

March 10, 2024

SYLLOGE ON CHINA

Focus: Nuclear, Space, Missiles and other Security Issues

**An Initiative by the Nuclear and Arms Control Centre,
MP-IDSA**



China completes world's first onshore modular nuclear reactor

Zhou Huiying

China Daily, March 1, 2024

The world's first onshore commercial modular pressurized water reactor, Linglong One, completed its final stage of construction in Hainan province, as reported by China Metallurgical News. As early as 2016, shortly after the Linglong One passed the safety review of the International Atomic Energy Agency, the company began actively tracking the stainless steel materials required for the project. After its completion, Linglong One will become a turning point for the nuclear energy industry, ushering in a new era of multi-purpose nuclear energy, the report said. An increasing number of small commercial reactors will be used in areas across China, including islands, mining areas, industrial parks and remote areas.

<https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202403/01/WS65e1ab4da31082fc043ba16b.html>

Chinese military purge said to show corruption, weakness

Shizuka Kuramitsu

Arms Control Association, March 1, 2024

China has purged nine generals from its national legislative body in a sweeping move that analysts say exposes corruption in the senior army ranks and could slow President Xi Jinping's campaign to modernize the military. "The corruption inside China's Rocket Force and throughout the nation's defence industrial base is so extensive that U.S. officials now believe [that] Xi is less likely to contemplate major military action in the coming years than would otherwise have been the case," the source told Bloomberg. This purge is part of a trend under Xi's regime. Not even two years after a big reshuffle of high-ranking officials in 2022, China has dismissed even more of them in 2023, including PLA Rocket Force head Li Yuchao in June, Foreign Minister Qin Gang in July, and Defence Minister Li Shangfu in September.

<https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2024-03/news/chinese-military-purge-said-show-corruption-weakness>

Where is China in the Red Sea crisis?

Carla Babb

Voice of America, March 1, 2024

As Iranian-backed Houthi militants in Yemen continue attacks on international shipping lanes in the Red Sea, a coalition of about two dozen countries, including the U.S. and the U.K., has been working to secure the important waterway. Noticeably absent from the coalition is China, even

though about 40% of trade between Europe and Asia goes through the Red Sea and Suez Canal. Yuan Mu, a spokesperson for China's Embassy in Washington, told VOA via email last month that "on the whole, China stands ready to work with all parties to safeguard the safety of international shipping lanes."

<https://www.voanews.com/a/where-is-china-in-the-red-sea-crisis-/7510435.html>

Chinese 'nuclear' cargo bound for Pakistan seized at Mumbai port

Namrata Biji Ahuja

The Week, March 2, 2024

Indian custom officials have seized a Chinese shipment meant for Pakistan at the Mumbai's Nhava Sheva port in January, on the suspicion of being a possible dual use consignment which could be used for Pakistan's nuclear and ballistic missile programme. Indian officials suspect that Pakistan is using China as a conduit to procure dual use and restricted items from Europe and the United States and masking identities to avoid detection. On January 23, customs officials stopped a Malta-flagged merchant ship, CMA CGM Attila at Nhava Sheva port while it was bound for Karachi. Port officials have alerted the Indian defence authorities who inspected the heavy cargo and reported their suspicions, after which the consignment was seized. The seizure falls under the prevention of possible proliferation concerns by Pakistan and China, officials told.

<https://www.theweek.in/news/india/2024/03/02/exclusive-chinese-shipment-meant-for-pakistan-nuclear-ballistic-missile-programmes-seized-at-mumbai-port.html>

Shenzhou-17 crew completes in-orbit repairs during 2nd extravehicular mission

The State Council, The People's Republic of China, March 2, 2024

The Shenzhou-17 crew aboard China's orbiting space station carried out their second extravehicular mission, the China Manned Space Agency has said. A spacewalk was conducted by Tang Hongbo and Jiang Xinlin, who have since returned safely to the Wentian lab module. China launched the Shenzhou-17 manned spaceship on October 26, 2023. Its crew conducted a repair test in their first extravehicular mission on December 21 last year. During their second extravehicular mission, the three taikonauts completed maintenance work on the Tianhe core module's solar wings, addressing the impact of small space particles. According to the agency, the solar wing's power generation function is operating normally after evaluation and analysis.

https://english.www.gov.cn/news/202403/02/content_WS65e32fa8c6d0868f4e8e48b8.html#:~:text=Shenzhou%2D17%20crew%20completes%20in%2Dorbit%20repairs%20during%202nd%20extravehicular%20mission&text=BEIJING%2C%20March%202%20%2D%2D%20The.Manned%20Space%20Agency%20has%20said.

