

May 10, 2025

SYLLOGE ON CHINA

Focus: Nuclear, Space, Missiles and other Security Issues

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



Senior PLA ideology official Miao Hua removed from China's top legislature

Xinlu Liang

South China Morning Post, April 30, 2025

Miao Hua, a top general at China's powerful Central Military Commission (CMC), has been removed from his position as a member of the country's legislature, the National People's Congress. According to a statement issued after a meeting of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, Miao has been dismissed from the NPC. Miao, who was put under investigation for suspected "serious violations of discipline" in late November, was the head of the political work department of the CMC, a role critical in managing Communist Party ideology and personnel changes within the People's Liberation Army.

https://www.scmp.com/news/china/military/article/3308539/senior-pla-ideology-official-miao-hua-removed-chinas-top-legislature?module=top_story&pgtype=subsection

A long-abandoned US nuclear technology is making a comeback in China

Casey Crownhartarchive page

MIT Technology Review, May 1, 2025

China has once again beat everyone else to a clean energy milestone—its new nuclear reactor is reportedly one of the first to use thorium instead of uranium as a fuel and the first of its kind that can be refueled while it's running. China is also leading the way for some advanced reactor technologies (that category includes basically anything that deviates from the standard blueprint of what's on the grid today: large reactors that use enriched uranium for fuel and high-pressure water to keep the reactor cool).

<https://www.technologyreview.com/2025/05/01/1115957/old-new-nuclear-technology/>

China nuclear power installed capacity tops 120m kilowatts

China Daily, May 1, 2025

China's operational nuclear power installed capacity and those under construction had exceeded 120 million kilowatts, an official with the National Energy Administration (NEA) said. China's nuclear power development has always adhered to the principle of "safety first," and the country has become one of the few in the world to possess a complete nuclear power industrial system, said Zhang Xing, an official with the NEA, adding that the technological level and comprehensive capabilities of China's nuclear power sector have now entered the world's advanced ranks.

<https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202505/01/WS68139962a310a04af22bd375.html>

China has developed an underwater drone boat Blue Whale

Taras Safronov

Militarnyi, May 1, 2025

China has launched the Blue Whale research vessel, capable of operating in an unmanned capacity underwater. Xinhua China reported that the drone is fully autonomous and can stay at sea for up to 30 days. This 11-meter-long drone, with a displacement of 12 tons, is capable of reaching speeds of up to 40 knots on the surface and remaining undetected at depth for an extended period. While in the underwater position, it can remain motionless for more than a month, similar to a stealthy nuclear submarine. The Blue Whale can reach a surface speed of up to 36 knots (66 km/h) and an underwater speed of up to 4 knots (7.5 km/h).

<https://militarnyi.com/en/news/china-has-developed-an-underwater-drone-boat-blue-whale/>

C.I.A. aims to recruit Chinese nationals with new videos

Julian E. Barnes

The New York Times, May 1, 2025

A pair of new C.I.A. videos released Thursday aim to encourage Chinese nationals to spy for the agency, appealing to their frustrations with, and fears of, Beijing's government and its corruption. The Mandarin-language videos are modeled on a series of videos the agency made in recent years asking Russians to spy for the United States, appeals that previous C.I.A. leaders said helped develop new sources. The appeal to Chinese nationals reflects the priority John Ratcliffe, the C.I.A. director, has placed on increasing the agency's intelligence collection on China. In a note to C.I.A. officers last month, Mr. Ratcliffe said China was atop the agency's priority list.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2025/05/01/us/politics/cia-china-spy-recruit.html>

China approves 10 new reactors, boosting nuclear power for climate goals

Xinhua, May 1, 2025

China has recently greenlit 10 new nuclear reactors across coastal regions, accelerating its atomic energy expansion amid renewed global interest in nuclear power. The move underscores the nation's commitment to achieving its ambitious climate targets -- peaking carbon emissions before 2030 and achieving carbon neutrality by 2060. Eight new reactors will employ the domestically designed Hualong One, a third-generation pressurised water reactor. The remaining two units will utilize the CAP1000 technology derived from the Westinghouse AP1000.

