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SYLLOGE ON CHINA

Focus: Nuclear, Space, Missiles and other Security Issues

An Initiative by Indian Pugwash Society and Centre for Nuclear Issues and Arms Control (MP - IDSA)



INDIAN PUGWASH SOCIETY

UK govt's \$839m buyout may be best exit for Chinese firm from troubled nuclear plant

Wang Cong

Global Times, November 30, 2022

The UK government confirmed that it would spend 700 million pounds (\$839 million) of its taxpayers' money amid the worst cost-of-living crisis in decades simply to buy out a Chinese firm's stake in the Sizewell C nuclear power plant, which has been plagued by massive delays, uncalculatable costs and serious pushback from some UK groups. China General Nuclear (CGN), which had a 20 percent stake in the plant, has agreed to back out of the project. There is no doubt that the Chinese firm has been pushed out by the UK government and has faced losses after years of involvement in the project. Still, the firm's decision should be respected and it might be best for the company to leave the project, which is clearly going nowhere in the near term, let alone making any profit. The company is better off leaving the mess behind and moving on.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202211/1280855.shtml#:~:text=The%20UK%20government%20confirmed%20on,delay%2C%20uncalculatable%20costs%20and%20serious>

Russian, Chinese strategic bombers conduct joint patrols in Asia

Nikkei Asia, November 30, 2022

Russian and Chinese strategic warplanes, including Tupolev-95 long-range "Bear" bombers, conducted joint patrols over the Sea of Japan and East China Sea, the Russian Defence Ministry said. South Korea's military said earlier that it scrambled fighter jets as two Chinese and six Russian warplanes entered its air defense zone. Russia's defense ministry said that "at certain stages of the route, strategic missile carriers were accompanied by fighters of foreign states." "An air group consisting of Tu-95MC strategic missile carriers of the Russian Aerospace Forces and strategic bombers XIAN H-6K of the PLA Air Force carried out air patrols over the waters of the Japanese and East China Seas," the ministry said.

<https://asia.nikkei.com/Business/Aerospace-Defense/Russian-Chinese-strategic-bombers-conduct-joint-patrols-in-Asia>

Pentagon aims to expand military spending by hyping progress in China's capability of safeguarding core interests

Global Times, November 30, 2022

The US Defense Department released its annual report on China's military development, with what experts said is a "tougher tone" than previous years against a backdrop of complicated international situations and a degradation in China-US relations. In a deliberate move to hype China's military strength, the report discussed China's nuclear arsenal and played up China's possible military actions to the island of Taiwan and the "Indo-Pacific region." Chinese military experts believe the

reports is aimed at hyping the China threat theory and demonize China's rightful military development, and serve the US' goal of pulling regional countries to its side to contain China. However, they point out that the US, the biggest owner of nuclear warheads which is constantly stirring up conflicts in other regions, is the biggest threat to global peace.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202211/1280854.shtml>

Influence Empire — can Tencent negotiate China's shifting political winds?

Ryan McMorro

Financial Times, December 01, 2022

It is perhaps Beijing's greatest tool for surveillance and control — WeChat. The widely popular “everything app” boasts over a billion users who use it to scroll through social posts, pay for food or scan the pandemic-related healthcodes required to enter restaurants or parks. WeChat's success has turned its owner, the internet platform Tencent, into China's most important private company with a market value of \$360bn and the biggest challenger to the tech giants of Silicon Valley. But it has also pitched Tencent into a perilous world where technology and business run up against the demands of authoritarian politics. This was recently made clear when Tencent shut down thousands of user accounts for sharing images of a rare Beijing protest attacking President Xi Jinping as a “dictator and traitor”.

