

The China–Taiwan Weekly Update



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Data Cutoff: July 1, 2025

The China–Taiwan Weekly Update is a joint product from the Institute for the Study of War and the American Enterprise Institute. The update supports the ISW–AEI Coalition Defense of Taiwan project, which assesses Chinese campaigns against Taiwan, examines alternative strategies for the United States and its allies to deter the Chinese Communist Party’s (CCP) aggression, and—if necessary—defeat the People’s Liberation Army (PLA). The update focuses on the Chinese Communist Party’s paths to controlling Taiwan and cross–Taiwan Strait developments.

Taiwan is expanding and modernizing its annual Han Kuang joint military exercise to better prepare the military and population for a PLA invasion. Taiwanese Defense Minister Wellington Koo announced on June 26 plans for military-civilian coordination operations and civil defense drills to occur simultaneously with Han Kuang to simulate greater realism.[1] The exercise will simulate a PRC blockade and invasion of Taiwan like previous iterations of the exercise. The exercise will run double the length of previous years’ exercise and include the largest-ever mobilization of reservists. Local governments and civil defense teams will run “relief stations” that administer first aid and coordinate disaster response activities.[2] Local governments will conduct drills involving civilian evacuation to shelters and the protection of critical infrastructure.[3] Taiwanese public transportation authorities released new air-raid guidelines that incorporate lessons from Ukraine and Israel.[4] The exercises will simulate a range of newly added PRC gray-zone tactics to form comprehensive scenarios both prior to and during combat.[5]

Efforts to expand the scope and realism of Han Kuang exercises illustrate the William Lai Ching-te administration’s emphasis on civil defense and national security. Taiwan observers have criticized the Han Kuang exercises for scriptedness in the past, but its live-fire exercises became unscripted in 2024.[6]

The Lai administration’s emphasis on societal resilience extends to efforts to bolster civilian morale and national unity. Lai designated July as “National Unity Month” during a speech at the fourth meeting of the Whole-of-Society Defense Resilience Committee on June 26.[7] Lai began touring Taiwan on June 22 to deliver a series of speeches on national unity to rally the country to come together in the face of threats to Taiwan’s sovereignty.[8]

PRC Taiwan Affairs Office (TAO) spokesperson Chen Binhua criticized Lai after his fourth national unity speech. Chen called Lai a “war trafficker” and a “veritable troublemaker” and said that Taiwan

and its outer islands belong to the PRC.[9] The PRC, which has criticized Lai as an “independence” activist, will likely maintain such criticisms throughout National Unity Month, as it seeks to frame Lai as a dangerous separatist. The PRC may use Lai’s speeches as a pretext to stage military exercises or raise the intensity of coercive activities around Taiwan, as it did following Lai’s inauguration in May 2024.

North Korea and South Korea continue to strengthen their defenses along their shared border despite South Korean President Lee Jae-myung’s promise to reinstate the Comprehensive Military Agreement (CMA). South Korea’s Defense Ministry confirmed on June 30 that North Korea resumed building barriers along the border after halting work for several months.[10] Joint Chiefs of Staff spokesperson Lee Sung-joon said in a press conference that approximately 1,000 North Koreans were observed constructing barriers in five or six regions along the border. South Korea observed 4,000–5,000 North Koreans in ten locations completing similar projects in 2024. North Korea has been observed sending troops to construct anti-tank barriers, plant mines, and reinforce barbed wire fences along the border following Worker’s Party of Korea General Secretary Kim Jong-un’s calls to “redefine the border” and abandon reunification.[11] North Korea notified the United Nations Command (UNC) — a United States-led multinational force responsible for overseeing the Korean armistice — that it would resume construction on June 30.[12] South Korean Ministry of Defense spokesperson Jeon Ha-gyu said that this notification was “meaningful” but did not provide additional details.[13] North Korea last notified the UNC of construction in November 2024.[14] South Korean observers noted that the notification could indicate Pyongyang’s willingness to resume communications, though North Korea has taken no other steps to do so.

