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CHINA

A PLA Unit in Tibet Conducted Combat-Oriented Emergency Drill

In mid-August, a combat-oriented emergency deployment drill was [conducted](#) by People's Liberation Army (PLA) troops from a unit of the Shigatse Military Sub-District (MSD) in Tibet Military Region. The participating troops raced to an unfamiliar terrain at an altitude of over 4,600 meters to conduct combat drills. A massive convoy from the barracks was mobilised for the drills. The drill aimed to test the individual soldier's physical stamina and equipment performance. Communist Party of China (CPC)'s representatives were also present overseeing the drill. The exercise included convoy maneuvering at a high altitude and difficult terrain, UAV reconnaissance, fire and maneuver, oath taking ceremony, and live-fire exercise.

PLA Army Regiment in Tibet Conducts Night Live-Fire Drill

An unidentified PLA Ground Force Regiment from Tibet Military Region [conducted](#) military drills including night maneuvering and night live-fire shooting at a designated site on the Karakoram Plateau. The participating troops were organised into combat formations and were transported by several infantry fighting vehicles (IFVs) to the drill site at night. Upon arriving at the designated site, the participating troops carried out the preparatory works for the live-fire combat drills. The preparatory works included setting up communication links, conducting safety patrols of the target zone, and performing final calibrations of the fire-

control systems. During the night drill, the targets appeared and disappeared in multiple waves from various directions, and the combat formations in the infantry fighting vehicles were tasked to fire at the moving targets. The participating troops used various types of ammunition and after several rounds of firing they destroyed the targets one after another. The drill was monitored by a Staff Officer, Regiment's Operation and Training Section, to record the data of the drill. After evaluating the drill, it was affirmed that the unit would continue to focus on combat capabilities such as night reconnaissance, precision strikes, and rapid maneuvering.

China Revises National Defence Mobilisation Law

On 28 August, China's top legislature the National People's Congress adopted the revised National Defence Mobilisation Law. The law is expected to take effect from 1 October 2026. The revised law has 14 chapters and 82 articles. The [major themes](#) in the amended version of the law are; more elaborate and broad definition of national defence mobilisation; promotion of the application of advanced technologies and development of national defence mobilisation capabilities in emerging technologies; clear delineation of responsibilities of organisations that will come under statistical surveys for national defence mobilisation potential and finally, inclusion of provisions that require "necessity, reasonableness, and timeliness" for special national defence mobilisation measures. Observers have contended that the legal revision has been done to [address](#) any scenario in the Taiwan Strait or the South China Sea.

JAPAN

Japan Releases 2026 Edition of Defence White Paper

Japan's Ministry of Defence [launched](#) the 2026 edition of its annual Defence of Japan series of white papers on 4 August. The new edition showcased Japanese strategic assessments of current conditions in its neighbourhood and the world. Terming the current period 'the greatest trial [of the international system] in the post-war era, the white paper designated China as an 'unprecedented and the greatest strategic challenge' for Japan. Meanwhile, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) was designated as a 'grave and imminent threat to Japan's national security than ever before' while Russia was referred to as a 'strong security concern'.

In light of the challenge posed by the three countries, as well as the ongoing uncertainty caused by the continued blockage of the Strait of Hormuz, the white paper revealed that Japan would prepare for 'a new way of warfare' by amassing significantly enhanced counterstrike capabilities in addition to deploying a web of cost-effective, easily-replaceable uncrewed platforms across the ground, air and sea domains. It proposed to rapidly build up the defence industrial base to enable self-reliance, though it remained unclear how much of the industrial capability would need to be indigenised. Finally, the white paper stressed the need to invest substantially in the human resource base of the Self-Defence Forces through increased salaries, better social welfare provision and greater integration of gender mainstreaming.

Japan-Australia-Indonesia Defence Cooperation Mooted

Through a three-way telephonic conversation between Japanese Defence Minister Shinjiro Koizumi and his Australian and Indonesian counterparts Richard Marles and Sjafrie Sjamsoeddin on 26 August, Japan, Australia and Indonesia [agreed](#) to promote trilateral cooperation in defence alongside existing bilateral tracks. During a review of bilateral efforts to improve security ties between Tokyo and Jakarta, as well as Canberra and Jakarta, the three ministers "confirmed their commitment to working together among the three countries in order to jointly contribute to regional and global peace and stability". Press coverage of the talks [noted](#) that Tokyo was interested in expanding existing bilateral cooperation into the trilateral domain, as it is currently contracted to deliver upgraded *Mogami*-class frigates for the Royal Australian Navy while it remains engaged in talks with Indonesia for the transfer of *Asagiri*-class destroyers currently in service with the Maritime Self-Defence Forces.

TAIWAN

Taiwan's Weapon Purchase List

The media [reported](#) that the weapon systems Taiwan plans to buy in the coming period include portable counter-drone systems, combat and armoured vehicles and Strong Bow interceptors that are capable of countering tactical ballistic and other missiles. The interceptors will be purchased "to build a layered T-Dome air defence network. Besides, Hai Lung-class submarines will be upgraded along with

continued investment in underwater trials of the Narwhal submarine. A submarine rescue vessel and a replenishment ship as well as attack drones and unmanned surface vehicles are other items in the wish list. In addition to these, the purchase of the M109A7 self-propelled howitzers, HIMARS rocket systems, Switchblade 300 systems, and ALTIUS 600ISR and ALTIUS 700M loitering munitions from the US remains on the agenda.

Upgrade in Taiwanese Navy

Taiwanese Navy will soon [have](#) an operational fleet of 10 rapid minelaying ships. While it already has four minelaying ships in service in the Navy's 192nd Fleet, it will soon induct another six ships. Lung-Teh Shipbuilding Corp. is building them. It is likely to deliver them by the end of 2026. In keeping with the focus on expanding its asymmetric capabilities, Taiwan will [buy](#) over 2,000 attack and reconnaissance drones for US\$847 million from US defence technology company Anduril Industries. Out of these 1,554 are Altius-700M loitering munitions and 478 Altius-600ISR reconnaissance drones. Reportedly, drones will be inducted in Army units.

THE KOREAN PENINSULA

South Korea-US Military Exercise

South Korea and the United States [held](#) their joint military exercise known as Ulchi Freedom Shield (UFS) in August. The joint military drills were held for “combined and all-domain operations” to strengthen military readiness between the two allies and prepare for the modern warfare.

Notably, the UFS is held annually to deepen military cooperation between the US and South Korean military and to counter the North Korean threats. However, American President Donald Trump [directed](#) the Pentagon to “substantially” scale back the joint military exercises between the US and South Korea. According to Trump these military exercises are “costly” and are not conducive for normalising relations with North Korea. Reportedly, Pyongyang had been highly critical of these military exercises between Seoul and Washington and view them as “rehearsals for war” against North Korea.

North Korea Condemns Japan's Military Expansion

In August 2026, the North Korean regime strongly [condemned](#) the Japanese efforts for military expansion. North Korea categorised Japan as “a war criminal state” and accused Tokyo of rearmament by taking advantage of the current geopolitical situation in the world. Particularly, Pyongyang criticised the recent launch of a Tomahawk long-range cruise missile by the Japanese military. From the North Korean viewpoint, Japan has been expanding its military capabilities and increasing joint military exercises with other nations in the region. According to another report, North Korea is seeking to [deepen](#) ties with Russia and China to counter the increasing military capabilities of Japan and South Korea. Notably, the Kim regime in Pyongyang considers Japan as a latent nuclear state which has the capability to become a nuclear weapons power within a short period.