

Why Korea-India Partnership Matters in the Era of Uncertainties? <i>Asia News Network</i> March 28, 2024	South Korea and India should amplify their cooperation across economic, technology, defence and security domains, particularly amidst mounting global uncertainties fuelled by ongoing wars in Ukraine and the Middle East and the intensifying U.S.-China strategic competition, experts from the two countries said.
U.S. Defence Secy lauds Indian Navy's Role in Anti-piracy Ops <i>The Indian Express</i> March 19, 2024	Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and U.S. Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin on March 18, 2024, discussed a range of bilateral, regional security and defence cooperation issues , the Defence Ministry said.
Policy Matters: Every Voice Matters When Shaping Public Policy	Every voice matters when it comes to shaping public policy. This was on display earlier this year when an outcry from advocates helped shelve draconian changes to the state's commutation process. Commutations

<p><i>Shiloh Kantz, The Journal Record</i> March 13, 2024</p>	<p>allow people in prison to petition the Oklahoma Pardon and Parole Board for early release</p>
<p>Newspace Raises US\$52mn, the Largest Equity Raise for an Indian Defence Startup <i>The Economic Times, Manu Pubby</i> March 01, 2024</p>	<p>In possibly the largest equity raise by an Indian start-up in the defence and aerospace sector, cutting-edge drone manufacturer Newspace Research & Technologies (NRT) has secured US\$52 million in a bridge round. The company has raised a bridge round of US\$33 million of equity from marquee investors and secured debt facilities of US\$19 million from SBI's start-up hub and SIDBI.</p>
<p>Chief of Defence Staff, U.S. Indo-Pacific Command Affirm Strong Defence Ties <i>NDTV</i> February 22, 2024</p>	<p>India's senior-most military official, Chief of Defence Staff Gen Anil Chauhan, along with Admiral John Christopher Aquilino of the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command (U.S. INDOPACOM) discussed contemporary security challenges and affirmed stronger ties between both countries. Sharing on social media X, Headquarters Integrated Defence Staff (HQ IDS) stated that the two discussed contemporary security challenges and issues of mutual strategic interest and bilateral defence cooperation.</p>
<p>NATO Releases First Ever Quantum Strategy <i>NATO</i> January 24, 2024</p>	<p>Ensuring that the Alliance is "quantum-ready" is the aim of NATO's first-ever quantum strategy that was approved by NATO Foreign Ministers on 28 November. On Wednesday (17 January 2024), NATO released a summary of the strategy.</p>
<p>Marine Deployment to Southeast Asia Highlights Roles for Force Design, Pacific Posturing <i>USNI News</i> January 17, 2024</p>	<p>The recent deployment to Southeast Asia of a contingent of Marines, who worked closely with U.S. and allied forces, helped advance some key concepts for operating in the Indo-Pacific during a potential conflict, the top commander said.</p>

DEFENSE TRADE

<p>U.S.-India: A Defining Partnership <i>U.S. Department of State</i> March 14, 2024</p>	<p>President Biden has called the U.S.-India relationship "the defining partnership of the 21st century." Prime Minister Modi has said our countries ties are "shaping lives, dreams, and destinies." There's no question that the relationship has not moved in a straight line over its 77 years.</p>
<p>Indian Navy Boosts Surveillance with High Altitude Pseudo-Satellite Deal <i>Sputnik India</i> March 13, 2024</p>	<p>Contract for design & development of indigenous High Altitude Pseudo-Satellite (HAPS) for the Indian Navy, under the iDEX initiative, signed with M/s New Space Research & Technologies. Enhancing the Navy's prowess with extended surveillance period, this is a strong move towards ensuring Future Proof Navy in consonance with GoI's vision of Aatmanirbhar Bharat," the Navy said in a statement.</p>
<p>Defense Unicorns Raises \$35 Million Series A to Advance National Security Through</p>	<p>Defense Unicorns, a software start-up providing open-source software and AI capabilities for National Security systems, today announced it has raised a \$35 million Series A funding round led by Sapphire</p>

