

April 30, 2023

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

China building cyber weapons to hijack enemy satellites, says US leak

Mehul Srivastava, Felicia Schwartz and Demetri Sevastopulo

Financial Times, April 21, 2023

China is building sophisticated cyber weapons to “seize control” of enemy satellites, rendering them useless for data signals or surveillance during wartime, according to a leaked US intelligence report. The US assesses that China’s push to develop capabilities to “deny, exploit or hijack” enemy satellites is a core part of its goal to control information, which Beijing considers to be a key “war-fighting domain”.

<https://www.ft.com/content/881c941a-c46f-4a40-b8d8-9e5c8a6775ba>

China's nuclear build-up deeply concerning, raises questions about country's intent: US

The Times of India, April 21, 2023

US Department of State Principal Deputy Spokesperson Vedant Patel said China's nuclear buildup is deeply concerning and it "raises questions" about the country's intent. "The PRC's nuclear buildup is deeply concerning, and it raises questions about the PRC's intent and it reinforces the importance of pursuing practical measures to reduce nuclear risks," Patel said during a press briefing.

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/world/us/chinas-nuclear-buildup-deeply-concerning-raises-questions-about-countrys-intent-us/articleshow/99655600.cms>

Wicker addresses rising nuclear threats from China, Russia in floor speech

US Senate, April 21, 2023

U.S. Senator Roger Wicker, R-Miss., ranking member of the Senate Armed Services Committee took to the Senate floor to address the acute nuclear weapons threats posed by China and Russia and a roadmap to improve U.S. deterrence against those threats. In his remarks, Wicker emphasized that for the first time in its history the United States needs to confront a reality where it must deter multiple major nuclear-armed adversaries – China and Russia – at once. This massive challenge, Wicker said, demands immediate and sustained investment in America’s nuclear arsenal.

<https://www.wicker.senate.gov/2023/4/wicker-addresses-rising-nuclear-threats-from-china-russia-in-floor-speech>

Bangladesh-Russia nuclear power plant deal in China's yuan opens doors for Beijing, but is 'still early days'

Seong Hyeon Choi

South China Morning Post, April 21, 2023

A rare yuan settlement between Bangladesh and Russia as part of a US\$12 billion nuclear power plant collaboration may have ushered in a new front to progress the Chinese currency's use overseas, but de-dollarisation progress will remain limited due to Beijing's tight control of its financial system and capital account, analysts said. Bangladesh and Russia agreed to use the yuan to settle payment for a nuclear plant Moscow is building in the South Asian country, a Bangladesh government official said.

<https://www.scmp.com/economy/global-economy/article/3217742/bangladesh-russia-nuclear-power-plant-deal-chinas-yuan-opens-doors-beijing-still-early-days>

China and Philippines discuss ties as Manila opens bases to U.S.

Cliff Venzon

Nikkei Asia, April 22, 2023

The foreign ministers of China and the Philippines met after bilateral relations were jolted by Manila's move to allow the U.S. access to its military bases near Taiwan, sparking opposition from Beijing. Philippine Foreign Affairs Secretary Enrique Manalo opened a meeting with Chinese counterpart Qin Gang, whose three-day visit to Manila coincides with the largest-ever Philippine-U.S. military drills.

<https://asia.nikkei.com/Politics/International-relations/China-and-Philippines-discuss-ties-as-Manila-opens-bases-to-U.S>

PRC writings on strategic deterrence

Alison A. Kaufman, Brian Waidelich

CAN, April 22, 2023

This paper examines recent writings from the People's Republic of China (PRC) and the People's Liberation Army (PLA) in order to highlight major themes and evolution in concepts of deterrence, strategic stability, and escalation control, particularly between 2017 and 2022. PRC writings during this period display growing concern that innovations in military technology over the past several decades undermine strategic stability. Many PRC authors argue that the balance of military capabilities that enabled China to maintain a fairly small

nuclear deterrent is becoming more fragile, and that as a result, Beijing can no longer be confident in its ability to deter other countries from attacking China with nuclear or other strategic weapons.

