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# CHINA MILITARY DIGEST

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- **US P-8A anti-submarine patrol aircraft passed through the Taiwan Strait**
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## China test-fires ICBM into the Pacific Ocean

China test fired an [intercontinental ballistic missile](#) into the Pacific Ocean. At 8:44 a.m. Beijing time (0044 GMT) on September 25, an ICBM with a dummy warhead was test-fired by the [PLA Rocket Force](#). The Chinese defense ministry said in a statement that the missile “fell into expected sea areas,” and added that it was a “routine arrangement in our annual training plan” and not directed at any country or target. Xinhua reported that China has “[notified relevant countries in advance](#)” of the test. The Pentagon spokesperson confirmed that China notified the United States ahead of the test-launch. Japan Coast Guard spokesperson confirmed that China sent a navigation warning on September 23 for “space debris” in three zones in South China Sea and the Pacific north of the Philippines’ Luzon island, and in South Pacific but did not notify about the reported missile launch. Pentagon spokesperson added that, “We will continue to press for substantive bilateral engagement on issues related to the PRC’s nuclear weapons expansion and measures to begin to address the risks driven by the PRC’s buildup.” On September 25, Taiwan’s Ministry of Defense said in a statement that it had detected 23 Chinese military aircraft, including J-16 fighters and drones, operating around Taiwan carrying out long-range missions to the southeast and east of the island. The ministry added that it had detected “intensive” Chinese missile firing and other drills. Usually China prefers to test-fire missiles unannounced in isolated provinces and it is rare for the country to fire into the sea. China’s first ICBM test-launch of DF-5 was in 1980 from the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center and it landed at the designated area into the South Pacific after covering a distance of 8,000

kms. Since then, China has been conducting the ICBMs test mostly over its own territory. According to Pentagon estimation in 2023, China has more than 500 operational nuclear warheads in its arsenal, of which approximately 350 are ICBMs. The report also presumed that China will reach over 1,000 warheads by 2030. It added that China is constructing hundreds of silos for land-based ICBMs.

## The 11th Beijing Xiangshan Forum concluded

The 11<sup>th</sup> Xiangshan Forum, China’s biggest military diplomacy event, opened on September 12 at the Beijing International Convention Center, with more than 500 representatives from more than 90 countries attended the forum, including 200 Chinese and foreign experts and scholars. Among them, 30 defense ministers and military chiefs were also invited. The U.S. sent Michael Chase, deputy assistant secretary of defence for China, Taiwan and Mongolia, to attend the forum. Themed “[Promoting Peace for a Shared Future](#),” the three-day forum covered a range of issues, including security in Europe and Asia-Pacific, international rules, and the future of artificial intelligence. This year, China also invited leaders and officials from international and regional organizations, such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the European Union. On September 13, Chinese Defense Minister [Dong Jun](#) in his speech said that Beijing would enhance military ties with its neighbor and with developing countries in particular. “Major countries must take the lead in safeguarding global security, abandon a zero-sum mindset and refrain from bullying the small and the weak,” Dong said in veiled criticism of the United States, which he did not name.

## US P-8A anti-Submarine Patrol Aircraft passed through the Taiwan Strait

PLA Eastern Theater Command spokesperson [Li Xi](#) said, on September 17, a US P-8A anti-submarine patrol aircraft passed through the Taiwan Strait. Following it the Theatre Command dispatched fighter jets to follow and monitor the US aircraft. Allison N. Christy, spokesperson for the [U.S. Navy's 7th Fleet](#) said that a "P-8A Poseidon transited the Taiwan Strait in international airspace at about 12:15 and exited around 1 pm on September 17 (local time)." "By operating within the Taiwan Strait in accordance with international law, the United States upholds the navigational rights and freedoms of all nations," it said. "The aircraft's transit of the Taiwan Strait demonstrates the United States' commitment to a free and open Indo-Pacific." On September 17, Taiwan's defense ministry stated, "a US P-8A aircraft passed through [Taiwan Strait](#) from south to north this morning" "The military has monitored the situation and no anomaly was detected in our surroundings," it said. Similar activities by the [US aircraft P-8A](#) in the Taiwan Strait was seen in April this year, as well as December and October of last year. The US P-8A Poseidon is a highly advanced maritime patrol and anti-submarine warfare aircraft widely considered to be one of the most sophisticated maritime patrol plans in operation. P-8As feature various technical and reconnaissance capabilities for detecting, tracking, and engaging submarines and vessels, as well as conducting surveillance. In 2001, a U.S. surveillance plane and a Chinese navy fighter aircraft [collided mid-air](#) near the Chinese island province of Hainan, resulting in the Chinese pilot's death.