<https://www.ft.com/content/880cc1ea-febd-45f1-a982-16fc0c22e8be>

Close Australia ties ‘secret sauce’ to tackle China's advanced space capabilities: top US military leader

South China Morning Post, December 01, 2022

Australia is a critical asset for the US in the growing strategic competition with China over space, with top US military leaders warning Beijing's technology is advancing “very, very quickly” to close the capability gap. US Space Force's Lt. General Nina M. Armagno said Australia's geographical position and research capabilities represented a “pot of a gold at the end of the rainbow” for the two countries' strategic interests in space defence. Armagno, the Director of Staff for US Space Force, said Australia's location in the southern hemisphere was vital to the US for “space domain awareness,” the ability to track and monitor all objects, satellites and debris in close orbit to the Earth. “This is prime country for space domain awareness,” she said at an interview in Canberra.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/asia/australasia/article/3201668/close-australia-ties-secret-sauce-tackle-chinas-advanced-space-capabilities-top-us-military-leader>

China protests test the limits of Xi Jinping's authority

Gideon Rachman and Yuan Yang

Financial Times, December 01, 2022

The Chinese government has often boasted of its success in keeping the pandemic at bay through its zero-Covid policies. But as the rest of the world has opened up after the pandemic, China has been stuck with increasingly severe lockdowns, and in recent days, something seems to have snapped. Protests have broken out all over the country against the government's Covid-19 policies and many of the demonstrations in cities such as Beijing, Shanghai and Chengdu, the slogans quickly became much more political, with calls heard for freedom of the press and for President Xi to step down.

<https://www.ft.com/content/2caa99dd-462c-45bc-be10-45a3ac8f7d5a>

India's plan to take on China as south Asia's favourite lender

Benjamin Parkin and Chloe Cornish

Financial Times, December 01, 2022

As China's Belt and Road Initiative projects proliferated in south Asia and the Indian Ocean, so too has Prime Minister Narendra Modi's India ramped up its own infrastructure lending in the region. While India lags far behind China in its overseas lending, New Delhi has stepped up its efforts in recent years, providing tens of billions of dollars in credit to neighbouring countries, including financially distressed BRI-recipients like Sri Lanka. Indian companies have also expanded rapidly in the region, providing a counterweight to Chinese commercial activity. Modi's government "began to develop this sense that India needs to do something," says C Raja Mohan, a senior fellow at the Asia Society Policy Institute in Delhi. "It has been far more alive to the geopolitical contestation with China."

<https://www.ft.com/content/67abce3d-7313-4788-8649-abb9343a2ebc>

Chinese firm prepares to send world's first methane-fuelled rocket into space

Ling Xin

South China Morning Post, December 02, 2022

China is aiming to send the world's first methane-fuelled rocket into space, with a launch planned in the next two weeks, according to a source with knowledge of the matter. The rocket – known as the Zhuque-2 and developed by Beijing-based start-up Landspace – is expected to be launched between December 4 and 15 from the Gobi Desert in Inner Mongolia, the source told the South China Morning Post. If successful it will be the first methane-burning rocket sent into orbit. Landspace is in a race with US rivals SpaceX and Relativity Space, which are also hoping to launch methane rockets soon. Methane is the primary component of natural gas. As a rocket fuel, it is

more efficient, easier to produce and more environmentally friendly than traditional fuels such as refined kerosene.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/science/article/3201834/chinese-firm-prepares-send-worlds-first-methane-fuelled-rocket-space>

China tries to keep Europe in play as U.S. seeks united front

Tsukasa Hadano and Yasuo Takeuchi

Nikkei Asia, December 02, 2022

Chinese President Xi Jinping welcomed another top European official to Beijing in a tug of war with the U.S. for influence. During his meeting with European Council President Charles Michel at the Great Hall of the People, Xi said China looks forward to seeing the European Union "share in the opportunities brought by China's huge market," according to the Chinese readout. The meeting came on the same day as French President Emmanuel Macron went to the White House for the first state visit hosted by U.S. President Joe Biden, as Washington seeks Paris's support in maintaining pressure on China. Macron is due to visit China in January. Xi, looking to whittle away at the U.S.-led pressure campaign, urged the EU to reject a "new Cold War" in any form. He stressed the lack of "conflicts of fundamental significance" between Beijing and Brussels, while calling for the two sides to respect each other's "core interests" – a tacit reference to Taiwan.