South Korea resumed surveillance and security operations at 11 previously deconstructed front-line guard posts on June 27.[15] The posts were dismantled in 2018 under the CMA, which included provisions requiring the destruction of 10 guard posts each along the military demarcation line (MDL), withdrawal of troops and weaponry, and allowance of mutual on-site inspections.[16] The CMA broke down in November 2023, prompting both sides to resume military exercises and construction. The Lee administration has called for the reinstatement of the CMA or a similar agreement since entering office, though South Korean military activity seemingly contradicts this rhetoric.[17] Lee’s efforts towards inter-Korean cooperation have remained rhetorical or primarily symbolic, particularly the banning of propaganda broadcasts and dissemination of leaflets across the border.[18]

Key Takeaways

- **Taiwan:** Taiwan is expanding and modernizing its annual Han Kuang joint military exercise to prepare its military and population for a PLA invasion. These changes reflect Taiwanese President Lai’s emphasis on societal resilience and national defense and unity against PRC aggression and coercion.
- **Korean Peninsula:** North Korea and South Korea continue to strengthen their defenses around their shared border, despite newly elected South Korean President Lee’s emphasis on inter-Korean cooperation. Lee has called for the reinstatement of the CMA, which collapsed in November 2023.

Czech military intelligence officials confirmed that PRC diplomats in Prague planned an aggressive physical confrontation against Taiwanese then-Vice President-elect Hsiao Bi-khim during her visit in March 2024. Czech Director of Military Intelligence Petr Bartovský said in an interview that the PRC planned to conduct “demonstrative kinetic action” against Hsiao. Czech media outlet *iROZHLAS* assessed this to be a car collision, based on their investigation.[19] *iROZHLAS* attributed the operation to three diplomats in the PRC Embassy’s Office of the Military and Aviation Attaché. It is unclear whether the aim of the plan was to intimidate Hsiao, injure her, or kill her, though most reporting has framed it as an intimidation attempt. Hsiao received police protection throughout her visit, including a convoy that accompanied her vehicle. Bartovský said that the plot did not go past the planning phase. Czech police did, however, question the PRC deputy military attaché, who ran a red light and nearly caused a car crash while following Hsiao’s convoy.[20]

The incident highlights the brazen measures that the PRC is willing to take to suppress Taiwan’s diplomatic engagements internationally. The PRC has previously acted aggressively towards Taiwan’s representatives abroad; PRC diplomats intruded on a Taiwanese national day celebration in Fiji in 2020 and physically assaulted Taiwanese diplomats, hospitalizing one of them.[21] Plotting violence against the vice president elect, however, represents an escalation by the PRC in terms of targeting Taiwanese leaders. PRC Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) spokesperson Guo Jiakun did not directly address a question about the incident and claimed that PRC diplomats always abide by their host country’s laws and regulations.[22]

The PRC recruitment of Taiwanese agents to form insurrection groups threatens Taiwan’s internal security and ability to respond to a PRC invasion. A Taiwanese court sentenced retired military officer Chu Hung-yi and his six accomplices to prison on June 26 for spying for the PRC and creating an armed insurrection group that would support the PLA in an invasion.[23]

Chu recruited six military veterans to collect intelligence for PRC handlers, including maps and photographs of the United States’ de-facto embassy in Taipei, important military bases throughout Taiwan, and lists of military officers with the rank of major general and above — possibly for further intelligence targeting.[24] The most critical evidence included a document that Chu wrote titled “Guidelines for the Chinese Unification Operations,” which discussed establishing a sniper team to kill Taiwan “separatists,” developing a network of PRC informants within Taiwan, and assisting the PRC in “deploying 100,000 troops to Taiwan.”

Taiwanese authorities likewise charged retired Lieutenant General Kao An-kuo to prison in January 2025 for collaborating with PRC intelligence operatives to form an armed insurrection group that would support a PLA invasion.[25] The recruitment of Taiwanese military personnel for insurrection underscores the PRC’s inclination to co-opt fifth column elements in Taiwanese society to sow chaos and degrade Taiwan’s self-defense ability. Fostering an insurrection reflects the PLA doctrinal concept of dividing the enemy into factions, a core component of its psychological warfare that PLA strategists believe will help the PRC seize the initiative during wartime.[26]

Chu is the chairman and founder of the Rehabilitation Alliance Party, a minor political party with no presence in government, whose other top leaders also engaged in espionage. The Ministry of the Interior (MOI) filed a petition in January with the Constitutional Court to dissolve the party for its collusion with the Chinese Communist Party (CCP).[27] The MOI is taking more active efforts under President Lai to combat malign PRC influence within Taiwanese society filed for the dissolution of the Chinese Unification Promotion Party in January, another pro-PRC political party whose members were repeatedly convicted of collusion with PRC intelligence services to conduct espionage and election interference.[28] The MOI's enhanced role aligns with a series of policy measures that Lai announced in March to combat PRC subversion of Taiwan's sovereignty.[29]

The Taichung District Prosecutors' Office indicted 34 Kuomintang (KMT) members for forging signatures on recall campaigns for two Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) legislators.[30] The Central Election Commission (CEC) found that over 70 percent of the total signatures across both petitions were falsified.[31] The accused used KMT membership lists to find names to forge onto recall petition forms. The first stage recall only requires signatures from one percent of constituents to pass; such high signature forgery rates in this stage reflect the KMT inability to find public support for DPP legislative recalls.

