

December 10- 21, 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  
(MP - IDSA)



INDIAN PUGWASH SOCIETY



Prepared By: Diya Deep Singh

## **China warns off US destroyer trespassing in South China Sea: Spokesperson**

China Military Online, December 22, 2020

“On December 22, the US guided missile destroyer USS John S. McCain trespassed into the waters adjacent to China's Nansha islands and reefs without Chinese Government’s permission, and the naval and aerial forces of the Chinese PLA Southern Theater Command conducted whole-process tracking and monitoring on the US destroyer and warned it off,” said Air Force Senior Colonel Tian Junli, Spokesperson for the PLA Southern Theater Command, in a written statement. The spokesperson pointed out that the US move has seriously violated China’s sovereignty and security, and gravely undermined peace and stability in the South China Sea. "China is strongly opposed to such moves," said the spokesperson.

He stressed in the end of the statement that the troops of the PLA Southern Theater Command will always stay on high alert, firmly perform their duties and missions to safeguard China’s sovereignty and security and protect peace and stability in the South China Sea.

[http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/view/2020-12/22/content\\_9956671.htm](http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/view/2020-12/22/content_9956671.htm)

## **PLA naval brigade conducts UAV delivery training**

China Military Online, December 22, 2020

Recently, a naval observation and communication brigade under the PLA Southern Theater Command organized a flight and delivery drill with unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) to deliver food and medical supplies to the troops stationed on mountains and islands. Most of the observation and communication posts assigned to the brigade are located on high mountains or islands, featuring geographical remoteness and inconvenient transportation. Special circumstances such as suspension of air and shipping services caused by geological disasters or bad weather will block the supply delivery. Exploring the construction of the unmanned transport system and establishing an intelligent logistic support model are critical to meeting future battlefield needs.

In the flight and delivery drill this time, more than 20 drone sorties got involved and successfully delivered a large amount of urgently needed supplies to the guarding posts on top of mountains. Also in this drill, a variety of training subjects, including multi-batch delivery, multi-model delivery in mixed formation and night delivery in complicated weather condition have been conducted. It is said that for the next step, the unmanned platform transportation and delivery system will be developed and transformed from pilot project to normal operation, for better combat readiness.

[http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/view/2020-12/22/content\\_9956713.htm](http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/view/2020-12/22/content_9956713.htm)

## **PLA's new dry dock in Hainan big enough for Type 002 aircraft carriers, analysts say**

Minnie Chan

South China Morning Post, December 21, 2020

A dry dock being built at China's naval complex on the island province of Hainan in the South China Sea will be big enough to accommodate the country's new generation of aircraft carriers, military analysts say. Satellite images found this month via the Earth Explorer website show the facility under construction at the Yulin Naval Base in Sanya, where China's first domestically developed aircraft carrier, the Shandong, was commissioned in December last year. The dock is located about 2.5km (1.5 miles) from a pier where a Type 075 amphibious assault ship and several smaller warships were seen berthing recently.

Two military sources said the dock was being built to serve the new Type 002 aircraft carriers.

"In the future, it's very likely at least one of the Type 002 carriers will be based in the South China Sea, which has strategic importance to China," a source close to the PLA Navy said on condition of anonymity due to the sensitivity of the issue. "All aircraft carriers need to spend more than half the year undergoing maintenance, so it's necessary to build a dry dock before the launch of the new aircraft carrier," the person said.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/military/article/3114634/south-china-sea-plas-new-dry-dock-hainan-big-enough-type-002>

## **Xi signs order to publish regulations on military professional education**

China Military Online, December 21, 2020

Xi Jinping, chairman of the Central Military Commission (CMC), has signed an order releasing trial regulations on military professional education for armed forces. Focusing on training new types of high-caliber and professional military personnel with both integrity and ability, the regulations are of great significance for promoting the development of military professional education and fostering a new system for training military personnel. With eight chapters and 43 articles, the regulations specified who are eligible to receive military professional education, the forms of education and requirements. The regulations established a leadership and management system for military professional education under the CMC's unified leadership and made provisions on education tasks, management, support measures, incentives and supervision, among other aspects.