<https://asia.nikkei.com/Politics/International-relations/China-tries-to-keep-Europe-in-play-as-U.S.-seeks-united-front>

China hosts Asia security group's talks on building regional influence

Kawala Xie

South China Morning Post, December 02, 2022

A security grouping with a strong focus on Central Asia will need to build trust between its member states if it is to increase its influence in regional and world affairs by transforming into an international organisation, a two-day forum in Shanghai heard. Experts and former officials from the 28-member Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia (CICA) were in China to discuss their vision for Asia's security during a turbulent time in world affairs. The forum followed the October CICA leaders' conference in Kazakhstan, which included a pledge by the host country's President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev to transform the grouping into a regional international organisation. CICA's members include countries from Southeast Asia and the Middle East, as well as China and Russia, and account for more than 50 per cent of the world's GDP, as well as two-thirds of global growth.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/diplomacy/article/3201791/china-hosts-asia-security-groups-talks-building-regional-influence>

Japan, Australia to hold '2-plus-2' security talks in Tokyo

Nikkei Asia, December 02, 2022

The defense and foreign ministers of Japan and Australia are set to meet in Tokyo, the Japanese government said, as China's military buildup and North Korea's missile and nuclear programs threaten regional security. At the planned "two-plus-two" talks on December 9, the four ministers are expected to exchange views on how to promote their defense cooperation "given the increasingly severe strategic security in the Indo-Pacific region," the Japanese Foreign Ministry said. Japan and Australia are part of the four-way security framework known as the Quad, involving the United States and India, as the countries seek to form a united front against Beijing's growing military and economic influence. Security concerns in the Asia-Pacific region have also been mounting as North Korea has fired ballistic missiles at an unprecedented pace since the start of this year amid fears that it may conduct its seventh nuclear test, the first since September 2017.

<https://asia.nikkei.com/Politics/International-relations/Japan-Australia-to-hold-2-plus-2-security-talks-in-Tokyo>

US debuts new B-21 nuclear stealth bomber in defence race with China

South China Morning Post, December 03, 2022

America's newest nuclear stealth bomber is making its public debut after years of secret development and as part of the Pentagon's answer to rising concerns over a future conflict with China. The B-21 Raider is the first new American bomber aircraft in more than 30 years. Almost every aspect of the programme is classified. Ahead of its unveiling on Friday at an Air Force facility in Palmdale, California, only artists' renderings of the warplane have been released. Those few images reveal that the Raider resembles the black nuclear stealth bomber it will eventually replace, the B-2 Spirit. The bomber is part of the Pentagon's efforts to modernise all three legs of its nuclear triad, which includes silo-launched nuclear ballistic missiles and submarine-launched warheads, as it shifts from the counterterrorism campaigns of recent decades to meet China's rapid military modernisation.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/world/united-states-canada/article/3201915/us-debuts-new-b-21-nuclear-stealth-bomber-defence-race-china>

Huge nuclear arms push by China would worry neighbours, analysts warn, as US report sees 1,500 warheads by 2035

Kristin Huang

South China Morning Post, December 03, 2022

An exponential increase in China's nuclear arsenal and military power would trigger concerns among its neighbours, even though Beijing has valid reasons for security build-up, military analysts said. This came as the United States in its latest China Military Power Report called China "the most consequential and systemic challenge to our [US] national security and to a free and

open international system". The annual Pentagon report on Chinese military might and strategy, said the country currently has about 400 nuclear warheads, and the number could reach 1,500 by 2035. According to the US defence department, an important element of China's strategy is "a determined pursuit to amass and expand its national power" to transform aspects of the international system to make it more favourable to the Chinese political system and national interests.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/military/article/3201856/huge-nuclear-arms-push-china-would-worry-neighbours-analysts-warn-us-report-sees-1500-warheads-2035>

Ex-unification minister casts doubts on China's role in North Korean nuclear issue