<https://www.cna.org/reports/2023/04/prc-writings-on-strategic-deterrence>

China, Philippines vow to deepen ties, resolve differences amid Qin Gang's visit

Global Times, April 23, 2023

China and the Philippines have more shared interests than differences and their disputes on the South China Sea do not form the totality of relations between the two countries - this consensus was reaffirmed and calibrated during Chinese State Councilor and Foreign Minister Qin Gang's ongoing visit to the Philippines, said analysts, calling for vigilance against the US' increasing interference.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202304/1289602.shtml>

Tech war: China's top memory chip maker YMTC making progress in producing advanced 3D NAND products with locally sourced equipment

Che Pan and Ann Cao

South China Morning Post, April 23, 2023

MTC's top secret project, which aims to use Chinese-only equipment, has placed big orders with domestic tool suppliers, including Beijing-based Naura Technology. The ramped up sourcing of local equipment comes after YMTC received fresh funding to the tune of US\$7 billion from its state-backed investors, including the 'Big Fund'.

<https://www.scmp.com/tech/article/3217919/tech-war-chinas-top-memory-chip-maker-ymtc-making-progress-producing-advanced-3d-nand-products>

G7's statement on nuclear issue hypocritical and pale

Da Zhigang

China Military Online, April 23, 2023

While warning Russia of "serious consequences" if it uses chemical or nuclear weapons, and warning some countries that they will "face severe costs" if they do not cooperate with sanctions against Russia, the so-called "China threat" has also become a topic that the G7 is keen to hype up, with China's nuclear weapons

mysteriously becoming a new target for criticism. So why did the G7 foreign ministers tear off the fig leaf and target China with the so-called "Chinese expansion of its nuclear arsenal" in their joint statement?

http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/WORLD_209198/WorldMilitaryAnalysis/16219968.html

PLA Navy's 3rd aircraft carrier Fujian holds propulsion tests; more Chinese carriers to be built

Liu Xuanzun and Guo Yuandan

Global Times, April 23, 2023

In addition to opening many naval bases along China's coastal regions to the public, China celebrated the 74th founding anniversary of the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) Navy on April 23 by releasing updates on its major naval development programs, including the trial progress of its third aircraft carrier, a plan to build more carriers and develop more new-type warplanes, as well as the commissioning of a 10,000 ton-class large destroyer.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202304/1289636.shtml>

Three nuclear superpowers, rather than two, usher in a new strategic era

David E. Sanger, William J. Broad and Chris Buckley

The Japan Times, April 23, 2023

On the Chinese coast, just 215 kilometres (135 miles) from Taiwan, Beijing is preparing to start a new reactor the Pentagon sees as delivering fuel for a vast expansion of China's nuclear arsenal, potentially making it an atomic peer of the United States and Russia. The reactor, known as a fast breeder, excels at making plutonium, a top fuel of atom bombs.

<https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2023/04/23/world/china-russia-us-nuclear-arsenal-buildup/>

House select committee on China pushes war game over Taiwan with insidious purpose

Hu Xijin

Global Times, April 24, 2023

The US House Select Committee on Strategic Competition between the US and the Chinese Communist Party (CPC) conducted an unusual war game on a cross-Taiwan Straits war with Washington think tank the

Center for a New American Security. Its superficial conclusion is that nobody wins when deterrence breaks down. All sides will pay a high price, but at the same time hide a sinister purpose.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202304/1289669.shtml>

US urges South Korea not to fill China shortfalls if Beijing bans Micron chips

Demetri Sevastopulo

Financial Times, April 24, 2023

The White House has asked South Korea to urge its chipmakers not to fill any market gap in China if Beijing bans Idaho-based Micron from selling chips, as it tries to rally allies to counter Chinese economic coercion.

<https://www.ft.com/content/64c58ee2-a604-4d31-84f4-bc0aa6d8343a>

Nuclear Belt and Road and U.S.-South Korea Nuclear Cooperation

Lami Kim

CSIS, April 24, 2023

Nuclear exports are an important component of the Belt and Road Initiative, Xi Jinping's signature infrastructure and development project abroad. Chinese nuclear industry officials have said that China could build as many as 30 nuclear reactors abroad worth \$145.5 billion by 2030.