<https://english.news.cn/20250501/ab4eacdc204746b3bef93bb96aa2e4e1/c.html>

China's military reveals details of Type 094 nuclear submarine for first time

Liu Zhen

South China Morning Post, May 2, 2025

The People's Liberation Army has revealed details of its Type 094 nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarine for the first time, during the navy's open day. The sea-based nuclear deterrent is said to have a submerged displacement of 11,000 tonnes, according to information on display during events to mark the PLA Navy's 76th anniversary. Posters on display for the open day also said the nuclear submarine had a maximum speed of 30 knots and could operate at a maximum depth of 400 metres.

https://www.scmp.com/news/china/military/article/3308686/chinas-military-reveals-details-type-094-nuclear-submarine-first-time?module=top_story&pgtype=subsection

US ability to defeat China in Taiwan threatened, top Indo-Pacific commander warns

Demetri Sevastopulo

Financial Times, May 3, 2025

The top American military commander in the Indo-Pacific said the US would defeat China in a conflict over Taiwan now but warned that it faced increasing challenges as China rapidly expanded its military. "The United States will prevail in the conflict as it stands now, with the force that we have right now," Admiral Samuel Paparo told the McCain Institute's annual Sedona Forum in Arizona

<https://www.ft.com/content/a78d7737-874f-47f9-9c50-9c6dd6c2bd44>

China claims an island in the South China Sea. Satellite images show Beijing's growing power-hungry struggle in the region

Jessica Orwig and Robert Leslie

Business Insider, May 3, 2025

Tensions between China and the Philippines are heating up over tiny sandbars and coral reefs in the South China Sea, and the US could get caught in the middle. The satellite images below show China's massive expansion across the South China Sea, which has turned open waters into a looming battleground that could rope the US in. Over the last decade, China has expanded

hundreds of miles south by building artificial islands over underwater reefs in the Paracel and Spratly Islands in the South China Sea.

<https://www.businessinsider.com/satellite-images-show-chinas-expansion-in-the-south-china-sea-2025-5#over-the-last-decade-china-has-expanded-hundreds-of-miles-south-by-building-artificial-islands-over-underwater-reefs-in-the-paracel-and-spratly-islands-in-the-south-china-sea-1>

‘China speed’ accelerates drive towards next step in nuclear fusion

Ling Xin

South China Morning Post, May 4, 2025

China is accelerating its efforts to build the world’s first nuclear fusion reactor capable of achieving net energy generation – a move that would be a historic step towards commercialising a clean, safe and near-limitless source of energy. The Burning Plasma Experimental Superconducting Tokamak (Best), is now in its final assembly phase in Hefei and is expected to be completed in 2027.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/science/article/3309037/china-speed-accelerates-drive-towards-next-step-nuclear-fusion>

China launches world’s fastest submersible drone with rocket-drilling capabilities

Kapil Kajal

Interesting Engineering, May 4, 2025

China has launched the world’s first high-speed, uncrewed submersible vessel. This advanced boat can operate independently for a long time in very tough ocean conditions. According to Xinhua News, the hybrid platform is designed to operate above and below the waterline and marks an important advancement in China’s indigenous marine technology development. The launch took place on April 28 in the southern coastal city of Zhuhai under the auspices of the Chinese Academy of Sciences and Yunzhou Tech.

<https://interestingengineering.com/innovation/worlds-first-fast-submersible-drone>

What's behind China's anti-corruption crackdown targeting top military brass?