Kang Seung-woo

The Korea Times, December 04, 2022

Amid escalating nuclear and missile threats from North Korea, China's role has come to the fore given Beijing is regarded as the only country that can exert influence on Pyongyang thanks to its billing as the reclusive state's sole economic pipeline and diplomatic guardian. Its accentuated role was evidenced by U.S. President Joe Biden's call on his Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping during their first face-to-face meeting in Indonesia, last month, to take proper steps to de-escalate military tensions exacerbated by the Kim Jong-un regime. However, Kyungnam University President Park Jae Kyu, a former South Korean unification minister, questioned if China would live up to those expectations by playing a constructive role in resolving the North Korean nuclear issue, saying that there is little that Beijing can do and it has little interest in supporting the United States in dealing with North Korea.

https://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/nation/2022/12/103_340980.html

US' newly unveiled B-21 stealth bomber raises new defense challenges to China, expected to be responded to by Chinese counterpart: analysts

Liu Xuanzun

Global Times, December 04, 2022

The world finally got its first glimpse on the B-21, the US' first new bomber in more than 30 years, after it made a high-profile debut in a ceremony, an event analysts said is an attempt to flex its muscles and deter China. Inheriting some selected strengths and drawing on lessons from major shortcomings of the B-2, the B-21's powerful but expensive predecessor, the new stealth bomber can be mass-produced and is more pragmatic in major power competitions, posing new challenges to the national defense of China, which is reportedly also developing a next-generation bomber of its own, Chinese experts said. Held in the US Air Force's Plant 42 in Palmdale, California, the event saw the B-21 towed out of a hangar as the aircraft made its debut.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202212/1281091.shtml>

U.S. faces pivotal years in countering China: Pentagon chief

Nikkei Asia, December 04, 2022

The U.S. is at a pivotal point with China and will need military strength to ensure that American values, not Beijing's, set global norms in the 21st century, Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin said. Austin's speech at the Reagan National Defense Forum capped a week in which the Pentagon was squarely focused on China's rise and what that might mean for America's position in the world. It released an annual China security report that warned Beijing would likely have 1,500 nuclear warheads by 2035, with no clarity on how China would seek to use them. In a dramatic nighttime rollout, Austin was on hand as the public got its first glimpse of the military's newest, highly classified nuclear stealth bomber, the B-21 Raider, which is being designed to best the quickly growing cyber, space and nuclear capabilities of Beijing. China "is the only country with both the will and, increasingly, the power to reshape its region and the international order to suit its authoritarian preferences," Austin said Saturday. "So let me be clear: We will not let that happen."

<https://asia.nikkei.com/Politics/International-relations/US-China-tensions/U.S.-faces-pivotal-years-in-countering-China-Pentagon-chief>

Shenzhou-14 crew safely return to Dongfeng landing site after 183 days at China Space Station

Deng Xiaoci

Global Times, December 04, 2022

After concluding six-month stay at the China Space Station and completing first-ever direct handover in orbit in the country's aerospace history, three taikonauts of the Shenzhou-14 manned spaceflight mission have safely returned to the Dongfeng landing site in the Gobi Desert, North China's Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region on December 04. The return capsule of the Shenzhou-14 manned spacecraft carrying three taikonauts conducted successful touchdown in the Dongfeng landing site. The medical personnel confirmed that the taikonauts were in good health, marking a complete success of the return mission, the Global Times has learned from the China Manned Space Agency (CMSA).

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202212/1281065.shtml>

China begins nuclear island installation of land-based small modular reactor

Global Times, December 04, 2022

Linglong One, a multi-functional small modular and pressurized-water nuclear reactor, has begun its construction in South China's Hainan Province, China's Central Television reported. Linglong One is being built by the China National Nuclear Corporation based on China's independent research and intellectual property rights. It is also the world's first reactor of this type to be approved by the International Atomic Energy Agency on the basis that it is built to serve the region's diverse power needs. The CCTV report described the Linglong One "nuclear island" as

the heart of the nuclear power plant. Other major facilities, including the power station's pressure vessel and steam generator, will be installed in the future, the report said. Commencing construction in July 2021, the Linlong One project is characterized as being highly secure, having short construction period, and flexible deployment among other advantages. It is expected to take about 58 months to finish the construction.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202212/1281048.shtml>

