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CHINA

China-Russia Joint Coastguard Exercise

On 2 October, marking the 75th anniversary of the establishment of People's Republic of China (PRC) and also the 75th anniversary of China-Russia relations, the Chinese state media informed that a Chinese coast guard fleet conducted [joint patrol](#) with its [Russian counterpart](#) in the Arctic Sea for the first time. Following the exercise, the [Chinese Coast Guard \(CCG\)](#) in a press statement informed that the coast guard ship *Meishan*, participated in the joint patrols. Further, the exercise not only significantly expanded the CCG's operational range in the Arctic Ocean but also tested the vessel's capability to carry out missions in unfamiliar territorial waters and bolstered its participation in [maritime and regional governance](#). Notably, Chinese and Russian coast guards also conducted another joint-exercise termed '[Pacific Patrol 2024](#)' in the Peter the Great Gulf in the Primorsky Region of Russia. According to China's official media statement, the exercises were conducted in accordance to international law and was not targeted towards a specific country. As per the media statement, the exercises and the joint patrols with the Russian coast guards were termed to be significant for [deepening mutual trust and cooperation](#) between the coast guards of the two countries and for maintaining [security and stability](#) in the North Pacific Maritime area.

China's Joint-Sword 2024B Exercise

The People's Liberation Army (PLA) announced on 14 October that it had successfully conducted [blockade drills](#)

around Taiwan. The military exercise titled Joint-Sword 2024 B came four days after Taiwanese President Lai Ching-te's National Day address where he expressed resolve to defend Taiwan's sovereignty and resist attempts of annexation and encroachment. Reportedly the military exercise was launched with Chinese aircraft carrier *Liaoning* sailing to the strategic east of the island. Thereafter, troops from army, navy, air force and rocket force conducted land and sea strikes on the north, south and east of Taiwan and in the Taiwan Straits. In a detailed analysis, the Global Times, argued that the drills achieved "[multiple breakthroughs](#)". Besides the CCG vessels conducting law enforcement patrols in waters surrounding Taiwan, the PLA expanded the scope of "deterrence" by moving closer to the island, compared to previous exercises. Further, the PLA's naval and air forces along with the CCG, simulating a complete blockade, advanced towards Taiwan from multiple directions. Moreover, the drills blockaded key northern and southern ports of Taiwan that handle significant amount of Taipei's import of natural liquefied gas. The Chinese Ministry of Defense, stated in another statement that the Joint-Sword Exercise was not repetition of previous military drills but aimed to intensify pressure against Taiwan independence.

Dynamic Assessment of Chinese Militia

In mid-October, the Tibet Military Region (TMR) organized [PLA militia assessment](#) activity to hone the militia's support and guarantee capabilities in all aspects. This exercise followed strictly the new version of the "Militia Military Training Outline".

Each [military sub-district \(MSD\)](#) of the Tibet Military Region formed a team of militia to participate in the competition. More than 100 militia participated in the competition that also tested their theoretical knowledge, basic physical fitness and professional skills. It was organized by the central authority of the PLA, and the participating militia was evaluated on-site. The entire assessment process of the militia was recorded by the instructors. Contents of the assessment included ammunition handling, reverse parking, obstacle crossing, road clearance, and mechanical repairing.

JAPAN

Chinese Aircraft Carrier Sails through Japan's Contiguous Sea

Reportedly, on 18 September, China's aircraft carrier *Liaoning*, accompanied by two destroyers, [crossed](#) the contiguous zone just outside Japan's territorial waters. This marked the first time that such an intrusion into contiguous waters has been conducted by the People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN), and follows on from another first, the intrusion of a Chinese surveillance aircraft into Japanese airspace in late August. According to the Ministry of Defence in Tokyo, the *Liaoning* and its escort component transited a narrow strait that lies between Yonaguni and Iriomote, two of Japan's southwestern-most islands in the Okinawa Island chain. Yonaguni is located only 120 kilometres from Taiwan. The MoD reported that the ships navigated strictly through the contiguous seas and did not stray into territorial waters. In a press briefing, Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary

Hiroshi Moriya told reporters that Japan had conveyed its 'serious concerns' to the Chinese side and called such actions 'utterly unacceptable in terms of [Japan's] security environment'. However, the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs spokesperson Lin Jian dismissed Japanese concerns and claimed that the transit was 'in compliance with China's domestic and international laws'. China's Ministry of Defence also [dismissed](#) Japanese concerns as 'over-interpretation' and claimed that the *Liaoning* was on a so-called 'routine training mission' in the Pacific Ocean. Tokyo has stated that it will continue to monitor Chinese naval activity around the Senkaku islands and the Okinawa island chain.

TAIWAN

Taiwan Procures Missiles and Attack Drones

The outgoing Biden administration has [approved](#) a USD 1.98 billion arms sale to Taiwan. The approved arms sale is "the 17th and biggest" under the Biden administration and would include surface-to-air missiles and radar systems among other things. Further, Taiwan will [buy](#) 29 High Mobility Artillery Rocket Systems (HIMARS) for USD 1.01 billion. It is expected to receive 11 HIMARS systems by 2025 and balance 18 systems in 2026 on schedule. It originally planned to buy only 11 HIMARS and wanted to procure M109A6 "Paladin" self-propelled howitzers. However, later Taipei decided to buy 18 additional HIMARS in place of the howitzers. It is also buying 864 precision rockets for HIMARS. Besides, it has

ordered 84 Army Tactical Missile Systems (ATACMS). Additionally, Taiwan will [procure](#) up to 1,000 attack drones from the United States (US)'s AeroVironment and Anduril Industries for USD 360.2 million. The attack drones are to be delivered over next two years. Separately, it will also [buy](#) 720 Switchblade 300 attack drones and 291 ALTIUS 600M-V. Boosting its military modernisation, Taiwan has also [purchased](#) 1,700 TOW 2B missiles, 100 Improved Target Acquisition Systems (ITAS), and new Humvees paying USD 369.41 million. Out of 1,700 TOW 2B missiles, four hundred and sixty missiles have already been delivered to Taiwan. The rest of the missiles will be supplied the end of 2024. The TOW-2B is advanced version of the TOW-2A variant, which Taiwan presently uses.

THE KOREAN PENINSULA

South Korea-US Joint Exercise

Reportedly, South Korea has [agreed to buy](#) Warmate suicide drones from Poland. On 1 October, the air forces of South Korea and the US conducted [joint exercise](#). According to the US Indo-Pacific Command, two US B-1B bombers conducted a simulated close air support exercise with two F-15K jets from the South Korean Air Force at the Pilsung Range in Gangwon Province. Later, South Korea and the US also held [joint marine exercise](#) in the East Sea (Sea of Japan) from 2-3 October, which included participation of *ROKS Marado* and the *USS Boxer*. The naval drills were conducted 270 kilometers off Seoul, in waters off Pohang, to strengthen interoperability between the navies of South Korea and the US. In a

separate development Seoul has also agreed to increase its [contribution](#) by 8.3 per cent on maintenance of American troops in South Korea in 2026. Further, South Korea will also deploy its new [bunker busting](#) missile system which is named *Ure* and has a range of 180 kilometers.

North Korea Missile Test

North Korea [tested](#) “240 mm-caliber controllable multiple rocket launcher shells” on 8 October. It was also reported that the Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky has claimed that North Korea sent soldiers to [participate](#) in the Ukraine war to support Russia. In October, North Korea accused South Korea for [sending drones](#) carrying propaganda leaflets and Pyongyang ordered its military to shoot down any drone coming from South Korea. Further, on 31 October, North Korea [tested](#) an Intercontinental Ballistic Missile (ICBM).