William Zheng

South China Morning Post, May 5, 2025

China's anti-corruption drive targeting the top brass of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) should not be taken as a sign that President Xi Jinping has weak control over the military, according to analysts. They added that the campaign's impact on the military's war readiness and modernisation was also limited, and that internal competition among Xi's supporters could be a factor behind the high-level investigations.

https://www.scmp.com/news/china/military/article/3309022/whats-behind-chinas-anti-corruption-crackdown-targeting-top-military-brass?module=top_story&pgtype=subsection

Is it too late to slow China's AI development?

Rishi Iyengar

Foreign Policy, May 5, 2025

Nvidia's hefty financial hit comes from a new Trump administration rule requiring the company to acquire a special license to sell its H20 chips in China, adding another hurdle in accessing one of the world's biggest tech markets and the United States' foremost competitor in the race for artificial intelligence. The perennial question hanging over U.S. restrictions on Chinese tech over the past eight years has been how well they are actually working. Significant milestones in China this year—such as the launch of the advanced AI model DeepSeek-R1 and advances in semiconductor chips from tech giant Huawei—have reignited that debate. Chinese AI companies' inability to access the most cutting-edge U.S. chips may have paradoxically supercharged their innovation by forcing them to be more resourceful, as was the case with DeepSeek.

<https://foreignpolicy.com/2025/05/05/china-artificial-intelligence-ai-technology-us-chip-restrictions-nvidia/>

Chinese Foreign Ministry on CIA posting two Chinese-language videos on social media for alleged recruitment

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the People's Republic of China, May 6, 2025

The U.S. has long been using all kinds of despicable methods to steal other countries' secrets, interfere in their internal affairs and commit subversion. Such behavior severely violates

international law and basic norms governing international relations, and seriously endangers international security and stability. The Chinese videos posted by the CIA on social media are another solid confession of what it does. The U.S. not only maliciously smears and attacks China, but also blatantly attempts to lure Chinese personnel, even government officials, to be their informants.

https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/xw/fyrbt/lxjzh/202505/t20250506_11616191.html

U.S. advances toward China in hypersonic weapons race

Heather Somerville

The Wall Street Journal, May 6, 2025

The U.S. military has completed successful test flights of a reusable hypersonic rocket-powered aircraft, its first such accomplishment in more than a half century. The win is a sign of the Pentagon's progress in a wartime technology race in which China has a sizable lead. The U.S. military hasn't flown a reusable hypersonic-speed aircraft since 1968. That is when it shuttered the X-15 program, a superfast human-piloted aircraft lauded as a gold standard for experimental programs. As the Pentagon dawdled, China plowed ahead, building some of the most state-of-the-art hypersonic missiles. Russia has claimed it has its own superfast nuclear-capable weapons.

<https://www.wsj.com/politics/national-security/u-s-china-hypersonic-weapons-race-5e34cacf>

Space rescue: Chinese astro-engineers share a satellite-saving mission that spans 123 days and covers 8.5 million kilometres

Huang Lanlan

Global Times, May 6, 2025

China has successfully established the world's first three-satellite constellation on the distant retrograde orbit (DRO) in the Earth-moon region of space, with the constellation operating stably for over 200 days, according to the project's developer, the Technology and Engineering Centre for Space Utilization (CSU) at the Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS). During the launch of two satellites in the three-satellite constellation - DRO-A and DRO-B - in March 2024, the mission once encountered anomalies. However, the situation was successfully navigated, under the 123-day dedicated efforts by the project's team at the centre. The DRO is a unique family of orbits between the Earth and the moon.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202505/1333428.shtml>

US tests AI-driven combat drones as it competes with China to develop 'loyal wingmen'

Enoch Wong

South China Morning Post, May 6, 2025

The US Air Force has started ground tests of its new AI-driven combat drones, intensifying its technological rivalry with China as the two countries race to develop unmanned weapons systems that can work alongside crewed aircraft. The US Air Force announced that trials for the YFQ-42A and YFQ-44A drones, developed by US-based defence firms General Atomics and Anduril respectively, had started. The prototypes are the first unmanned aircraft in US military history to receive fighter designations. While China has not announced plans to build its next generation of loyal wingmen, it has tested drones such as the FH-97A and GJ-11.