Japan to expand Okinawa-based ground force, a move ‘to exacerbate regional arms race trend’

Zhang Changyue

Global Times, December 04, 2022

As Japan plans to expand and strengthen its Okinawa-based ground force unit, a step to further enhance its military capacity in Japan's southwest islands for the so-called Taiwan emergency, Chinese experts said the move will amplify adverse impacts to poison bilateral relations and exacerbate the trend of regional arms race. Japan's Defense Ministry is considering upgrading the Ground Self-Defense Force's (GSDF) 15th Brigade, which is based in Japan's southernmost prefecture of Okinawa and is in charge of guarding and defending Okinawa, by doubling the number of infantry regiments under the 15th Brigade and upgrading its highest rank from major general to general, Kyodo News reported, quoting sources from the Japanese government. Japanese media reported that the move is intended to improve the defense capacity of Japan's southwest islands and enhance Japan-US cooperation to prepare for "a Taiwan emergency." Chinese experts said the possible expansion measures are the latest move in Japan's continuous reinforcement of its military capacity in the country's southwest islands, which clearly targets the cross-Taiwan Straits situation and the Diaoyu Islands.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202212/1281097.shtml>

Canada to send more warships through Taiwan Strait in signal to China

Demetri Sevastopulo

Financial Times, December 05, 2022

Canada plans to sail more warships through the Taiwan Strait to affirm the waters claimed by China are international, after Ottawa released an Indo-Pacific strategy that described Beijing as an “increasingly disruptive” power. “We need to make sure that the question of the Taiwan Strait is clear and that it remains an international strait,” Canadian foreign minister Mélanie Joly said in an interview. “We will continue to enforce the international rules-based order when it comes to the Taiwan Strait. And that’s why also we had a frigate going through the Taiwan Strait this summer, along with the Americans, [and] we’re looking to have more frigates going through it.”

<https://www.ft.com/content/b19721e8-7bfc-44f2-9f72-971a63d2bfac>

Relentless US crackdown on Chinese companies is doomed: experts

Global Times, December 05, 2022

Disinformation by some US politicians regarding Chinese companies, hyping the so-called risks to the US "national security", will fail to achieve their goals as the relentless crackdown won't hinder the demand of America consumers for Chinese goods and services, experts told the Global Times. The comment came after FBI Director Chris Wray warned that control of TikTok, the popular Chinese video-sharing app, is "in the hands of the Chinese government". Wray said the FBI was concerned that the Chinese had the ability to control the app's recommendation algorithm, "which allows them to manipulate content, and if they want to, to use it for influence operations." He also asserted that China could use the app to collect data on its users that could be used for traditional espionage operations, according to a report by the Associated Press.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202212/1281136.shtml>

Australia, China and the judgment of the Solomons

Gideon Rachman

Financial Times, December 05, 2022

If you wanted to nominate a country in the world with zero strategic significance, the Solomon Islands might sound like a good shout. An archipelago of almost 1,000 islands in the southern Pacific with a total population of about 700,000, the Solomons seem safely distant from great power politics. The country's head of state is the British monarch, but the last visit by the sovereign was 40 years ago. China is more than 6,000km away; Australia, roughly 2,000km away. Despite their remoteness, the Solomon Islands have become an unlikely flashpoint in the growing strategic rivalry between China and the west. The signature of a security pact between the Solomons and China in April sparked alarm in Washington and Canberra.

<https://www.ft.com/content/463405f1-7e48-4ae6-a15c-03fe60844082>

US' latest arms sale proposal to Taiwan island may hinder China-US military exchanges; little help for secessionists to gain a military edge

Global Times, December 06, 2022

The provocative arms sale to China's Taiwan region will make it more difficult to restore China-US military cooperation and exchanges, Chinese experts warned, following reports that Washington has proposed arms sale to the secessionist Taiwan authorities, less than a month after two heads of state met face-to-face in Bali, when US President Joe Biden reaffirmed that the US does not support "Taiwan independence," and has no intention to engage in conflict with China. Given the absolute military advantage of the Chinese mainland over Taiwan island, the US arms sales to Taiwan would be more about political provocation than a military support in practice, experts said. They also urged the US to be true to its words and deeds, take concrete actions to

stop provocations against China's core interests on the Taiwan question and refrain from sending wrong signals to Taiwan secessionists after their fiasco in the recent local elections.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202212/1281266.shtml>