## The United States and China held the 18th Defense Policy Coordination Talks

The U.S. and China held the [18<sup>th</sup> defense policy coordination talks](#) from September 14 to 15 in Beijing. [Michael S. Chase](#), deputy assistant secretary of defense for China, Taiwan and Mongolia of the U.S. DoD and Ci Guowei (慈国巍), director of the International Military Cooperation Office of the Central Military Commission, PRC, co-chaired the meeting. The two sides exchanged views on issues of common concern. The two sides discussed a range of regional and global security issues as part of the exchange, including U.S. concerns over [China's support for Russia's defense industrial base](#) and the impact that support is having on European and transatlantic security. On the issue of peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait, the U.S. side raised concern about ongoing provocations from North Korea, and urged China to encourage stability and de-escalation in the Middle East. After the meeting, a senior U.S. defense official said, the discussion is an opportunity for candid discussion about U.S. concerns over issues affecting the countries' relationship. "The department continues to view [China] as our pacing challenge as described in the National Defense Strategy," the senior US official said. He added, "U.S. diplomacy and channels of communication do not indicate any change in our approach to China," and "This is an intensely competitive relationship, but we are committed to managing that competition responsibly and preventing it from veering into conflict." He added, "DOD also reaffirmed the U.S. commitment to defending its Indo-Pacific allies, and the department emphasized the importance of respect for freedom of navigation as guaranteed under international law in light of ongoing

aggressive PRC [People's Republic of China] harassment against lawfully operating Philippines vessels in the South China Sea." The official added that the U.S. "remains clear-eyed about China's intentions and their actions in the region around the world."

### **Chinese and Russian Coast Guards held Joint Law Enforcement patrols in the North Pacific**

In September 16-20, for [the first time](#), the [Chinese and Russian Coast Guard](#) fleets carried out joint law enforcement cruise missions in the North Pacific. During the cruise, the [Chinese and Russian Coast Guards](#) inspected the vessels operating in the North Pacific. The formation also conducted joint search and rescue, joint search for illegal vessels and other multi-subject exercises. The joint patrol is in accordance with the [United Nations General Assembly Resolution](#) 46/215 and the Convention on the Conservation and Management of Fishery Resources in the North Pacific Ocean. China-Russia Coast Guard fleet is composed of the Chinese Coast Guard Meishan (梅山) and Xiushan (秀山) ships and the Russian Coast Guard patrol ships "Petropavlovsk-Kamchatka" and "Kamchatka". On September 27, the Reuters quoted the commander of the U.S. Coast Guard Pacific Region, Tiongson, as saying: "The U.S. Coast Guard is paying attention to the increased activities of the Chinese and Russian navies around Alaska and the North Pacific." "What we do is to use presence to counter presence. Where they appear, we must let them know that we are there too. The two sides communicate. Sometimes they inform us: they are just passing by and will soon leave our exclusive economic zone. Sometimes we will monitor and track." Tiongson also said that the U.S. Coast Guard exchanges information with the U.S. military and

Canada, and "so far, all contacts with Russia or China have been professional."

### **China-Nepal "Mt Everest Friendship-2024" Joint Training concludes**

The [fourth edition](#) of 10 day long China-Nepal "[Mt Everest Friendship – 2024](#)" was conducted in Chongqing, China from September 21- October 1. The platoon level 20 troops from the two sides participated led by their respective captains. Nepalese side confirmed that joint exercise was primarily focused on counterterrorism and disaster management, and their 18 member delegation was led by senior officer Pradeep Jung KC to Beijing. Exercise themed "[Joint anti-terrorism operations in urban blocks](#)", in which the [Nepalese trainees](#) experienced the operation of more than 20 types of equipment in three categories, namely, Chinese light weapons, reconnaissance and anti-terrorism equipment, and intelligent information system. Both sides exchanged views on natural disaster rescue operations with special focus on earthquakes, snowstorms, and mudslides. Cultural events events such as dragon dance performance, Sichuan opera face-changing etc. were organized. This series of joint exercise began in 2017. Last edition of joint exercises was held in 2019, and it resumed after 5 years due to the Covid outbreak. According to the [Nepal Army HQs](#), the Chinese side were hesitant to restart the drill in the early years following the pandemic. According to the Nepalese official Brig Gen Gaurav Kumar KC, the Nepal Army Chief Prabhu Ram Sharma played a key role in reviving the joint exercises. Nepalese senior official Prem Dhoj Adhikari visited Beijing following which the dates for the drill was confirmed. Nepal Army maintains that these kinds of drills are routine exercises that the country conducts with several other nations including the U.S. and India.