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SYLLOGE ON CHINA

Focus: Nuclear, Space, Missiles and other Security Issues

An Initiative by Indian Pugwash Society and Centre for Nuclear Issues and Arms Control (MP - IDSA)



INDIAN PUGWASH SOCIETY

A retired R.C.M.P. officer is charged with spying for China

Norimitsu Onishi

The New York Times, July 21, 2023

A retired officer of Canada's national police force was charged Friday with foreign interference after spying for the Chinese government and targeting an individual on its behalf, the authorities said. The retired officer, William Majcher, 60, "allegedly used his knowledge and his extensive network of contacts in Canada to obtain intelligence or services to benefit" Beijing, the authorities said in a statement. The case is likely to heighten calls for a public inquiry into the Chinese government's alleged involvement in Canadian affairs.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2023/07/21/world/canada/majcher-canada-spy-china.html>

China's total known uranium resources increase by one-third in past decade: report

Chu Daye and Fan Wei

Global Times, July 21, 2023

China has added one-third of its total known uranium resources, accumulated in the past 68 years, during extensive survey and exploration work during the past 10 years, while 70 percent of the newly discovered resources are fine, extractable resources, according to an industry report published by the China Nuclear Geology, a subsidiary of Chinese nuclear giant China National Nuclear Corporation (CNNC).

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202307/1294827.shtml>

Chinese autonomous vehicle tech raises concerns: U.S. transportation chief

The Hindu, July 21, 2023

U.S. Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg said his agency has national security concerns about Chinese autonomous vehicle companies in the American market after some lawmakers called for restrictions on their operations. "Whether we are talking about hardware or software, in the same way there are concerns around telecom or TikTok, there are concerns around transportation technologies," Buttigieg said in an interview with Reuters.

<https://www.thehindu.com/sci-tech/technology/chinese-autonomous-vehicle-tech-raises-concerns-us-transportation-chief/article67104570.ece>

China studies nuclear risk in the context of the Ukraine war

Lyle Goldstein and Nathan Waechter

The Diplomat, July 21, 2023

In shaping patterns of future warfare, there is little doubt that militaries across the world will be seeking to absorb the key lessons of the Russia-Ukraine War, ranging from the employment of tanks to the use of anti-ship cruise missiles and the ubiquitous drones. For the Chinese military,

these lessons might even assume a greater importance, since the People's Liberation Army (PLA) both lacks major, recent combat experience, and has also leaned heavily on Russian weapons and doctrine for its rapid modernization over the last few decades.

<https://thediplomat.com/2023/07/china-studies-nuclear-risk-in-the-context-of-the-ukraine-war/>

China's CH UAV develops new-type loitering munition with super-long-range

Liu Xuanzun

Global Times, July 21, 2023

China's CH UAV company announced recently that it is developing a new type of super-long-range loitering munition which delivers a number of new functions. Aerospace CH UAV Co Ltd is developing a type of loitering munition product based on AR air-to-ground missile series technology, the Global Times learned from the company. It can carry out missions including communications relay on the battlefield, radar disturbance and suppression, precision strikes against time-sensitive targets as well as battle damage evaluation.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202307/1294826.shtml>

China's Shenzhou-16 astronauts complete first spacewalk

CGTN, July 21, 2023

China's Shenzhou-16 astronauts, or taikonauts, conducted their first extravehicular activity (EVA), according to the China Manned Space Agency (CMSA). With the assistance of robotic arms, taikonauts Jing Haipeng, Zhu Yangzhu and Gui Haichao completed all set tasks during the eight-hour spacewalk. During the spacewalk, the taikonauts completed tasks including bracket installation and lifting of panorama camera B of the core module and the unlocking and lifting of panorama cameras A and B of the Mengtian lab module.

<https://news.cgtn.com/news/2023-07-20/China-s-Shenzhou-16-astronauts-conduct-first-spacewalk-1lBdgPg4ifm/index.html>

Taiwan VP's US transit to test already tense China-US ties

William Yang

Voice of America, July 22, 2023

Taiwan's Vice President William Lai, a front-runner in the island's planned January presidential elections, announced this week that he plans to make transit stops in the U.S. next month on his way to Paraguay, sparking swift protest from China. Beijing objects to any action that could raise Taiwan's international profile and has pledged to keep the transit stops from happening.