[http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/view/2020-12/21/content\\_9955966.htm](http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/view/2020-12/21/content_9955966.htm)

## **American warship 'jeopardised stability' with Taiwan Strait transit, PLA says**

Amanda Lee

South China Morning Post, December 21, 2020

China's military has accused the United States of jeopardising peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait by sending a guided missile destroyer through the waterway on Saturday. "Recently, US warships have sailed through the Taiwan Strait from time to time," Zhang Chunhui, a spokesman for the People's Liberation Army's Eastern Theatre Command, said in a statement.

"They have deliberately raised the heat of the Taiwan issue ... [and] sent flirtatious glances to Taiwan's independence forces, severely jeopardising peace and stability." Zhang said China's air force and navy had tracked the USS Mustin as it took part in what the US Navy called a "routine Taiwan Strait transit". The US was engaging in a show of force and trying to use Taiwan "as a pawn for its own selfish strategic purposes", Zhang said, adding that China resolutely opposed such actions. The US Navy said in a statement that the warship's transit showed America's commitment to a "free and open Indo-Pacific".

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/diplomacy/article/3114690/china-us-ties-american-warship-jeopardised-stability-taiwan>

### **China aircraft carrier sails through Taiwan Strait a day after US warship**

Sarah Zheng

South China Morning Post, December 21, 2020

China sailed its Shandong aircraft carrier through the Taiwan Strait on Sunday, after denouncing a US warship just a day earlier for travelling through the strategic waterway and "casting flirtatious glances" at Taiwanese independence supporters. Liu Wensheng, spokesman for the Chinese navy, said in a statement on Monday morning that the Shandong, China's second aircraft carrier, had "smoothly sailed through the Taiwan Strait" on its way to conduct drills in the South China Sea. "Over the past year since the Shandong was entered into service, it has completed carrier-based take-off and landing exercises, weapons practice, combat system adjustments and other tasks, and the combat ability of its formation system has continued to improve through training," he said. "This time, we organised the Shandong carrier to carry out cross-regional manoeuvre training as part of our normal arrangements in our annual plan. We will continue to organise future trainings based on our training needs."

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/military/article/3114736/shandong-aircraft-carrier-group-heads-south-china-sea-drills>

### **Z-20 helicopters to play more roles in China's military**

China Military Online, December 19, 2020

An air assault brigade under the People's Liberation Army's (PLA) 75th Group Army conducted an air-ground integration exercise simulating the securing of an airfield recently. The combatants

took utility helicopters to avoid the enemy's frontal fire, broke through their weak points, landed on the top of the simulated enemy's command building, and end the battle with the shortest possible time. During the exercise, the Russian-made Mi-171 transport helicopter that is common in other troops was not spotted. Except for a small number of 13-ton Z-8G helicopters, the most choppers used in this exercise are Z-20 helicopters, which have the following highlights. First, increased efficiency in fast-roping operations

With a double-side door design, five commandos can fast-rope from the Z-20 helicopter simultaneously, while Z-8G and Mi-171 helicopters can theoretically allow only four commandos at the same time. Obviously, compared with the other two, the Z-20's efficiency has increased by at least 25%. All 13 commandos can complete the fast-roping operation within half a minute. It can be seen from the exercise that China's domestically-developed Z-20 and Z-8G helicopters have become the standard equipment of the air assault brigade. This also reflects the general trend that the Z-20 is replacing the Mi-17 series. Second, complementary tactical cooperation with The combination of Z-20 and Z-8G gave full play to their respective advantages in this exercise. The Z-20 helicopters concentrated on fast-roping operations, while the Z-8G carried out heliborne operations.

Third, playing growingly important role as a medium-lift utility helicopter for the PLA. According to Deng Jinghui, the chief designer of the Z-20, it is the first domestic helicopter using fly-by-wire flight control. The new advanced control system does not need the mechanical lever of the traditional system, which makes the control and agility better, and the weight is also significantly reduced. Not long ago, the trial flight of Z-20 over the snowy plateau indicates that two key technical problems have been solved. One is a new domestic turboshaft engine suitable for high altitude flight, and the other is anti-icing and deicing technology for rotors.

