

March 31, 2024

SYLLOGE ON CHINA

Focus: Nuclear, Space, Missiles and other Security Issues

**An Initiative by the Nuclear and Arms Control Centre,
MP-IDSA**



Chinese private rocket company readies 'Falcon 9 equivalent' for maiden flight

Deng Xiaoci

Global Times, March 21, 2024

Space Pioneer, a Chinese private rocket company founded in 2019, revealed that its new large liquid-propellant reusable rocket model TL-3, also known as the Chinese "Falcon 9 equivalent" for its matching powerful design, has come closer to its maiden flight scheduled for July this year. Its main power system - the 9 Tianhuo-12 variable thrust engines forming the rocket's first stage - completed a hot running test on March 21, the last stage before final delivery. Specially designed for China's low-orbit satellite internet constellation construction, the TL-3 rocket has a diameter of 3.8 meters, a total length of 71 meters and a liftoff mass of 590 tons. It is capable of sending a payload of 17 tons to the Low Earth orbit (LEO) and 14 tons to the Sun-synchronous orbit, according to the company.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202403/1309285.shtml>

China will be ready for potential Taiwan invasion by 2027, US admiral warns

Brad Dress

The Hill, March 21, 2024

U.S. Adm. John Aquilino, head of Indo-Pacific Command, said "all indications" point to the Chinese military being ready for a potential invasion of Taiwan by 2027, the date China's leader Xi Jinping has set for a possible military operation. Aquilino testified in front of the Senate Armed Services Committee on Thursday that China's People's Liberation Army (PLA) continues an "aggressive military buildup" and modernization effort. "All indications point to the PLA meeting President Xi Jinping's directive to be ready to invade Taiwan by 2027," the admiral said in a statement released ahead of his testimony. "Furthermore, the PLA's actions indicate their ability to meet Xi's preferred timeline to unify Taiwan with mainland China by force if directed."

<https://thehill.com/policy/defence/4547637-china-potential-taiwan-invasion-2027-us-admiral-warns/>

Nuclear Industry: China National Nuclear Corporation opens R&D facilities for global cooperation

CGTN, March 21, 2024

The China National Nuclear Corporation says it will open its scientific research facilities and test platforms, in batches, for global cooperation. During the ongoing Nuclear Industry China

2024 held in Beijing, China National Nuclear Corporation unveiled a plan to open its research facilities to international scientific institutions and nuclear energy companies for cooperation. The first batch to be opened has ten key facilities, including nuclear fusion reactor HL-3, a test reactor for medical isotopes, the world's first third-generation underground research lab, and an advanced research reactor – considered to be one of the six major neutron sources in the world.

<https://news.cgtn.com/news/2024-03-21/VHJhbnNjcmlwdDc3ODM1/index.html>

China on Solomon Islands' Prime Minister Manasseh Sogavare

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the People's Republic of China, March 21, 2024

Since the establishment of diplomatic ties between China and Solomon Islands in September 2019, the two countries have enjoyed fast growth of bilateral relations, friendly cooperation in various fields, and fruitful results which have brought tangible benefits to the people in Solomon Islands. The fast growth of the bilateral relations since the establishment of our diplomatic ties fully demonstrates that establishing and developing relations with China based on the one-China principle is a right choice that stands the test of time and history. It's never too late to welcome new friends. As long as we engage with each other, we will usher in a bright future. For a handful of countries who still maintain the so-called "diplomatic ties" with the Taiwan region, the example set by Solomon Islands deserves some serious thought.

https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/xwfw_665399/s2510_665401/2511_665403/202403/t20240321_11264987.html

PLA upgrades armaments in race against US military

Yu Zeyuan

Think China, March 21, 2024

China has recently been making big moves to upgrade its military equipment. First, during the Two Sessions in early March, senior officials of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) Navy and Air Force respectively revealed new developments on aircraft carriers, the J-35 stealth fighter and the H-20 stealth bomber. The South China Morning Post (SCMP) later reported that China's new hypersonic drone is capable of reaching the continental US. These developments indicate that the PLA is accelerating its race against the US military amid deepening China-US rivalry.