This is yet another case where high-level KMT party officials organized systemic forgery efforts for recall petitions, which have the potential to change the balance of power in the Legislative Yuan (LY). The CEC referred 19 recall petitions targeting the DPP to prosecutors in response to fraud suspicions in April 2025.[32] The Tainan District Prosecutors Office charged 11 KMT officials in Pingtung for copying names off the KMT party list to forge signatures on recall petitions against two other DPP legislators.[33] The Taipei District Prosecutors' Office charged the Taipei KMT chair for forging over 90 percent of signatures on two DPP recall campaigns.[34] New Taipei District Prosecutors Office also charged 31 individuals, including the KMT New Taipei City Branch secretary general, with forging 2,566 recall petition signatures against three DPP lawmakers.[35]

Recall votes against 24 KMT legislators are scheduled for July 26 and recall votes against another two KMT legislators are scheduled for August 23.[36] There are five recall elections that still have not been scheduled. The KMT will lose the legislative majority if at least 12 recall elections are successful. Recalled legislators immediately vacate their seats, which are filled after a special election scheduled within three months of the recall vote.

The PRC appears to be extending its “Kinmen model” of coast guard patrols in Taiwan-administered waters to Taiwan's Pratas Island. A CCG ship patrolled around Pratas four times in June. China Coast Guard (CCG) ship 3302 conducted patrols around Taiwan's Pratas (Dongsha) island on June 7, 21, 27, and 29, each time sailing almost entirely within the island's contiguous zone for a full 24 hours, according to ship-tracking data obtained from Starboard Maritime Intelligence. The ship made two full circles around the island during the first three patrols but did not complete a second rotation on June 29, possibly because a Taiwanese coast guard ship arrived to block it. Another CCG ship arrived seemingly to confront the Taiwanese ship on June 29.

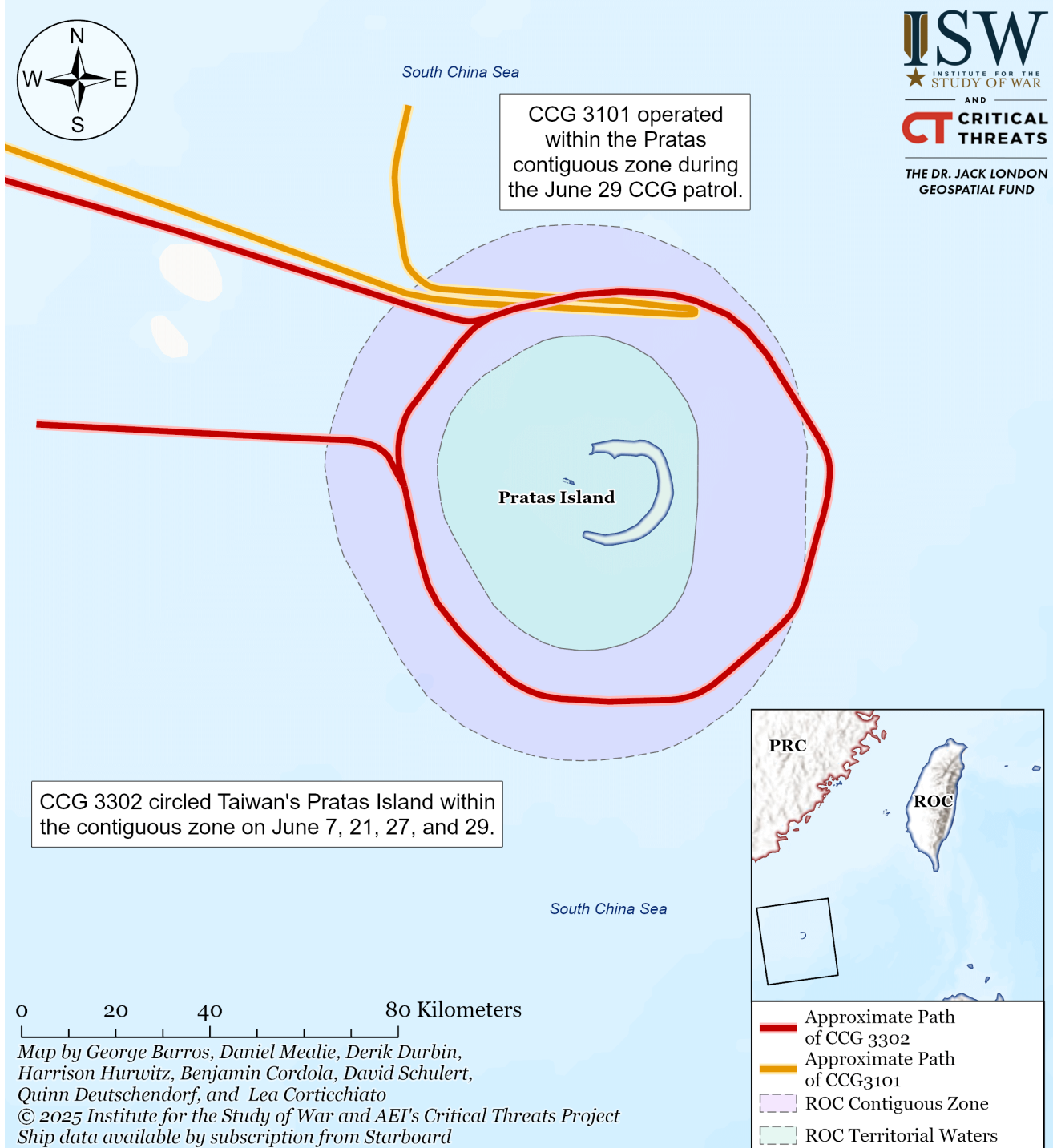
Pratas is a Taiwan-administered atoll and island in the northern part of the South China Sea, which has a Taiwanese coast guard base but no civilian population. Taiwan maintains territorial (or “prohibited”) waters in a 12-nautical mile radius around Pratas, and a contiguous zone (or “restricted waters”)