Australia warned not to become US' 'spearhead', as '2+2' meeting goes beyond hyping 'China threats'

Wang Qi

Global Times, December 07, 2022

Australia should not sacrifice its interests and autonomy for the sake of US hegemony, and China would not meet Australia's wishful thinking on cooperation if it is just siding with the US and challenging China's core interests, Chinese experts warned, following the US-Australia agreement to increase the presence of US forces in Australia, citing so-called "threats from China." Along with Australian defense chief Richard Marles, US Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin told a joint news conference that the two sides agreed to increase the rotational presence of US forces in Australia, including rotations of bomber task forces, fighters and future rotations of US Navy and US Army capabilities. At a routine press briefing, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning denounced that the US has formed military alliances with some of its allies to stir up division and confrontation and undermine regional peace and stability. "It is unpopular and has no market," Mao said.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202212/1281371.shtml>

Beijing allows US export-control checks on Chinese tech companies

Demetri Sevastopulo and Qianer Liu

Financial Times, December 07, 2022

The Biden administration says Beijing has relented and allowed US inspections of Chinese businesses, with a number of companies facing a deadline to co-operate by this week or risk being put on a trade blacklist. Alan Estevez, the US commerce under-secretary for industry and security, said China had started letting American officials inspect some Chinese companies after Washington recently brought in tough semiconductor export controls. Estevez said the Chinese commerce ministry — which since the Trump administration has refused to allow US officials to conduct end-use checks to ensure that American technology was not being diverted for unauthorised activity such as the manufacture of weapons — had become more receptive since Washington imposed the controls in October.

<https://www.ft.com/content/f153c631-6270-4883-a632-2ccd7ef46469>

Troop rotations among US and allies expose hazardous nature of US-centered cliques

Global Times, December 07, 2022

The US is trying to make its allies pillars of its “Indo-Pacific Strategy.” With the strengthening of the cooperation among the US, Australia and Japan, the US hopes to build a military triangle in the region to consolidate its dominant role and form more consensus in China-related affairs. This exposes the hazardous nature of the US-centered cliques. After talks between US and Australian foreign and defense chiefs in Washington, the two sides agreed to step up troop rotations and that the US will expand the number of the bomber task force and fighter aircraft forces in Australia. They will also invite Japan into the three-way rotations, vowing a united front in the face of “China’s dangerous and coercive actions throughout the Indo-Pacific, including around Taiwan.” The three-way rotations of troops are a new tactic under US’ “Indo-Pacific Strategy.” Song Zhongping, a Chinese military expert, believes that the US is expanding its frontline military bases and seeking to integrate the first island chain with the second island chain.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202212/1281385.shtml>

The great chip war — and the challenge for global diplomacy

Andrew Hill

Financial Times, December 07, 2022

Taiwan sits on geopolitical and seismic faultlines. Until recently, companies trusted that seamless globalised networks would underpin their chip supply. But boards are suddenly worrying about “Taiwan risk”. They are contemplating the possibility of military confrontation between the US and China and grappling with the implications of a trade war over chip development and supply. Academics call this situation “weaponised interdependence”, in which, Miller writes, “rather than defusing conflicts and encouraging co-operation” the intertwined interests of the economic powers create “new venues for competition”. Encouraging more investment in local chip manufacturing, as the US, China and EU are trying to do with subsidies and tax breaks, is one way to offset these risks.

<https://www.ft.com/content/7de40326-58a9-457b-a828-edf86031883e>

Why is Saudi Arabia looking to China to buy weapons after years of arms deals with the US?