China to test laser-based communication payloads for real-time maritime data transmission: CASIC president

Deng Xiaoci

Global Times, March 3, 2024

China's Weihai-1 laser-based communication payloads that were successfully sent to preset orbit on February 3, will soon carry out inter-satellite and satellite-ground technology convergence experiment in order to realize real-time transmission of maritime remote sensing data and fishing vessel monitoring data, China's state-owned China Aerospace Science and Industry Corp (CASIC,) a major space contractor, revealed. Song Xiaoming, a member of the 14th National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference and the head of the Second Academy of CASIC, told the Global Times that the Weihai-1 laser-based communication payload has successfully undergone the satellite-ground communication technology verification, laying ground for new experiment works.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202403/1308062.shtml>

Russia, China eye nuclear power plant on moon

DW, March 3, 2024

Moscow plans to contribute its expertise in "nuclear space energy" to a joint lunar program with China, including a nuclear power plant on the moon, Russia's space agency chief Yuri Borisov said. Borisov warned that solar panels would not be enough to ensure a reliable supply of electricity to potential lunar settlements. "Today we are seriously considering a project — somewhere at the turn of 2033-2035 — to deliver and install a power unit on the lunar surface together with our Chinese colleagues," Borisov said during a youth event. In March 2021, Moscow and Beijing signed an agreement on building an international lunar research station, and presented a roadmap for the construction in June 2021. China has its own lunar exploration program, with an unmanned "Chang'e-6" probe due to launch in May to collect rock samples.

<https://www.dw.com/en/russia-china-float-idea-of-building-nuclear-plant-on-moon/a-68448940>

America has the medicine for the DF-27 'aircraft carrier killer' hypersonic missile

George Allison

The Telegraph, March 4, 2024

China and its new DF-27 hypersonic 'aircraft carrier killer' missiles have been a talking point recently, especially among Western military men who want aircraft carriers to be declared

obsolete. While the US is rightfully concerned at this evolving threat, the nation that sent men to the moon is more than capable of rising to meet the threat to its ships and, thankfully for the rest of us, to the world order. How is the US staying on top as a military giant and a science powerhouse? The recent launch of six super-advanced satellites, including the first of the Hypersonic and Ballistic Tracking Sensor System (HBTSS) constellation, is a prime example.

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2024/03/04/usa-hypersonic-missile-defence-htbss-satellites-aegis-gpi/>

China's space program to keep strong momentum in 2024: CASC

Deng Xiaoci

Global Times, March 4, 2024

China's space program is set to maintain positive momentum in 2024, with major programs including ones related to the China Space Station, manned moon landing, and Chang'e lunar probe missions, being expected to achieve solid progress, China Aerospace Science and Technology Corp (CASC), a state-owned conglomerate and the nation's leading space contractor, revealed on the sidelines of the ongoing two sessions. To be specific, two cargo spacecraft launching missions - Tianzhou -7, -8, two crewed spacecraft launch missions - Shenzhou-18, -19, have been scheduled for the year of 2024, and two crewed return missions for Shenzhou-17 and -18 will be also executed.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202403/1308146.shtml>

BRI cooperation provides progress and deepens friendships

The State Council Information Office, the People's Republic of China, March 4, 2024

High-quality Belt and Road cooperation has provided great opportunities and made notable progress for partner countries in achieving common development and improving people's wellbeing, Liu Jieyi, spokesman for the second session of the 14th National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, said. As an important platform for building a community with a shared future for mankind, the BRI has been serving as a bridge to achieve mutual benefit, Liu told a news conference. People in different countries have benefited from Belt and Road cooperation, he said, adding that they have realized that a community with a shared future for mankind is not just a vision, but is bringing tangible results.