between 12 and 24 nautical miles from the island, where Taiwan exercises some law enforcement jurisdiction. CCG ships have entered Taiwan-administered waters around Pratas 12 times so far in 2025^[37] The CCG did not conduct any such patrols before 2025, though CCG and other PRC law enforcement ships intruded into Taiwanese waters around Pratas at least three times in 2024, according to Starboard data. CCG 3302 is a ship that has also been involved in aggressive confrontations with Philippine ships around Scarborough Shoal, a disputed South China Sea feature that the PRC seized from the Philippines in 2012 using coast guard vessels.^[38]

The CCG also conducted four patrols in restricted waters around Kinmen in June, consistent with the monthly patrol frequency it has normalized since Taiwanese President Lai's inauguration in May 2024. The incursions occurred on June 19, 20, and 23 — with two incursions on June 19.^[39] The CCG has patrolled Taiwanese waters around Kinmen 77 times since February 2024, when it began the incursions.

The CCG's new pattern of patrols around Pratas align with the "Kinmen model" of asserting PRC law enforcement jurisdiction in waters around Taiwan's outlying islands and eroding Taiwanese control of those waters. Such a tactic is mainly a form of cognitive or legal warfare but may also set conditions for a future "quarantine," blockade, or seizure of those islands by the PRC. The PRC social media account Yuyuan Tiantian, affiliated with PRC state broadcaster CCTV, first made reference to such a "Kinmen model" in May 2024 and cited an "expert" who suggested the model could be extended from Kinmen to other Taiwanese islands and possibly even Taiwan itself, partly in the name of protecting PRC fishermen. The CCG patrols around Pratas began on February 21, almost exactly a year after the CCG's first patrol around Kinmen. The patrol pattern of fully encircling the Pratas was first seen on May 28, roughly a year after the "Kinmen model" concept debuted in PRC state media.^[40]

China Coast Guard patrols around Pratas Island, June 2025

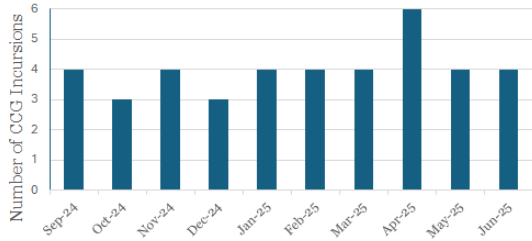


About the Kinmen Islands

Kinmen is a Taiwan-controlled island group and county located three kilometers (1.9 miles) from the PRC's coast. The PRC claims the islands as its own, and its coast guard has regularized incursions around the island since February 2024.

