

Wednesday Dispatch

01 January, 2020

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 (IDSA)



INDIAN PUGWASH SOCIETY



INSTITUTE FOR DEFENCE
STUDIES & ANALYSES
रक्षा अध्ययन एवं विश्लेषण संस्थान

Prepared by:
Diya Deep Singh

President Xi's impressive speech to welcome New Year

Zamir Ahmed Awan

People's Daily Online, January 1, 2020

It is a tradition of Chinese leadership to address the public on all critical occasions. President Xi Jinping addressed the nation on the eve 2020. He expressed satisfaction regarding the achievements made during 2019, mentioning that China worked hard and pressed ahead with many concrete efforts. Thanks to the steady pursuit of high-quality development, China's GDP is expected to edge close to as high as 100 trillion yuan with the per capita figure reaching the level of 10,000 U.S. dollars.

Although China faced several challenges, especially geopolitical challenges, and domestic issues, economic growth and prosperity were still witnessed during the year 2019. It all is due to the hard work of common people and the collective efforts of the masses. The government has provided the enabling policies and environments, while it was the hard work of the people of China to achieve economic growth in spite of the global recession.

One of the most impressive aspects of his speech was his love for people. He always places the most importance on the welfare of people. He proudly highlighted some of the achievements in 2019: about 340 impoverished counties and more than 10 million people were lifted out of poverty. The lunar probe Chang'e-4, for the first time in human history, landed on the far side of the moon; the Long March-5 Y3 rocket was successfully launched; the Xuelong 2 icebreaker set sail on its maiden voyage to the Antarctic; the construction of the global Beidou Navigation Satellite System network is sprinting towards completion; the commercial application of 5G technology is accelerating; the Beijing Daxing International Airport opened like a phoenix spread its wings... all these achievements are the result of the efforts and sweat of those who are striving in this new era, and they demonstrate extraordinary Chinese splendor and Chinese strength. Moreover, he mentioned that as usual, no matter how busy he was, he always spared time to make visits to people living in the countryside.

People shared many of their innermost thoughts with him, and he always keeps them in mind. Further elaborating on the essential achievements of 2019, he cited that the most memorable moment of 2019 were celebrations pertaining to the 70th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China. We cheered for the glorious achievements China has made over the past 70 years and were overwhelmed by the sheer force of patriotism. The formations during the military parade were mighty, and the mass pageant found to be thrilling. Tiananmen Square was turned into a sea of happiness.

Based on the achievements of 2019, he is right to be optimistic for 2020, believing it will be a year of milestone significance. China will finish building a moderately prosperous society in all respects

and realize the first centenary goal. 2020 will also be a year of a decisive victory for the elimination of extreme poverty.

He praised the development of Macao under "One Country, Two Systems" and expressed his satisfaction over the achievements of Macao. He expressed his feelings regarding the situation in Hong Kong and said, "I sincerely wish Hong Kong well and our Hong Kong compatriots well. Hong Kong's prosperity and stability is the wish of Hong Kong compatriots and the expectation of the people of our motherland".

He conveyed a strong message to the whole world "China is determined to walk along the road of peaceful development and will resolutely safeguard world peace and promote common development. We are willing to join hands with people of all countries in the world to together realize the Belt and Road Initiative, and push forward the building of a community with a shared future for mankind, and make unremitting efforts for the creation of a beautiful future for all". At the end of his speech, he once again wished everyone "A Happy New Year."

<http://en.people.cn/n3/2020/0101/c90000-9645407.html>

China and Iran to strengthen cooperation

Wang Qingyun

China Daily, January 1, 2020

China and Iran said they will strengthen cooperation to implement the Iran nuclear deal and uphold multilateralism, as Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif visited China for the fourth time in 2019. When meeting Zarif in Beijing on Tuesday, State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi said the deal faces serious challenges, and the root cause of tensions is that the United States withdrew unilaterally from the deal, gave up its due international obligations and applied maximum pressure on Iran. The deal, which has been endorsed by a United Nations Security Council resolution, is an important outcome of multilateral diplomacy, Wang said, adding that to maintain its authority and validity is to maintain multilateralism, international law and basic norms that guide international relations.

China supports all kinds of constructive efforts that help ease tensions and uphold the deal, and hopes parties involved will continue to implement the deal effectively by sticking to the right direction, standing up against external pressure and settling differences through talks, Wang said. Also, China will firmly safeguard international fairness and justice, oppose any kind of unilateral behavior or bullying, and work for political and diplomatic resolutions to the Iran nuclear issue, Wang added. Wang said he hopes to work with Zarif to implement the consensus reached by the

top leaders of China and Iran, and consolidate political mutual trust and deepen pragmatic cooperation between the two countries.

