

US Typhon Missile Systems in

THE PHILIPPINES



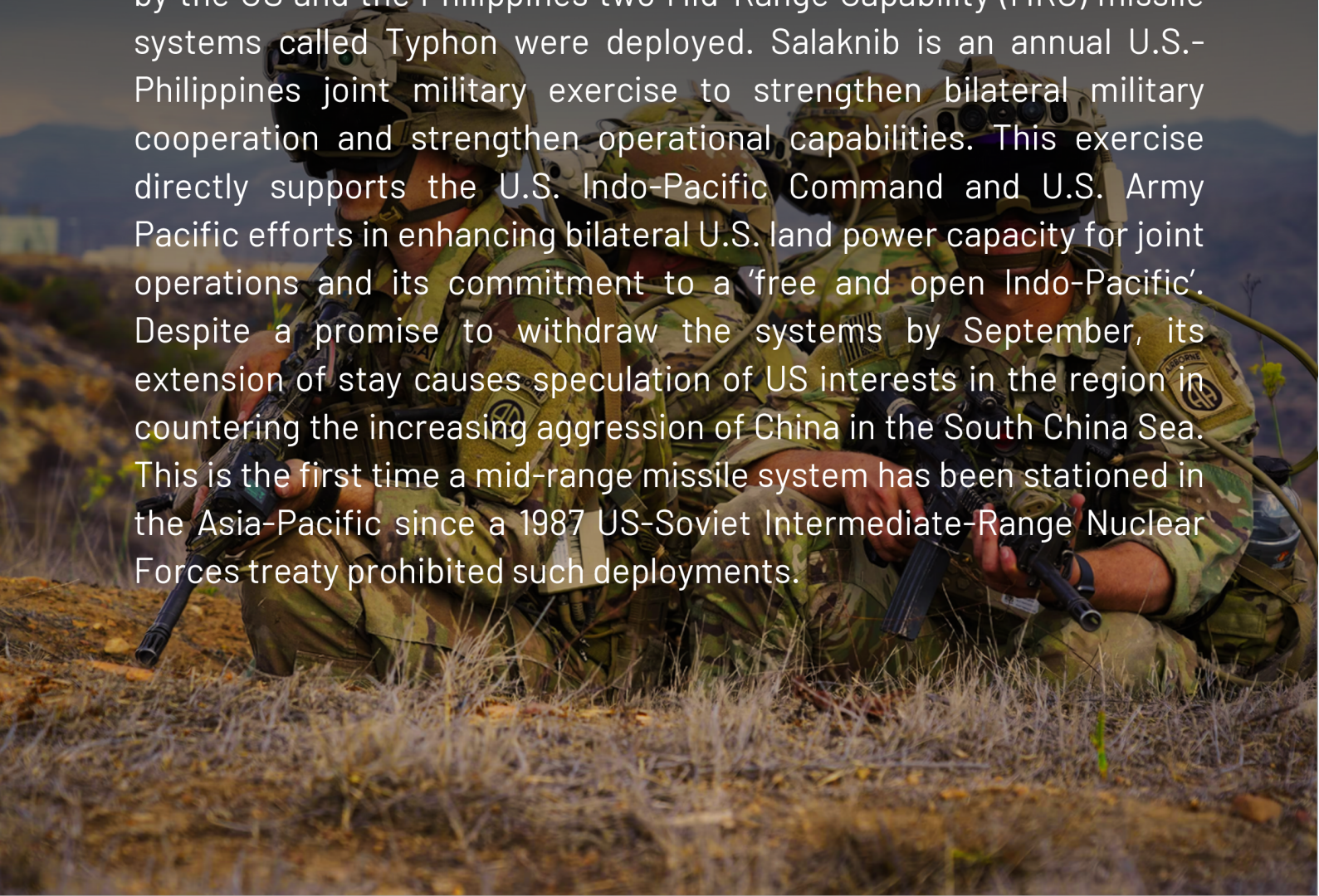
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Executive Overview

The United States strategic deployment of Mid-Range Capability (MRC) Typhon missile systems near the **Luzon strait south of Taiwan** in the **Philippines** signifies the bolstering of its regional military presence and capabilities. This deployment is part of the annual joint **military exercise 'Salaknib 24'**. This demonstrates the US commitment to its allies amidst increasing tensions with China over territorial disputes in the **South China Sea**. The report outlines the capabilities of the **Typhon missile system**, tactical and strategic assessment and recommendations.

