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मनोहर पर्रिकर रक्षा अध्ययन एवं विश्लेषण संस्थान

CHINA MILITARY DIGEST

SEPTEMBER 2025

- China held the 2025 Victory Day parade
- Defense Minister Dong Jun Meets with US Congressional Delegation
- 12th Beijing Xiangshan Forum was held
- China and Thailand holds "Eagle Strike-2025" Joint Air Force Exercise
- General Liu Zhenli holds Talks with Commander of the Australian Defence Force

China held the 2025 Victory Day parade

China held the 2025 Victory Day parade in Tiananmen Square, Beijing on September 3. During the ceremony, Xi Jinping was flanked by the Russian President Vladimir Putin and North Korean leader Kim Jong-un. A total of 26 heads of states and governments [attended](#) the ceremony, most of who were from Central and South Asian countries. Among the invited guests included Iran's President Masoud Pezeshkian, Pakistan's Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, Vietnam's President Luong Cuong, and Zimbabwe's President Emmerson Mnangagwa. Most of the Western leaders have not [attended](#) the event except for Prime Minister of Slovakia Robert Fico and President of Serbia Aleksandar Vucic. It is said that Xi Jinping has sought to transform the Victory Day parade into a diplomatic platform that also speaks about Beijing's diplomatic and security calculus. Besides, sixty-one foreign heads of state and government, high-level representatives of relevant countries, heads of international organizations, and former political leaders attended the meeting. Xi Jinping in his speech [said](#) that China fears no violence and is self-reliant and strong. He pointed out that today the world is facing a situation of making choices between peace and war, dialogue and confrontation, and win-win cooperation and zero-sum game. He called for transforming the PLA into a world-class military, and provide strategic support for the Great Rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. He urged the Chinese people to advance China's development and national

rejuvenation through Chinese style modernization. A large number of PLA troops, military equipment, and military aircrafts were organized into 45 military formations displayed during the parade. The parade showcased new tanks, unmanned intelligent systems, cyber warfare, hypersonic aircraft, air defense and anti-missile systems, strategic missiles, and main battle equipment. Among the PLA aircrafts showcased were early warning and command aircraft, special aircraft, transport aircraft, bombers, tankers, fighter jets, and carrier-based aircraft participated in the parade.

Defense Minister Dong Jun Meets with US Congressional Delegation

On September 22, Chinese Defense Minister Dong Jun [met](#) with a delegation of US lawmakers led by Rep. Mac Thornberry, former Ranking Member of the House Armed Services Committee, in Beijing. Dong Jun said China hopes that the members of congress would disregard interference and constraints and take constructive and pragmatic measures to contribute to improving bilateral military relations and promoting positive China-US relations. He [added](#) that the US lawmakers' visit "shows a good phase in strengthening China-US communications," which "is the right thing to do." He underlined that the People's Liberation Army (PLA) is willing to build a relationship of mutual respect, peaceful coexistence, and stable and positive development with the US military, while resolutely safeguarding national sovereignty, security, and development interests. He [suggested](#) that the two

countries should keep military communication channels open and promote the stable, healthy, and sustainable development of bilateral military relations through concrete actions. Washington issued statement that said the US delegation emphasized the need to increase dialogue and transparency between the two countries, especially at the military-to-military level, and underlined that the US seeks a peaceful resolution to the issue of Taiwan. The delegation [said](#) that the US and China need better communications to prevent disagreements or misunderstandings from spiraling into unintended conflict in the Indo-Pacific. Following the Nancy Pelosi's Taiwan trip in August 2022, Beijing cut-off all US-China military dialogues and since then, the US has long struggled to foster reliable military-to-military communications with China. However, the Biden administration had managed to persuade China to resume the key military dialogues including China-US Theatre Commanders Talks, China-US Defense Policy Coordination Talks and the bilateral Military Maritime Consultative Agreement meetings by the end of 2024. Nonetheless, these dialogues didn't provide a reliable crisis communications link between the two militaries at either the most senior levels nor at the operational level on and above the high seas in the Indo-Pacific.