<https://www.thinkchina.sg/pla-upgrades-armaments-race-against-us-military>

AUKUS likely to see membership expansion, 'poses threats to regional stability': Chinese experts

Zhang Yuying

Global Times, March 21, 2024

While pillar one of the agreement entails the US and UK assisting Australia in constructing nuclear-powered submarines, pillar two allows the three nations to collaborate on agreements for the development of advanced military technology in areas such as artificial intelligence, hypersonic missiles and quantum technologies, the media said. Chinese experts reached by the Global Times noted that the AUKUS alliance has been actively seeking to broaden its influence by expansion, with the overarching objective of transforming itself into a mini-NATO in Asia.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202403/1309291.shtml>

Construction of Linglong One in Hainan goes smoothly

Xinhua, March 21, 2024

The construction of Linglong One in Hainan Province has gone smoothly. Linglong One is another innovative nuclear reactor developed by China with independent intellectual property rights, after Hualong One reactor. It is also the first small modular pressurised water reactor in the world to have passed the International Atomic Energy Agency's (IAEA) general safety review. Based at the Changjiang nuclear power plant in Hainan, construction on Linglong One started in July 2021, and it is expected to be in commercial use at the end of 2025.

<https://english.news.cn/20240321/6c1bd57d96fb4e82907a0e7d234cf2f2/c.html>

China under cyberattack, 100s of govt units and firms compromised: Report

Bhaswar Kumar

Business Standard, March 21, 2024

Citing a recent case where an unnamed Chinese technology company was targeted by a foreign hacking group for cyber extortion, China's Ministry of State Security (MSS) warned that the networks of "hundreds" of other Chinese businesses and government units have also been infiltrated by these overseas hackers, in preparation for "larger scale criminal activities". The warning was issued by the MSS through a message on its official WeChat account. The intention of the message was to raise public awareness about hacking and cyber-ransom risks from overseas, which the state security authority said could cause "huge economic losses and leakage of sensitive information", especially given the "rampant" cyberattacks by foreign agencies in recent years.

https://www.business-standard.com/external-affairs-defence-security/news/china-under-cyberattack-100s-of-govt-units-and-firms-compromised-report-124032100909_1.html

US military ramps up activities in S.China Sea, risking conflicts: report

Liu Xuanzun and Guo Yuandan

Global Times, March 22, 2024

The US continued to strengthen its military activities on China's doorstep in the South China Sea and surrounding areas in 2023, including deploying aircraft carriers, nuclear submarines and bombers, holding intensified close-in reconnaissance operations, and holding joint exercises, which posed growing risks to China-US relations, according to a newly released think tank report. While the US is providing support to the Philippines in the ongoing friction between Beijing and Manila in the region, it is not ready to engage China militarily, and is not willing to be exploited by the Philippines, the report said. The report was released by the South China Sea Strategic Situation Probing Initiative (SCSPI) at a press conference in Beijing.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202403/1309354.shtml>

Another Chinese missile tracking vessel in Indian Ocean Region as India issues new NOTAM

Saurabh Sharma

Business Today, March 22, 2024

A Chinese satellite and missile tracking vessel is approaching the Indian Ocean, raising concerns in India, said Damien Symon, a geo-intelligence expert. He also said that one more Chinese research vessel is operating in the region right now. This comes in the wake of a notification by India for a no-fly zone over the Bay Of Bengal Region, indicating a likely missile test. The geo-intelligence expert expected the date of the missile test to be between April 3 and 4. In a tweet on Thursday, Symon wrote: "AreaWarning #India issues a notification for a no-fly zone over the Bay Of Bengal Region indicative of a likely missile test - Date | 03-04 April 2024." He said China's missile tracking vessel - Yuan Wang 03 - was seen heading to the IOR (Indian Ocean Region).

<https://www.businesstoday.in/india/story/another-chinese-missile-tracking-vessel-in-indian-ocean-region-as-india-issues-new-notam-422505-2024-03-22>

In One Key A.I. Metric, China Pulls Ahead of the U.S.: Talent

Paul Mozur and Cade Metz

The New York Times, March 22, 2024

When it comes to the artificial intelligence that powers chatbots like ChatGPT, China lags behind the United States. But when it comes to producing the scientists behind a new generation of humanoid technologies, China is pulling ahead. New research shows that China has by some

metrics eclipsed the United States as the biggest producer of A.I. talent, with the country generating almost half the world's top A.I. researchers. By contrast, about 18 percent come from U.S. undergraduate institutions, according to the study, from MacroPolo, a think tank run by the Paulson Institute, which promotes constructive ties between the United States and China.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2024/03/22/technology/china-ai-talent.html>