Situation Overview

- **Location:** Laoag International Airport, Ilocos Norte Province, Philippines
- **Timeframe:** 11 April 2024 to ongoing
- **Military Forces Involved:** Armed Forces of the Philippines and US Army Pacific (USARPAC)
- **Background:** As part of the annual joint military exercise (Salaknib 24) by the US and the Philippines two Mid-Range Capability (MRC) missile systems called Typhon were deployed. Salaknib is an annual U.S.-Philippines joint military exercise to strengthen bilateral military cooperation and strengthen operational capabilities. This exercise directly supports the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command and U.S. Army Pacific efforts in enhancing bilateral U.S. land power capacity for joint operations and its commitment to a 'free and open Indo-Pacific'. Despite a promise to withdraw the systems by September, its extension of stay causes speculation of US interests in the region in countering the increasing aggression of China in the South China Sea. This is the first time a mid-range missile system has been stationed in the Asia-Pacific since a 1987 US-Soviet Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces treaty prohibited such deployments.



Key Findings

Deployment Location: The Typhon missile system is placed south of Taiwan, providing the US to aid Taipei militarily in times of attack from China.

Operational Status: The Typhon system is fully operational and has been integrated into the US-Philippine joint defense plans. With an extension of deployment of the Typhon system beyond September.

Chinese Reaction: China has strongly protested the deployment and is very concerned about the plan to keep the system in place till now. Pointing that it threatens the security of regional countries and intensifies geopolitical confrontation.

Regional Implications: The deployment of the Typhon has strengthened the US-Philippine alliance and signaled a commitment to the region. It has also raised concerns among other regional powers about the potential for increased tensions and escalation.





Typhon System Analysis

Composition: The deployment involves two Typhon systems where the full configuration comprises:

- Battery Operations Centre
- Four launchers with modified trailers
- Prime movers for mobility

Capabilities: The system is capable of launching

- SM-6 Missile: Range of approximately 500 km, capable of targeting surface ships, aircraft, and ballistic missiles.
- TLAM (Tomahawk Land Attack Missile): Range of 2,000 km, primarily used for precision land-strike missions.
- Mobile and adaptable for rapid deployment across different terrains.



Tactical and Strategic Assessments

Tactical Assessment:

- The Typhon system will enhance military security options for defending Taiwan from potential Chinese threats or a travel blockade. Its capabilities of mobility and mid-range strike can significantly challenge Chinese naval and air assets in the region.
- Its presence strengthens the U.S. and Philippines control over strategic areas such as the Luzon Strait, a key maritime passage between the South China Sea and the Philippine Sea.
- The extension of deployment can also be seen with the recent standoff between the coastguards of China and the Philippines in Sabina Shoal.
- As of now the immediate military threat from China remains low but a predictable increase can be expected due to heightened tensions over Taiwan and U.S. military activity in the region.



Strategic Assessment:

- Typhon's deployment may be seen as a component of a larger US plan aimed at undermining China's naval and missile capabilities in the area. To tackle China's continued aggressive military actions in the South China Sea and the Indo-Pacific region.
- To strengthen its missile defense system in the Indo-Pacific area, the United States is anticipated to employ over 800 SM-6 missiles over the next five years.
- China will step up military exercises in the South China Sea and close to Taiwan while diplomatically pressing the other nations in the region. It might also step up its efforts to cast suspicion on America's involvement in the area.



Recommendations

Operational Recommendations:

- Continuous maintenance and mobility readiness of Typhon systems with proper training to the Philippines armed forces in operation to facilitate rapid deployment in the event of a crisis.
- Enhancing intelligence-sharing through Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA) mechanisms between the U.S. and the Philippines to improve early warning capabilities against Chinese activities in the region.

