

Task Force to address Chinese government influence in the region, including discussion on COFA amendments. Amata noted the RMI negotiations on the \$7 billion Compact deal are stalled over nuclear testing compensation. “The deals are key to US and regional security in the Pacific. The administration is proposing the reauthorizing of the Compact agreements with economic assistance to the FAS in return for U.S. military basing rights.” But Amata said the Biden Administration’s proposal lacked spending offsets for COFA and increased costs for postal and other services. U.S. Special Envoy for Compact Negotiations Joseph Yun said the timeline to complete talks will be “very soon,” adding the U.S. Postal Service approval is the biggest hurdle. 🐟



Congresswoman Amata at the announcement of the bipartisan Indo-Pacific Task force in Washington D.C. Photo: Marianas Variety.

## Severe Storm Disrupts Guam’s Small-Boat Fishery

**Guam’s artisanal small-boat fishery** was devastated by Typhoon Mawar when it passed over the northern tip of Guam May 24-25, 2023, as a Category 4 storm with sustained winds of up to 140 miles per hour.

An institution for fishermen to sell fish and for the community to purchase freshly processed sashimi for more than 40 years, the Guam Fishermen’s Coop was severely damaged and unable to reopen until a temporary facility is completed, which is expected around the end of August 2023. A new facility is already in the planning stage and is expected to open in early 2025.

The storm also sunk or destroyed boats left in their slips at the Agaña and Agat Marinas. Many fishermen were unable to go fishing for weeks after the storm due to spilt oil and fuel from sunken boats, and boats damaged in their yards. This was exacerbated by fuel lines several miles long sparked by fear of a gas and diesel shortage.

Fortunately, there was little damage to the marinas themselves. Only the Malesso Pier suffered some damage due to storm waves.