Chinese Vice Premier stresses sharing benefits of nuclear energy

Xinhua, March 23, 2024

Chinese Vice Premier Zhang Guoqing said that China stands ready to work with all parties to extend the benefits of nuclear energy development to a broader spectrum of nations. Zhang, also a member of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China Central Committee, made the remarks when attending the first Nuclear Energy Summit here as Chinese President Xi Jinping's special envoy. Noting that nuclear energy has unique advantages in addressing climate change and ensuring energy security, Zhang said China has been following a rational, coordinated and balanced nuclear security strategy put forward by President Xi, and formulated and implemented policies and measures for active, safe and orderly development of nuclear power.

<https://english.news.cn/20240323/9ec5eccfcc4d47768096b6b888060f08/c.html>

China's dispute with Taiwan is playing out near this frontline island

Chris Buckley and Amy Chang Chien

The New York Times, March 24, 2024

A small island controlled by Taiwan a few miles off China's coast lived for decades in constant readiness for war. At one point in 1958, troops there hunkered in bunkers as Communist forces rained hundreds of thousands of shells on them. These days, the island, Kinmen, has become a hub of Taiwan's commerce with China and its abandoned, weatherworn fortifications are tourist sites. Eight ferries a day take Taiwanese businesspeople and visitors from Kinmen to mainland China. But the sea around Kinmen has again turned tense after two Chinese men onboard a speedboat died in the area last month while trying to flee a Taiwanese Coast Guard vessel.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2024/03/24/world/asia/china-taiwan-ships.html>

How China advances its nuclear safety strategy

CGTN, March 24, 2024

A decade ago, Chinese President Xi Jinping proposed a rational, coordinated and balanced nuclear safety strategy at the third Nuclear Security Summit in The Hague, the Netherlands. Over the past

decade, China has made efforts to advance its nuclear safety strategy through legislative measures and regulatory transparency. On September 1, 2017, China adopted the Nuclear Safety Law, which incorporated nuclear safety as an important part of the overall national security framework. China also contributes its strength to the world by promoting its nuclear safety regulatory system and sharing advanced technology, experience, resources, and platforms, the white paper said.

<https://news.cgtn.com/news/2024-03-24/How-China-advances-its-nuclear-safety-strategy-1serdti7Ju0/p.html>

It's in China's best interest to rein in a nuclearised North Korea

Lee Min-Yong

South China Morning Post, March 24, 2024

Amid assessments that a seventh North Korea nuclear test hinges on leader Kim Jong-un's decision, the timing of its execution remains a matter of utmost concern. Experts indicate that North Korea had met the technical prerequisites for yet another nuclear test as of March 2023. Undoubtedly, China shoulders the primary responsibility for North Korea's nuclear status. This is evident as China, while adopting UN Security Council resolutions to impose sanctions on North Korea, has simultaneously pursued a dual approach of engagement, affording North Korea a window of opportunity. Despite China's professed commitment to stability on the Korean peninsula, its tolerance of North Korea's nuclear programme undermines these claims, leading to criticism that China lacks credibility when advocating for strategic cooperation with the US or discussing security concerns in the Asia-Pacific region.

<https://www.scmp.com/comment/asia-opinion/article/3256058/its-chinas-best-interest-rein-nuclearised-north-korea>

China blocks use of Intel and AMD chips in government computers

Ryan McMorrow, Nian Liu and Qianer Liu

Financial Times, March 24, 2024

China has introduced new guidelines that will mean US microprocessors from Intel and AMD are phased out of government PCs and servers, as Beijing ramps up a campaign to replace foreign technology with homegrown solutions. The stricter government procurement guidance also seeks to sideline Microsoft's Windows operating system and foreign-made database software in favour of domestic options. It runs alongside a parallel localisation drive under way in state-owned enterprises.