Kawala Xie

South China Morning Post, December 08, 2022

As the world’s largest defence spender, Saudi Arabia has sourced weapons from a variety of countries and in the past has imported mostly from the US. But amid increased tension with Washington in recent years following the death of journalist Jamal Khashoggi in 2018 and in light

of the recent Opec+ oil dispute, Riyadh is actively looking to diversify its weapon sources, with China now considered a top alternative. Chinese media recently reported that Saudi Arabia bought US\$4 billion worth of weapons after the Zhuhai Air Show in November, a sale much larger than their previous arms deal, according to observers. The arms trade between China and Saudi Arabia dates back to the late 1980s, after the two countries held their first official meetings in 1985. They officially established ties in 1990.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/diplomacy/article/3202245/why-saudi-arabia-looking-china-buy-weapons-after-years-arms-deals-us>

Chinese scientists' quantum study hailed as a 'breakthrough of the year'

Ling Xin

South China Morning Post, December 08, 2022

Chinese scientists are ending the year with a double celebration. Days after releasing details of their latest breakthrough, a team from Anhui in eastern China has been included in Physics World's top 10 achievements of 2022. The researchers, from the University of Science and Technology of China (USTC), were recognised for their initial study earlier this year, which outlined indirect evidence that they had created the first ultracold three-atom molecules. In their latest paper, published by the journal Science, the team confirmed the breakthrough which is expected to shed new light on how chemicals behave at the quantum level. And, the Institute of Physics's membership journal listed their first study – published in the February edition of Nature – as one of its top 10 scientific breakthroughs of the year.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/science/article/3202526/chinese-scientists-quantum-study-hailed-breakthrough-year>

China completes first seaborne hot launch with carrier rocket sending 14 satellites to orbit

Fan Anqi and Deng Xiaoci

Global Times, December 09, 2022

China's commercial carrier rockets have welcomed a new member to the family, after the Smart Dragon-3, or Jielong-3, made its successful maiden flight from the waters of the Yellow Sea, sending 14 satellites precisely into their designated orbit. Its debut further expanded the spectrum of China's launch vehicles and marked the country's first hot seaborne launch, filling multiple technical gaps in China's domestic aerospace industry. The vehicle, developed and manufactured by the state-owned China Academy of Launch Vehicle Technology (CALT), is a four-stage solid-propellant carrier rocket with a total length of about 31 meters and a diameter of up to 2.65 meters. It weighs about 140 tons. Smart Dragon-3 is capable of sending a 1.5-ton payload to the 500-kilometer Sun-synchronous orbit, has a larger nose cone with a diameter of 3.35 meters that

provides more space for payloads and diversified launch modes, and is more cost-efficient, the Global Times learned.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202212/1281509.shtml>

China and Saudi Arabia pledge to widen ties to ‘all fields’ and work together on Iran nuclear programme

Kawala Xie and Teddy Ng

South China Morning Post, December 09, 2022

China and Saudi Arabia pledged to further expand their cooperation to areas such as technology, security and Iran in a joint declaration during President Xi Jinping’s visit to the kingdom. The declaration stressed the importance of continuing cooperation in “all fields” and deepening their relations within the framework of a comprehensive strategic partnership established in 2016. Xi and King Salman agreed to enhance the comprehensive strategic partnership to include a biannual meeting between the two heads of state, and upgrade regular high-level talks from vice-premier to premier level. The declaration included a joint statement on Iran, Riyadh’s long-time rival and a strategic partner of Beijing. The two agreed to work together to guarantee the “peaceful nature” of Iran’s nuclear programme and called on Iran to maintain a “non-proliferation regime” while emphasising “respect” for the principles of “good- neighbourliness”.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/diplomacy/article/3202656/china-saudi-ties-upgraded-xi-pledges-priority-status-riyadh>

