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CHINA

Xinjiang Military Region Explores System-Based Training

In January, a regiment of the Xinjiang Military Region [organised](#) assessment of system-based training. In the recent years, the Xinjiang Military Region has introduced and enhanced the application and handling of system-based training. The system-based training is an integrated training model facilitated by various modules that support multi-branch coordination. The command vehicle uses the unmanned combat modules for various military tasks such as multi-dimensional reconnaissance of enemy's positions. Reportedly, earlier, the concerned Xinjiang Military Region had to spend time and energy communicating plans and selecting personnel. However, with the new integrated training model, all [participating](#) personnel and equipment are integrated into a system that facilitates easier and faster communications and decision making. For instance, the unmanned modules in the system carries out reconnaissance of the enemy's location and data is transferred to the combat vehicle in real time enabling the commander to plan and undertake quick decision, and faster actions.

China's Top Generals Purged

In another round of anti-corruption campaign, two of China's top military officials, Zhang Youxia, vice-chairman of the Central Military Commission (CMC) and Liu Zhenli, chief of CMC's Joint Staff Department have been [purged](#). The state media Xinhua reported on 24 January that both of them have been placed under [investigation](#) for "suspected serious violations of discipline and law".

Speculation about their political career was triggered by their absence from a top-level Party seminar presided by Chinese president Xi Jinping on 20 January. Reportedly, Zhang Youxia has been placed under investigation over issues of corruption including failure to control corruptive practices of his family members and delinquency in reporting issues to the party leadership. There were few reports in the Western media regarding accusations against Zhang of leaking [nuclear secrets](#) to the United States (US). Some observers also noted that differences between Xi and Zhang over China's deadline and People's Liberation Army (PLA)'s capability in invading Taiwan could also be one of the reasons. Notably, following the purge, the PLA Daily in its editorial [warned](#) officials against corrupt practices, stating that the CPC Central Committee and the CMC will investigate "every case till the end, no matter how many are involved or how deep the trail goes".

JAPAN

Japanese Defence Minister Visits US

Japan's Minister of Defence Shinjiro Koizumi [embarked](#) on a week-long trip to the United States of America from 11 January. He started off his trip with a visit to Hawaii, where he spoke at the Honolulu Defense Forum organised by a prominent US-based think tank. The next day, Koizumi visited the headquarters of the US Indo-Pacific Command (USINDOPACOM), where he met its head Admiral Samuel J Paparo. Both sides exchanged 'candid' views on the regional security situation and discussed ways to boost bilateral cooperation. Both sides agreed to further boost deterrence and response capabilities. Koizumi also later met General Xavier T

Brunson, Commander of the US Forces Korea and the United Forces Command, where trilateral cooperation with the Republic of Korea formed the subject of discussion. During his time in Hawaii, Koizumi also visited prominent sites such as Pearl Harbor and the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific, where he commemorated those who lost their lives in the Imperial Japanese Navy's attack on 7 December 1941.

On 13 January, Koizumi visited Los Angeles, where he visited a drone manufacturer and 'engaged in discussions with representatives from Japanese and US defense industries', followed by Washington DC, the last leg of his tour. In Washington, the defence minister met members of the US Congress who had sponsored resolutions in support of Japan after tensions with China spiralled in December 2025. He then joined his American counterpart, Secretary of War Pete Hegseth, in undertaking physical training exercises with members of the Japanese Self-Defence Forces and the US Army's 3rd Infantry Regiment. After a courtesy call on Vice President JD Vance, the two defence ministers held a Japan-US Defense Ministerial Meeting where the two sides discussed practical ways to enhance the deterrence capabilities of the US-Japan alliance. Interestingly, Koizumi was also given a briefing on the US defence bureaucracy's approach to Artificial Intelligence use.

The defence minister returned to Japan after further visits to key drone and satellite companies as well as a meeting with the President of a leading American think-tank.