<https://www.ft.com/content/7bf0f79b-dea7-49fa-8253-f678d5acd64a>

U.S. and Britain accuse China of cyberespionage campaign

David E. Sanger and Mark Landler

The New York Times, March 25, 2024

The United States and Britain imposed sanctions on China's elite hacking units, accusing Beijing's top spy agency of a yearslong effort to place malware in America's electrical grids, defence systems and other critical infrastructure, and of stealing the voting rolls for 40 million British citizens. Taken together, the actions on both sides of the Atlantic underscored the escalation of cyberconflict between the Western allies and Beijing, in vastly different spheres.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2024/03/25/us/politics/china-hacking-us-sanctions.html>

Chinese comments on cyberattacks against the electoral commission in the UK

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the People's Republic of China, March 25, 2024

Cybersecurity is a global challenge. China is a major victim of cyberattacks. We have firmly fought and stopped all kinds of malicious cyber activities in accordance with the law, and advocated joint response from all countries through dialogue and cooperation. The origin-tracing of cyberattacks is highly complex and sensitive. When investigating and determining the nature of cyber cases, one needs to have adequate and objective evidence, instead of smearing other countries when facts do not exist, still less politicize cybersecurity issues. We hope relevant parties will stop spreading disinformation, take a responsible attitude and jointly safeguard peace and security in the cyberspace. China opposes illegal and unilateral sanctions and will firmly safeguard its lawful rights and interests.

https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/xwfw_665399/s2510_665401/2511_665403/202403/t2024032511270550.html

China's 45th naval fleet arrives in Tanzania for 5-day visit

CGTN, March 25, 2024

The 45th fleet of the Chinese People's Liberation Army Navy arrived in Tanzania for a five-day visit. The fleet, comprising a guided-missile destroyer, a guided-missile frigate and a comprehensive replenishment vessel, sailed slowly into Tanzania's largest port, Dar es Salaam in the morning. During their five-day stay, the Chinese soldiers will visit the Cemetery for the Memorable Deceased Chinese Experts Assisting Tanzania. The navies of the two sides will also participate in joint activities.

<https://news.cgtn.com/news/2024-03-25/China-s-45th-naval-fleet-arrives-in-Tanzania-for-5-day-visit-1sfMytTT8WY/p.html>

Apple reportedly seeking partnership with Baidu on using its AI solution

Zhang Weilan

Global Times, March 26, 2024

Apple has reportedly sought a partnership with Chinese search engine Baidu to provide generative AI solution in its devices sold in China. The US tech company is introducing AI to augment its operating system and other software. Media reports have suggested that Apple will use Baidu's Ernie Bot - a generative artificial intelligence product for its iPhone 16, Mac OS and iOS 18 in China. The Wall Street Journal reported last week that Apple had held preliminary talks with Baidu about using the Chinese company's generative AI technology in its devices in China, though, "Apple's discussions with Baidu are still exploratory," the report said citing people familiar with the matter.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202403/1309555.shtml>

China's modified Long March-8 rocket completes fairing separation test

People's Daily Online, March 26, 2024

A modified version of China's Long March-8 carrier rocket has completed a 5.2-meter-diameter fairing separation test and a new satellite-rocket joint operation test. The rocket was developed by the China Academy of Launch Vehicle Technology. The successful test represents a critical step in the rocket's development phase, as it prepares to enter its maiden flight test phase. For a launch vehicle, its fairing needs to have the maximum envelope space and the maximum carrying capacity to improve the adaptability and efficiency of the launch mission. The test verifies the correctness of the fairing separation scheme, and determines the maximum available envelope of the fairing.

<http://en.people.cn/n3/2024/0326/c90000-20149305.html>

Deterring the powerful enemy: China's Counter-Intervention capability in a regional conflict

Tom Shugart

Centre for a New American Security, March 26, 2024

Chinese military doctrine identifies three primary joint-level campaigns that could trigger a U.S. (and allied) military intervention: the Joint Blockade Campaign (such as a naval and air blockade isolating Taiwan), the Landing Campaign (such as a landing on Taiwan), and the Anti-Air Raid

Campaign (a defensive campaign, with offensive elements, intended to prevent strikes into the PRC from forces such as Taiwan, Japan, or the United States). PLA doctrine also identifies service-level campaigns that could support or supplement these joint-level campaigns, such as campaigns for offensive anti-ship operations, sea line of communication (SLOC) interdiction, SLOC guarding, naval base defence, coral reef seizure, air offense and defence, and conventional missile assault operations.