https://www.scmp.com/news/china/military/article/3309244/us-tests-ai-driven-combat-drones-it-competes-china-develop-loyal-wingmen?module=top_story&pgtype=subsection

China's expanding global espionage network under scrutiny

The Economic Times, May 6, 2025

China is a police state, a nation whose people are under constant surveillance, plus it owns one of the world's largest espionage networks. It is unclear how many "spies" China has, but last year the BBC quoted a Western intelligence official who estimated China has some 600,000 people working on intelligence and security. Of course, it is difficult to quantify such things, especially because China utilizes not only paid employees, but proxy organizations like the United Front Work Department (UFWD) and also civilians that collect data for the government.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/international/world-news/chinas-expanding-global-espionage-network-under-scrutiny/articleshow/120915392.cms?from=mdr>

Chinese Foreign Ministry on China-US trade talks

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the People's Republic of China, May 7, 2025

Recently, the U.S. said repeatedly it wants to negotiate with China. This meeting is requested by the U.S. side. China firmly opposes the U.S.'s tariff hikes. This position remains unchanged. Meanwhile, as we've stressed many times before, China is open to dialogue, but any dialogue must be based on equality, respect and mutual benefit. To pressure or coerce China in whatever way simply does not work. We will resolutely safeguard our legitimate interests and uphold international fairness and justice.

https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/xw/fyrbt/lxjzh/202505/t20250507_11616836.html

China is working on a jammer to send missiles after ‘ghost’ fleet of warships

Stephen Chen

South China Morning Post, May 7, 2025

In a naval combat simulation conducted by Chinese researchers, an anti-ship missile targets a fleet of eight People’s Liberation Army warships showing on its radar. But it is not an armada – it is just a single vessel. Four electronic warfare devices circling the ship created the illusion, sending signals that could deceive even an advanced radar from a distance. It was developed by a team from the Beijing Research Institute of Telemetry, an aerospace defence contractor.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/science/article/3309372/china-working-jammer-send-missiles-after-ghost-fleet-warships>

US and China to launch formal trade talks

Demetri Sevastopulo, Aime Williams and Ryan McMorrow

Financial Times, May 7, 2025

Washington and Beijing will hold their first trade talks since US President Donald Trump launched a trade war against China that has rattled financial markets and triggered concerns about supply chains. Treasury secretary Scott Bessent and US trade representative Jamieson Greer will meet their Chinese counterparts in Geneva this week. China said vice-premier He Lifeng, its top economy official, would lead its delegation. The meeting will be the first high-level interaction between the two sides since vice-president Han Zheng attended Trump’s inauguration in January.

<https://www.ft.com/content/cb553e32-2372-410b-9e4d-0aa59c6db35d>

Uncovering Chinese academic espionage at Stanford

Garret Molloy and Elsa Johnson

The Stanford Review, May 7, 2025

This summer, a CCP agent impersonated a Stanford student. Under the alias Charles Chen, he approached several students through social media. Anna*, a Stanford student conducting sensitive research on China, began receiving unexpected messages from Charles Chen. At first, Charles’s outreach seemed benign: he asked about networking opportunities. But soon, his messages took a strange turn. Charles inquired whether Anna spoke Mandarin, then grew increasingly persistent and personal. He sent videos of Americans who had gained fame in China, encouraged Anna to visit Beijing, and offered to cover her travel expenses.

<https://stanfordreview.org/investigation-uncovering-chinese-academic-espionage-at-stanford/>

China claims its hypersonic weapon with Mach 20 speed can strike global targets in 30 mins

Prabhat Ranjan Mishra

Interesting Engineering, May 8, 2025

Researchers in the Chinese military claimed that they can launch missiles from space using different types of platforms. They even revealed that China's re-entry glide missiles, can travel up to 13,000 miles per hour in high altitudes within the atmosphere, according to a report. Published last month in the Chinese academic journal Acta Aeronautica et Astronautica Sinica, the details highlight that some variants that can be launched from space may have the capability of drastically compressing the adversary's early-warning system response time and operational scope, thereby enhancing the probability of successful penetration.