As a medium-lift utility helicopter, the Z-20 is expected to be utilized in various areas. It has been reported so far that several models have already been developed by China, including the armed Z-20 equipped with door guns, the ship-borne transport Z-20 with naval coating, and the anti-submarine Z-20 equipped with submarine/anti-submarine weapons. It is foreseeable that the Z-20 series will be a more and more important utility helicopter series for multi-services and arms in China's military.

[http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/view/2020-12/19/content\\_9955018.htm](http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/view/2020-12/19/content_9955018.htm)

### **Qingdao Port rebuilds ro-ro berths for military and civilian dual-use**

China Military Online, December 18, 2020

A PLA Navy's landing ship smoothly berthed at a ro-ro dock at the Port of Qingdao in Northeast China on December 15, marking the first military and civilian dual-use dock's official operation.

"In the past, warships and large civilian ro-ro ships could not berth at port full-time restricted by the ship model and tide," said Ma Donghui, director of the Qingdao Port's Control Center. He said that the operation of the dual-use dock for both military and civilian applications has solved this problem. Therefore, the military delivery efficiency of waterway transportation in Qingdao has been dramatically improved.

In recent years, it has become normal to deliver the training troops in multiple ways such as railways, waterways, highways, and airways, posing new and higher requirements for the support capabilities of ports. The Port of Qingdao originally had no large ro-ro berths, so that loading and unloading operations were carried out by specific ro-ro ships via vertical wharves under the circumstance of appropriate tides. Hence the operations were quite limited in time with a low efficiency. In response, the Qingdao Military Representative Office under the Qingdao Port's Control Center proposed a solution to rebuild the ro-ro berths after full investigation and extensive consultation.

[http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/view/2020-12/18/content\\_9954920.htm](http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/view/2020-12/18/content_9954920.htm)

### **New military petition system put into operation**

China Military Online, December 18, 2020

Recently, the PLA's new-version military petition system has been officially put into operation. It is learnt that multiple functions integrated in the new system include rapid complaints and proposals collection, remote video interviews, process monitoring, etc., making the whole complains handling procedures fully covered, transparent, and traceable. The system will further optimize information management in handling military-related complaints and proposals and provide convenient and efficient services. Within the new system, the information is shared instantly among corps-level petition departments. The online data flow will improve the efficiency of approval and implementation and thus cut back administrative costs.

[http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/view/2020-12/18/content\\_9954929.htm](http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/view/2020-12/18/content_9954929.htm)

### **Chang'e 5 recovery team use exoskeletons to aid mission**

Minnie Chan

South China Morning Post, December 18, 2020

Members of the team sent to recover the Chang'e 5 re-entry capsule and its precious cargo wore exoskeletons to help them trudge through the deep snows of Inner Mongolia laden with heavy packs. As soon as the capsule arrived back on Earth in the early hours of Thursday morning in the Siziwang banner of the north China region, a team from the China Aerospace Science and Technology Corporation, which was responsible for the entire lunar mission, had to race to set up

a temporary communication station to connect the landing site with its Beijing headquarters, state broadcaster CCTV reported.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/military/article/3114387/change-5-recovery-team-use-exoskeletons-aid-mission>

### **Chinese, US militaries blame each other for PLA ‘no-show’ at virtual meeting**

Laura Zhou

South China Morning Post, December 17, 2020

China and the United States have traded accusations over the failure to hold a maritime security meeting this week, in the latest sign of heightened tensions between the rival powers in the military sphere. The Chinese military failed to show up for a virtual meeting planned with the US defence ministry, the chief of the US Indo-Pacific Command said on Thursday, but a People’s Liberation Army (PLA) Navy spokesman said the Americans had tried to press ahead without the two sides agreeing on an agenda.

The three-day Military Maritime Consultative Agreement (MMCA) work group and flag officer session, scheduled from Monday, was part of a mechanism to strengthen maritime safety, improve operational air and sea safety, and reduce risk between the two militaries.