<https://www.cnas.org/publications/congressional-testimony/deterring-the-powerful-enemy>

AI could help transform Mars into habitable planet for humans: expert

Liu Caiyu

Global Times, March 26, 2024

Experts have expressed excitement about the potential for artificial intelligence (AI), at the Boao Forum for Asia in South China's Hainan Province. Zhang Keke, director of the Macau Institute of Space Technology and Application, told the Global Times that Mars could be transformed into a habitable planet for humans with the help of AI. Zhang said that Mars used to have water and an atmosphere, just like Earth, but Mars has evolved faster. In a sense, today's Mars represents the future of the Earth. "If we humans can go to Mars and transform it with the help of modern technologies such as AI, we might be able to transform the environment of Mars so that humans can live there, which would represent a very important starting point for a breakthrough moment in the technological revolution," Zhang said during a session at the Boao Forum for Asia.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202403/1309561.shtml>

Taiwan conducts missile drills 'in face of' China military intrusions

Voice of America, March 26, 2024

Taiwan conducted an air defence test on Tuesday deploying US-made Patriot missiles and its anti-aircraft artillery systems, saying it will ramp up training in the face of Chinese military "intrusions" around the self-ruled island. Beijing claims Taiwan as part of its territory and has said it will not rule out using force to bring the island under its control. Chinese warplanes and ships maintain a near-daily presence around the island, as Beijing has ramped up military pressure against Taipei using what experts say are "grey zone" actions — tactics that stop short of outright acts of war.

<https://www.voanews.com/a/taiwan-conducts-missile-drills-in-face-of-china-military-intrusions-/7542885.html>

'Trust deficit' between China and Myanmar's military, report says

Thompson Chau

Nikkei Asia, March 27, 2024

China, which has shielded Myanmar's regime from United Nations Security Council sanctions, has nevertheless refused to provide significant diplomatic backing and full recognition of the Burmese generals, according to a new International Crisis Group report. "The extent of China's displeasure with the Myanmar regime became even clearer via its muted response to a major offensive by the Three Brotherhood Alliance in northern Shan state, right on its border," Brussels-based ICG said in its report "Scam Centres and Ceasefires: China-Myanmar Ties Since the Coup" published.

<https://asia.nikkei.com/Spotlight/Myanmar-Crisis/Trust-deficit-between-China-and-Myanmar-s-military-report-says>

INDOPACOM Boss: China 'Soon to Be World's Largest Air Force'

Unshin Lee Harpley

Air and Space Forces Magazine, March 28, 2024

It has been known and publicly acknowledged for several years now that China has surpassed the U.S. Navy in sheer number of warships. But in recent testimony on Capitol Hill, the head of U.S. Indo-Pacific Command suggested China may also have world's largest air force soon, a surprising assessment of their rapid modernization efforts. "The world's largest Navy, soon to be the world's largest Air Force," Navy Adm. John C. Aquilino said, referring to the People's Liberation Army, before the Senate Armed Services Committee on March 21. "The magnitude, scope, and scale of this security challenge cannot be understated, all would be challenged." An INDOPACOM spokesperson confirmed to Air & Space Forces Magazine that Aquilino was referring to the number of warplanes each country's military possesses.

<https://www.airandspaceforces.com/indopacom-boss-china-soon-world-largest-air-force/>

Security alliance threatens stability: China Daily editorial

China Daily, March 28, 2024

Beijing has stressed time and again that China's rise is peaceful. What China is doing in the South China Sea, contrary to the claims of "aggression", is to defend its own sovereignty and territorial integrity. It is the Philippines with the collusion of the US that has been challenging the status quo

with its brazen provocations. China maintains that the maritime disputes should be settled through talks, and can be shelved for joint development if they cannot be settled for the time being. As far as the Taiwan question is concerned, it is China's internal affair. Whatever way the island is reunited with the motherland, it is none of any other country's business. Not Japan's, and not the US'. Their meddling is ill-intentioned and self-serving.

