

Wednesday Dispatch

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SYLLOGE ON CHINA

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China, Pakistan launch 6th joint naval exercise

Zhao Lei

China Daily, January 8, 2020

China and Pakistan launched a joint naval exercise on Monday in Karachi, a coastal city in Pakistan, according to the People's Liberation Army. The nine-day "Sea Guardians 2020" exercise was organized to strengthen security cooperation, enhance and develop the nations' strategic partnership, foster joint efforts to safeguard seas and improve the two militaries' capabilities to handle sea-based terrorism and crime. The exercise consists of two sessions—joint training in Karachi and live-fire drills in northern parts of the Arabian Sea—and will include workshops, tactical simulation, joint patrol, air and missile defense, law enforcement inspection and anti-submarine operations, the PLA said in a statement.

<https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202001/08/WS5e151941a310cf3e3558316e.html>

China successfully launches new communication technology experiment satellite

Xinhua, January 8, 2020

China sent a new communication technology experiment satellite into space from Xichang Satellite Launch Center in Sichuan Province at 11:20 p.m. (Beijing Time), Tuesday. The satellite has entered the preset orbit. It will be used in communication, radio, television and data transmission, as well as high throughput technology test. The satellite was launched on a Long March-3B carrier rocket. It was the 324th mission for the Long March series carrier rockets. The new satellite and the carrier rocket were developed by the Shanghai Academy of Spaceflight Technology and the China Academy of Launch Vehicle Technology, under the China Aerospace Science and Technology Corporation.

http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2020-01/08/c_138685999.htm

Chinese naval 33rd escort taskforce escorts eight Chinese fishing boats

China Military Online, January 8, 2020

The guided-missile frigate Weifang (Hull 550) of the 33rd Chinese naval escort taskforce under the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) Navy successfully escorted eight fishing boats of the China National Fisheries Corporation to the designated sea area in waters west of the Gulf of Aden at 4 p.m. on January 6, local time. This is the first time that the Chinese naval escort taskforce has dispatched special forces to perform on-board escort tasks.

The eight fishing boats that were escorted this time set sail from Zhoushan Port in China's Zhejiang Province and sailed to Morocco via the Gulf of Aden. Taking into considerations that there are totally eight ships moving in low speed and low freeboard, vulnerable to pirate attacks, the escort formation formulated a strict escort plan and sent five special combatants on board for the mission. Five heavily armed special combatants boarded the escorted ship YUANYU 926 on the early morning of January 3. They worked with the captain of the fishing boat, assisted in improving their anti-piracy measures, and conducted anti-piracy deployment drill under different circumstances with the crew.

During the escort mission, frigate Weifang comprehensively used helicopter patrol, ship maneuver and other methods to strengthen observation and alertness. Sailors closely monitored the situation of the surrounding waters of the formation, and successfully dispersed a number of suspected pirate boats. After four days and three nights, all of the eight fishing boats passed through the dangerous waters safely. "Big thanks to our motherland and the Chinese Navy!" said Captain Chai Guokuan of YUANYU 926. "This is the first time I have led the crew through the Gulf of Aden and the first time I am escorted by the navy of our motherland. I can personally feel the safety and convenience brought by our strong motherland. We feel very proud!" said Chai.

http://english.chinamil.com.cn/view/2020-01/08/content_9712435.htm

China starts work on US\$97 million, 10,700 tonne civilian patrol vessel – its biggest ever

Laura Zhou

South China Morning Post, January 8, 2020

With tensions between Beijing and its neighbours riding high over territorial claims in the South China Sea, a Chinese shipyard has begun work on what will be the largest offshore patrol vessel in the nation's civilian fleet, according to a state media report. Commissioned by the Guangdong Maritime Safety Administration, the 676 million yuan (US\$97.1 million) ship is designed to handle a range of tasks, from emergency operations and law enforcement to search and rescue missions and even tackling pollution, China News Service reported. At 165 metres (540 feet) long and 20.6 metres wide, the vessel will weigh in at 10,700 tonnes and be large enough to accommodate several types of helicopters. According to earlier reports it is expected to be completed by September next year.

At present, only the Chinese coastguard, which is administered by the People's Armed Police – a branch of the military – has patrol ships weighing more than 10,000 tonnes.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/military/article/3045240/china-starts-work-us97-million-10700-tonne-civilian-patrol>

CES 2020: 5G, AI provide spark

Kong Wenzheng

China Daily, January 7, 2020

With industry experts expecting record retail sales from the US consumer tech industry in the first year of a new decade, the world's largest and most influential technology expo is kicking off in Las Vegas with 5G, artificial intelligence (AI) and electric and self-driving vehicles generating much buzz. The 2020 Consumer Electronics Show (CES) kicked off on Sunday afternoon with two-day media events featuring news conferences and an official sneak peek event. Hundreds of companies provided a glimpse of their latest innovations before the four-day trade event officially starts on Tuesday. The organizer of the event, the Consumer Technology Association (CTA), estimates that in this year's show, more than 4,500 exhibitors from around 160 countries are launching nearly 20,000 new transformative tech products that fall into 36 product categories.

Among those categories, streaming services, wireless earbuds, 5G connectivity and AI-enabled devices are leading the growth in 2020, according to a CTA report revealed on Sunday. The advancement and commercialization of 5G, or fifth-generation wireless technology, and AI are particularly driving innovation in the field and influencing human culture and behavior, according to industry experts. While the internet of things (IoT) defined the market dynamic in the past decade, this year the industry is "increasingly confronted with an entirely new IoT, and that is the intelligence of things," said Steve Koenig, vice-president of research at the CTA, during an event on Sunday discussing industry trends. "5G is one of those ingredient technologies that is really powering the intelligence of things," he said. "This 5G narrative is just going to continue to unfold as we move forward throughout the decade."

<https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202001/07/WS5e149943a310cf3e355830b8.html>

Chinese military hints at plans for airborne laser attack weapon

Liu Zhen

South China Morning Post, January 7, 2020

China could be developing the capability to attach a new laser weapon to its planes, after its military revealed plans to buy such equipment. Notices titled "procurement plan for airborne laser attack pod" and "price inquiry on procurement plan for controlling software module of laser attack platform" were published on Saturday on weain.mil.cn, the official weapons and equipment procurement website of the People's Liberation Army (PLA). Marked confidential, the notices invited bids from potential suppliers.

Although the detailed requirements for such equipment are unknown, it is likely to be a new type of tactical assault weapon, rather than laser guidance devices for missiles, which are already widely in use. The notice titles supported this idea, said Global Times, the nationalist tabloid published under the auspices of Communist Party mouthpiece People's Daily. Global Times reported that this type of airborne laser weapon could be a tool for aerial interception to take down incoming missiles or shoot down hostile aircraft in a dogfight.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/military/article/3045066/chinese-military-hints-plans-airborne-laser-attack-weapon>