Taiwan does not claim any territorial waters around Kinmen partly due to its proximity to the PRC, but it designates "prohibited" and "restricted" waters around Kinmen which it treats as equivalent to territorial waters and a contiguous zone, respectively. Kinmen is home to about 140,000 people, including about 3,000 garrisoned soldiers.

CCG Incursion Frequency in Kinmen Waters



Restricted and Prohibited Waters around Taiwan's Kinmen Islands



Sources: Taiwan CGA, ISW's China-Taiwan Weekly Updates

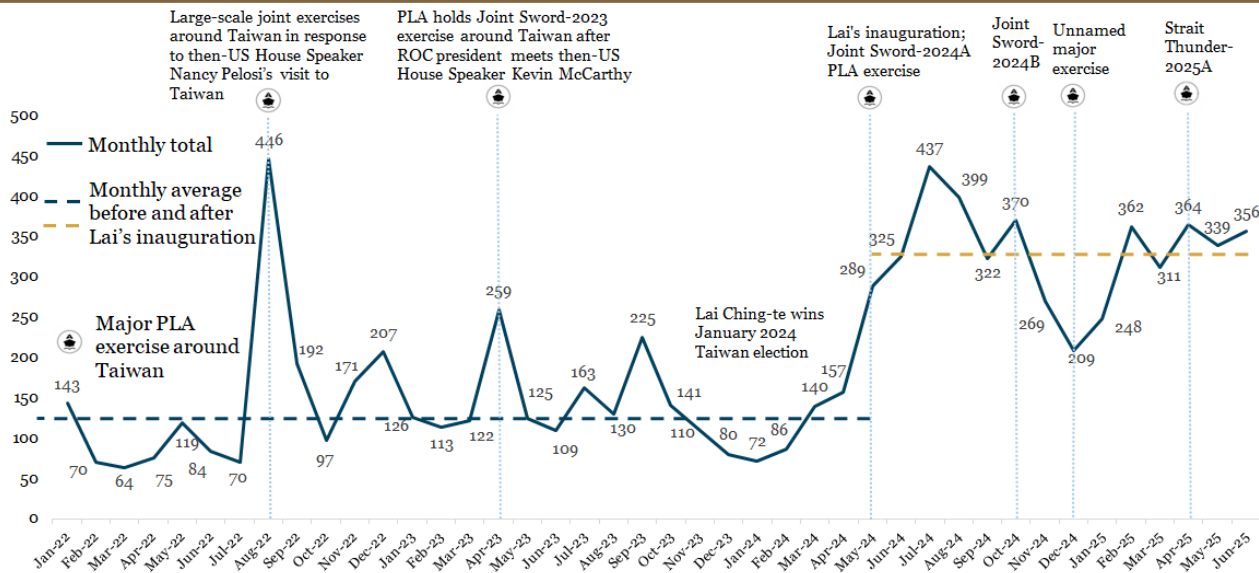
History

Feb. 14, 2024 – A fishing boat capsized in Kinmen's territorial waters as it was fleeing from a Taiwanese Coast Guard inspection, killing two PRC nationals.

Feb. 18, 2024 – The CCG announced that it will conduct regular inspections in waters around Kinmen.

July 30, 2024 – The PRC and Taiwan successfully negotiated a resolution to the February 14 capsizing incident. The PRC returned Taiwanese fishermen it had detained but continued regular incursions into waters around Kinmen.

PLA activity in Taiwan's Air Defense Identification Zone (ADIZ) is continuing at high monthly volumes "normalized" since Taiwan President Lai's inauguration in May 2024. Taiwan's Ministry of National Defense (MND) reported that PLA aircraft flew 356 sorties across the median line of the Taiwan Strait and into Taiwan's ADIZ in June. PLA incursions into Taiwan's ADIZ averaged 328.6 per month since Lai's inauguration in May 2024, more than double the average in the previous two years.^[41] The PRC has normalized a heightened level of military activity around Taiwan to erode Taiwan's threat awareness and to signal its strong opposition to Lai. Beijing considers Lai a dangerous separatist. The normalization of more frequent ADIZ incursions by PLA aircraft raises the threshold of coercive activity that would trigger a Taiwanese response, making it more difficult for Taiwan to detect and respond to a real threat in time. Taiwan must put personnel on standby to respond to ADIZ incursions, which strains resources and exhausts personnel.