http://english.scio.gov.cn/m/beltandroad/2024-03/04/content_117033826.htm

US mulling MIRVs to counter China's nuclear buildup

Gabriel Honrada

Asia Times, March 4, 2024

China's nuclear buildup may spur the US to consider rearming its land-based nuclear missiles with multiple warheads, a move that would have significant implications for strategic stability and breach a crucial arms control treaty with Russia. The Warzone reported that the US Strategic Command (STRATCOM) has called for a return to deploying intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) with multiple independently targetable reentry vehicles (MIRVs). China's accelerated nuclear weapons buildup may be the immediate impetus for the US to reconsider deploying MIRVed ICBMs, with Russia providing nuclear technology to China in the two sides' "no limits" strategic partnership.

<https://asiatimes.com/2024/03/us-mulling-mirvs-to-counter-chinas-nuclear-buildup/>

China's 3 deep-sea manned submersibles conduct over 1,100 dives

Xinhua, March 4, 2024

China's three deep-sea manned submersibles have made more than 1,100 dives, according to a researcher with the China Ship Scientific Research Center. The trio, namely Jiaolong, Shenhai Yongshi and Fendouzhe, have completed more than half of the world's manned deep dive missions in the past three years, said Ye Cong, also a member of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, the country's top political advisory body.

<https://english.news.cn/20240304/47cf5464712e49878372bfad1c2d2be8/c.html>

Hypersonic hegemony: Niobium and the Western Hemisphere's role in the U.S.-China power struggle

Guido L. Torres, Laura Delgado López, Ryan C. Berg, and Henry Ziemer

Centre for Strategic and International Studies, March 4, 2024

China's strides in the hypersonic field are a manifestation of its broader strategic intentions and underscore its drive toward technological and military preeminence. This journey toward mastering hypersonic technology is not merely for show; it is about redefining the global balance of military power. For the United States, this might mean that even with the world's most advanced detection systems, the window to act could be so minimal that it might be rendered

ineffective. As the United States and China jostle for dominance in this arena, the strategic significance of an elemental material, niobium, emerges as a pivotal concern, and with it, China's rising dominance in the Western Hemisphere's mining sector.

<https://www.csis.org/analysis/hypersonic-hegemony-niobium-and-western-hemispheres-role-us-china-power-struggle>

Meteorological satellite FY-4B officially replaces FY-4A; to benefit more countries jointly building BRI

Global Times, March 5, 2024

The meteorological satellite Fengyun-4B (FY-4B) successfully succeeded Fengyun-4A (FY-4A) and resumed operational services in the geostationary orbit after drifting and adjusting, which is expected to serve more countries jointly building the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) by providing data support for weather forecasting, disaster prevention, mitigation and relief, China Central Television reported. According to the National Satellite Meteorological Center (NSMC), FY-4B was launched in June 2021 and previously carried out operational monitoring services at 133 degrees east longitude, from where it drifted on February 1 this year and positioned at 105 degrees east longitude on February 19. It underwent half a month of operational debugging and resumed operational services on March 5.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202403/1308223.shtml>

China calls for strengthening int'l supervision over Fukushima nuclear wastewater discharge

China Daily, March 5, 2024

A Chinese envoy reiterated China's firm opposition to Japan's discharge of nuclear-contaminated wastewater from the crippled Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant into the ocean, calling for strengthening international supervision over the water release. In disregard of the opposition from neighboring countries and concerns of the international community, Japan has so far arbitrarily discharged over 23,000 tonnes of nuclear-contaminated wastewater into the ocean, and started the fourth round of wastewater release last week, Li Song, China's permanent representative to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), told a meeting of the agency's board of governors.

<https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202403/05/WS65e672b4a31082fc043ba9b3.html>

China's impressive rate of nuclear construction

Seaver Wang

The Breakthrough Institute, March 5, 2024

Nearly every Chinese nuclear project that has entered service since 2010 has achieved construction in 7 years or less. This real-world trend flies in the face of the tiresome and longstanding claims that nuclear energy technologies inherently exhibit a negative learning curve, and that nuclear reactors require a decade or more to build. The Chinese nuclear project construction record reveals a few interesting insights. Since the start of 2022, China has completed an additional five domestic reactor builds, with their completion times ranging from just under five years to just over 7 years. This continues the consistent completion record of Chinese projects even despite potential disruptions from the intervening COVID-19 pandemic.