Japan, ROK Defence Chiefs Meet

The defence ministers of Japan and the Republic of Korea (ROK) [met](#) in Yokosuka Naval Base in Japan on 30 January to discuss ways to enhance mutual defence cooperation between the two countries in light of the still-fragile state of bilateral relations. The 50-minute meeting [saw](#) Defence Minister Shinjiro Koizumi express hope that the meeting would present 'an opportunity to exchange candid opinions and deepen the relationship of mutual trust'. His Korean counterpart, Minister of National Defence Ahn Gyu-Back, reciprocated the hope that bilateral relations would move 'a step forward' thanks to the meeting.

Both sides reaffirmed their commitment to work together for regional security and stability, bilaterally and trilaterally with the United States of America. Both sides mentioned joint efforts for the 'complete denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula', and agreed to regularise annual visits by both sides to each other's countries. Ahn thanked Koizumi for the Japanese Self-Defence Forces' assistance to a stricken transport aircraft of the ROK Air Force, which had to make an emergency landing at the Naha Air Base in Japan's southwestern Okinawa prefecture earlier the same day. After the meeting, Koizumi told reporters he was looking forward to visiting the ROK for the next meeting.

TAIWAN

Taiwan's Indigenous Submarine

Taiwan's first indigenous submarine, the Narwhal, is likely to be [delivered](#) by early June 2026. Its handing over to the navy has

been delayed due to “incompatibility between an onboard electronic management system and other sensing and weapons systems,” a problem which has been “provisionally resolved. Recently, it was put on “its sixth sea acceptance test.”

In a separate development, Taiwan and the US [endorsed](#) the Pax Silica Declaration, which is a US-led initiative, “to secure supply chains for advanced technologies and critical minerals” with the underlying principles of “mutual prosperity, technological progress, and supply chain resilience.” The two sides signed a joint statement in this regard at the sixth round of their Economic Prosperity Partnership Dialogue in Washington. Reportedly, Taiwan is also [considering](#) a forward deployment of HIMARS rocket systems to its outlying islands Penghu and Dongyin islands. ATACMS tactical missiles, which has a range of up to 300 kilometres, attached to the system, would increase Taiwan’s strike capabilities significantly, targeting “PLA naval ports, missile bases, and airfields in China’s Fujian and Zhejiang provinces.”

THE KOREAN PENINSULA

South Korea’s Defence Industry Cooperation

In January, South Korea increased its cooperation with various countries in the field of defence industry. South Korea’s Vice Defense Minister Lee Doo-hee and Minister for Arms Procurement and Personnel Gijs Tuinman of Netherlands [discussed](#) ways to enhance cooperation between the two countries in defence industry and strengthen ties in the fields like

artificial intelligence (AI) and space research. Notably, Netherland had supported South Korea during the Korean War (1950-1953) and had sent its troops to fight against North Korean aggression. Also, South Korea and Britain held [talks](#) for cooperation in the arms industry and strengthen joint production of weapon systems between South Korean and British companies. According to another report, South Korea [completed](#) the flight tests of its indigenously developed fighter jet called KF-21.

North Korea Launches Hypersonic Missiles

On 4 January, North Korea [tested](#) several hypersonic missiles. Reportedly, this launch of missiles were part of the exercise to evaluate the military preparedness of the North Korean hypersonic weapon system. The North Korean leader Kim Jong-un observed the launch of these missiles and he called upon to maintain the nuclear deterrent and be prepared for the actual military conflict. Apparently, these hypersonic missiles were launched from the Ryokpho District, Pyongyang Municipality and they hit the targets about 1,000 kilometres away in the East Sea (Sea of Japan). The South Korean media [reported](#) that Kim regime’s test-launching of hypersonic missiles coincided with the China-South Korea summit and the seizure of Venezuelan leader Nicolas Maduro by the United States. According to the South Korean military, these missiles were launched at 7.50 AM on 4 January. On 27 January, North Korean regime again [fired](#) several ballistic missiles towards the East Sea.