<https://www.csis.org/analysis/nuclear-belt-and-road-and-us-south-korea-nuclear-cooperation>

US war games touch nerve in Philippines as tensions flare with China

Kathrin Hille

Financial Times, April 24, 2023

But now that Taiwan — just 200km to the north across the Bashi Channel — has become a flashpoint in the geopolitical struggle between China and the US, Batan is being redefined as a “key terrain” that both sides could fight to occupy if they ever go to war.

<https://www.ft.com/content/08820f14-22d8-4e1a-8e91-139a47285624>

Australian defence review misplaces focus

Chen Hong

Global Times, April 25, 2023

The Review correctly assesses the geopolitical reality in the Indo-Pacific region as no longer being dominated by the US as "the unipolar leader," but it makes a fundamentally and strategically misguided appraisal of Australia's relationship with China. Instead of accurately acknowledging China as Australia's comprehensive strategic partner, the report maintains the platitudinal hype of the "China threat theory," which serves as the keystone for the alarming militaristic course Australia is about to take with the stockpiling of its military arsenal and the build-up of its armed forces.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202304/1289763.shtml>

China details International Lunar Research Station building plans

Deng Xiaoci

Global Times, April 25, 2023

China plans to work with global partners to construct a basic version of International Lunar Research Station (ILRS) before 2028, an improved version of ILRS earlier than 2040, and a further complete one with application functions by around 2050, Director General of Deep Space Exploration Laboratory Wu Weiren said.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202304/1289758.shtml>

Shanghai woos semiconductor and AI projects with generous subsidies, lining up behind Beijing's innovation drive

Lilian Zhang

South China Morning Post, April 25, 2023

Shanghai's municipal government has vowed to provide up to 100 million yuan (US\$14.45 million) to shore up investments in semiconductors, biomedicine, and artificial intelligence (AI), amid the country's growing technological rivalry with the US.

<https://www.scmp.com/tech/policy/article/3218324/shanghai-woos-semiconductor-and-ai-projects-generous-subsidies-lining-behind-beijings-innovation>

'Decoupling from China' push exposes absurdity of some Western politicians' zero-sum thinking: Italian scholar

Global Times, April 25, 2023

"The 'decoupling from China' theory violates economic laws and is detached from objective reality. It exposes the absurdity of some Western politicians' zero-sum thinking, which is nothing but the fallacy of harming others and themselves in favor of third and distant interests," said Giancarlo Elia Valori (Valori), an Italian expert on international affairs, in an interview.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202304/1289766.shtml>

Quad countries to bolster cyber defence with information-sharing

Reiko Miki

Nikkei Asia, April 25, 2023

The U.S., Australia, India and Japan will work together to create a system enabling the cyber sections of each government to report to each other on cyberattacks or damage to critical infrastructure. The U.K. suffered the second-most attacks at 58, followed by India at 32. Australia and Japan were targeted 22 and 16 times, respectively. Some analysts believe that these cyberattacks involved China, Russia and North Korea.

<https://asia.nikkei.com/Politics/Defense/Quad-countries-to-bolster-cyber-defense-with-information-sharing>

China to search for habitable planets beyond solar system

Global Times, April 25, 2023

China is planning on a quest beyond the solar system to find habitable planets, and the first search will be carried out in 2030 upon the completion of a basic type of telescope array, Chinese researchers revealed at this year's China Space Day event. The plan, called the Miyin program, aims to detect "another Earth" among near neighbors of the solar system through the launching of a telescope array.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202304/1289777.shtml>

U.S., Philippines sink ship in war drills near China-claimed sea

Cliff Venzon

Nikkei Asia, April 26, 2023

U.S. and Philippine forces on Wednesday sank a retired navy ship near the disputed South China Sea in a drill intended to show the allies' combat readiness in the face of an increasingly assertive China. Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr., wearing a military-style jacket, used binoculars to watch the drill from an observation tower along with U.S. Ambassador to the Philippines MaryKay Carlson and Philippine defence officials.

