

Thursday Dispatch

09 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

China and Iran: a relationship built on trade, weapons and oil

Kristin Huang

South China Morning Post, January 9, 2020

Amid its long-running conflict with the US, Iran has increasingly turned to China for aid to boost its military and to help protect its economy from trade sanctions imposed by Washington.

The strong ties between Beijing and Tehran have been evident in recent days as tensions have risen in the Middle East, triggered by the killing of Iran's top military chief Qassem Soleimani by the US in Iraq. Tehran responded with a missile attack on US forces in Iraq. China's envoy to Iran, Chang Hua, has said Beijing remained committed to its partnership with Tehran. Zhai Jun, China's special representative for the Middle East, visited Tehran for a security dialogue on Monday and Tuesday, when he said some "external nations" were stirring provocations, without naming the US.

China remains Iran's biggest trading partner, but its oil imports from the country have fallen sharply as a result of US sanctions. In November 2019, the last available data, China imported 547,758 tonnes of Iranian oil, down from 3.07 million tonnes in April, according to China's General Administration of Customs. Trade between China and Iran in 2018 totaled US\$35.13 billion, with crude oil accounting for about half, or US\$15 billion.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/military/article/3045253/china-and-iran-relationship-built-trade-weapons-and-oil>

Nation kicks off busiest year for launches

Zhao Lei

China Daily, January 9, 2020

China used a Long March 3B carrier rocket late on Tuesday to send an experimental communication satellite into space, marking the first launch in what is expected to be the busiest year for the nation's space industry. The launch took place at 11:20 pm at the Xichang Satellite Launch Center in Sichuan province. It was the 324th mission for the Long March series carrier family, according to China Aerospace Science and Technology Corp, the country's major space contractor.

The company said the satellite—Communication Technology Experimental Satellite 5—was designed and built by its Shanghai Academy of Spaceflight Technology and is tasked with communication, broadcasting, data transmission operations and high-throughput technology demonstration. China's space industry is getting ready for an extremely busy year, with at least 50 launch missions likely to take place. China Aerospace Science and Technology Corp has

announced that it will strive to carry out more than 40 launch missions to serve national space programs, such as the completion of the Beidou Navigation Satellite System, as well as demands from commercial satellite operators.

<https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202001/09/WS5e168ae1a310cf3e35583639.html>

China contributes to global anti-terror cause with deradicalization efforts in Xinjiang: FM
Xinhua, January 9, 2020

China has made important contributions to the global fight against terrorism with its deradicalization efforts in Xinjiang, Chinese State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi said on Wednesday. Speaking at a joint news conference with Egyptian Foreign Minister Sameh Shoukry in Cairo, Wang stressed that the issue of Xinjiang is solely China's internal affairs. He said that what happens in Xinjiang is an issue of fighting separatism and terrorism, rather than an issue of human rights or religion.

For quite a period, the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, as one of the five ethnic autonomous regions in China, had suffered from the woes of terrorism and extremism. Violent extremists had perpetrated a number of terror attacks, killing and wounding thousands of innocent civilians, Wang said. To protect the safety of all ethnic groups in Xinjiang including the Muslims, the Chinese government has firmly cracked down on all forms of terror activities, on one hand, and set up vocational education and training centers, on another hand, the top Chinese diplomat explained. These centers aimed at saving those who were infected by extremist thoughts through education and professional training to uproot extremism and terrorism at the source, he said. In its anti-terror campaign in Xinjiang, China has drawn on the experience of many countries, including Egypt, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, as well as many Western countries such as the United States and France, he said.

The Chinese measures "are totally legal, as they are widely recognized as preventive counter-terrorism steps," Wang said. He added that China's counter-terrorism efforts in Xinjiang have paid off. "For three years in a row, Xinjiang has been free from violent terrorist incidents," he noted. Wang said that all the trainees in the training centers have now graduated, and, with the help of the government, they have found stable jobs and are living a peaceful and secure life. "It has been proved that the efforts made by the government in Xinjiang have not only provided security for local residents, but also protected the rights of religious freedom, thus making important contributions to the global anti-terror cause and providing useful experience for the global deradicalization efforts," Wang said. The freedom of religious belief, including Islam, is fully ensured in Xinjiang, where there are over 24,000 mosques, or one for every 530 Muslims, which is a higher ratio than many Islamic countries.

http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2020-01/09/c_138689043.htm

Chinese military welcomes 2020 with real combat scenario training

China Military Online, January 9, 2020

The Armed Police Force in Southwest China's Yunnan Province conduct anti-terrorism training ahead of the New Year. Military forces across China welcomed the new year of 2020 by conducting training for real combat scenarios. "The 400-meter hurdle race is not among the year-end test?" asked Han Yang, a captain at the Armed Police Force in East China's Jiangsu Province. The course is usually a required test and that officers had to take seven or eight times a year in the past, 81.cn, China's People's Liberation Army's official news website, reported.