<https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202403/28/WS660561c8a31082fc043bf425.html>

Keynote Speech by H.E. Chen Xiaodong, Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China at the Session on the Global Security Initiative Of the Boao Forum for Asia Annual Conference 2024

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the People's Republic of China, March 28, 2024

The GSI is underpinned by "six commitments", specifically, commitment to the vision of common, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable security; respecting the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all countries; abiding by the purposes and principles of the U.N. Charter; taking the legitimate security concerns of all countries seriously; peacefully resolving differences and disputes between countries through dialogue and consultation; and maintaining security in both traditional and nontraditional domains. As another important public good China provides for the world, the GSI represents China's proposal to help build global consensus to address security challenges.

https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/wjbxw/202403/t20240328_11272725.html

Chinese scientists plan surface-to-air missile with 2,000km kill range

Stephen Chen

South China Morning Post, March 28, 2024

Chinese researchers say they have designed a surface-to-air missile that will vastly outstrip its rivals, with a kill range of more than 2,000km (1,240 miles), according to a peer-reviewed paper published by the Chinese language Journal of Graphics. Ultra-long-range air defence is considered infeasible, with surface-to-air missiles typically having a flight range of tens of kilometres and the fastest few reaching several hundred kilometres. The team, led by Su Hua, an associate researcher at Northwestern Polytechnical University, said the weapon would be able to shoot down early-warning aircraft and bombers, preventing them from intervening in possible regional conflicts.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/science/article/3256914/chinese-scientists-plan-surface-air-missile-2000km-range>

Philippines's Marcos promises action after China's 'dangerous attacks'

Al Jazeera, March 28, 2024

President Ferdinand Marcos has said the Philippines will take countermeasures against China after the latest confrontation between the two countries in the disputed South China Sea injured Filipino soldiers and damaged vessels. "We seek no conflict with any nation, more so nations that purport and claim to be our friends but we will not be cowed into silence, submission, or subservience," Marcos said in a statement.

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2024/3/28/philippines-marcos-promises-measures-after-chinas-dangerous-attacks>

China decries U.S. 'bullying.' But, to many, China is the bully.

Ishaan Tharoor

The Washington Post, March 29, 2024

At a regional security forum in the southern Chinese island of Hainan, Beijing laid out its vision for Asian peace and prosperity. But many onlookers interpreted the remarks made by Zhao Leji, the third highest-ranking official in the ruling Communist Party, as another tacit rebuke of the U.S. role in the region and an articulation of China's hardening desire for a regional order free of U.S. involvement. Under President Xi Jinping, China has put forward a somewhat vague project known as the Global Security Initiative — a set of broad-brush principles that, as the Financial Times summed up, "advocates for resolving conflicts through dialogue but which analysts believe ultimately aims to reduce America's role in global defence, particularly in Asia."

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2024/03/29/china-security-us-region-influence-confrontation/>

Chinese comments on US-China Chip issue

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the People's Republic of China, March 29, 2024

The US launched tech blockade and restrictions on China and sanctions and suppression against Chinese companies with an intent to contain China's development. They gravely harm the legitimate rights and interests of Chinese companies, violate market economy principles, undermine international trade rules, and destabilize the global industrial and supply chains. China remains firmly opposed to those US actions. We urge the US to correct the wrongdoings at once and stop illegal unilateral sanctions and long-arm jurisdiction against Chinese companies. China

will continue to closely follow the developments and firmly safeguard the lawful rights and interests of Chinese companies.

https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/xwfw_665399/s2510_665401/202403/t20240329_11273709.html

China urges respect for neighbours' security concerns after Japan approves record defence budget

CGTN, March 29, 2024

China urges Japan to respect neighbouring countries' security concerns and deeply reflect its history of aggression, Foreign Ministry spokesperson Lin Jian said in a query about Japan's record 7.95 trillion yen (\$52.52 billion) defence budget for the 2024 fiscal year. In recent years, Japan has been consistently increasing its defence budget and easing restrictions on arms exports, as well as seeking breakthroughs in military development, Lin noted. Japan's parliament approved the budget for the fiscal year 2024, starting in April. In terms of specific allocations, the 2024 fiscal year defence budget focuses on enhancing the country's counterstrike capabilities and strengthening missile defence systems. China hopes Japan will stick to the path of peaceful development so as to not further lose credibility among its Asian neighbours and the international community, Lin added.