<https://asia.nikkei.com/Politics/International-relations/South-China-Sea/U.S.-Philippines-sink-ship-in-war-drills-near-China-claimed-sea>

China building 24 nuclear power units, ranking No.1 in world: industry report

Global Times, April 26, 2023

Construction is in progress on 24 nuclear power units in China, with a total installed capacity of about 26.81 million kilowatts (kW), ranking the first in the world, an industry report showed. Since 2022, China has approved 10 new nuclear power units, put three new commercial units into operation and started construction on six new units, read a report titled China Nuclear Energy Development Report 2023 released by the China Nuclear Energy Association (CNEA).

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202304/1289882.shtml>

U.S. to send nuclear ballistic sub to South Korea in show of force

Ryo Nakamura and Junno Kobara

Nikkei Asia, April 26, 2023

U.S. President Joe Biden and South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol will agree at their meeting in Washington on the U.S. dispatch of a nuclear ballistic missile submarine to the Asian country. The deal aims to reinforce the effectiveness of extended deterrence by the U.S. in a visible form. U.S. restrictions on China in semiconductor trade will be another focal point at the Biden-Yoon meeting. As they are gravely affecting Samsung Electronics and other South Korean chip companies doing business in China, Seoul is asking Washington to ease them.

<https://asia.nikkei.com/Politics/Defense/U.S.-to-send-nuclear-ballistic-sub-to-South-Korea-in-show-of-force>

China must focus on building its own strengths

Hu Xijin

Global Times, April 26, 2023

Joe Biden and Donald Trump will have a high chance of confronting each other again, and some countries will be nervous, either fearing about or looking forward to another change in the White House. But China should be the "most calm" one, because no matter who the next US president is, the US' strategic suppression of China will continue and spiral upward.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202304/1289845.shtml>

China pushes largest-ever expansion of nuclear arsenal

France 24, April 26, 2023

The SIPRI think tank estimates that China has a stockpile of around 350 nuclear warheads -- small fry when compared with the United States and Russia. But it is growing fast, and could have 1,500 warheads by 2035, according to a Pentagon estimate published in November.

<https://www.france24.com/en/live-news/20230426-china-pushes-largest-ever-expansion-of-nuclear-arsenal>

China's nuclear technology to spur safe, reliable energy for Argentina, contrasts with US rhetoric: experts

Global Times, April 26, 2023

China and Argentina have been close partners for decades and such a relationship has been further strengthened under the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), exemplified by the joint development of pillar infrastructure projects such as dam, powerhouse, and railway construction, which inject real impetus to the country's sustainable development.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202304/1289855.shtml>

Companies unnerved by China detentions, says U.S. business group

CK Tan

Nikkei Asia, April 26, 2023

Foreign businesses in China say the safety of their personnel and family has become a "major concern" after a number of expatriates were detained recently, with Beijing's move to broaden its counterespionage law adding to their unease. Business sentiment regarding China-U.S. relations has also worsened, while nearly a quarter of U.S. companies are or are preparing to shift away from Asia's largest economy, according to a recent survey by the American Chamber of Commerce in China.

<https://asia.nikkei.com/Politics/International-relations/US-China-tensions/Companies-unnerved-by-China-detentions-says-U.S.-business-group>

Assessing China's Emerging Role in 2023

Carnegie China, April 26, 2023

China's successful mediation of Saudi-Iran diplomatic ties has been widely viewed as a sign of its growing role in the Middle East. As the United States slowly shifts its focus away from the region, many experts wonder whether China will eventually replace the US as the region's leading power. However, China will only replace the United States when it becomes more involved in the political and security issues of the Middle East rather than focusing primarily on economic engagement.

<https://carnegieendowment.org/2023/04/26/assessing-china-s-emerging-role-in-2023-pub-89625>

Neither China nor Huawei will be held back by U.S. pressure

Andy Mok

Nikkei Asia, April 27, 2023

China's Huawei Technologies has been targeted by the most powerful nation in the world like almost no other company. Its ability to not only persevere since being placed in 2019 on the U.S. Commerce Department's Entity List -- a blacklist that essentially rules out normal trading with American companies - - but to thrive in the face of unrelenting hostility is an inspirational achievement worth appreciating.