Issued by Xi, also general secretary of the Communist Party of China Central Committee and chairman of the CMC, the order stressed strengthening military training for real combat conditions. It also asked the armed forces to maintain a high level of readiness and step up emergency and combat training. The order required strengthened joint command in training. It also stressed integrating new forces into the joint operations system. Force-on-force training should also be strengthened and the evaluation system should be improved, according to the order. After the order was released, each troop conducted the updated New Year training.

http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/view/2020-01/09/content_9713101.htm

Aircraft carrier inspires series of creative products

China Daily, January 8, 2020

Creative products inspired by China's first fully homegrown aircraft carrier, Shandong, were unveiled at a launch event at the Military Museum of the Chinese People's Revolution in Beijing on Tuesday. A collection of the creative goods — including badge- and emblem-themed souvenirs, ball caps, model kits and silver pendants — were donated to the museum at the event. The aircraft carrier, named after the eastern province of Shandong, was commissioned to the People's Liberation Army Navy on Dec 17. The creative goods were designed by China Shipbuilding Culture and Technology Co, a subsidiary of China State Shipbuilding Corporation. The company set about designing the carrier's badge and emblem and developing creative goods inspired by the vessel a few years ago.

<https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202001/08/WS5e1587b0a310cf3e35583405.html>

Joint research paves way to China's 'artificial sun'

Wan Lin

Global Times, January 8, 2020

Chinese and British scientists have designed a material that can assist in the generation of controlled nuclear fusion and generate energy in a similar process to the sun. The research, by scientists from Liverpool University in the UK and Xi'an Jiaotong-Liverpool University, can efficiently obtain deuterium, a heavy isotope of hydrogen, which a team member said could pave the road of China's artificial sun project. "It can efficiently select deuterium from a gas mixture and absorb them in large quantities." Ding Lifeng, a scientist from the Chinese side, told the Global Times on Wednesday. Deuterium, a primary fuel for controlled nuclear fusion, is diluted in nature and therefore expensive.

High-purity, or enriched, deuterium is usually obtained by separating the isotope out of a hydrogen-deuterium mixture, which is energy-intensive and inefficient, Ding said. The new material, named porous organic cages (POCs), makes it more efficient and cheaper to produce deuterium, he said. "Our research helps solve the shortage in deuterium supply and has the potential to secure the fuel source for the fusion process," Ding said. The US, Russia and the European Union are also researching controlled nuclear fusion as one of the most important future technologies that generates energy in a safe way, without nuclear waste.

<http://www.globaltimes.cn/content/1176143.shtml>

China, Indonesia square-off in South China Sea

John Mcbeth

Amid a brewing maritime standoff, Indonesian President Joko Widodo flew to the Natuna Islands on Wednesday (January 8) to underline how seriously his administration takes China's recent provocations in the southern reaches of the South China Sea. While some of Widodo's senior ministers initially sought to play down the tensions, his government has pressed ahead in dispatching warships and jet fighters to the energy and fishery-rich region, which Indonesia has unilaterally renamed the North Natuna Sea. China has claimed implausibly the area is part of its "traditional fishing grounds", as defined in its controversial nine-dash line map that dates back to the early 1900s and encompasses as much as 90% of the South China Sea. Before today's tour of the main Natuna Besar island, Widodo had declared the issue "non-negotiable." "There is no such thing as bargaining about our sovereignty, about our country's territories," he said, echoing a previous statement from political coordinating minister Mohamad Mahfud.

On January 6, Indonesia announced it was sending six warships and four F-16 fighters to the Natunas. A day later, Indonesia's Maritime Security Agency (Bakamla) revealed that two more Chinese Coast Guard vessels were headed to the area to join three patrol craft already inside Indonesia's Economic Exclusion Zone (EEZ).

<https://www.asiatimes.com/2020/01/article/china-indonesia-square-off-in-south-china-sea/>