<https://news.cgtn.com/news/2024-03-29/-China-urges-Japan-to-respect-neighbors-concerns-over-record-defence-budget-1smUYn9MEda/p.html>

China turns to AI in propaganda mocking the 'American Dream'

Erin Hale

Al Jazeera, March 29, 2024

"The American Dream. They say it's for all, but is it really?" So begins a 65-second, AI-generated animated video that touches on hot-button issues in the United States ranging from drug addiction and imprisonment rates to growing wealth inequality. The video, titled American Dream or American Mirage, is one of a number of segments aired by Chinese state broadcaster CGTN – and shared far and wide on social media – as part of its A Fractured America animated series. China has long exploited the enormous reach and borderless nature of the internet to conduct influence campaigns overseas.

<https://www.aljazeera.com/economy/2024/3/29/china-turns-to-ai-in-propaganda-mocking-the-american-dream>

Preparing for a China war, the Marines are retooling how they'll fight

Ellen Nakashima

The Washington Post, March 29, 2024

Beijing's aggressive military modernization and investment over the past two decades have challenged U.S. ability to control the seas and skies in any conflict in the western Pacific. China has vastly expanded its reach in the Pacific, building artificial islands for military outposts in the South China Sea and seeking to expand bases in the Indian and Pacific Oceans — including a naval facility in Cambodia that U.S. intelligence says is for exclusive use by the People's Liberation Army. The U.S. Marine Corps has a blueprint to fight back: a vision called Force Design that stresses the forward deployment of Marines — placing units on the front line — while making them as invisible as possible to radar and other electronic detection.

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/national-security/2024/03/29/us-china-taiwan-marines/>

'China and US are inseparable, conjoined Siamese twins:' Graham Allison

Global Times, March 30, 2024

Occasionally, human beings are born as inseparable, conjoined Siamese twins. There are two heads, but they have the same nervous or gastrointestinal system. If either of them were to strangle the other, they commit suicide - this is how Graham Allison describes China-US relations in an exclusive interview with Global Times reporters Li Aixin, Xue Ke and Niu Yingbo. During his recent trip to Beijing, Allison, Douglas Dillon Professor of Government at Harvard University, met with a series of government officials and scholars, and attended President Xi Jinping's meeting with representatives from the US business, strategic and academic communities on March 27. The Chinese leadership has risen to the conceptual challenge of Thucydides' Trap, and is prepared to be intellectually courageous in trying to deal with it, he said.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202403/1309804.shtml>

Chinese private space company joins Taobao to experiment delivering on-demand packages by reusable rocket

Global Times, March 31, 2024

Privately-run Beijing Sepoch Technology Co announced that it will collaborate with Chinese e-commerce platform Taobao, an affiliate of Alibaba, to experiment delivering on-demand packages by reusable rockets. The first test will be tried out in 2024, according to Beijing Sepoch. If the project moves smoothly, international delivery packages could be completed by a rocket within

hours. The private space company confirmed the plan with the Global Times. The delivery will use the first stage of Sepoch Hiker, a medium-sized reusable liquid carrier rocket developed by the company.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202403/1309832.shtml>

Japan, China hold "expert dialogue" over treated water release

Kyodo News, March 31, 2024

Japan and China held an "expert dialogue" over the release of treated radioactive wastewater from the crippled Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant, in their latest effort to address the dispute about the issue. During the talks in Dalian, northeastern China, the Japanese side explained their belief that the water release is safe and detailed ongoing radiation monitoring activities. China has upheld an import ban on all seafood products from Japan in response to the multiple discharges that began in August last year. According to the Japanese Foreign Ministry, it is the first publicly acknowledged Japan-China expert dialogue on the water release, even though the two countries have communicated on the issue at various levels.

<https://english.kyodonews.net/news/2024/03/53bdf247f8f5-update1-japan-china-hold-expert-dialogue-over-fukushima-water-releases.html>

CCTV announces J-15D electronic warfare aircraft for Fujian carrier

China Arms, March 31, 2024

The People's Liberation Army Navy has equipped its carrier-based aircraft J-15 with electronic warfare pods in an attempt to develop a new electronic warfare aircraft. However, there had been no information revealed about it until recently when CCTV openly reported on this electronically enhanced variant of the J-15 developed for carrier-based operations, effectively making it an official announcement. According to CCTV, this electronic warfare aircraft, named J-15D, has already entered service and is expected to appear on the decks of Fujian aircraft carrier soon.

<https://www.china-arms.com/2024/03/j-15d-electronic-warfare-aircraft-announced/>

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