<p>Open-Source Software <i>Business Wire</i> March 07, 2024</p>	<p>Ventures and Ansa Capital.</p>
<p>RTX's Collins Aerospace to Provide Air India with Avionics Hardware <i>RTX</i> February 22, 2024</p>	<p>Collins Aerospace, an RTX (NYSE: RTX) business, has been selected by Air India for a full suite of avionics hardware catering to the airline's expanding Boeing 737 MAX fleet. The deal was announced at the ongoing Singapore Airshow 2024.</p>
<p>U.S. Politics Turn Against Trade, Leaving IPEF Talks in Limbo <i>Nikkei Asia</i> February 06, 2024</p>	<p>The outlook for the trade section of the U.S.-led Indo-Pacific Economic Framework looks increasingly dim as American politicians woo voters sceptical of free trade ahead of this fall's presidential election. As a result, the U.S.-led effort to counter Chinese economic influence in the Indo-Pacific region is itself becoming a barrier to that effort.</p>
<p>U.S. Approves US\$4 Billion Drone Sale to India for Maritime Security Needs <i>AP News</i> February 02, 2024</p>	<p>The Biden administration approved a nearly US\$4 billion sale of drones and military equipment to India that are meant to be used to improve its maritime safety and surveillance. The approval comes at a time when Washington is courting New Delhi to increase its cooperation with the U.S. Indo-Pacific strategy, which is largely focused on countering China's influence in the region.</p>
<p>America's Crumbling Trade Initiative in Asia <i>Livemint</i> January 25, 2024</p>	<p>There is no lack of American engagement in Asian capitals on security and geopolitics. That is what all the talk of a "free and open Indo-Pacific" is about – seeking friends and allies in a new great power contest, to China's annoyance.</p>

TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION

<p>NASA to Launch Sounding Rockets into Moon's Shadow During Solar Eclipse <i>The National Aeronautics and Space Administration</i> March 25, 2024</p>	<p>NASA will launch three sounding rockets during the total solar eclipse on April 8, 2024, to study how Earth's upper atmosphere is affected when sunlight momentarily dims over a portion of the planet. The Atmospheric Perturbations around Eclipse Path (APEP) sounding rockets will launch from NASA's Wallops Flight Facility in Virginia to study the disturbances in the ionosphere created when the Moon eclipses the Sun.</p>
<p>Nvidia Unveils Latest Chips at 'AI Woodstock' <i>The Wall Street Journal</i> March 18, 2024</p>	<p>The Nvidia NVDA 2.45 percent increase; green up pointing triangle frenzy over artificial intelligence has come to this: Chief Executive Jensen Huang unveiled his company's latest chips on March 18, 2024 in a sports arena at an event one analyst dubbed the "AI Woodstock."</p>
<p>I am Looking at India in a Far Broader Way: Bill Gates <i>The Times of India</i> February 29, 2024</p>	<p>Microsoft co-founder Bill Gates on February 29, 2024 emphasised that the need for innovation to deal with different challenges is greater than ever. During his speech at the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Delhi, Gates also highlighted the importance of leveraging technology for social good.</p>

<p>U.S. to Co-Host 6th Indo-Pacific Business Forum <i>Mirage News</i> February 13, 2024</p>	<p>The U.S. government, in partnership with the Government of the Philippines, is sponsoring the sixth Indo-Pacific Business Forum (IPBF) on May 21, 2024. Government and business leaders from the U.S., the Philippines, and across the Indo-Pacific will exchange ideas, explore regional government and business partnerships, and discuss commercial opportunities.</p>
<p>Leveraging Big Data and Regulatory Frameworks to Strengthen Indo-U.S. AI Ties <i>The News Hashtag</i> January 06, 2024</p>	<p>In the context of evolving U.S.-China relations, experts emphasise the pivotal role of big data tailored for Artificial Intelligence (AI) and the establishment of a robust regulatory framework in deepening Indo-U.S. AI relations. This was discussed during a workshop on “Defense News Conclave: Stories of U.S.-India Defense and Security Partnership,” jointly organised by CUTS International, U.S. Consulate Hyderabad, and U.S. Consulate Kolkata.</p>