<https://www.voanews.com/a/taiwan-vp-s-us-transit-to-test-already-tense-china-us-ties-/7191691.html>

PLA rolls out longer-range missiles near Taiwan: military experts

Jack Lau

South China Morning Post, July 23, 2023

The Chinese military has expanded its missile force over the past decade and rolled out modern missiles allowing it to target Taiwan and its allies in the event of a cross-strait war, according to military analysts. According to a report released earlier this month by Decker Eveleth, a researcher at the Middlebury Institute of International Studies, the People's Liberation Army Rocket Force is widely deploying DF-17 medium-range ballistic missiles near Taiwan.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/military/article/3228592/military-experts-say-pla-rolling-out-longer-range-missiles-near-taiwan>

China successfully tests high-thrust engine for moon landing

Leng Shumei

Global Times, July 23, 2023

China successfully carried out a trial test on the main engine of the Long March-10, a new carrier rocket designed for manned moon landing missions, on Saturday, as the country actively makes progress on the road to realizing its goal of landing taikonauts on the moon by the year 2030. The test assessed all the requirements for the engine, and provided strong support for the solidification for its technical state, the establishment of the technical baseline of the product and improving reliability, the Global Times learned from the China Aerospace Science and Technology Corporation (CASC).

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202307/1294879.shtml>

U.S. allies hold record-setting military exercise in Australia in message aimed at China

Mike Cherney

The Wall Street Journal, July 23, 2023

The broader scope and increasing complexity of the exercise, called Talisman Sabre, reflect the latest U.S. planning as Washington seeks to deter Beijing from launching military action against Taiwan, which China claims as part of its territory. To do that, the U.S. is looking to bolster its network of alliances in the region, while improving the ability of the U.S. military to operate seamlessly with friendly nations.

<https://www.wsj.com/amp/articles/u-s-allies-hold-record-setting-military-exercise-in-australia-in-message-aimed-at-china-86080059>

Taiwan air raid drills simulate response to China missile attacks

Thai PBS World, July 24, 2023

Taiwan held air raid drills simulating its response to Chinese missile attacks in several cities on the same day the island's military kicked off its annual war games. Self-ruled Taiwan holds

frequent defence drills in the face of increasing military and political pressures from China, which regards the island as its territory. Preparation efforts also extend to its civilian population, with authorities stepping up drills in cities, citing lessons learned from Russia's invasion of Ukraine where the street-to-street warfare appears to be part of the defence strategy playbook.

<https://www.thaipbsworld.com/taiwan-air-raid-drills-simulate-response-to-china-missile-attacks/>

Contracts inked for nuclear tech expansion in Shandong

China Daily, July 24, 2023

State Power Investment Corporation sealed a bundle of contracts worth 5 billion yuan (\$694.8 million) related to its Guohe One nuclear power technology during a nuclear energy industry supply and demand conference held in Shandong province. As one of China's most advanced and independently developed third-generation pieces of nuclear technology, Guohe One is one of the crowning achievements in China's nuclear power research. As part of efforts to step up strategic cooperation with Shandong province, SPIC has installed 2.5 million kilowatts of nuclear power capacity, with 5.5 million kilowatts under construction.

<https://global.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202307/24/WS64be65f1a31035260b818318.html>

Pro-China influence campaign infiltrates U.S. news websites

Cate Cadell, Tim Starks and David DiMolfetta

The Washington Post, July 24, 2023

A Chinese marketing firm that has counted state police and other government bureaus as clients is leveraging newswire services to place pro-Beijing stories on the websites of almost three dozen news outlets across America in an apparent effort to help Beijing improve its image abroad. The Shanghai-based firm — Shanghai Yihuan Cultural Communication Co., Ltd., which goes by the brand name Haixun Press — says on its website that it can plant news articles globally, and can boost the content by providing paid inauthentic social media likes on platforms including Twitter, Facebook and Instagram.

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2023/07/24/pro-china-influence-campaign-infiltrates-us-news-websites/>

China vows countermeasures after CIA chief William Burns says agency is working to rebuild spy network

Liu Zhen

South China Morning Post, July 24, 2023

Beijing has vowed to take “all necessary” countermeasures following comments by CIA director William Burns that the agency has “made progress” in rebuilding its spy networks in China. Foreign ministry spokeswoman Mao Ning said that the Chinese government had taken note of the comments. “China will take all necessary measures to firmly safeguard our national security,” she told a press conference. Burns, CIA director since 2021, said last week that his agency has been

working to rebuild its networks after the Chinese government caught some of its agents a decade ago.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/diplomacy/article/3228775/china-vows-countermeasures-after-cia-chief-william-burns-says-agency-working-rebuild-spy-network>

