

February 20, 2025

SYLLOGE ON CHINA

Focus: Nuclear, Space, Missiles and other Security Issues

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



China tightens rules on publishing information about the military online

Hayley Wong

South China Morning Post, February 10, 2025

China has announced new rules limiting what information can be shared about the military. Beijing said the rules were designed to protect defence sources and the People's Liberation Army's public image, but they may mean it will be harder to monitor the development and evolution of China's military. From March 1 "online military information providers" will be banned from "producing, copying, publishing, or disseminating" previously undisclosed information, including details of weapon systems and military facilities.

https://www.scmp.com/news/china/military/article/3298106/china-tightens-rules-publishing-information-about-military-online?module=top_story&pgtype=subsection

China's space station to welcome more commercial spaceflights in 2025 including cargo crafts and launch vehicles

Fan Anqi

Global Times, February 11, 2025

As China's aerospace industry achieved a record-breaking 68 rocket launches in the past year, the country has promised even greater excitement in 2025, including the debuts of a series of commercial spacecrafts, such as the Haoloong space cargo shuttle, Qingzhou cargo spacecraft, launched aboard their respective carriers, the Zhuque-3 and Lijian-2 rockets. This year, China's Tiangong space station is expected to welcome two more crews of Shenzhou-20 and Shenzhou-21, along with the Tianzhou-9 cargo spacecraft. The two crewed missions may be undertaken by China's fourth batch of taikonauts, which includes payload specialists from Hong Kong and Macao special administrative regions, China Central Television reported.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202502/1328259.shtml>

China's stratospheric airship can detect American F-35 fighter from nearly 2,000km: study

Stephen Chen

South China Morning Post, February 11, 2025

A stratospheric airship equipped with advanced infrared detection systems could identify stealth aircraft – such as the US-made F-35 fighter jet – from nearly 2,000km (1,240 miles), according to

Chinese scientists. The findings suggest a potential vulnerability in America's fifth-generation stealth technology and mark a significant leap in China's pursuit of anti-access/area denial capabilities.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/science/article/3298181/chinas-stratospheric-airship-can-detect-american-f-35-fighters-1800km-study>

Chinese Foreign Ministry on the 31st China-ASEAN Senior Officials' Consultation

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the People's Republic of China, February 11, 2025

As agreed between the two sides, the 31st China-ASEAN Senior Officials' Consultation will be held from February 12 to 14 in Ningbo, Zhejiang Province. China's Vice Foreign Minister Sun Weidong will lead the delegation to the consultation and co-chair it with Dato' Sri Amran Mohamed Zin, ASEAN SOM Leader of Malaysia, country coordinator for ASEAN-China Dialogue Relations and rotating chair of ASEAN for 2025. The China-ASEAN Senior Officials' Consultation is an important annual mechanism of dialogue and cooperation between the foreign affairs departments of China and ASEAN countries.

https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/xw/fyrbt/lxjzh/202502/t20250211_11552999.html

China's Long March 8A carrier rocket makes successful debut

Zhao Lei

China Daily, February 12, 2025

China conducted the debut flight of its Long March 8A carrier rocket, transporting a group of satellites to space, according to China Aerospace Science and Technology Corp. The launch marked the 559th flight mission of the Long March carrier rocket series. After the mission, Long March 8A has become the 18th operating member in the Long March family, the pillar of China's space programs. The model is mainly tasked with deploying satellites to sun-synchronous orbits, and is capable of transporting payloads weighing as much as 7 tons to a typical sun-synchronous orbit with an altitude of 700 kilometers.

<https://www.chinadailyhk.com/hk/article/604319>

How Trump's air force picks signal blast-off in the US-China military space race

Hayley Wong

South China Morning Post, February 12, 2025

Competition in space between the US and China could be about to intensify, with US President Donald Trump's picks to lead the United States Air Force notable for their strong backgrounds in the field, according to analysts. Trump has nominated space and air force veteran Troy Meink for the post of secretary, with Matthew Lohmeier, former commander of the space force – which is overseen by the airborne service – expected to serve as deputy. Experts say the appointments will add to the already-tense US-China military competition in space. Both men have said space should be prioritised, a position also held by Frank Kendall, who was air force secretary in the Joe Biden administration.