<https://thebreakthrough.org/issues/energy/chinas-impressive-rate-of-nuclear-construction>

China's new-generation reusable rockets eye maiden flight by 2025, 2026

Deng Xiaoci

Global Times, March 5, 2024

China Aerospace Science and Technology Corp (CASC), a state-owned conglomerate and the nation's leading space contractor, is accelerating the development of a 4-meter-diameter and a 5-meter-diameter reusable launch vehicle, and the two new models are scheduled to carry out maiden flight by 2025 and 2026, respectively, chief designer Rong Yi disclosed. Rong, who is a member of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC), the country's top political advisory body, made the remarks on the sidelines of the ongoing two sessions. "China has continuously tackled the key technologies of reusable carrier rockets over the recent years, and the overall progress is currently very smooth," said the chief designer for the new-generation carrier rocket from the China Academy of Launch Vehicle Technology (CALT) under the CASC.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202403/1308227.shtml>

Taiwan to increase missile drills amid China threats

Reuters, March 5, 2024

Taiwan's armed forces will increase the number of missile drills they hold this year, defence minister Chiu Kuo-cheng said, amid China's ramped-up military pressure to force the island to accept its sovereignty claims. China claims democratically governed Taiwan as its own territory, over the island's strong objections. It has in recent years increased military activities near Taiwan,

including almost-daily incursions into the island's air defence identification zones. Answering reporters' questions on the sidelines of parliament, Chiu said the ministry would increase the frequency of missile drills in response to a change in "enemy threat". Chiu said that in the past, missile drills had only been held at certain times of the year to limit the impact to aviation and everyday life.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/taiwan-increase-missile-drills-amid-china-threats-2024-03-05/>

China building new generation of mobile ICBMs

Bill Gertz

The Washington Times, March 6, 2024

China is developing a new generation of mobile intercontinental ballistic missiles, part of a large-scale buildup of its nuclear arsenal, the commander of U.S. Strategic Command recently disclosed to Congress. Gen. Anthony Cotton, who took over Strategic Command in December, revealed details of the new mobile ICBM development in closed-door testimony to the Senate Armed Services Committee last week, The Washington Times has learned. The four-star nuclear forces commander described the rapid deployment of Chinese strategic nuclear missiles, bombers and submarines as “breathtaking.” He was the second Strategic Command leader to testify to the alarming pace of Beijing’s nuclear expansion.

<https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2024/mar/6/exclusive-china-building-new-generation-of-mobile-/>

China’s space industry continues on extensive intl exchanges, sharing and cooperation: CASC

Deng Xiaoci

Global Times, March 6, 2024

According to the China Aerospace Science and Technology Corp (CASC), a state-owned conglomerate and the nation's leading space contractor, China's aerospace industry has facilitated extensive exchanges, data sharing, and technology cooperation with the international community over the past year. These efforts have propelled the joint high-quality development of the Belt and Road Initiative and furthered the goal of building a community with a shared future for humanity. The BeiDou Navigation Satellite System, the country’s by-far largest space-borne infrastructure also known as the BDS, has also officially joined the standards of the International Civil Aviation Organization of the UN in the year.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202403/1308320.shtml>

Swarms of missiles: How China plans to win a war against America

Brandon J. Weichert

The National Interest, March 6, 2024

China aims to challenge U.S. military dominance in the Indo-Pacific by 2049 through modernizing its forces, expanding its navy, and excelling in the fourth industrial revolution. Central to its strategy is the cost-effective "anti-access/area denial" (A2/AD) approach, focusing on missiles rather than matching U.S. capabilities ship-for-ship. This strategy includes neutralizing U.S. forward-deployed forces and bases, such as Guam, with long-range and hypersonic missiles, targeting aircraft carriers, and disabling critical military infrastructure through cyberattacks and electromagnetic disruption. China's comprehensive plan underlines the need for the U.S. to reassess its military posture in the region.'