<https://interestingengineering.com/military/china-hypersonic-missile-gets-mach-20-speed>

Chinese Foreign Ministry on the Philippines-U.S.-Australia joint sea and air patrol in the South China Sea

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the People's Republic of China, May 8, 2025

China firmly opposes the recent joint sea and air patrol in the South China Sea by the Philippines, the U.S. and Australia and their hyping up. The current situation in the South China Sea is generally stable. There isn't any problem with the freedom of navigation and overflight that countries enjoy in accordance with the law. When carrying out activities in the South China Sea, countries need to observe international law and uphold the spirit of the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC), and should not target any third country or endanger regional peace and stability.

https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/xw/fyrbt/lxjzh/202505/t20250508_11617555.html

PLA prevents Philippine corvette from trespassing into Huangyan Dao waters, releases trail illustration

Liang Rui and Liu Xuanzun

Global Times, May 8, 2025

The Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) has recently prevented a Philippine corvette from intruding into Chinese territorial waters around Huangyan Dao, and the Chinese Ministry of National Defence and Foreign Ministry slammed the Philippine side's infringing provocations. An expert said

that frequent maritime provocations and media manipulation are habitual tactics employed by the Philippines, warning that such disregarding of facts negatively impacts regional peace.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202505/1333576.shtml>

Can China launch hypersonic glider from satellite? Rocket force study suggests possibility

Stephen Chen

South China Morning Post, May 8, 2025

China's hypersonic weapons can travel at extreme speeds of up to Mach 20, strike global targets within half an hour and even be launched from space, according to a new study. Researchers from the People's Liberation Army Rocket Force (PLARF) summarised the capabilities and vulnerabilities of China's re-entry glide missiles, revealing they can travel up to 21,000km/h (13,000 miles per hour) in high altitudes within the atmosphere.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/science/article/3309502/can-china-launch-hypersonic-glider-satellite-rocket-force-study-suggests-possibility>

Chinese Foreign Ministry on alleged Chinese dual use exports to Russia

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the People's Republic of China, May 8, 2025

China's position on the Ukraine issue is consistent and clear. We've all along been committed to promoting talks for peace and ending the conflict. We have never provided lethal weapons to any party to the conflict, and strictly controlled dual-use articles. Let me stress that those who deliberately want to smear China can make an issue out of any normal cooperation between China and other countries. We firmly oppose ill-intentioned and groundless accusations as well as political manipulation.

https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/xw/fyrbt/lxjzh/202505/t20250508_11617555.html

China will have 1,000 nuclear warheads by 2030

Kris Osborn

Warrior Maven, May 8, 2025

Beneath the visible threshold of China's well known military expansion in the realm of carriers, destroyers, stealth aircraft, drones armored vehicles, the People's Liberation Army is also

massively accelerating production and modernization of its nuclear arsenal. An Arms Control Association essay says DoD and independent researchers states China now has a total of at least 500 nuclear weapons. The essay says researchers anticipate that, based on its current pace of production, China is expected to have up to 1,000 nuclear warheads by 2030.

<https://warriormaven.com/china/china-will-have-1000-nuclear-warheads-by-2030-2>

Can China sink all US carriers in 20 minutes?

Think China, May 8, 2025

Can China's hypersonic missiles destroy all of America's aircraft carriers in 20 minutes? Comments made by US Secretary of Defence Pete Hegseth at the end of last year have recently sparked fervent discussion among Chinese and American military buffs, with China's Ministry of National Defence also responding. Before becoming defence secretary in January 2025, 44-year-old Hegseth was a TV host on Fox News. As a guest last November on a podcast by former Navy SEAL Shawn Ryan, he warned that China is building a military force "specifically dedicated to defeating the United States of America"; that the People's Liberation Army's (PLA) hypersonic missiles could sink all of America's aircraft carriers "within the first minutes of a potential conflict"; and that the US lost "every time" in all of the Pentagon's simulated war games against China.