https://www.scmp.com/news/china/military/article/3298178/how-trumps-air-force-picks-signal-blast-us-china-military-space-race?module=top_story&pgtype=subsection

Chinese Foreign Ministry on the Typhon missile system in the Philippines

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the People's Republic of China, February 12, 2025

Regarding the U.S. deployment of Mid-Range Capability (MRC) missile system in the Philippines, China has made clear the grave harm of such deployment and stated our firm opposition to it on multiple occasions. On this issue, the Philippines has gone back on its words again and again. The Philippines has explained itself multiple times regarding the introduction of the Typhon system, pledging that the deployment was “temporary,” and that the system will be shipped out of the country after relevant military exercises. However, it has breached such commitments, claiming they would acquire its own midrange system and field these deterrent capabilities, and linking the South China Sea issue with the Typhon system. This is not only ridiculous but also extremely dangerous.

https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/xw/fyrbt/lxjzh/202502/t20250212_11553791.html

US think tank report urges setting up space hotline with China

Deng Xiaoci

Global Times, February 12, 2025

US think tank Council on Foreign Relations (CFR) has released a new report, urging Trump administration and US Congress to adopt a comprehensive strategy to maintain the country's

leadership in space, while recommending the establishment of a direct communication hotline with China to reduce the risk of miscalculation in orbit. According to the Spacenews.com, the report titled "Securing Space: A Plan for US Action" was released on US local time Tuesday, and it highlights so-called "mounting threats, including anti-satellite weapons, the proliferation of space debris, and growing competition from China."

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202502/1328326.shtml>

Manila relying on 'transparency initiative' to offset Beijing's moves in South China Sea

Mark Magnier

South China Morning Post, February 12, 2025

Crew members assigned to the Philippine Coast Guard vessel BRP Sindangan say they knew their mission would involve facing off against huge, numerous, intimidating Chinese vessels in the contested waters of the South China Sea. But that did not fully prepare them for the reality. The 44-metre (144-foot) Sindangan is on the front lines of Manila's "transparency initiative", one the nation's 62 coastguard patrol and 90 naval warfare vessels engaged in the showdown between the Philippines and China over sovereignty. Beijing has an arsenal of some 142 coastguard and 370 naval ships to draw on.

https://www.scmp.com/news/china/diplomacy/article/3298395/manila-relying-transparency-initiative-offset-beijings-moves-south-china-sea?module=top_story&pgtype=subsection

Industries manager under corruption probe

Zhao Lei

China Daily, February 12, 2025

Liu Weidong, deputy general manager at China South Industries Group Corp, has been placed under a corruption probe for alleged serious violations of disciplinary regulations and national laws. His case is now being investigated by the Central Commission for Discipline Inspection of the Communist Party of China and the National Commission of Supervision, according to a brief news release published by the top anti-corruption authorities. He has become the latest executive in China's defence industry to be investigated for alleged violations of regulations and laws.

<https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202502/12/WS67ac8e49a310a2ab06eabdc8.html>

Chinese Foreign Ministry on Chinese fighter jet's of unsafe conduct in the South China Sea

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the People's Republic of China, February 13, 2025

The Australian military airplane deliberately intruded into China's airspace over Xisha Qundao without China's permission. Such move violated China's sovereignty and undermined China's national security. The Chinese side took legitimate, lawful, professional and restrained measures to expel the airplane. China has lodged serious protests with Australia and urged it to stop infringing on China's sovereignty and making provocations and stop disrupting peace and stability in the South China Sea.

https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/xw/fyrbt/lxjzh/202502/t20250213_11554506.html

Philippines to bolster defence with subs and BrahMos missiles. Can it sustain this arsenal?

Jeoffrey Maitem

South China Morning Post, February 13, 2025

Manila's plan to acquire submarines and additional missiles to counter Beijing's military might in the South China Sea has been praised by observers as a strategic long-term measure, despite the high costs and questions about the country's readiness to maintain such technology. One analyst said the move was long overdue, since the Philippines discovered last year that its rival had used drones in mapping out the seabed in the disputed waters.