But the PLA did not attend the virtual meeting that was agreed upon by the two militaries, according to the Indo-Pacific Command, which is acting as the US defence secretary’s lead agent for the dialogue.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/military/article/3114389/chinese-us-militaries-blame-each-other-pla-no-show-virtual>

### **Irradiation technology could be used in killing coronavirus on cold chain food packaging: China National Nuclear Corporation**

Global Times, December 17, 2020

China National Nuclear Corporation and other institutions are researching irradiation technology to kill the coronavirus. Earlier stage experiments have simulated conditions under which the virus is sensitive to irradiation. Over the last three months, a series of experiments have been carried out using two simulated coronavirus, and a large amount of data has been obtained. Simulations show that a lower radiation can kill the virus without affecting food safety. According to preliminary results of the study, the irradiation technology is expected to be used eliminate the coronavirus on food packaging.

The China National Nuclear Corporation task force on coronavirus prevention will continue the study and improve technology that can be used to disinfect cold-chain food. Irradiation technology has been widely used to sterilize food. Currently, chemical and ultraviolet light is used to disinfect food. However, chemical disinfectants may leave chemical reagents in food, and ultraviolet disinfection is only applicable on the surface of food packaging, according to the China National Nuclear Corporation. Irradiation disinfection has greater penetrating power and is suitable for comprehensive virus-cleaning of a large number of cold chain foods. Across the country, stricter measures regulating imported cold-chain products are now being implemented after successive reports of imported cold-chain food samples testing positive for COVID-19 in the past few months, with experts noting that such cases could pose a risk of another outbreak in China this winter.

The city of Hefei, the capital of East China's Anhui Province, became the first city to require buyers of imported cold-chain products to use their real-name identity. A number of cities including Beijing and Tianjin also launched new rules to regulate cold-chain food markets. More than 40 cases of contaminated food packaging have been reported in at least 16 provinces and regions, leading to infections in North China's Tianjin and East China's Qingdao.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/content/1210303.shtml>

### **PLA Nansha Garrison adopts new-type camouflage combat uniforms**

China Military Online, December 17, 2020

The PLA Navy's Nansha Garrison has recently begun to try on the new-type camouflage combat uniforms specially designed for the troops in the tropical areas, which is another major improvement on the combat equipment of troops stationed on the Nansha Islands following the provision of new combat boots. The islands and reefs in the South China Sea, far away from the Chinese mainland, are located on the edge of the equator. The natural environment featuring high salinity, humidity, temperature and radiation makes this area one of the harshest border posts in China, bringing great challenges to officers and soldiers therein.

This new-type camouflage combat uniforms adopt special blended fabrics, characterized by moisture absorption and quick-drying, bacteriostasis and antibiosis, as well as being comfortable and breathable, wear-resistant, tear-resistant, and ultraviolet-resistant. Besides, optimal design has been made in the armpits and pockets areas to meet the multiple needs in combat and training under the scorching sun. It is learnt that the camouflage pattern has made its debut at last year's National Day military parade in Beijing, which is closer to the actual combat needs and helps soldiers further integrate into the environment and improve the actual concealment effect.

[http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/view/2020-12/17/content\\_9954263.htm](http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/view/2020-12/17/content_9954263.htm)



## **Is China really ready to back a nuclear arms-free Southeast Asia?**

Laura Zhou

South China Morning Post, December 16, 2020

A senior Chinese official says Beijing is prepared to back Asean's 25-year-old treaty on the weapons. But this is not the first time this has happened and could be part of a bigger power play, observers say. China has signalled that it is ready to work with its neighbours to create a nuclear weapons-free zone in Southeast Asia, after more than two decades of objections to a regional agreement. But observers said the move was part of China's growing rivalry with the United States and an attempt to expand its influence in the region. The agreement, the Southeast Asian Nuclear-Weapon-Free-Zone Treaty, was signed by the 10 members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) 25 years ago to establish an area in the region free of nuclear weapons and to bolster its neutrality in great-power competition.

Nuclear powers like China and the United States are free to sign a protocol to not violate the treaty but so far none of them have, largely because of differences over security assurances and the definitions of territory, much of which involves the disputed South China Sea.