<https://nationalinterest.org/blog/buzz/swarms-missiles-how-china-plans-win-war-against-america-209885>

Why Philippine maritime zones act is an ‘egregious bill’ that will only aggravate tensions in South China Sea

Hu Yuwei and Huang Lanlan

Global Times, March 6, 2024

The Philippines has recently advanced the domestic legislation of the "Maritime Zones Act" in an attempt to put a legal veneer on its illegal claims and actions in the South China Sea. Experts have called it an "egregious bill" as it will create more risks and confrontations, like opening a Pandora's Box, making the situation more complex in the South China Sea. This bill goes against the provisions of international law, including the UN Charter and the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), and against the spirit of the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea, they pointed out.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202403/1308303.shtml>

China’s aircraft carrier No 4 on track with ‘no technical bottleneck’, admiral reveals in first official confirmation

Hayley Wong

South China Morning Post, March 6, 2024

China is building its fourth aircraft carrier, a naval admiral and political supervisor has confirmed, adding that the going has been smooth on the technical front. The fresh update on China’s opaque

warship development programme came during annual legislative meetings in Beijing where People's Liberation Army (PLA) representatives make rare public appearances. Asked whether China's newest carrier would be nuclear-powered, PLA Navy political commissar Yuan Huazhi said this "will soon be announced", according to a video interview posted by Hong Kong Commercial Daily on social media platform Weibo.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/military/article/3254415/chinas-aircraft-carrier-no-4-track-no-technical-bottleneck-admiral-reveals-first-official>

Accelerating development of industrial systems is highest priority for AI industry in China: top political advisor

Guo Yuandan and Leng Shumei

Global Times, March 7, 2024

"The highest priority for the development of artificial intelligence (AI) technologies in China is not to create explosive applications, but to accelerate the development of industrial systems and the real economy," said Xiao Xinguang, a member of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference and chief software architect from Chinese cybersecurity company Antiy. With the emergence of ChatGPT and Sora, the AI industry is accelerating its development, and human society is accelerating into the era of AI civilization. At the same time, the potential problems and uncertainties related to it may bring negative impacts and challenges to humanity. The security issues arising from it have also been put on the agenda.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202403/1308424.shtml>

China raises defence budget by 7.2% for 2024, 'conducive to peace, stability'

Liu Xuanzun

China Military Online, March 7, 2024

China announced a defence budget draft for 2024 worth 1.66554 trillion yuan (\$231.36 billion), an increase of 7.2 percent from the previous year. The moderate figure reflects China's reasonable, restrained and steady steps in national defence development, which takes factors including military modernization, external security environments and economic development into account, experts said. The proposed defence budget was released in a draft budget report issued at the opening of the second session of the 14th National People's Congress (NPC), the country's top legislature.

http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/OPINIONS_209196/Opinions_209197/16291656.html

The China-North Korea Relationship

Clara Fong and Eleanor Albert

Council on Foreign Relations, March 7, 2024

China is North Korea's most important aid and trade partner. The two countries also share a mutual defence treaty, which they renewed in 2021. China's previous support for UN sanctions against North Korea caused a rift in the relationship. but Beijing and Pyongyang have made efforts to forge closer ties amid rising U.S.-China competition. China has kept a distance as North Korea supports Russia's war in Ukraine and improves its military cooperation with Moscow, but Beijing continues to prioritize regional stability.

<https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/china-north-korea-relationship>

Application of China's space-borne infrastructure increasingly capable of serving domestic and overseas users: CASC

Deng Xiaoci

Global Times, March 7, 2024

China's space-borne infrastructure based on technologies including satellite communication, satellite remote sensing and satellite navigation further developed into a rather complete application system in 2023, significantly supporting national strategies of building the country into a cyberspace, maritime, agricultural, transport and cultural power, the China Aerospace Science and Technology Corp (CASC), a state-owned conglomerate and the nation's leading space contractor, said. According to the CASC statement, China Satellite Communications, a CASC subsidiary, continued to increase its construction of high-throughput satellite aviation internet access capabilities in 2023.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202403/1308408.shtml>