<https://www.scmp.com/week-asia/politics/article/3298573/philippines-bolster-defence-subs-and-brahmos-missiles-can-it-sustain-arsenal>

China steps up planetary defence efforts amid asteroid impact concerns

Fan Anqi

Global Times, February 13, 2025

Recent reports of a potential asteroid impact have sparked widespread concern on Chinese social media, with many voicing safety worries. Amid the discussions, public attention has turned to China's recruitment of planetary defence experts. Media reported that Shan Zhongde, head of the China National Space Administration (CNSA), visited the Earth Observation and Data Center - a move expert says highlights China's growing focus on this critical field. "The visit by

the CNSA head to the Earth Observation and Data Center, along with the recent recruitment of talents in this field, indicates that China has placed heightened attention on asteroid impact monitoring," Kang Guohua, a senior member of the Chinese Society of Astronautics and professor of Aerospace Engineering at Nanjing University of Aeronautics and Astronautics, told the Global Times.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202502/1328387.shtml>

Beijing approves construction of first South China Sea deepwater ‘space station’

Stephen Chen

South China Morning Post, February 13, 2025

After years of debate and technical reviews, China has given the green light to a deep-sea research facility that could redefine marine exploration, while amplifying Beijing’s geopolitical leverage in one of the world’s most resource-rich areas. The “cold seep” ecosystem research facility will be anchored 2,000 metres (6,560 feet) below the surface of the strategically significant South China Sea, which is also subject to a number of competing territorial claims.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/science/article/3298328/beijing-approves-construction-first-south-china-sea-deepwater-space-station>

Chinese Foreign Ministry on Wang Yi’s visit to the UK

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the People’s Republic of China, February 14, 2025

From February 12 to 13, at the invitation of U.K. Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs David Lammy, Member of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee and Minister of Foreign Affairs Wang Yi visited the U.K. and held the 10th China-U.K. Strategic Dialogue with the Secretary. He also met with U.K. Prime Minister Keir Starmer and Prime Minister’s National Security Adviser Jonathan Powell. The visit was a great success and achieved positive outcomes. The visit is an important move of implementing the common understandings between leaders of the two countries.

https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/xw/fyrbt/lxjzh/202502/t20250214_11555376.html

US Intelligence Community needs upgrade to stop Beijing forcibly taking Taiwan: report

Enoch Wong

South China Morning Post, February 14, 2025

A Washington-based think tank has proposed a major overhaul of the US Intelligence Community's early-warning abilities to deter the People's Liberation Army from forcibly taking Taiwan. The proposal written by Scott Berrier, a retired US Army lieutenant-general, and published by the Atlantic Council, calls for a real-time, integrated intelligence system that spans all domains – space, cyber, air, sea and land. “The side that sees first decides first, and the one that acts first will have the advantage,” Berrier said in the brief, stressing the need for speed and integration in modern warfare.

https://www.scmp.com/news/china/military/article/3298717/us-intelligence-community-needs-upgrade-stop-beijing-forcibly-taking-taiwan-report?module=top_story&pgtype=subsection

China military exercises near Taiwan could be used to conceal attack, US says

Demetri Sevastopulo

Financial Times, February 14, 2025

China's military exercises around Taiwan have become so extensive that they could soon be used as a “fig leaf” to conceal an attack on the island, according to the top US military commander in the Indo-Pacific. Speaking at the Honolulu Defence Forum, US Navy Admiral Samuel Paparo also warned about rising co-operation between China, Russia and North Korea, describing it as an “emerging axis of autocracy”. “China, Russia and North Korea have formed a triangle of troublemakers,” Paparo told the event sponsored by the Pacific Forum think-tank.

<https://www.ft.com/content/3a31c037-f74c-4e33-9720-0fdc32f5133b>

Philippines brings in Typhon to hold a candle to the devil, play the jackal to the tiger: Chinese defence ministry

China Military Online, February 14, 2025

The Chinese side has made clear multiple times our firm opposition against the US deployment of the mid-range missile system in the Philippines. The Typhon missile system is a strategic asset and an offensive weapon. The Philippine side has repeatedly gone back on its words and brought in the system to cater to the US side. Such decision would only place its national security and

defence in the hands of others, and lead to geopolitical confrontation and risks of arms race in the region. It's like holding a candle to the devil and playing the jackal to the tiger.