China’s new high-altitude, high-speed demonstrator drone makes first flight

Liu Xuanzun

Global Times, December 09, 2022

China recently carried out the maiden flight for a type of new high-altitude, high-speed demonstrator drone, which can help test and verify a number of new technologies including artificial intelligence, loyal wingman and drone swarm, the aircraft’s maker announced. Independently developed by the flight test center of the state-owned Aviation Industry Corporation of China (AVIC), the Liuxing-260 successfully completed its first flight, AVIC said in a statement released on social media. During the flight, which took place in the desert in Northwest China, the Liuxing-260 high-altitude, high-speed, high-maneuver drone took off from a launcher vehicle, conducted several maneuvers including diving, rolling and circling, before descending to a preset position for a parachute recovery, AVIC said.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202212/1281488.shtml>

China launches new remote sensing satellite

Global Times, December 09, 2022

China sent a new remote sensing satellite into space from the Taiyuan Satellite Launch Center in north China's Shanxi Province at 02:31 am on December 09. The satellite, Gaofen-5 01A, was launched aboard a Long March-2D rocket and entered its planned orbit successfully. It is a hyperspectral satellite that will be used for remote sensing and applications in diverse fields, such as pollution reduction, environmental monitoring, natural resource surveys, and climate change studies. The satellite will help improve the country's hyperspectral observation capacity in areas such as environmental protection, land, weather, agriculture, and disaster alleviation. The launch was the 453rd flight mission of the Long March carrier rocket series.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202212/1281546.shtml>

Full text of Xi Jinping's keynote speech at China-GCC Summit

Global Times, December 10, 2022

At the outset, I wish to express heartfelt appreciation to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for hosting the China-Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Summit. It gives me great pleasure to join you in planning for the future of China-GCC relations. The friendly exchange between China and GCC countries goes back nearly two millennia in history. Throughout those years, the two peoples interacted with each other continuously along the ancient Silk Road inspired by the "Eastern wisdom" of peace, harmony and truth. In 1981, China established contact with the GCC upon its inception. Forty plus years on, the two sides have written together a splendid chapter of solidarity, mutual assistance and win-win cooperation.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202212/1281561.shtml>

Artemis, Tiangong successes in US-China space race leave Russia eating cosmic dust

Philip J. Cunningham

South China Morning Post, December 10, 2022

Space exploration, once a spirited rivalry between the United States and the Soviet Union, has now become a contest between the US and China. Recent weeks have seen advances in the space programmes of both countries, and these advances have left Russia in the cosmic dust. A powerful new US rocket propelled an uncrewed module to the moon and beyond while the International Space Station, primarily funded and run by the US, continues to do good science. Meanwhile, China's newly expanded Tiangong space station recently refreshed its crew with a visit from Shenzhou 15. On November 16, the US-designed Space Launch System (SLS) thrust an uncrewed Orion capsule on a trajectory for the moon in its inaugural test flight as part of the Artemis programme. The SLS was supposed to be an answer to Russia's Proton rockets and the legendary

Saturn rocket. It has not been an instant success, though. The SLS, plagued by cost overruns and technical delays, has had trouble getting off the ground, with four launches scrubbed earlier this year.

<https://www.scmp.com/comment/opinion/article/3202379/artemis-tiangong-successes-us-china-space-race-leave-russia-eating-cosmic-dust>

US puts sanctions on 2 Chinese companies over alleged illegal fishing practices

Demetri Sevastopulo

Financial Times, December 10, 2022

Joe Biden’s administration has imposed financial sanctions on two big Chinese fishing fleet companies, including one listed on Nasdaq, that it has accused of engaging in illegal fishing and human rights abuses. The US Treasury on Friday put sanctions on Pingtan Marine Enterprise, a Cayman Islands-registered Chinese company listed on the Nasdaq exchange, and Dalian Ocean Fishing. It also targeted two individuals — Li Zhenyu and Zhuo Xinrong — whom Treasury said controlled fishing fleet networks that included the two companies. “These designations demonstrate how seriously we take the problem of illicit fishing and our commitment to holding the perpetrators of serious human rights abuses to account,” said Brian Nelson, a top Treasury official, who added that the practices “harm the economic prospects of local populations in the Indo-Pacific”.

<https://www.ft.com/content/b1e0a20d-062e-4eea-baf7-9d4cd9674fe6>

*Sylloge on China is compiled by Mr. Niranjana C. Oak with inputs
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