Wang Yi: All People of Chinese Descent Should Jointly Oppose “Taiwan Independence” and Support Peaceful Reunification

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the People's Republic of China, March 7, 2024

On March 7, 2024, Member of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee and Foreign Minister Wang Yi stated China's position on the Taiwan question when he met the press during the NPC and CPPCC sessions. Wang Yi said the elections in Taiwan are just local elections in one part of China. The result does not change, even in the slightest terms, the basic fact that Taiwan is part of China. Nor does it change the historical trend of Taiwan's return to the motherland. Since the elections ended, more than 180 countries and international organizations

have reaffirmed their commitment to the one-China principle and their support for China in safeguarding its sovereignty and territorial integrity.

https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/zxxx_662805/202403/t20240308_11256422.html

Washington pushes allies to tighten China chipmaking restrictions

Christian Davies, Qianer Liu, Kana Inagaki and Andy Bounds

Financial Times, March 7, 2024

The US is pushing Japan and the Netherlands to tighten restrictions on exports of chipmaking equipment to China, following a series of advances by blacklisted Chinese tech companies Huawei and SMIC. Washington imposed unilateral export controls in October 2022 in an effort to slow Chinese efforts to build or obtain high-performance semiconductors that can be used for military purposes. But despite the controls, Chinese mobile phone maker Huawei and Shanghai-based Semiconductor Manufacturing International Corporation — both of which are on a US trade blacklist — revealed in August they had produced an advanced chip used in Huawei's Mate 60 series phone.

<https://www.ft.com/content/a437c103-9544-4cfe-86f5-25c65f7f347c>

Habitual smearing of defence budget intended to make China the fall guy

China Daily, March 7, 2024

As has become the norm in recent years, as soon as it was announced, China's proposed defence budget triggered a furore from some Western media, alleging a lack of transparency. The Associated Press, for example, has claimed that China's actions are fuelling a regional arms race and its military spending is "furthering growth in high-tech military technologies, from stealth fighters to aircraft carriers and a growing arsenal of nuclear weapons", and that the official spending figure "is considered only a fraction" of the country's spending "once spending on research and development and foreign weapons purchases are considered".

<https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202403/07/WS65e90443a31082fc043bb140.html>

International cooperation boosts China's competitiveness in controlled nuclear fusion: political advisor

Fan Wei and Leng Shumei

Global Times, March 7, 2024

China is playing an increasingly important role in the International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor (ITER) project and it is due to the long-term attention and support of the country's industry

and government to controlled nuclear fusion research, Duan Xuru, a senior expert on fusion who is also a member of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, told the Global Times. Especially through participation in the ITER project, the world's largest "artificial sun," the level of China's research in controlled nuclear fusion has been greatly improved, and the technological level has caught up and even surpassed those of other countries in some areas, said Duan, chief expert on fusion of the China National Nuclear Corp (CNNC).

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202403/1308439.shtml>

China's views on the US elections

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the People's Republic of China, March 8, 2024

No matter who becomes the US president, China's position on China-US relations is consistent. China always handles China-US relations in accordance with the three principles of mutual respect, peaceful coexistence and win-win cooperation proposed by President Xi Jinping. We are happy to see a confident and open US enjoying prosperity and believe that the US should also welcome a prosperous China enjoying peace and stability. China and the US can help each other succeed and achieve development together. China has always believed that China-US relations should not be a zero-sum game where one side out-competes or thrives at the expense of the other.

https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/xwfw_665399/s2510_665401/2511_665403/202403/t20240308_11256513.html

Military urged to strengthen innovation

Zhao Lei

China Daily, March 8, 2024

President Xi Jinping said that China's military should improve its strategic capabilities in emerging spheres, during a meeting with lawmakers from the nation's armed forces. Xi, who is also general secretary of the Communist Party of China Central Committee and chairman of the Central Military Commission, told national legislators from the People's Liberation Army and the People's Armed Police Force that strategic capabilities in emerging spheres — new frontiers originating from innovation and applications of science and technology — are closely related to the country's socioeconomic development, national security and military power, and are of great significance to modernization efforts and national rejuvenation.