In the past, Beijing has said it disagrees with the geographic delimitation of the zone but is willing to continue talks with Asean. Fu Cong, director of the Chinese foreign ministry's arms control department, said Beijing was prepared to endorse the protocol. "Yes, China is ready to be the first to sign the Protocol to the Southeast Asian Nuclear-Weapon-Free-Zone Treaty," Fu said in a tweet in response to a question by Hans Kristensen, director of the Nuclear Information Project at the Federation of American Scientists in Washington.

Under the protocol, signatories would be obliged not to develop, manufacture or otherwise acquire, possess or have control over nuclear weapons in the treaty zone. Testing or using nuclear weapons is also prohibited anywhere inside or outside the treaty zone that covers the continental shelf and exclusive economic zones – the boundaries of which are fiercely disputed by China and some Asean members.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/diplomacy/article/3114218/china-really-ready-back-nuclear-arms-free-southeast-asia>

## **Border troops in Tibet get high-tech support**

Palden Nyima and Daqiong

China Daily, December 16, 2020

Troops stationed in Ngari prefecture of the Tibet autonomous region were provided recently with more advanced high-tech equipment, including cold-resistant clothing, bedding and other gear to strengthen border defense. Troops stationed in Ngari prefecture of the Tibet autonomous region

were provided recently with more advanced high-tech equipment, including cold-resistant clothing, bedding and other gear to strengthen border defense. In a harsh environment where altitudes top 5,000 meters above sea level and with lower temperatures and thinner air, it is crucial to provide them with customized winter clothing that is both lightweight and cold-resistant.

According to a report by CCTV, troops were also provided with detachable self-energized insulated shelters that allow sunshine to enter through big windows. Temperatures inside can rise to 15 C even though it might be -40 C outdoors. The latest logistical support improvements also include self-cleaning, biodegradable latrines, greenhouses for fresh vegetables grain and storing coal.

<https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202012/16/WS5fd9cb56a31024ad0ba9c370.html>

### **Chinese military hosts regular reception day events for national defense innovation**

China Military Online, December 15, 2020

The Science and Technology Commission (STC) of the Central Military Commission (CMC) hosted a reception day on national defense science and technology innovation for the third time in Beijing on December 13. Officials from the STC listened to innovative and creative suggestions from 18 scientific research teams on new sensors, new materials, unmanned systems, and underwater detection, and conducted exchanges and discussions with the representatives. Most of the 46 participants are young scientific researchers from non-traditional military units.

With a view to pooling creative talents and creating an enabling environment, the STC began to host reception days regularly from September this year, providing access to face-to-face communication with scientific researchers, especially the young ones. Such an activity has attracted widespread attention and received warm response from scientific research units and researchers. Besides, the STC has established a support mechanism for the incubation of national defense science and technology innovation, providing a quick response in decision-making, approval, initiating and funding to project proposals with profound research value and application prospects. Next, the STC will continue to improve its working mechanism to set the stage for the scientific researchers to serve national defense with better conditions and opportunities.

[http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/view/2020-12/15/content\\_9952913.htm](http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/view/2020-12/15/content_9952913.htm)

### **China's Yuanwang-5 returns after 3 successful monitoring missions**

China Military Online

The space-tracking ship Yuanwang-5 returned to the port of the China Satellite Maritime Tracking and Controlling Department on December 14 after successfully carrying out three monitoring

missions in the Pacific Ocean. It is learnt that Yuanwang-5 has changed its sailing plan and returned in advance after operating 82 days at sea and sailing more than 18,000 nautical miles due to the rescheduling of a satellite launch mission. To date the ship has operated over 220 days at sea cumulatively this year, setting a new record, and has sailed over 510,000 nautical miles in total, equivalent to sailing around the earth for 23.7 times.

During the oceangoing mission, Yuanwang-5 and Yuanwang-6 jointly carried out maritime monitoring and provided crucial support for the launch of the Chang'e 5 lunar probe. After Yuanwang-5 berths at the port, personnel recovery, equipment maintenance, spare parts supplement and other work will be conducted for another voyage in the near future.