<https://asia.nikkei.com/Opinion/Neither-China-nor-Huawei-will-be-held-back-by-U.S.-pressure>

IAEA director general hails China's nuclear energy efforts to combat climate change

Global Times, April 27, 2023

International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Director General Rafael Grossi delivered a video speech, emphasizing the need for clean and affordable sustainable energy to combat the most severe climate change. Grossi hailed China's efforts to achieve peak carbon dioxide emissions before 2030 and carbon neutrality by 2060, noting that as the world's largest energy consumer, China has made significant strides in low-carbon development, including the active and orderly development of nuclear energy.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202304/1289903.shtml>

Tech war: Beijing's cybersecurity review into US memory chip maker Micron opens opportunity for Chinese suppliers to fill gap in market

Ann Cao and Lilian Zhang

South China Morning Post, April 27, 2023

China's cybersecurity review into Micron Technology, the United States' largest memory chip maker, has opened an opportunity for mainland suppliers, led by Yangtze Memory Technologies Co (YMTC), to plug any potential gap in the market, according to local analysts and merchants.

<https://www.scmp.com/tech/tech-war/article/3218631/tech-war-beijings-cybersecurity-review-us-memory-chip-maker-micron-opens-opportunity-chinese>

US-S.Korea agreements add new danger; 'extended deterrence' could trigger 'another nuclear crisis' in peninsula

Yang Sheng

Global Times, April 27, 2023

Chinese experts warned that if Washington deploys nuclear weapons, including a nuclear-armed submarine, according to US media reports, in South Korea, it could trigger another nuclear crisis in the Korean Peninsula, and Washington and Seoul should take full responsibility for the consequences. Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning responded to the US-South Korea Washington Declaration and the leaders' joint statement at a routine press conference saying that "the US, in order to realize its own geopolitical interests and disregarding regional security, insisted on making use of the peninsula issue to create tension."

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202304/1289926.shtml>

China nuclear Chairman sees sevenfold surge in capacity by 2060

Bloomberg, April 27, 2023

The chairman of one of China's top nuclear energy firms expects a massive surge of atomic plants in the coming decades to help the country meet its decarbonization goals. China's nuclear fleet will grow to 400 gigawatts by 2060, and account for about 18% of the country's generation, China General Nuclear Power Group Co. Chairman Yang Changli said at an industry event.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2023-04-27/china-nuclear-chairman-sees-sevenfold-surge-in-capacity-by-2060#xj4y7vzkg>

China's expansive anti-spying law to take effect July 1

Yukio Tajima

Nikkei Asia, April 27, 2023

China approved an updated counterespionage law that greatly expands what is viewed as spying, the official Xinhua News Agency reported, a move that analysts say will put foreigners conducting business in the country under greater risk of scrutiny by authorities. The revisions, the first since the law was enacted in 2014, were passed by the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress and will take effect July 1.

<https://asia.nikkei.com/Politics/China-s-expansive-anti-spying-law-to-take-effect-July-1>

PLA naval vessels evacuate more than 1,300 Chinese and citizens of 5 other countries from Sudan

Guo Yuandan and Xu Yelu

Global Times, April 27, 2023

More than 1,300 Chinese personnel have been safely evacuated after the Chinese military sent naval vessels to evacuate Chinese nationals from Sudan. The Global Times learned that this is the third time the Chinese Navy has carried out such evacuation missions, and only the second time that a Chinese warship has directly docked at a foreign port for evacuation missions.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202304/1289902.shtml>

India-China border dispute must be resolved through pacts: New Delhi

Kiran Sharma

Nikkei Asia, April 28, 2023

All border issues between India and China need to be resolved per existing bilateral agreements and commitments, Indian Defence Minister Rajnath Singh told his Chinese counterpart Li Shangfu, amid simmering tensions over a border dispute in the Himalayas. Li, who took the post last month, was in the Indian capital on a two-day visit to attend a defence ministers meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), along with counterparts from Russia and Central Asian nations.