<https://www.chinadailyhk.com/article/380041>

Does China need a space data bureau to support its ever-growing satellite networks?

Zhang Tong and Kinling Lo

South China Morning Post, March 8, 2024

A national satellite data management agency should be established to coordinate the information being gathered by the ever-growing number of Chinese satellites in orbit, according to a leader in China's aerospace sector. Zhao Xiaojin, Communist Party secretary of the China Academy of Space Technology under the China Aerospace Science and Technology Corporation (CASC), said a dedicated data bureau could support the burgeoning aerospace sector in China and prevent collected information being wasted. The Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) member made the comments on the sidelines of the conference.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/science/article/3254601/does-china-need-space-data-bureau-support-its-ever-growing-satellite-networks>

Philippines strikes security deals as tensions rise with China at sea

Regine Cabato

The Washington Post, March 9, 2024

The Philippines has been striking new defence agreements with other countries at a rapid clip, seeking to build what officials here call a "network of alliances" that could deter Chinese aggression in disputed waters. The Philippines has signed or entered discussions over new security agreements with at least 18 countries since a Chinese coast guard vessel flashed a military-grade laser at a Philippine coast guard ship in the South China Sea last year, according to the Philippine Defence Department. While the deepening Philippine alliance with the United States — which includes granting the U.S. military expanded access to Philippine military bases — has drawn much attention, Manila's security campaign goes beyond Washington.

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2024/03/09/philippines-south-china-sea-security/>

China's 2022 wastewater tritium level higher than Fukushima's

Nikkei Asia, March 9, 2024

Chinese nuclear power plants released wastewater containing tritium in 2022 at levels up to nine times higher than the amount expected to be found in the planned annual discharge from Japan's crippled Fukushima Daiichi complex, a public document showed. China has criticized Japan for releasing "nuclear-contaminated water" into the Pacific Ocean from the Fukushima power plant

while imposing a blanket import ban on all seafood products from the neighboring country since the start of the discharge in August 2023. The amount of tritium contained in the wastewater at 15 locations greatly surpassed the maximum annual limit of 22 trillion becquerels set for the treated water planned to be released from the Fukushima power plant, the yearbook said, noting that the Qinshan plant, for one, discharged around 202 trillion becquerels of tritium in 2022.

<https://asia.nikkei.com/Business/Energy/China-s-2022-wastewater-tritium-level-higher-than-Fukushima-s>

Exploring China Opportunities: China Space Station empowers aerospace industry of over \$100 billion

CGTN, March 10, 2024

China has made significant strides in space exploration over the past two decades, from launching its first manned mission in 2003 with taikonaut Yang Liwei to the landmark completion of the construction of the China Space Station (CSS) in 2022. The CSS, which involves 14 major systems, is co-constructed by over a thousand domestic companies, empowering an industrial chain of over 1 trillion yuan (about \$139 billion). Zhou Jianping, chief designer of the China Manned Space Program, said the CSS, which consists of five parts: the Tianhe core module, the Wentian lab module, the Mengtian lab module, the Shenzhou manned spacecraft and the Tianzhou cargo spacecraft, is expected to surpass the International Space Station in terms of information, energy, power technology and operating cost-effectiveness.

<https://news.cgtn.com/news/2024-03-10/China-Space-Station-empowers-aerospace-industry-of-over-100-billion-1rR6okPcgXC/p.html>

Chinese military aims to boost strategic capabilities in emerging areas such as AI, unmanned tech

Liu Xuanzun

Global Times, March 10, 2024

The Chinese military has vowed to implement President Xi Jinping's call to enhance strategic capabilities in emerging areas, with military lawmakers and experts stressing the importance of new quality productive forces including artificial intelligence (AI), unmanned technologies, aerospace and cyberspace in modern warfare. Xi, also general secretary of the Communist Party of China Central Committee and chairman of the Central Military Commission, called on China's armed forces to forge a stronger sense of mission, deepen reform and promote innovation to comprehensively enhance strategic capabilities in emerging areas.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202403/1308558.shtml>

Sylloge on China is compiled by Mr. Niranjan C. Oak

Nuclear and Arms Control Centre, MP-IDSA