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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

Philippines' claim about removing Chinese blocking nets at Huangyan Island fabricated: China Coast Guard

China Military Online, October 1, 2023

The Philippines' claim about having removed blocking nets set by the China Coast Guard (CCG) at Huangyan Dao (Huangyan Island) in the South China Sea is purely fabricated, said a CCG spokesperson. CCG spokesperson Gan Yu made the remarks in a statement released in response to a statement by the Philippine Coast Guard claiming it had removed the "floating barrier" deployed by the China Coast Guard on the southeast side of Huangyan Island that obstructed Philippine fishermen from "entering the area for fishing activities."

http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/CHINA_209163/TopStories_209189/16255876.html

Russia and China's super weapons and the threat of nuclear war

Lewis Page

The Telegraph, October 1, 2023

After decades of disarmament, we are at the dawn of a new age of nuclear weapons. Years of stockpile reduction following the end of the Cold War have come to an abrupt end as China ploughs billions into new armaments and the detente between Russia and the US collapses. China refuses to negotiate at all, and is increasing its nuclear arsenal rapidly. It now has more than 400 warheads, more than the UK or France. If Beijing continues investing at its current rate, it would have 1,500 by the middle of the next decade.

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/business/2023/10/01/russia-china-new-nuclear-weapons-arms-race-hypersonics/>

China's belt and road shows the high price of Beijing's money

Karishma Vaswani

The Washington Post, October 2, 2023

To understand why China's infrastructure program attracts controversy, it is worth understanding how it started: As a way to save its own economy during the tumultuous aftermath of the Global Financial Crisis. The government put in place a multi-billion dollar stimulus package and launched a massive infrastructure program, leading to a saturation of the market in the process. The BRI was seen as a solution to this "issue of excess capacity," as the Council of Foreign Relations notes, and led to an "explosion in the number and location of new overseas foreign contracted projects signed by Chinese companies."

https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/2023/10/02/china-s-belt-and-road-shows-the-high-price-of-beijing-s-money/f63adc0e-616a-11ee-b406-3ea724995806_story.html

BrahMos & The Philippines: a strategic fortification against China's ambitions

Aritra Banerjee

Indian Aerospace and Defence Bulletin, October 3, 2023

The tides of the South China Sea (SCS) have been historically turbulent, bearing witness to several disputes and aggressive postures. In recent years, however, these waters have garnered significant global attention as China has amplified its maritime ambitions, often treading on the sovereignty of smaller nations like the Philippines. In response, the Manilla has found an ally in New Delhi, and their partnership materialises in the form of the BrahMos missile—a defensive weapon and a significant geopolitical statement.

<https://www.iadb.in/2023/10/03/brahmos-the-philippines-a-strategic-fortification-against-chinas-ambitions/>

Chang'e-8 mission planned for launch around 2028, to form basic structure of a lunar research station with Chang'e-7

Global Times, October 3, 2023

China's lunar exploration mission, Chang'e-8, is planned for launch around 2028 and will join Chang'e-7 to form the basic structure of a lunar research station, the China National Space Administration (CNSA) announced international cooperation opportunities linked to the Chang'e-8 mission during the 74th International Astronautical Congress. The Chang'e-8 mission aims to explore and research multiple lunar physical fields, regional geological profiles, lunar-based Earth observations and research, in-situ lunar sample analysis and resource utilization, and small, enclosed terrestrial ecosystems on the lunar surface, the Paper reported.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202310/1299205.shtml>

EU to assess export controls on sensitive tech to China

Andy Bounds

Financial Times, October 3, 2023

The EU is to examine bloc-wide export controls in sensitive technology as part of its attempt to “de-risk” its relationship with China and other authoritarian regimes. The European Commission has identified four areas — semiconductors, artificial intelligence, quantum computing and biotechnology — in which to assess whether the bloc should ban the transfer of some goods and services to other countries. Brussels is struggling to create a united front to defend its economic security as the US, China and other countries implement restrictions on exports.