Highlights to expect in PLA Air Force's aviation open-day activities

China Military Online, July 24, 2023

The Chinese People's Liberation Army Air Force (PLAAF) will host aviation open-day activities from July 26 to 30 at the Changchun Airport of the PLAAF. During the event, air performances, ground exhibitions, themed pavilions and other activities will be held, and various types of aircraft and ground equipment will be on public display. Xie Peng, the new spokesperson for the Chinese Air Force, introduced some highlights of the event at a press conference held on the morning of July 21.

http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/ARMEDFORCES/AirForce/News_209159/16240110.html

Chinese, Russian warships continue exercises in Sea of Japan; North Korea resumes missile launches

Dzirhan Mahadzir

USNI, July 25, 2023

The People's Liberation Army Navy and Russian Navy wrapped up their joint exercise "Northern Interaction 2023" in the Sea of Japan before the combined fleet arrived at Vladivostok, where the PLAN ships are making a port visit. The Northern Interaction 2023 exercise began and involved a PLAN Surface Action Group consisting of destroyers CNS Guiyang (119) and CNS Qiqihar (121), frigates CNS Zaozhuang (542) and CNS Rizhao (598) and fleet oiler CNS Taihu (889) and a Russian Navy SAG made up of destroyers RFS Admiral Panteleyev (548) and RFS Admiral Tributs (564) and corvettes RFS Gremyashchiy (337) and RFS Hero of the Russian Federation Aldar Tsydenzhapov (339).

<https://news.usni.org/2023/07/25/chinese-russian-warships-continue-exercises-in-sea-of-japan-north-korea-resumes-missile-launches>

China's nuclear weapons build-up and its implications for Northeast Asian security

Lami Kim

Asia-Pacific Leadership Network, July 25, 2023

China's nuclear modernisation should concern the United States less because it poses a nuclear threat to the US homeland, and more because it poses a risk to vital US interests in Northeast Asia. China's nuclear modernisation increases the risk that it will be emboldened to invade Taiwan, as well as the risk that Japan and South Korea might request deployment of US tactical nuclear weapons on their territory or chose to develop their own nuclear weapons. Although it will be hard for Washington to stop China from continuing to build up its nuclear arsenal, it should seek to

manage these risks by strengthening deterrence measures around the Taiwan Strait and giving stronger assurances to its regional allies. Additionally, Washington and Beijing should enhance transparency as to their nuclear posture and missile testing, and also establish viable crisis management mechanisms.

<https://www.apln.network/analysis/policy-briefs/chinas-nuclear-weapons-build-up-and-its-implications-for-northeast-asian-security>

China's first commercial spacecraft launch site in Hainan to commence normalized launch missions in 2024

Ni Hao and Tao Mingyang

Global Times, July 26, 2023

China's first commercial spacecraft launch site in Wenchang, South China's Hainan Province, is ramping up the final stages of construction, and plans to commence normalized commercial launch operations in 2024, a representative from the launch site told the Global Times. The construction of the commercial spacecraft launch site began in July 2022, and the infrastructure needed for the site will be finished by the end of 2023. The first commercial launch mission will commence in the first half of 2024, and the launch site will enter the operations and normalized launch mission in the same year.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202307/1295103.shtml>

Discerning the drivers of China's nuclear force development: models, indicators, and data

David C. Logan and Phillip C. Saunders

National Defence University Press, July 26, 2023

For decades following its first test in 1964, China maintained a small nuclear force and a doctrine emphasizing deterrence and no-first-use of nuclear weapons. China has recently embarked on an unprecedented campaign of expansion and modernization, which is changing the size, structure, and operational posture of its nuclear forces. The growing discrepancy between China's restrained declaratory policy and advancing nuclear capabilities raises important questions about the status and future trajectory of China's nuclear forces, with major implications for the United States.

<https://ndupress.ndu.edu/Media/News/News-Article-View/Article/3471053/discerning-the-drivers-of-chinas-nuclear-force-development-models-indicators-an/>

It takes two to tango. But does China want to dance?

Fareed Zakaria

The Washington Post, July 27, 2023

The mysterious disappearance of Chinese Foreign Minister Qin Gang is a timely reminder that the future of U.S.-China relations will be determined not just by U.S. policy and what is happening domestically in the United States (such as the presidential election campaign). It will be shaped also by developments in China — which at this point are opaque but troubling. Today, again, there

are no limits to the power of China's ruler. What scholar Elizabeth Economy has called China's "Third Revolution" (the first personified by Mao Zedong, the second by Deng, and now by Xi Jinping) is still going strong.