<https://www.thinkchina.sg/politics/can-china-sink-all-us-carriers-20-minutes>

Huawei and other Chinese chip firms are catching up fast

The Economist, May 8, 2025

A wave of optimism has lately swept through China's chip industry. Share traders in Shanghai joke that Cambricon, a local firm, not only offers a substitute for Nvidia's processors, but for its stock, too. Although the Chinese semiconductor firm is worth but a fraction of its giant American rival, its share price has rocketed by 350% over the past year, around 15 times as much as Nvidia's.

<https://www.economist.com/business/2025/05/08/huawei-and-other-chinese-chip-firms-are-catching-up-fast>

China, Russia urge nuclear-weapon states to abandon Cold War mentality: joint statement

China Daily, May 9, 2025

China and Russia urged nuclear-weapon states to abandon the Cold War mentality and zero-sum games, according to a joint statement on global strategic stability. The two sides emphasized the

importance of maintaining a constructive relationship among major countries in addressing global strategic issues. Noting that nuclear-weapon states bear special responsibilities for international security and global strategic stability, the statement said that they should give up taking measures that trigger strategic risks, and concerns should be addressed through equal dialogue and consultations based on mutual respect to enhance trust and avoid dangerous misjudgments.

<https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202505/09/WS681cfd0da310a04af22be3aa.html>

Statement by the Chinese Delegation on Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy at the Third Session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2026 NPT Review Conference

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the People's Republic of China, May 9, 2025

Peaceful uses of nuclear energy, as one of the three pillars of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), is an inalienable right of all States parties to the NPT. "Atoms for peace and development" is the shared aspiration of all nations. Promoting peaceful uses of nuclear energy and nuclear technology is an important means to address the challenges of global climate change and fulfill the United Nations 2030 Sustainable Development Goals. China is ready to make efforts with the international community to give full play to the role of NPT in serving world peace and development.

https://www.mfa.gov.cn/eng/wjb/zzjg_663340/jks_665232/kjfywj_665252/202505/t20250509_11618155.html

Xi Jinping meets Myanmar's military government chief for the first time since the latter took power in 2021

Grant Peck

The Washington Post, May 10, 2025

The chief of Myanmar's military government, Senior Gen. Min Aung Hlaing, has for the first time since seizing power four years ago met with President Xi Jinping of China, a top ally of his military government, state-run media in the Southeast Asian nation reported. The Global New Light of Myanmar newspaper reported that Xi pledged to provide assistance for recovery after Myanmar's devastating earthquake in March and aid in efforts to end the country's civil war. The two leaders met in Moscow on the sidelines of the commemoration of the 80th anniversary of the defeat of Nazi Germany in World War II.

https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2025/05/10/xi-beijing-min-aung-hlaing-lashio/1ac2ba16-2d88-11f0-a724-3bc879c9f843_story.html

China will have over 100 nuclear reactors. A PLA study warns some could be hit in wartime

Stephen Chen

South China Morning Post, May 10, 2025

China's nuclear power construction is booming, yet the People's Liberation Army (PLA) harbours growing concerns about how Chinese reactors will fare in a conflict. Last month, Beijing greenlit 10 new reactors, bringing the total number of operational and under-construction commercial reactors to 102 – more than any other country. All of these plants are along the coast, with some in geopolitically sensitive areas, such as the Taiwan Strait and South China Sea.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/science/article/3309749/china-will-have-over-100-nuclear-reactors-pla-study-warns-some-could-be-hit-wartime>

Sylloge on China is compiled by Mr. Niranjana C. Oak

Nuclear and Arms Control Centre, MP-IDSA