<https://www.ft.com/content/2b7a97ab-f563-434e-8d01-70ff9fa9efa6>

China invites Chang'e-8 lunar probe mission global collaboration

China Military Online, October 3, 2023

The China National Space Administration (CNSA) is offering opportunities for international cooperation on payloads that will piggyback on the country's Chang'e-8 lunar exploration mission, slated for launch around 2028. The Chang'e-8 mission is open to all countries and international organizations for collaboration at either mission, system or single-machine levels in order to encourage more major original discoveries, according to a CNSA. The Chang'e-8 mission, a key task in the fourth stage of China's lunar probe, will carry out more lunar geological detection and research, lunar-based observations of Earth, lunar in-situ sampling analysis and resource use, as well as a small, closed terrestrial ecosystem experiment on the moon's surface, according to the CNSA.

http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/CHINA_209163/TopStories_209189/16256154.html

US warns of Chinese global disinformation campaign that could undermine peace and stability

Didi Tang

The Washington Post, October 4, 2023

For much of the world, China's Xinjiang region is notorious, a place where ethnic Uyghurs face forced labor and arbitrary detention. But a group of visiting foreign journalists was left with a decidedly different impression. The Global Engagement Center, a State Department agency tasked with combating foreign propaganda and disinformation and which released the 58-page report, warned that Beijing's information campaign could eventually sway how decisions are made around the world and undermine U.S. interests.

https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2023/10/04/disinformation-china-us-xinjiang-global-opinion/d90f140e-626b-11ee-b406-3ea724995806_story.html

Decoding anti-China rhetoric in U.S. State Department's report

Hamzah Rifaat Hussain

CGTN, October 4, 2023

The U.S. State Department's Global Engagement Center Special Report accuses China of using a combination of tactics to create a world in which it seeks to "control" the flow of critical information. Without providing any evidence beyond passing references to Chinese applications, accounts and media outlets, the report blatantly stated that China is pouring "billions of dollars" into reshaping the global world order and attempts to "bend the will of multiple nations to Beijing's advantage.

<https://news.cgtn.com/news/2023-10-04/Decoding-anti-China-rhetoric-in-U-S-State-Department-s-report-1nD2iuz0PhC/index.html>

Xi's dilemma: the risk of waging war against Taiwan

Willy Wo-Lap Lam

The Jamestown Foundation, October 4, 2023

Chinese President Xi Jinping faces a dilemma. Around a dozen of his protégés have been found to be so corrupt that the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) General Secretary and Commander-in-Chief is no longer sure of the efficacy of the PLA's trump-card weapons. These men populate the upper echelons of the People's Liberation Army's (PLA) Rocket Force and the Central Military Commission Equipment Development Department, which handle China's missile and nuclear hardware and the procurement of top-level equipment for ICBMs, nuclear submarines, and spatial vehicles.

<https://jamestown.org/program/xis-dilemma-the-risk-of-waging-war-against-taiwan/>

China exhibition shows latest advances in drone technology, especially for military use

Liu Zhen

South China Morning Post, October 4, 2023

Beijing displayed an array of new military drones at an exhibition in southwest China last week, a technology the PLA considers a key area to advance. More than 300 models of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) – many for military uses – were on display at the UAV Industry Development Conference in the Science and Technology City in Mianyang, a major defence industry base in Sichuan province. One small high-speed drone, or loitering munition, can carry out a suicide bombing at 174km (108 miles) per hour, according to state broadcaster CCTV.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/military/article/3236713/china-exhibition-shows-latest-advances-drone-technology-especially-military-use>

Aukus could weaken China deterrence, US congress research paper suggests

Daniel Hurst

The Guardian, October 4, 2023

Doubts about Australia's willingness to join forces with the US in a war against China are being cited by congressional researchers as a potential obstacle to the Aukus nuclear-powered submarine deal. It lists six "potential arguments from sceptics", including that the sale could weaken deterrence "if China were to find reason to believe, correctly or not, that Australia might use its Virginia-class boats less effectively than the US Navy would use them".

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2023/oct/04/aukus-alliance-weaken-china-deterrence-research-paper-submarine-deal>

How the big chip makers are pushing back on Biden's China agenda

Tripp Mickle, David McCabe and Ana Swanson

The New York Times, October 5, 2023

A year after the Biden administration took its first major step toward restricting the sale of semiconductors to China, it has begun drafting additional limits aimed at denying Beijing the technology critical to modern-day weapons. But in recent months, its progress has been slowed as American chip companies have pushed back with a blunt warning: Cutting sales to China would gut their businesses and derail the administration's plan to build new semiconductor factories in the United States.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2023/10/05/technology/chip-makers-china-lobbying.html>

Chinese FM slams Japan's second round of nuclear-contaminated wastewater dumping; experts warn of further damage to Japan's exports and tourism sectors

Global Times, October 5, 2023

In spite of international outrage, Japan began releasing a second round of nuclear-contaminated wastewater from Fukushima. Chinese experts warned that this latest irresponsible move will not only further damage Japan's international reputation, but also continue to eat away at Japan's exports to China and discourage travel to Japan. After Japan's move, a spokesperson from the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs stated that China's stance on Japan's dumping of nuclear-contaminated wastewater from Fukushima has always been consistent and clear. The spokesperson emphasized, "We firmly oppose Japan's unilateral action of discharging the water into the sea."