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2023/07/27/china-xi-opaque-authoritarian-united-states/>

FAST makes new discovery of black hole phenomenon, opens up new avenues for observing and studying black hole emissions

Deng Xiaoci

Global Times, July 27, 2023

China's Five-hundred-meter Aperture Spherical radio Telescope (FAST), or known as the Tianyan (Heaven's Eye,) has made world's first observation of sub-millisecond low-frequency radio quasi-periodic oscillations in microquasars, renewing men's understanding of the mysterious black hole by revealing the direct correlation between the quasi-periodic oscillations in black hole systems and relativistic jets.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202307/1295141.shtml#:~:text=China's%20Five%2Dhundred%2Dmeter%20Aperture,hole%20by%20revealing%20the%20direct>

North Korea, China and Russia commemorate 'victory' 70 years ago, while aligning on Ukraine

Brad Lendon and Gawon Bae

CNN, July 27, 2023

Delegations from Russia and China, North Korea's key allies in the Korean War, gathered in Pyongyang this week to celebrate North Korea's "Victory Day" in the war that ravaged the Korean Peninsula seven decades ago as they align over another very contemporary conflict – Russia's devastating invasion of Ukraine. At a reception for the Chinese delegation led by Politburo member Li Hongzhong, senior North Korean official Kim Song Nam thanked Chinese forces for joining in the Korean War, saying North Korea "would not forget forever the heroic feats and merits of the bravery soldiers who recorded a brilliant page in the history."

<https://edition.cnn.com/2023/07/27/asia/north-korea-russia-china-war-anniversary-intl-hnk/index.html>

Thailand launches first experimental tokamak device in collaboration with China

Xinhua, July 27, 2023

Thailand's first experimental tokamak device was officially launched in a joint collaboration with China. The device, a joint collaboration between the Institute of Plasma Physics Chinese Academy of Sciences (ASIPP) and the Thailand Institute of Nuclear Technology (TINT), arrived in Thailand in January and commenced trial runs in May. Thawatchai Onjun, executive director of the TINT, emphasized that the operation will propel Thailand's advancements in nuclear fusion applications,

impacting academic research, engineering technology, and talent development. Song Yuntao, director of ASIIPP, told Xinhua that China's research in the field of nuclear fusion applications adheres to an open and friendly approach.

<https://english.news.cn/20230727/6d90decd317a4072bcc5a82062edcb61/c.html>

Implications of China's nuclear expansion for strategic stability

Aaron Miles,

War on the Rocks, July 27, 2023

Will China's dramatic nuclear expansion, including more than 300 new silos for intercontinental-range ballistic missiles require a counter-expansion of U.S. nuclear capabilities, or posturing existing forces differently? Will the dynamics of a three-sided system undermine strategic stability by creating first-strike incentives that drive nuclear escalation in crisis, and by driving a new arms race spiral that would make limits on strategic nuclear arms untenable? Does the longstanding U.S. policy of maintaining nuclear counterforce capabilities for targeting adversary nuclear forces make these challenges unmanageable? Fortunately, the worst outcomes are avoidable if each peer maintains a high degree of survivability for a sufficient portion of its forces.

<https://warontherocks.com/2023/07/implications-of-chinas-nuclear-expansion-for-strategic-stability/>

Key chipmaking material prices soar ahead of Chinese export curbs

Shinichi Arakawa

Nikkei Asia, July 27, 2023

Gallium prices are surging after China said it would start requiring permits to export the key metal and other chipmaking materials in August, signaling a potentially significant impact on the industry. China produces 540 tonnes of gallium a year, or 98% of the global supply, according to the U.S. Geological Survey. The material is used in blue light-emitting diodes, the development of which won the Nobel Prize.

<https://asia.nikkei.com/Business/Tech/Semiconductors/Key-chipmaking-material-prices-soar-ahead-of-Chinese-export-curbs>

New nuclear technology sees vast export potential

Tao Mingyang and Chu Daye

Global Times, July 27, 2023

The Linglong One, a multi-functional small modular and pressurized-water nuclear reactor (SMR), will be ready for operation in South China's Hainan Province by the end of 2025, almost five months ahead of schedule, according to its builder, as China expands its nuclear power generation capacity on the path to green development. "After the core module is placed in the container of the Linglong One nuclear plant in early August, relevant assembly work of other equipment will start, and the nuclear reactor may enter operation by 2025. It will provide more clean energy for enterprises participating in the construction of the Hainan Free Trade Port," Chen Jianxin, chief

engineer of the Hainan Nuclear Power Co, the operator of the Changjiang Nuclear Power Plant, told the Global Times.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202307/1295190.shtml>