INDO-PACIFIC DEVELOPMENTS

<p>UK and Australia Celebrate Closer Ties with AUKUS Progress and New Defence Treaty <i>GOV.UK</i> March 22, 2024</p>	<p>UK and Australia ties are stronger than ever following a successful defence and foreign policy summit in Canberra, attended by the Defence Secretary and Foreign Secretary.</p>
<p>Washington Ramps Up Pressure on Israel <i>Foreign Policy</i> March 15, 2024</p>	<p>The Biden administration sanctioned two Israeli settler outposts in the West Bank and three Israeli citizens on March 14, 2024 citing violence against Palestinian civilians as the rationale for the latest economic restrictions.</p>
<p>The Limitations of India and Russia’s Transactional Relationship <i>U.S. Institute of Peace</i> February 22, 2024</p>	<p>Since Russia’s unprovoked invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, it might seem as though ties between India and Russia have strengthened. While much of the West isolated Russia, India-Russia energy trade spiked, and India made efforts to accommodate Russia on the world stage.</p>
<p>Ratner Describes Strategy Driven Changes in Indo-Pacific <i>U.S. Department of Defence</i> February 16, 2024</p>	<p>Ely Ratner, the assistant secretary of defence for Indo-Pacific security affairs, shared his thoughts on the second anniversary of the Indo-Pacific strategy during a presentation at the U.S. Institute of Peace in Washington, yesterday. He spoke alongside representatives from the White House and State Department, illustrating the whole-of-government approach of the strategy.</p>
<p>Vladimir Putin, in a Rare U.S. Interview, Says Russia has no Interest in Wider War <i>The Economic Times</i> February 09, 2024</p>	<p>Russian President Vladimir Putin said in an interview that aired on February 08, 2024 that Russia will fight for its interests “to the end” but has no interest in expanding its war in Ukraine to other countries such as Poland and Latvia.</p>
<p>Macron in India: New ties for Renewables <i>Financial Times</i> January 26, 2024</p>	<p>It is imperative that energy cooperation is a key point of agenda during the visit of French President Emanuel Macron, who has been invited as the chief guest of the State for the 75th Republic Day celebrations. Both countries are large energy importers and have a shared interest in stable energy prices and decarbonisation.</p>

<p>OpenAI Is Working with US Military on Cybersecurity Tools <i>Bloomberg</i> January 16, 2024</p>	<p>OpenAI is working with the Pentagon on a number of projects including cyber-security capabilities, a departure from the start-up's earlier ban on providing its artificial intelligence to militaries.</p>
---	---