<http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/VOICES/16370201.html>

Chinese Foreign Ministry on Trump's remarks about military sales to India

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the People's Republic of China, February 14, 2025

No one should make China an issue in the relations and cooperation between countries, or seek to instigate bloc politics and confrontation. The Asia-Pacific is a stellar example of peace and development, not an arena for geopolitical games. Ganging up to form exclusive groupings and engaging in bloc politics and confrontation will not bring about security, and will by no means keep the Asia-Pacific and the whole world peaceful and stable. China believes that relations and cooperation between countries should not target any third party or harm others' interests, and should be conducive to regional peace, stability and prosperity.

https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/xw/fyrbt/lxjzh/202502/t20250214_11555376.html

China-Africa space co-op shows tech's multipolarisation, democratization trends

People's Daily Online, February 14, 2025

In recent years, cooperation between China and Africa in the space field has deepened. However, some Western media outlets have tried to distort the nature of this cooperation. Reuters reported that China is "building space alliances in Africa to enhance its global surveillance network and advance its bid to become the world's dominant space power." The article also cited remarks from the Pentagon, claiming that China's space projects in Africa and other parts of the developing world are a "security risk."

<http://en.people.cn/n3/2025/0214/c90000-20276761.html>

Chinese Defence Ministry on PLA Navy's task group visit to Pakistan to attend the multinational maritime exercise AMAN 2025

China Military Online, February 14, 2025

At the invitation of the Pakistani military, a PLAN task group comprising of the guided-missile destroyer PLAN Baotou and the comprehensive supply ship PLAN Gaoyouhu participated in

the multinational maritime exercise AMAN 2025 from February 6 to 11. During the onshore phase of the exercise, the task group and other participating naval forces held planning conferences, professional exchanges and open ship events. During the maritime phase, drills were conducted on joint counter-piracy operations, search and rescue and air defence.

<http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/VOICES/16370201.html>

FM responds to Trump's proposal to meet with Chinese, Russian leaders to discuss reducing nuclear weapons, cutting defence spending

Global Times, February 14, 2025

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Guo Jiakun responded to reports that US President Donald Trump said that he wants to meet with Chinese, Russian leaders to discuss reducing nuclear weapons and cutting defence spending. According to AP, Trump said that he wants to restart nuclear arms control talks with Russia and China and that eventually he hopes all three countries could agree to cut their massive defence budgets in half. Guo said that it is widely recognized around the world that the US and Russia possess over 90 percent of the world's nuclear weapons, and the nuclear disarmament must adhere to fundamental principles such as maintaining global strategic stability and ensuring that the security of all countries is not compromised.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202502/1328451.shtml>

MI5 investigates use of Chinese green technology in UK

Jim Pickard, Rachel Millard, Simeon Kerr, Lucy Fisher and John Paul Rathbone

Financial Times, February 15, 2025

Britain's security services are taking part in a review into China's growing role in the UK's energy system amid concerns over Beijing's influence in strategic national infrastructure. MI5 is helping establish the extent to which the use of Chinese technology such as solar panels or industrial batteries could pose potential future security threats, according to people close to the situation. Concern over Chinese companies' dominance of international supply chains for technologies crucial to decarbonisation is growing as the UK tries to shift away from fossil fuels.

<https://www.ft.com/content/534eef36-d9ad-4a03-afa1-f87ab03a9b18>

China, Cook Islands sign strategic partnership pact

William Yang

Voice of America, February 15, 2025

China and the Cook Islands signed a comprehensive strategic partnership agreement, but the lack of transparency around the details has alarmed New Zealand, the South Pacific state's closest democratically. While details of the agreement remain unclear, public statements from Cook Islands Prime Minister Mark Brown and the islands' Seabed Minerals Authority signaled that the Cook Islands and China would look to deepen cooperation in areas such as deep-sea mining, infrastructure enhancement, climate resilience, and economic cooperation.

<https://www.voanews.com/a/china-cook-islands-sign-strategic-partnership-pact/7976033.html>

The US must play to its strengths to compete with China in Latin America

Robert Mosbacher Jr

Financial Times, February 16, 2025

Although the first priority of the Trump administration when it comes to Latin America is stemming the flow of illegal immigrants and narcotics into the US, it is essential that a simultaneous initiative be undertaken to slow the expansion of Chinese economic influence and investment in the region. Under the cover of the Belt and Road Initiative, a multibillion-dollar global infrastructure development programme, China has made huge gains in access to critical minerals, power development and transportation infrastructure, while the US has been largely absent.

