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CHINA

PLA's Fujian Transits Taiwan Strait

A day after, Taiwan launched its five-day military exercise, the People's Liberation Army (PLA)'s most advanced aircraft carrier [Fujian Type 003](#) transited through the Taiwan Strait on 23 June. However, no aircraft was visible in the carrier according to the [surveillance photographs](#) released by Taiwan's Ministry of Defense. Reportedly, the carrier had first sailed through the strait last September in a trial run and later in December after being commissioned officially in the military. It is the world's [largest](#) non-nuclear powered ship and more advanced than China's two other carriers, that is, Shandong and Liaoning. Observers note that the Fujian's transit demonstrate a layered pressure tactic by China as well as Beijing's efforts to develop [three-carrier capability](#).

Ideological Training Camp for PLA Officers

Reportedly, a [10-week ideological training camp](#) for top PLA officials organised at the National Defense University concluded on 12 June. According to media reports, during the training programme, the military officials studied President Xi's speeches and confessions of other PLA officials charged with corruption. The programme was launched on 8 April with President Xi delivering a speech at the opening ceremony. In his address to the PLA officers he emphasised that "leading officers, especially senior cadres, must take the lead in ... building an atmosphere where people speak the truth, offer advice

candidly and fight against wrongdoings". The training course contained over 40 theoretical lectures, focused reading sessions and group discussions. Additionally, the officers were also given case studies of corrupt individuals to assess corruption risks and counter-measures.

PLA in Tibet conducts Live-Fire Assessment of Multiple Weapon Systems

In early June, a PLA Ground Force Unit in Tibet [stationed](#) at an altitude of over 4000 meters carried out live-fire drills that involved multiple weapon systems to test actual combat capabilities of soldiers in harsh and unfamiliar terrain. During the drill the participating soldiers were tested in their ability to use pistol-knives, automatic rifles along with overcoming challenges such as elevated heart rates, laboured breathing, and difficulty in steadying weapons caused by the extreme cold and low-oxygen environment. Among other difficult tasks was shooting of the target at the harsh plateau environment and low air pressure that causes ballistic trajectory deviations. At the same time, assessments for the sniper squad featuring 35mm sniper grenade launchers and multiple caliber sniper rifles were in full swing. During the firing process, the marksman had to analyse how high-altitude conditions affected shooting accuracy, continuously adjusting firing parameters to hit their targets. Overall, the drills were aimed to test and improve the soldiers' ability to use multi-weapon for live-fire combat and their adaptability to operational awareness in high-altitude conditions.

JAPAN

Japan-ROK Resume Joint Exercises

Japan's Maritime Self-Defence Forces (MSDF) [joined](#) the Republic of Korea Navy for a joint search-and-rescue (SAR) drill off the coast of Nagasaki Prefecture on 9 June. The exercise, originally envisaged in 1999 as a response to missile launches by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), was held after an interval of nine years. From the MSDF, the Aegis-class destroyer *Kongo* and a patrol helicopter participated in the exercise, with the ROK side dispatching a landing ship to take part. The exercise simulated an onboard fire at sea, with the patrol helicopter practicing landing on the ROK ship's deck to mount rescue operations. Admiral Akira Saito, Chief of Staff of the MSDF, praised the exercises' potential to 'boost defence cooperation and exchanges between Japan and (the ROK)'.

Japan's Participation in Kamandag Exercises

Elements of the Japanese Ground Self-Defence Forces (GSDF) [participated](#) in Exercise Kamandag, a multilateral drill jointly hosted by the United States (US) and the Philippines. In the ten years since the launch of the exercise, Japan engaged in combat-oriented drills for the first time in its nine years of participation, due in large part to the signing of a reciprocal access agreement (RAA) between it and the Philippines. The exercises included a free-fall jump drill involving paratroopers, which was held on Batan Island in the north

of the Philippines, located 200 kilometres from Taiwan on the other side of the Bashi Channel, as well as a drill simulating 'an amphibious and airborne seizure of an airfield on the Manila-controlled island of Thitu (in the Spratly chain of islands) off the Philippines' west'.

TAIWAN

Military Exercise in Taiwan

Taiwanese military [carried out](#) a five-day "Immediate Combat Readiness Exercise" to enhance preparedness for a swift response to "a full-scale military attack" by China. This particular exercise was launched in March 2025. The 2026 military drills were held in Northern Taiwan, in strategically important Qingpu in Taoyuan where several CM32, CM33 and CM34 "Clouded Leopard" eight-wheeled armoured vehicles and a military Field Information Communications System (FICS) vehicle were seen participating. Qingpu is critical for the defence of Greater Taipei area. Separately, Taiwan is [considering](#) to make army reservist training programme more rigorous. Among other things, it will emphasise drone training in the new training module for them.

Taiwan's Military Modernisation

According to media reports Taiwanese Navy will [receive](#) its first domestically built submarine, the Narwhal, in the second half of 2026. It is learnt that its sea trials have been fairly smooth. Presently, it is in the stage of "detailed fine-tuning and functional verification." The submarine was initially to be delivered by 2025. Its

primary contractor has been “accumulating daily fines” for the delay since missing the deadline. The media also [reported](#) that Taiwan may not receive F-16 jets from Lockheed Martin Corp this year. It was to receive two out of total 66 F-16s in the last quarter of this year. However, now the expected date of their delivery has been extended to July -September 2027. The delay has been attributed to “complex developmental challenges,” contrary to COVID-19-induced disruptions in supply chains, cited earlier. Further, the MQ-9B “Sky Guardian” drones are under testing, and in the assembly phase. They will soon enter flight testing phase.

THE KOREAN PENINSULA

South Korea-Japan Military Cooperation

In June, the defence ministers of South Korea and Japan agreed to [deepen](#) military cooperation between the two countries. The South Korean Defence Minister Ahn Gyu-back and Japanese Defence Minister Shinjiro Koizumi were reported to have discussed the issue of enhancing their bilateral defence collaboration in Seoul. Notably, South Korea-Japan military cooperation has increased in the recent years in the backdrop of warming up of the bilateral relationship between the two countries. Both Seoul and Tokyo have been facing similar security challenges in the region which has pushed them for closer cooperation. However, the historical and territorial disputes between the two countries have often been an impediment in deepening military cooperation. According

to the South Korean media report, this [visit](#) by a Japanese defence minister to South Korea happened after a gap of almost eleven years. During the meeting of the two ministers, both South Korea and Japan also pledged to maintain their trilateral military cooperation with the United States and seek total denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula.

North Korea Condemns US-South Korea Alliance

In June, the North Korean regime strongly [criticised](#) the planned sale of defence equipment by the United States to South Korea. According to the North Korean state media report, the transfer of the 708 KMU-557 JDAM tail kits and 58 KMU-572 JDAM guidance sets worth US\$ 106 million to Seoul by Washington would lead to an increase in the regional instability and could spike military tensions on the Korean Peninsula. Reportedly, this development in the sale of arms to South Korea is an American strategy to enhance the military capabilities of Seoul against Pyongyang. The United States has also been providing military hardware with offensive capabilities to its allies in the region to deter North Korean threats. According to another news report, North Korean regime declared that its nuclear weapons programme is “[irreversible](#)” and pledged not to pursue any strategy for denuclearisation under international pressure. Apparently, this declaration on the nuclear issue by Pyongyang came in the backdrop of the American comments on denuclearisation of North Korea.