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202310/1299251.shtml>

US provocatively points new nuke-tipped missile at China

Gabriel Honrada

Asia Times, October 5, 2023

The US has just tested a new type of nuclear-tipped air launch cruise missile, reaffirming the viability of the air-based leg of its nuclear triad against evolving threats from near-peer adversaries China and Russia with profound implications for regional stability and global non-proliferation norms. The AGM-181A LRSO with the variable yield W80-4 warhead may be crucial for the US to fill a perceived nuclear deterrence gap resulting from the downsizing of its nuclear arsenal after the previous Cold War while its near-peer adversaries, China and Russia, continued to develop tactical nuclear weapons.

<https://asiatimes.com/2023/10/us-provocatively-points-new-nuke-tipped-missile-at-china/>

China launches remote-sensing satellite

Zhao Lei

China Daily, October 5, 2023

China launched a remote-sensing satellite, according to the nation's leading space contractor China Aerospace Science and Technology Corp. The State-owned conglomerate said in a news release that the Yaogan 39 was carried by a Long March 2D rocket that lifted off at 0824hrs (China Standard Time) at the Xichang Satellite Launch Center in Sichuan province and soon arrived in its orbit. The satellite was jointly developed by the China Academy of Space Technology in Beijing and the Shanghai Academy of Spaceflight Technology, and is the latest member in the nation's Yaogan network.

<https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202310/05/WS651e2b87a310d2dce4bb9105.html>

Former U.S. soldier is accused of trying to give classified secrets to China

Adam Goldman

The New York Times, October 6, 2023

A former U.S. Army soldier who fled to Hong Kong has been charged with trying to deliver classified secrets to the Chinese government, according to federal court documents unsealed. Joseph D. Schmidt, 29, who served in a military intelligence battalion in Washington State, was indicted in Seattle on two counts of violating the Espionage Act. He was arrested this week after flying from Hong Kong to San Francisco and appeared in federal court. Prosecutors accused Mr. Schmidt of trying to help the Chinese government after he finished active duty with Army in January 2020.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2023/10/06/us/politics/china-classified-intelligence-army-soldier.html>

Chinese scientists discover new strategic mineral crucial for high-tech components

Global Times, October 6, 2023

China National Nuclear Corp announced that a key strategic mineral named Niobobaotite was discovered by three Chinese scientists. It is the 13th new mineral discovered in the past 70 years since the establishment of China's uranium geology system, and has great application and economic potential. Discovered by researchers Ge Xiangkun, Fan Guang and Li Ting, Niobobaotite received official recognition from the Commission on New Minerals, Nomenclature and Classification of the International Mineralogical Association, numbered IMA 2022-127a.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202310/1299306.shtml>

At UN, Chinese official urges global strategic stability

Minlu Zhang

China Daily, October 6, 2023

A Chinese head of delegation urged the international community to work together to maintain global strategic stability and reduce strategic risks. Sun Xiaobo, head of the Chinese delegation and director-general of the department of arms control of the Foreign Ministry, spoke at the General Assembly of the United Nations Disarmament and International Security Committee, or the First Committee of the 78th UN General Assembly. Sun pointed out that in the field of international security, Cold War mentalities, such as zero-sum games and bloc confrontations, have made a comeback, leading to intensified geopolitical conflicts that impact global strategic balance and stability.

<https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202310/06/WS651f46caa310d2dce4bb91ae.html>

What Chinese nuclear modernization means for U.S. deterrence strategy

George Krompacky

Freeman Spogli Institute for International Studies, Stanford University, October 6, 2023

Amidst evolving geopolitical shifts, the foundation of U.S. nuclear deterrence, forged in the crucible of the Cold War, faces a new set of challenges. The principle of mutually assured destruction (MAD), once the bedrock of deterrence, is now being tested by Russia's aggressive posturing and China's strategic advancements. In the wake of Russia's invasion of Ukraine and signals of a willingness to employ tactical nuclear weapons, questions arise about the efficacy of traditional deterrence strategies. Concurrently, China's expanding nuclear arsenal adds complexity to the equation. Do these developments mean America needs to rethink its deterrence strategy?