<https://www.ft.com/content/a37f6206-a479-4c61-a2e7-fe9a3b94a1b9>

China to deepen cooperation with France in various fields: FM

Xinhua, February 16, 2025

China is ready to work with France, guided by the important consensus reached by their heads of state, to continuously advance cooperation in diverse fields, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi said. Wang, also a member of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China Central Committee, made the remarks during a meeting with his French counterpart Jean-Noel Barrot after attending the Munich Security Conference. Chinese President Xi Jinping's milestone visit to France last year, marking the 60th anniversary of bilateral diplomatic ties, has opened a new chapter in China-France relations, Wang said.

<https://english.news.cn/europe/20250216/4ccde6e95363408999d8f3c8ce7623fd/c.html>

China tightens grip on tech, minerals and engineers as trade war spirals

Ryan McMorrow, Christian Davies, Kathrin Hille, John Reed and Zijing Wu

Financial Times, February 16, 2025

Beijing is tightening its grip on cutting-edge Chinese technology, aiming to keep critical knowhow within its borders as trade tensions with the US and Europe escalate. Chinese authorities in recent months have made it more difficult for some engineers and equipment to leave the country, proposed new export controls to retain key battery technologies, and moved to restrict technologies for processing critical minerals, according to multiple industry figures and ministry notices.

<https://www.ft.com/content/d48e9a90-ba6a-42bb-9da7-58db89643f86>

China's leader embraces business, even Jack Ma. But will it be enough?

Alexandra Stevenson

The New York Times, February 17, 2025

When Beijing sidelined Jack Ma, China's most prominent entrepreneur, by slamming the brakes on his business in 2020, it sent an unmistakable message that no company was above the Chinese Communist Party. But now, Mr. Xi met with corporate chieftains, including Mr. Ma, who has largely kept out of the public eye for the past four years, in a show of support at an economically precarious time. It was the first gathering between Mr. Xi and corporate leaders since President Trump targeted China in a series of tariffs, adding to a growing list of threats to China's economy, on top a property crisis, falling prices and fragile consumer sentiment.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2025/02/17/business/china-xi-jinping-jack-ma.html>

Is China's military really built for war? New report questions Beijing's arms buildup

Brad Lendon

CNN, February 17, 2025

China is not ready for war, according to a contentious report from a US think tank, which claims the main motivation for the ruling Communist Party's expansive push for military modernization is to retain its grip on power – not fight an overseas foe. Beijing has pursued a head-turning military buildup under Chinese leader Xi Jinping, during which the People's Liberation Army (PLA) – previously not even one of the strongest in Asia – has started to rival, or in some categories surpass, the US military in analysts' estimations.

<https://amp.cnn.com/cnn/2025/02/16/china/china-military-readiness-rand-report-intl-hnk-ml>

FM, Taiwan Affairs Office respond to US dropping wording of ‘not supporting Taiwan independence’

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the People’s Republic of China, February 17, 2025

here is but one China in the world, Taiwan is part of China and the government of the People’s Republic of China is the sole legal government representing the whole of China. It is a prevailing international consensus and basic norm governing international relations, and also a solemn commitment the U.S. has made in the three China-U.S. joint communiqués. History cannot be tampered with, facts cannot be denied, and truth cannot be distorted. U.S. State Department updated its fact sheet on relations with Taiwan and gravely backpedaled on its position on Taiwan-related issues.

https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/xw/fyrbt/lxjzh/202502/t20250217_11556446.html

Chinese Foreign Ministry on China-Cook Island relationship

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the People’s Republic of China, February 17, 2025

On the afternoon of February 14, Premier Li Qiang met with Prime Minister Mark Brown of the Cook Islands. During the meeting, the two sides spoke highly of the relationship between China and the Cook Islands, reaffirmed principles guiding the two countries’ interactions, and discussed the prospect of future cooperation. After the meeting, they witnessed the signing of multiple bilateral cooperation documents, including the Action Plan for Comprehensive Strategic Partnership 2025-2030. The Action Plan will provide a road map for the two countries’ cooperation in the economic, environmental, cultural and social fields, among others, and will help the two sides achieve more results in friendly exchanges and practical cooperation in various areas for the benefit of the two peoples.