Zarif praised China's role in maintaining the Iran nuclear deal, and briefed Wang on Iran's talks with Russia and Europe over the Iran nuclear issue. Iran hopes to keep close contact with China to uphold multilateralism, oppose unilateralism and take effective measures to safeguard the deal as well as its own legitimate interests, Zarif said, adding that Iran greatly values its ties with China. The meeting came after China, Russia and Iran started a joint military exercise in the Gulf of Oman on Friday. The exercise lasted until Monday.

<https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202001/01/WS5e0bd8f7a310cf3e35581d7f.html>

PLA garrison in Hong Kong releases video of air, sea exercises

China Military Online, December 31, 2019

CCTV released a video on Sunday, showing footage of air and sea exercises conducted recently by the garrison of People's Liberation Army (PLA) in Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR). The drill – posted by the station's military channel – includes an emergency response, joint search and rescue, and joint patrols. The PLA said that the drill lasted longer than previous exercises and involved more troops, with training closer to actual combat.

Authorities said the HKSAR garrison of the PLA strictly abided by laws and regulations of HKSAR and notified the HKSAR government in advance. Beijing has reiterated its confidence in the team, saying it has the "determination, confidence and capability" to fulfill its duties and missions vested in the Basic Law and the Law on Garrisoning the HKSAR to safeguard national sovereignty, security and development interests, and maintain long-term prosperity and stability of the region. Defense Ministry spokesperson Ren Guoqiang also stressed that the PLA Hong Kong Garrison will follow the command of the Communist Party of China Central Committee and the Central Military Commission at all times.

http://english.chinamil.com.cn/view/2019-12/30/content_9706115.htm

China steps up warship building programme as navy looks to extend its global reach

Kristin Huang

China is speeding up its warship building programme as its navy extends its reach to cover Beijing's increasingly far-flung interests. The latest warships, launched last week, were a Type 055 and a Type 052D, both guided missile destroyers built by Dalian Shipbuilding Industry

Company in Liaoning province. The ships – China’s sixth Type 055 and, according to mainland media its 23rd Type 052D, were among 24 launched by the PLA Navy in 2019. At about 12,000 tonnes, the Type 055 class is China’s first guided missile destroyer equipped to hold and fire 112 missiles. At 8,000 tonnes, the Type 052D has 64 vertical launchers. Typically, such ships require one or two years of outfitting and sea trials before they enter service.

China’s drive to build and commission warships stepped up a gear after President Xi Jinping took office and in 2015 began sweeping reforms across the entire PLA, demanding that it become combat-ready more quickly. Eighteen ships went into service in 2016 alone, and at least another 14 joined in 2017, according to a report from US think tank the Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) released in December last year. In 2018, China launched 21 warships, including five Type 054A frigates, four Type 056 corvettes and a ballistic missile submarine, Chinese news portal Sina.cn reported. China’s Type 075 helicopter ship nears completion, amateur pictures show 22 Aug 2019 As of 2018, the PLA Navy consisted of more than 300 vessels, making it larger than the 290 that the US Navy could muster, the CSIS report said. While new ships join the PLAN every year, there has been no overall increase in total fleet size as many older vessels are being gradually replaced, said Collin Koh, a research fellow at the S Rajaratnam School of International Studies think tank at Singapore’s Nanyang Technological University. “But the overall quality of the ships has improved, since each new destroyer and frigate inducted into service, for example, is larger and much more capable than the ones being replaced,” he said.

First made-in-China aircraft carrier, the Shandong, enters service. Koh said that China’s rapid build-up in hardware and software required a corresponding build-up of professional, qualified personnel to crew and maintain these assets, and there China was lagging behind.

Earlier this month, two decommissioned Type 053H3 class frigates – the Jiaying and the Lianyungang – were given to the Bangladeshi Navy. Hong Kong-based military commentator Song Zhongping, said the latest launches were in line with China’s evolving maritime strategy.

Chinese navy trains top guns to command expanding aircraft carrier fleet

12 Dec 2019

“In the past, China emphasised near-coast defence, but now, China is sailing into the far seas to safeguard its national sovereignty and development interests,” Song said.

He also said China needed to improve the power systems in its warships if it wanted a strong combat capability. Beijing has maritime disputes with neighbours including Vietnam, the Philippines and Japan. It claims to have ownership of most of the busy and resource-rich South China Sea and views “freedom of navigation” exercises in the region by Western powers – mainly the US – as threats.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/military/article/3043975/china-steps-warship-building-programme-navy-looks-extend-its>