China employs 'nuclear cabbage' strategy for dominance in South China Sea

Vipul Tamhane

WION, July 27, 2023

China's plan entails encircling disputed islands with as many ships as possible, a tactic known as "the cabbage strategy." This approach entails encircling contested islands with as many ships as possible, and China employs the cabbage technique to gradually take over contested territory. The South China Sea tensions are rising, with nations detaining trespassers and threatening to impose an air identification zone over the South China Sea. The United States is presently in a difficult position: it does not want to risk triggering a fight with China, but it also wants China to cease pressuring its regional allies.

<https://www.wionews.com/opinions-blogs/chinas-nuclear-cabbage-619972>

Undersea data center in S.China's Hainan facilitates energy-saving commercial services

Ni Hao and Tao Mingyang

Global Times, July 28, 2023

The Undersea Data Center (UDC), the largest of its kind in the world, in Sanya, South China's Hainan Province, has been operating soundly for eight months since it entered commercial operation in December 2022, becoming a pioneer in the global industry of commercializing undersea data centers. Pu Ding, a representative of the project, told the Global Times during the visit to the UDC that only two countries, the US and China, have the ability and technology to build undersea data centers at present.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202307/1295232.shtml>

China's Wang Yi picks up third job with return as foreign minister

Yukio Tajima

Nikkei Asia, July 28, 2023

Wang Yi's reappointment as China's foreign minister puts the 69-year-old in the unusual position of having three sets of diplomatic and party responsibilities at an age when Chinese officials are usually set to retire. Chinese law stipulates that the Communist Party holds decision-making power over foreign policy. The party's Central Commission for Foreign Affairs is led by President Xi Jinping, while Wang, as head of the commission's executive office, is responsible for assisting Xi and providing direction to such government bodies as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

<https://asia.nikkei.com/Politics/China-s-Wang-Yi-picks-up-third-job-with-return-as-foreign-minister>

U.S. announces \$345 million military aid package for Taiwan

nbc news, July 29, 2023

The U.S. announced \$345 million in military aid for Taiwan, in what is the Biden administration's first major package drawing on America's own stockpiles to help Taiwan counter China. The White House's announcement said the package would include defense, education and training for the Taiwanese. Washington will send man-portable air defense systems, or MANPADS, intelligence and surveillance capabilities, firearms and missiles, according to two U.S. officials who spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss sensitive matters ahead of the announcement.

<https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/us-taiwan-military-aid-package-china-invasion-air-defense-missiles-rcna97026>

US to further military footprint in Australia to suppress China; Washington 'source of tension' in Asia-Pacific

Global Times, July 30, 2023

Chinese analysts warned of a more volatile and unstable Asia-Pacific region where the US would provoke a regional arms race with more large-scale military drills and more strategic weapons deployments, after the latest move between the US and Australia that reached an agreement to expand the US military footprint on the southern continent to contain China's development. The US and Australia will deepen military ties after reaching an agreement that expands military cooperation as both countries work to suppress China's growing influence and try to interfere in the Taiwan question and South China Sea affairs, according to media reports.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202307/1295319.shtml>

Xi appoints new chief of China's nuclear arsenal

Reuters, July 31, 2023

Chinese President Xi Jinping, also the military's commander-in-chief, appointed a new head of the armed force overseeing the nation's conventional - and nuclear - missiles, one day before the anniversary of the People's Liberation Army. Wang Houbin, former deputy commander of the navy, was named the new head of the PLA Rocket Force, and Xu Xisheng, its new political commissar, with both men acquiring the top rank of general, according to state media.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/china/xi-appoints-new-chief-chinas-nuclear-arsenal-2023-07-31/>

China ousts top generals from nuclear Rocket Force

Kathrin Hille

Financial Times, July 31, 2023

China's leader Xi Jinping has replaced the two missing generals who had been in command of the country's missile forces, in effect confirming the largest purge at the top levels of the military in a decade. General Li Yuchao, commander of the People's Liberation Army Rocket Force, and his deputy General Liu Guangbin disappeared from public view several months ago amid what foreign experts and intelligence officials said was a drive to crack down on corruption and enforce Communist party discipline.

<https://www.ft.com/content/0375c760-7902-4a41-b8f4-1b41026a38fd>

*Sylloge on China is compiled by Mr. Niranjana C. Oak with inputs
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