https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/xw/fyrbt/lxjzh/202502/t20250217_11556446.html

Opposing the ‘one China’ policy

Michael Lin

Taipei Times, February 17, 2025

24 Republican representatives in the US Congress proposed a resolution calling for US President Donald Trump’s administration to abandon the US’ “one China” policy, calling it outdated, counterproductive and not reflective of reality, and to restore official diplomatic relations with Taiwan, enter bilateral free-trade agreement negotiations and support its entry into international organizations. That is an exciting and inspiring development. To help the US government and

other nations further understand that Taiwan is not a part of China, that those “one China” policies are contrary to the fact that the two countries across the Taiwan Strait are independent and do not share the same political system, and that Taiwan is a sovereign country, the government should bolster international campaigns and use powerful arguments to refute Beijing’s fictitious “one China” principle.

<https://www.taipeitimes.com/News/editorials/archives/2025/02/17/2003831993>

China’s FC-31 stealth fighter, J-10CE aircraft, Taihang engine displayed at UAE defence expo

Liu Xuanzun

Global Times, February 18, 2025

Some of China's top aviation equipment, including the FC-31 stealth fighter jet, the J-10CE fighter jet and the Taihang turbofan engine, are on display at an ongoing defence expo in the UAE, with a Chinese expert seeing good export potential in the Middle Eastern market. Representing the Aviation Industry Corporation of China (AVIC), China National Aero-Technology Import & Export Corporation (CATIC) showcased a diverse range of aviation equipment, including fighter jets, drones, transport aircraft, helicopters, trainer aircraft, anti-drone equipment and aero engines at the 17th International Defence Exhibition and Conference. Among the products are the FC-31 fighter jet, the J-10CE fighter jet, the Y-20 transport aircraft, the Y-9E transport aircraft and the L15 advanced trainer aircraft, AVIC said.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202502/1328641.shtml>

Chinese Foreign Ministry on the China-U.S. competition in Latin America

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the People’s Republic of China, February 18, 2025

In economic, trade and investment cooperation with Latin America, China never seeks so-called geopolitical competition or resorts to the tricks of carving out spheres of influence. Win-win cooperation is the hallmark of China’s relations with Latin America. Both from the Global South, China and Latin America have many similar positions and a lot to offer each other. We are natural partners for cooperation. Cooperation between China and Latin America features extensive consultation and joint contribution for shared benefit, respects Latin America’s aspiration, meets its needs, gives a boost to its development and is well received by Latin American people.

https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/xw/fyrbt/lxjzh/202502/t20250218_11558214.html

DPP authorities reportedly mull arms purchase from US

Wang Qi and Liu Xuanzun

Global Times, February 18, 2025

Taiwan authorities are considering an arms purchase package worth billions of dollars from the US, according to a Reuters report, which Chinese mainland experts regard as a proactive move of the island authorities aimed at currying favor with the Trump administration in terms of both easing tariff pressure and attempts to "resist reunification by force." However, in the face of firm resolution and strong capability of the Chinese mainland to achieve reunification, any more arms purchases are nothing but self-consolation to the island, experts said.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202502/1328672.shtml>

Chinese aircraft and Philippine plane in close encounter over Scarborough Shoal

Holly Chik

South China Morning Post, February 18, 2025

The Chinese military said it expelled a Philippine plane from airspace over Scarborough Shoal in a manoeuvre that the Philippine coastguard described as reckless. The People's Liberation Army (PLA) said a C-208 light utility plane sent by the Philippines "illegally invaded the airspace" above the shoal, known in China as Huangyan Island and in the Philippines as Panatag Shoal or Bajo De Masinloc. "Our naval and air forces legally tracked, monitored and warned the aircraft to leave. The actions of the Philippines seriously violated China's sovereignty and relevant international laws and Chinese regulations," Tian Junli, spokesman for the PLA's Southern Theatre Command, said.