Strategic Recommendations:

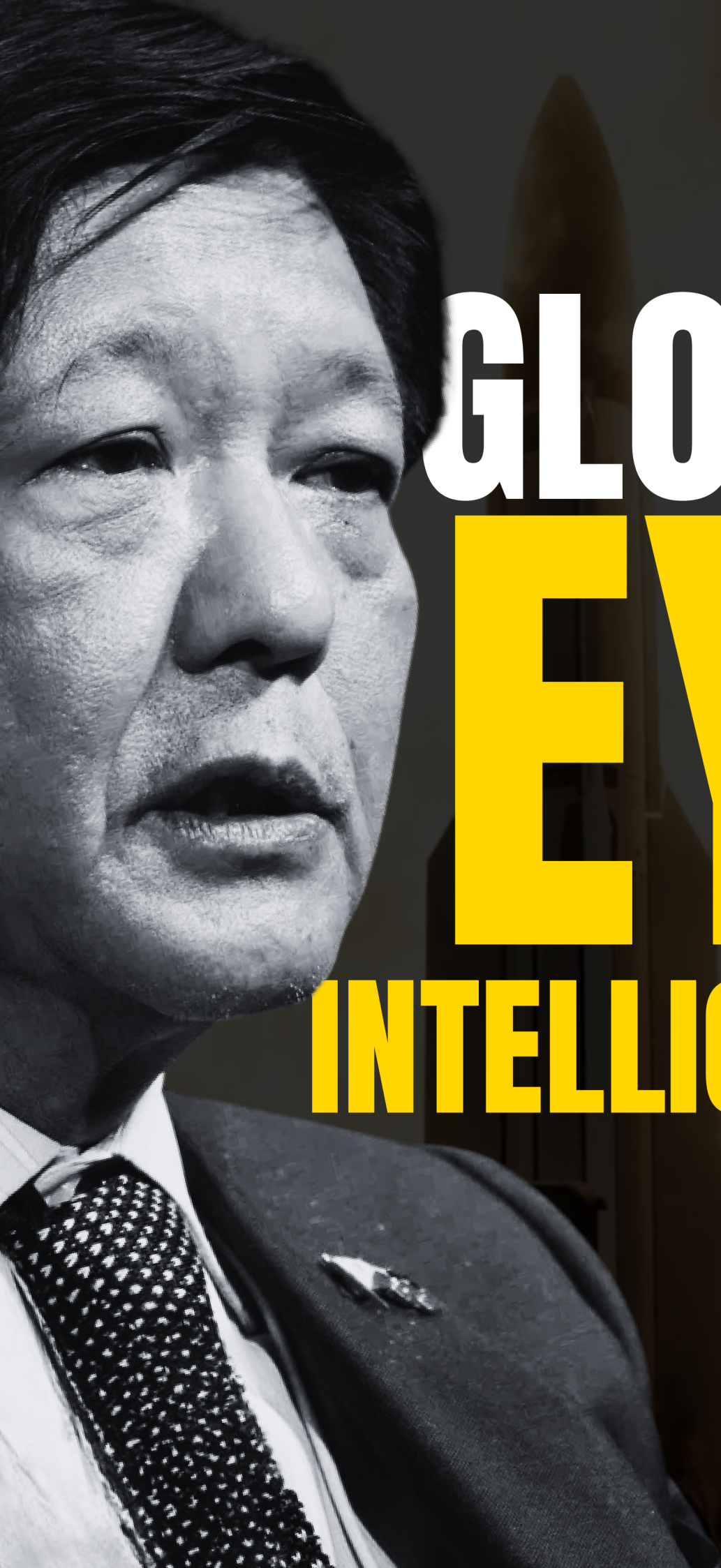
- An expansion in joint military exercises with regional partners such as Japan, Australia, and ASEAN countries would be a viable strategic move to showcase unity against potential Chinese aggression.
- Developing and capacity building/training missile defense capabilities in the Philippines to create a comprehensive regional deterrent thus by complementing the U.S. Indo-Pacific strategy.



Conclusions

The deployment of the Typhon missile systems in the Philippines holds a significant strategic move of the US in the Asia-Pacific region to contemplate its motives in the region. The deployment has raised tensions between China and the US with arguments and counterarguments. The system's capabilities suggest a strategic move by the US in defending its allies like Taiwan in the region. As tensions rise, maintaining operational readiness, training, bolstering regional alliances, joint military exercises and diplomatic engagements will be critical to preserving stability in the region.





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