[http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/view/2020-12/15/content\\_9952932.htm](http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/view/2020-12/15/content_9952932.htm)

### **PLA airborne brigade introduces VR training system**

China Military Online, December 14, 2020

A brigade of the PLA airborne troops organized a phase assessment on the airborne training for new recruits in late November. Its commanding officer introduced that it was the first time for the brigade to use the VR airborne simulation training system on a large scale in the airborne training for new recruits, which has contributed to the improvement of new recruits' training performance through the immersive airborne experience it brought. The new recruits born in the 2000s are passionate about high-tech and willing to try new things, but the traditional airborne training methods are relatively boring with a long training period, which affects the training quality and effectiveness. Therefore, the brigade decided to introduce the VR airborne simulation training system.

The system adopts VR and electromechanical control technology to realize the parachute landing simulation concerning multiple aircraft models, parachute types, and combat environments. It covers the entire process of parachuting training from jumping to landing, making the airborne soldiers know well the parachuting process, overcome psychological fear, strengthen the parachute skills, and master the emergency handling skills in a safe environment. "VR airborne simulation training allows me to master the essentials of exercise in a real environment. The parachuting simulation is very flexible, and the operation process from jumping to landing is very authentic. When emergencies occur in the air, I can handle them by following the theoretical requirements," said a new recruit Zhang Chuxuan. Zhang believes that their training results will get better with the help of the VR airborne simulation training system.

[http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/view/2020-12/14/content\\_9952341.htm](http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/view/2020-12/14/content_9952341.htm)

### **Drone attacks in Nagorno-Karabakh conflict 'a warning for Chinese military'**

Kristin Huang  
South China Morning Post, December 13, 2020

An alarming lesson from the Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict over the disputed region of Nagorno-Karabakh concerns drones' transformation of battlefields, and shows China needs a carefully considered counter-strategy, according to an article published by a firm that supplies the People's Liberation Army (PLA). The article, in the latest edition of *Naval and Merchant Ships* – a Beijing-based magazine published by the state-owned China State Shipbuilding Corporation – reviewed how the Armenian army was overwhelmed by enemy drones.

Despite their superiority in conventional ground forces, including tankers, radars and armoured vehicles, the Armenian army were easy prey for armed drones from Azerbaijan, notably Bayraktar TB2 drones that mounted precise attacks against targets in trenches and moving vehicles. Videos taken by Azerbaijan's hovering drones showed Armenian soldiers being identified and targeted on the ground. The drones were also used for reconnaissance operations, helping Azerbaijan to force an Armenian surrender within six weeks.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/diplomacy/article/3113598/drone-attacks-nagorno-karabakh-conflict-warning-chinese>

**China's military: pressure from US can help drive PLA's modernisation, observers say**  
Minnie Chan  
South China Morning Post, December 12, 2020

China should use the United States' efforts to contain its expansion in the Asia-Pacific region as the driving force for modernising the People's Liberation Army, Chinese military observers say. At the annual Defence Forum Washington last weekend, General Mark Milley, chairman of the US Joint Chiefs, said the Pentagon needed to deploy forces across the region, and embrace hi-tech weapons and technologies to prevent China from taking control of the Western Pacific.

"[We] are in the middle of a fundamental change in the character of war," he told the online symposium.

"If you're serious about great power competition and deterring great power war, and you're serious about having dominant capability over something like China ... 500 [ships by 2045] is probably your entrance ticket," he said. Lu Li-shih, a former instructor at Taiwan's Naval Academy in Kaohsiung, said America's new deployments and strategies showed it was determined to reinforce its military advantage over the PLA. "A rising China is always the biggest strategic threat to the US," he said. "The PLA Navy has already ordered more ships in response to the US's 500-ship plan," he said, in reference to a report released last month that China plans to build 20 Type 054A guided-missile stealth frigates.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/military/article/3113542/chinas-military-pressure-us-can-help-drive-plas-modernisation>