12th Beijing Xiangshan Forum was held

The 12th Beijing Xiangshan Forum was [held](#) on September 17 that invited foreign and domestic guests. The Forum has [brought](#) together defense and military leaders from over 100 countries; including Singapore, Russia, France, Vietnam, Brazil

and Nigeria, as well as representatives of international and regional organizations. This year's theme is "Upholding International Order and Promoting Peaceful Development." The programme featured four plenary sessions and eight simultaneous sessions focusing on global security governance, Asia-Pacific security cooperation, safeguarding international order, and building regional peace. Zhang Youxia, Vice Chairman of the Central Military Commission, in his speech emphasized on advancing the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation through Chinese-style modernization. Members of the CMC Liu Zhenli and the Chinese Defense Minister Dong Jun attended the meeting along with official representatives from more than 100 countries, regions and international organization. Among the foreign guests [invited](#) for the forum were Malaysian Defense Minister Mohamed Khaled Nordin, Cambodian Defense Minister Tea Seiha, Myanmar Defense Minister Maung Maung Aye, Namibian Minister of Defense and Veterans affairs Frans Kapofi, Rwandan Minister of Defense Juvenal Marizamunda, and Chief of the General Staff of the Senegalese Armed Forces General Mbaye Cisse.

China and Thailand conducted "Eagle Strike-2025" Joint Air Force Exercise

In mid-to-late September, the China-Thailand "Eagle Strike 2025" joint air force exercise was [held](#) in Thailand. This joint exercise is aimed to improve the tactical skills of participating forces and deepen mutual trust and practical cooperation between the two militaries. The closing ceremony was [held](#) on September 25 at the

Udon Royal Thai Air Force Base. Since 2015, the Chinese and Thai air forces have held regular exercises, but these exercises were suspended during the COVID-19 pandemic and were resumed in 2022. This year marks the eighth such joint exercise between the two sides. According to the Chinese Air Force expert Fu Qianshao, the Thai Air Force's tactics and training methods are Western-style training methods and weaponry. During a meeting with Thai Army Supreme Commander General Phana Khlaeplotthuk in May in Beijing, Chinese Defense Minister Dong Jun stated that China-Thailand military cooperation has a solid foundation and has yielded fruitful results. He added that China is willing to work with Thailand to leverage existing cooperation mechanisms, further enhance cooperation in areas such as joint training and personnel training. It is to be noted that Thailand has been a staunch ally of the United States since the early days of the Cold War and is one of six countries that have signed defense treaties with the United States. For the joint exercise in Thailand, China [sent](#) six J-10C/S, two J-11B/BS (one of which was a J-11BG), and two JH-7A fighters, supported by KJ-500 early warning aircraft, electronic warfare aircraft, transport aircraft, and surface-to-air missile units. During the military exercise, fighter jets from both sides continuously executed various aerial maneuvers, from high-altitude dives to low-altitude circling. China used PL-15E missiles during the exercise, and later on, the Thai Air Force conducted a public seminar to study the PL-15E missiles.

General Liu Zhenli Holds Talks with Commander of the Australian Defence Force

On 13 August 2025, Admiral David Johnston AC RAN, Chief of Australian Defence Force, met General Liu Zhenli, Chief of Staff of the Joint Staff Department, in Beijing. The two sides [exchanged](#) views on military-to-military ties, bilateral, global, and regional security issues, and agreed to strengthen defense dialogue and promote the development of bilateral military relations. At the meeting, Admiral Johnston [reiterated](#) the importance of all countries in the region operating in a safe and professional manner at all times to avoid the risk of miscalculation or escalation. He also emphasized the importance of adherence to international law, particularly the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, which provides the comprehensive legal framework for all activities in the oceans and seas. He urged for respecting sovereignty and upholding peace, security and stability. Admiral Johnston stressed Australia's commitment to a stable and rules-based regional order, emphasizing the need for all nations to operate in a safe, professional and predictable manner – especially in contested maritime zones. The meeting [followed](#) the 23rd Australia-China Strategic Dialogue held in February 2025, signaling a continued effort to manage tensions and maintain open channels of communication between the two nations. Amidst the ongoing disputes in the South China Sea and East China Sea, the dialogue between Admiral Johnston and General Liu Zhenli represent a diplomatic effort to mitigate risks and foster military predictability in an increasingly volatile region.