<https://asia.nikkei.com/Politics/International-relations/India-China-border-dispute-must-be-resolved-through-pacts-New-Delhi>

Detained Japanese businessman was spy, Chinese envoy says

Ken Moriyasu

Nikkei Asia, April 28, 2023

The detention of a Japanese employee of drugmaker Astellas Pharma in China involves espionage, Beijing's new ambassador to Tokyo, Wu Jianghao, alleged. Responding to questions from reporters at the Japan National Press Club, Wu said: "The core of this incident is that it is a spy incident that touches on China's national security. That fact is becoming more and more certain."

<https://asia.nikkei.com/Politics/International-relations/Detained-Japanese-businessman-was-spy-Chinese-envoy-says>

U.S. considers landing bombers in South Korea: Air Force general

Ryo Nakamura

Nikkei Asia, April 28, 2023

The U.S. Air Force is considering a plan to land strategic bombers in South Korea and to regularly deploy the aircraft in and around the Korean Peninsula, Nikkei has learned. Combined with visits by a nuclear ballistic missile submarine to South Korea, the latest move would enhance extended deterrence by providing a visible demonstration of the ability to counterattack North Korea. As for China, the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command said in December that a Chinese military plane had come within 20 feet of the nose of a U.S. Air Force RC-135 reconnaissance aircraft over the South China Sea.

<https://asia.nikkei.com/Politics/Defense/U.S.-considers-landing-bombers-in-South-Korea-Air-Force-general>

Taiwan detects mainland Chinese combat drones circling the island ‘for the first time’

Minnie Chan

South China Morning Post, April 28, 2023

Taipei reported that the People’s Liberation Army (PLA) sent two drones to fly around much of the island, in what may be the first time it has detected such a move by Beijing. Experts said the move indicated the mainland was trying to use a low-cost strategy to break into the self-ruled island’s 24-nautical mile air defence identification zone.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/military/article/3218801/taiwan-detects-chinese-combat-drones-circling-island-first-time>

Chinese Fissile Material

International Panel on Fissile Materials, April 29, 2023

China has produced highly enriched uranium (HEU) for weapons in two complexes: the Lanzhou gaseous diffusion plant (Plant 504) and the Heping gaseous diffusion plant (Plant 814). It also used these enrichment plants to produce HEU for its research reactors and LEU for naval reactors. The Heping plant continues to operate.

<https://fissilematerials.org/countries/china.html>

Singapore deepens US defence ties despite Chinese financial inflows

Mercedes Ruehl

Financial Times, April 30, 2023

Singapore’s prime minister Lee Hsien Loong recently managed what few other global leaders would be able or willing to do: travel to China and publicly praise a US-led Asian initiative. “Asia should always remain an open region,” Lee said at the Boao Forum for Asia in Hainan. “As Asian countries develop co-operation among ourselves, we should also cultivate our relations with the US, Europe and other parts of the world.”

<https://www.ft.com/content/0c20823d-2d5f-435e-aec4-269dbe5dafb4>

Japan's export control measures on semiconductor equipment violate WTO rules

Tu Xinquan

Global Times, April 30, 2023

On January 27, 2023, several Western media outlets reported an agreement among the US, the Netherlands and Japan on restricting the export of advanced chip manufacturing equipment to China and extending the export control measures adopted by the US in October 2022 to relevant companies in the other two countries.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202304/1289990.shtml>

U.S. tells China to stop harassing Philippine ships in South China Sea

Nikkei Asia, April 30, 2023

The United States called on China to stop harassing Philippine vessels in the South China Sea, pledging to stand with the Philippines at a time of simmering geopolitical tension. "We call upon Beijing to desist from its provocative and unsafe conduct," the U.S. State Department said in a statement.

<https://asia.nikkei.com/Politics/International-relations/U.S.-tells-China-to-stop-harassing-Philippine-ships-in-South-China-Sea>

*Sylloge on China is compiled by Mr. Niranjan C. Oak
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**Nuclear and Arms Control Centre, MP-IDSA
And
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