## **China boosts nuclear strike capability in face of growing rivalry with US, report says**

Minnie Chan

South China Morning Post, December 11, 2020

The Chinese military has increased the number of ballistic missile brigades by around a third in the past three years to enhance its nuclear strike capabilities amid escalating tensions with the US, a report has concluded. The People's Liberation Army Rocket Force now has 40 brigades, a 35 per cent increase compared with 2017, with more being formed, according to the study published by the Bulletin of Atomic Scientists. The report estimated about half the brigades had ballistic or cruise missile launchers, and the number is likely to grow when the construction of further missile bases is completed. The report said 12 of the brigades were in the Eastern and Southern theatre commands, which focus on the Taiwan Strait and the disputed South China Sea. US shoots down mock intercontinental ballistic missile with ship-based interceptor off Hawaii

US shoots down mock intercontinental ballistic missile with ship-based interceptor off Hawaii

“The expansion of ballistic missile brigades could be seen as an achievement of the PLA's unprecedented military overhaul, when the Second Artillery Corps divided from the [ground force] and to become the independent Rocket Force in late 2015,” Hong Kong-based military commentator Song Zhongping, a former instructor with the Second Artillery Corps, said.

“As it plays a key role specialising in the asymmetric strategy, the Rocket Force needs to be expanded and enhance its special advantages to help China counter the increasing challenge posed by the United States.” Lu Li-shih, a former instructor at Taiwan's Naval Academy in Kaohsiung, said the PLA Rocket Force would not only play a key role in any efforts to take Taiwan by force, but was also responsible for responding with retaliatory nuclear strikes in the event of an attack by the US.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/military/article/3113639/china-boosts-nuclear-strike-capability-face-growing-rivalry-us>

## **Military hyperbaric oxygen chambers benefit border herders in Tibet**

China Military Online, December 11, 2020

In recent years, with more and more border troops on plateau areas being equipped with hyperbaric oxygen chambers, the problem of oxygen inhalation that plagued China's border guards has gradually been solved. Always keeping the people in mind, a border defense regiment under the PLA Tibet Military Command decided to make their hyperbaric oxygen chamber available to local herders. More than a month ago, Suolang, a local herder from where the defense troops station,

suffered a severe altitude sickness due to excessive physical exertion when looking for a lost yak in a snowy field. Fortunately, the PLA service members on patrol found dying Suolang and carried him back to the camp. After a hyperbaric oxygen treatment, Suolang gradually recovered.

Fan Yan, a military doctor from the border regiment, introduced that "elevated ambient pressure of the hyperbaric oxygen chamber can simulate environment of sea level standards. The oxygen concentration in the confined space can reach 29 percent, which can effectively prevent acute altitude sickness such as pulmonary edema. Regular use of the hyperbaric oxygen chamber can reduce risks of cardiovascular disease." A villager who lives close to the border defense troops' 2nd Battalion said that more than 10 villagers had been treated with the hyperbaric oxygen therapy for more than 20 times, and the treatment rate of sudden plateau diseases has been greatly improved. In addition to border herders, the border defense regiment also provides emergency rescue for tourists and truck drivers in Tibet.

[http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/view/2020-12/11/content\\_9951363.htm](http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/view/2020-12/11/content_9951363.htm)

### **China's first Type 075 ship to be based in Hainan amid South China Sea tension**

Minnie Chan

South China Morning Post, December 9, 2020

China's first Type 075 landing helicopter assault dock is expected to be deployed in the South China Sea rather than the East China Sea, highlighting its potential use in confrontations in the disputed waters as well as the potential Taiwan missions for which it was designed. Satellite images obtained last month by Washington think tank the Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) showed the amphibious assault vessel berthed in Sanya on the southern island province of Hainan, on the doorstep of the South China Sea.

Designed for a possible war to try to take Taiwan, it is likely to join the People's Liberation Army's (PLA's) naval fleet in the Southern Theatre Command, tasked with monitoring the Taiwan Strait and the South China Sea, according to War Industry Black Technology, a social media account run by a former PLA official, on Monday. The Type 075 is expected to be commissioned next year then deployed to the South Sea Fleet. Able to carry an estimated 30 helicopters and hundreds of troops, it is China's largest amphibious assault ship – and the world's third-largest, behind the United States' Wasp-class and America-class ships.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/military/article/3113232/chinas-first-type-075-ship-be-based-hainan-amid-south-china-sea>