RELEVANT EVENTS AND VISITS

S. No.	Events/Visits	Major Outcomes
1.	<p>MC13 ends with decisions on dispute reform, and development; commitment to continue ongoing talks March 02, 2024</p>	<p>WTO members concluded the 13th Ministerial Conference (MC13) in Abu Dhabi on 2 March with the adoption of a Ministerial Declaration setting out a forward-looking, reform agenda for the organisation. Ministers also took several ministerial decisions, including renewing the commitment to have a fully and well-functioning dispute settlement system by 2024 and to improve the use of the special and differential treatment (S&DT) provisions for developing and least developed countries (LDCs).</p>
2.	<p>Infosys CEO Salil Parekh Joins U.S.-India Partnership Forum Board February 23, 2024</p>	<p>Salil Parekh, CEO and managing director at Infosys, has joined the U.S. India Strategic and Partnership Forum as its board of directors.</p>
3.	<p>U.S. Indo-Pacific Commander Travels to India, Speaks at Raisina Dialogue February 21-24, 2024</p>	<p>Adm. John C. Aquilino, Commander of U.S. Indo-Pacific Command, visited India on an overseas trip from February 21-24, 2024, where he met with senior military and government leaders, and participated in discussions at the Raisina Dialogue and the India-U.S. Defense Acceleration Ecosystem (INDUS-X) Summit.</p>
4.	<p>Deputy Secretary Verma's Meetings with the Government of India in New Delhi, India February 19 to 21, 2024</p>	<p>From February 19 to 21, Deputy Secretary of State for Management and Resources Richard Verma met with senior Indian officials in New Delhi to advance the U.S.-Indian global strategic partnership. His meetings with External Affairs Minister Dr S. Jaishankar, Foreign Secretary Vinay Mohan Kwatra, Defense Secretary Giridhar Aramane, and Deputy National Security Advisor Vikram Misri explored opportunities to strengthen U.S.-India cooperation and people-to-people ties to ensure a free, open, secure, and prosperous Indo-Pacific region.</p>
5.	<p>'INDUS-X' Summit: India, U.S. Looking at Advancing Defence Collaboration February 20-21, 2024</p>	<p>India and the U.S. will explore ways to bolster their strategic cooperation at a two-day summit beginning February 20, which will be specifically focused on advancing bilateral defence innovation and collaboration.</p>
6.	<p>Assistant Secretary of State for Consular Affairs Bitter Travels to India and Qatar February 19-27, 2024</p>	<p>Assistant Secretary of State for Consular Affairs Rena Bitter will travel February 19-27 to Chennai, Mumbai, New Delhi, and Doha. The Assistant Secretary will engage with embassy and consulate colleagues in all four cities.</p>

7.	EAM Jaishankar Holds Bilateral Meetings with U.S. Blinken and UK's Cameron among others February 17, 2024	External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar discussed issues related to bilateral cooperation as well as those of key global and regional concern with prominent leaders, including U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken and his British counterpart David Cameron here in Germany.
8.	Under Secretary Elizabeth M. Allen's Travel to Jordan, Sri Lanka, and India February 12-22	Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy Liz Allen is on travel to Jordan, Sri Lanka, and India from February 12-22. The visit underscores the United States' unwavering commitment to reinforcing and expanding partnerships and alliances. The trip highlights the core of U.S. foreign policy and public diplomacy initiatives: fostering freedom of expression, economic empowerment, and global collaboration.
9.	Assistant Secretary Pyatt's Travel to India January 26-31	Assistant Secretary of State for Energy Resources Geoffrey R. Pyatt will travel to New Delhi and Hyderabad from January 26-31. In New Delhi, he will speak on two panels at the India-U.S. Forum focusing on shared energy priorities, and on opportunities and challenges around critical minerals for the global energy transition.



About U.S. Consulate, Kolkata: *The Consulate General of the United States in Kolkata represents the interests of the United States government in Kolkata, India, and nearby surrounding areas. The Consulate General serves the Indian states of West Bengal, Bihar, Jharkhand, Sikkim, Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura, Mizoram, Manipur, Nagaland and Arunachal Pradesh. It is the U.S. Department of State's second oldest Consulate and dates from November 19, 1792.*

About CUTS International: *Established in 1983, CUTS International is a global public policy think and action-tank, working on trade, regulation, and governance. With its headquarters in Jaipur, India, CUTS has its offices in Lusaka (Zambia); Nairobi (Kenya); Accra (Ghana); Hanoi (Vietnam); Geneva (Switzerland); and Washington DC (USA).*



D-217, Bhaskar Marg, Bani Park, Jaipur 302016, India

Ph: +91.141.2282821, Fax: +91.141.2282485,

E-mail: cuts-washington@cuts.org Website: <http://www.cuts-wdc.org/>

Also at Delhi, Kolkata and Chittorgarh (India); Lusaka (Zambia); Nairobi (Kenya); Accra (Ghana); Hanoi (Vietnam); Geneva (Switzerland) and Washington DC (USA).