<https://fsi.stanford.edu/news/what-chinese-nuclear-modernization-means-us-deterrence-strategy>

China opposes U.S. placing Chinese firms on export control entity list

Xinhua, October 7, 2023

China resolutely opposes the move of the U.S. Commerce Department to place some Chinese companies on its export control "entity list," a spokesperson with China's Ministry of Commerce said. The spokesperson made the remarks in response to a media query on the U.S. Department of Commerce recently putting a number of Chinese entities on its export control "entity list" under the so-called Russia-related excuses. "The move is a typical act of economic coercion and unilateral bullying," said the spokesperson, noting that the U.S. side has generalized national security, abused export control measures, and arbitrarily imposed unilateral sanctions and "long-arm jurisdiction" on Chinese companies.

<https://english.news.cn/20231007/0aa1353c0d874cbd958df8769e908ebc/c.html>

US Senate delegation, the group most sensitive to geopolitics, visits China

Hu Xijin

Global Times, October 7, 2023

A bipartisan delegation of US senators led by Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer arrived in Shanghai, which should be seen as a new move to deepen communication between China and the US. As we all know, parliamentarians are usually the group with the most extreme anti-China stances in the US. This delegation does not include the most hawkish anti-China senators such as Marco Rubio and Tom Cotton, but Schumer himself is the proposer of the bill dubbed "China Competition 2.0."

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202310/1299385.shtml>

Chinese FM urges improving China-U.S. ties

CGTN, October 9, 2023

Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi urged for stabilizing and improving China-U.S. ties to benefit both countries as well as the world during a meeting with a U.S. congressional delegation led by Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer in Beijing. Wang, also a member of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China Central Committee, said China and the U.S. should respect each other's development paths chosen by the respective peoples, and respect each other's core interests and development rights.

<https://news.cgtn.com/news/2023-10-09/Chinese-FM-urges-improving-China-U-S-ties-1nLAaqawUWQ/index.html>

China's first nuclear power plant with super-large cooling towers being built in Guangdong

Global Times, October 9, 2023

State Power Investment Corporation (SPIC) announced on Sunday that phase one construction of its Lianjiang nuclear power plant started on September 29. As the country's first nuclear power plant with super-large cooling towers, it is expected to reduce the amount of sea water used and to generate up to 70.2 billion kWh annually after its construction. The super-large cooling towers are designed to transfer the heat of the power plant to the atmosphere to reduce the amount of cooling seawater used, and to lower the heat of the drainage.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202310/1299470.shtml>

Did the Chinese submarine accident happen?

Radio Free Asia, October 9, 2023

Submarine experts and observers are casting doubt on reports by British media, citing leaked intelligence, that a Chinese nuclear submarine had an accident in late August, resulting in the deaths of 55 sailors. The tabloid Daily Mail reported that the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) Navy submarine '093-417' "apparently got caught in a trap intended to ensnare British sub-surface vessels in the Yellow Sea." "According to a secret UK report the seamen died following a catastrophic failure of the submarine's oxygen systems which poisoned the crew," the Mail said.

<https://www.rfa.org/english/news/china/china-submarine-deaths-10092023041959.html>

China, Azerbaijan sign cooperation document on joint building of the International Lunar Research Station

Global Times, October 9, 2023

China and Azerbaijan signed a joint statement on cooperation on International Lunar Research Station program, which marked Azerbaijan's official participation in the program, with the two sides agreeing to conduct extensive and in-depth cooperation in the areas of demonstration, engineering implementation, operation and application at the station. The statement was signed by Li Guoping, Chief Engineer of the China National Space Administration, and Samaddin Asadov, chairman of Azerbaijan's space agency Azercosmos, during the 74th International Astronautical Congress held in Azerbaijan's capital Baku.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202310/1299467.shtml>

Inside Asia's arms race: China near 'breakthroughs' with nuclear-armed submarines, report says