https://www.scmp.com/news/china/military/article/3299197/chinese-aircraft-and-philippine-plane-close-encounter-over-scarborough-shoal?module=top_story&pgtype=subsection

China opposes construction on illegally-occupied islands, reefs

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the People's Republic of China, February 19, 2025

In response to a question about Vietnam expanding Bai Jiao 10 times by land reclamation, dredging a 299-meter-wide waterway located at the western end of Bai Jiao wide enough to host large vessels including warships, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Guo Jiakun said Nansha

Qundao has always been part of China's territory. Bai Jiao is part of Nansha Qundao. China opposes relevant countries' construction activities on islands and reefs they have illegally occupied.

https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/xw/fyrbt/lxjzh/202502/t20250219_11558920.html

Chinese warships sail within 150 nautical miles of Sydney

Demetri Sevastopulo and Nic Fildes

Financial Times, February 19, 2025

The Australian navy is shadowing Chinese warships 150 nautical miles east of Sydney, the furthest China's navy has sailed down the eastern Australian coast. Two Australian ships are following a Chinese naval task group — comprising two warships and a supply vessel — that appeared off the north-east coast of Australia a week ago, according to people familiar with the situation. One person said it was “unprecedented” for the Chinese navy to sail so far down Australia's east coast and stressed that Beijing was normalising its projection of power beyond the first Pacific island chain, which stretches from Japan to Indonesia, and the second island chain, which runs from Japan through Guam to Micronesia.

<https://www.ft.com/content/fda734fc-6023-4ad9-b3ae-33234ee40505>

South China Sea: Beijing resources ministry gauges depth of new Vietnamese port on reef

Stephen Chen

South China Morning Post, February 19, 2025

Vietnam has dramatically expanded its presence on Barque Canada Reef through a three-year land-reclamation project enabling large warships to sail into the harbour, according to a study by China's Ministry of Natural Resources. The research combines laser measurements from Nasa's ICESat-2 satellite with optical data from the European Union's Sentinel-2 to map underwater changes with unprecedented precision. The team's peer-reviewed paper was published in the Chinese-language Journal of Tropical Oceanography on February 13.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/science/article/3299167/south-china-sea-beijing-resources-ministry-gauges-depth-new-vietnamese-port-reef>

Chinese scientists build world's most powerful spy camera

Stephen Chen

South China Morning Post, February 20, 2025

Chinese scientists have achieved a quantum leap in optical imaging technology with a powerful laser that could redefine global standards for surveillance, potentially allowing Beijing to scrutinise foreign military satellites with unparalleled precision or distinguish details as fine as a human face from low-Earth orbit. The team from the Chinese Academy of Sciences' Aerospace Information Research Institute captured images with millimetre-level resolution from distances exceeding 100km (62 miles), a feat previously deemed unattainable.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/science/article/3299346/chinese-scientists-build-worlds-most-powerful-spy-camera>

China's Tianwen-2 mission probe arrives at launch center, set for asteroid sample return mission in first half of year

Deng Xiaoci

Global Times, February 20, 2025

China's Tianwen-2 mission probe arrived at the Xichang Satellite Launch Center on February 20, according to the China National Space Administration (CNSA). The mission will carry out several tasks in a single launch, including a flyby of asteroid 2016 HO3, sample collection, return and main-belt comet 311P flyby exploration. The launch facility is currently in good condition, and preparations for pre-launch tests are proceeding according to schedule. The launch is planned in the first half of this year, Global Times learned from the CNSA.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202502/1328784.shtml>

PLA Air Force launches AI-powered biometric screening to recruit next top guns: report

Enoch Wong

South China Morning Post, February 20, 2025

China's air force has deployed AI-powered biometric tests to screen potential pilots as part of a rigorous hiring process, according to state media. State broadcaster CCTV reported that the People's Liberation Army Air Force had begun using artificial intelligence to assess the biological signals of pilot candidates to determine long-term health risks and human-machine adaptability.

The final stage of the pilot selection involves rigorous medical and psychological evaluations. More than 100 tests are conducted to assess a candidate's health prospects and their ability to adapt to technology.

https://www.scmp.com/news/china/military/article/3299429/pla-air-force-launches-ai-powered-biometric-screening-recruit-next-top-guns-report?module=top_story&pgtype=subsection

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