Greg Torode

Reuters, October 9, 2023

A submarine arms race is intensifying as China embarks on production of a new generation of nuclear-armed submarines that for the first time are expected to pose a challenge to growing U.S. and allied efforts to track them. Analysts and regional defence attaches say evidence is mounting that China is on track to have its Type 096 ballistic missile submarine operational before the end of the decade, with breakthroughs in its quietness aided in part by Russian technology.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/inside-asias-arms-race-china-near-breakthroughs-with-nuclear-armed-submarines-2023-10-09/>

Xi meets U.S. congressional delegation

Xinhua, October 9, 2023

Chinese President Xi Jinping met with a U.S. congressional delegation led by Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer in Beijing. Xi said that the China-U.S. relationship is the most important bilateral relationship in the world, and how China and the United States get along will determine the future and destiny of humanity. Competition and confrontation do not conform to the trend of the times, still less can they help solve a country's own problems and the challenges facing the world.

<https://english.news.cn/20231009/655a3ba7ac1a48c2be8420322ef578f4/c.html>

How prepared is Taiwan for a war with China?

Erin Hale

Al Jazeera, October 10, 2023

The past month has been busy in the Taiwan Strait. China's People's Liberation Army (PLA) made 225 sorties into Taiwan's Air Defense Identification Zone (ADIZ) – an area monitored by the island's military – over 18 days in September and conducted large-scale naval exercises earlier this month. While these events occurred in international waters and airspace, they were meant to intimidate Taiwan and remind the self-ruled island's leaders that Beijing has not ruled out the use of force to take control of the territory it claims as its own.

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/10/10/how-prepared-is-taiwan-for-a-war-with-china>

Chinese navy looks to big data to give it an edge

Minnie Chan

South China Morning Post, October 10, 2023

The People's Liberation Army has outlined ways it is strengthening the navy's data analytics capability and collecting large amounts of information about foreign vessels and aircraft. In a full-page feature, the official PLA Daily newspaper described how data analysts on the Yancheng, a Type 054A guided-missile frigate, had been working with radar operators to collect sonar data from foreign ships. "Data collection has become one of our key tasks in regular training, which is now an integral part of our detachment," the report said, quoting a commander from the PLA's North Sea Fleet.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/military/article/3237356/chinese-navy-looks-big-data-give-it-edge>

China urges Philippines to take concerns seriously, stop making provocations on Ren'ai Jiao issue

Global Times, October 10, 2023

China once again urges the Philippines to take seriously China's concerns, stop making provocations and creating troubles at sea, and to stop groundless attacks and smears on the Ren'ai Jiao (also commonly known as Ren'ai Reef) issue, China's Foreign Ministry stated. A spokesperson for the Armed Forces of the Philippines said on Saturday that China's claim of "indisputable sovereignty" over the "West Philippine Sea" is disputable, adding that China's "unfounded" claim and its actions in the "West Philippine Sea" are irresponsible.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202310/1299547.shtml>

Majority of Chinese believe nuclear war could happen: poll

Ryohtaroh Satoh

Nikkei Asia, October 10, 2023

More than half of Chinese people believe a nuclear war could occur in the near future as Russia threatens to use nuclear weapons in Ukraine and superpowers fail in nuclear disarmament, according to a public opinion poll released. The findings were part of an annual China-Japan joint opinion survey conducted by Genron NPO, a Japanese think tank, and China International Communications Group, a publishing organization. The survey was conducted in August and September among citizens from the two countries aged 18 and over. There were 1,506 valid responses from China and 1,000 from Japan.

<https://asia.nikkei.com/Politics/International-relations/Majority-of-Chinese-believe-nuclear-war-could-happen-poll>

Saudi-China collaboration raises concerns about access to AI chips

Simeon Kerr, Samer Al-Atrush, Qianer Liu and Madhumita Murgia

Financial Times, October 10, 2023

Saudi-Chinese collaboration in artificial intelligence has stirred fears within the Gulf kingdom's premier academic institution that the ties could jeopardise the university's access to US-made chips needed to power the new technology. "Many people involved have raised their concerns to leadership about the Chinese relationships jeopardising the supercomputer," said one of the people aware of the matter. "They don't want to upset the US government." AI has become one of the regional battlegrounds of China-US competition in the Gulf, where Riyadh and Abu Dhabi are determined to build on flourishing trade relations to include technology transfer while also sustaining ties with Washington, their main security partner.

<https://www.ft.com/content/2a636cee-b0d2-45c2-a815-11ca32371763>

*Sylloge on China is compiled by Mr. Niranjan C. Oak
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