Source: Taiwan Ministry of National Defense; CSIS China Power Project



China

The PRC National People's Congress (NPC) removed Admiral Miao Hua from the Central Military Commission (CMC) and removed a top naval officer and nuclear expert from the legislature. The removals of these officials are reflective of CCP General Secretary Xi Jinping's lack of faith in his military leaders. The PRC National People's Congress (NPC) formally removed Admiral Miao Hua from the Central Military Commission (CMC) after a months-long corruption investigation. The NPC also removed the navy's chief of staff and a top nuclear scientist from the legislature, which may be a precursor to further disciplinary action. Miao was the director of the CMC's Political Work Department, making him the top political commissar responsible for enforcing ideological discipline in the PLA. Miao was placed under investigation and suspended from his position in November 2024, then removed from the NPC in May 2025 for "serious violations of discipline and the law."^[42] The NPC Standing Committee voted to remove Miao from the CMC permanently on June 27.^[43] The NPC separately removed Vice Admiral Li Hanjun and top nuclear scientist Liu Shipeng the same day. Li is the chief of staff of the PLA Navy (PLAN), the PLAN's third highest-ranking officer. Liu is a former deputy chief engineer at the China National Nuclear Corporation (CNNC), the main state-owned corporation responsible for the PRC's civilian and military nuclear programs. He was also the chairman of CNNC's 404 Base, the PRC's first and largest nuclear research center.^[44]

The removals of Miao, Li, and Liu are the latest developments in CCP General Secretary Xi Jinping's far-reaching anti-corruption campaign within the PLA and defense industry. Some of the purges, such as those targeting political commissars, such as Miao, may be related to Xi's desire to enforce ideological conformity within the PLA. Others have been related to corruption that affects the PLA's combat

readiness, including purges targeting officials in the PLA Rocket Force and procurements in 2023. Liu Shipeng's removal may be related to the latter effort, as he is a nuclear scientist and the PLARF is responsible for the PRC's nuclear arsenal.

The NPC's public announcements did not state the reasons for Li and Liu's removal, and there is little publicly available information about their work, which was classified. There also has been no indication that Admiral Li has been removed from his position in the PLAN as of July 2025. Removal from the NPC is often an indicator of further disciplinary action, however, because NPC delegates enjoy special protections from criminal prosecution.[45]

The PRC is leveraging artificial intelligence (AI) company DeepSeek to support its military and intelligence apparatus, taking further steps towards "intelligentization". An unnamed senior US State Department official reported that DeepSeek is referenced more than 150 times in publicly unavailable procurement records for the PLA and other entities affiliated with the Chinese defense industrial base.[46] The PLA, People's Armed Police (PAP), and the National Defense Mobilization Agency have deployed DeepSeek's V-3 and R-1 reasoning models for a variety of non-combat support purposes.[47] PRC researchers have also explored leveraging DeepSeek's AI models to support PRC military operations and streamline decision-making. A Xi'an Technological University research team achieved automatic generation of simulated military scenarios using DeepSeek in May 2025.[48] The ability to effectively integrate AI platforms to analyze and respond to evolving combat scenarios would represent a significant step forward towards achieving intelligentization. "Intelligentization" refers to a PLA modernization goal centered around utilizing AI to enhance cognitive warfare and military decision-making [49]

The PRC may be using DeepSeek to subvert US export controls on US-made advanced semiconductors. The same unnamed official stated that DeepSeek is trying to gain access to advanced US-made chips by using shell companies in Southeast Asia to evade export controls.[50] The source reported that DeepSeek is attempting to access data centers in Southeast Asia that are not subject to the same strict export controls as the PRC to remotely access US chips, as another form of export control circumvention.[51] DeepSeek may be trying to acquire US-made advanced chips to stay competitive on the domestic and international market, but the CCP's control over ostensibly private sector companies, especially tech companies, implies that the CCP is still likely involved. US export controls on advanced semiconductors are designed to prevent the PRC from developing advanced AI systems to support military objectives. It does not matter if the push to circumvent US export controls is state-driven or not, because the outcome is that the PRC is acquiring chips that drive their AI development, which is another step toward military integration.

The PRC will almost certainly continue to leverage AI platforms, such as DeepSeek, to undermine US technological and military superiority. The PRC is also using DeepSeek to collect data on American users via "backend infrastructure" connected to PRC state-owned telecommunications company China Mobile.[52] The PRC may attempt to leverage this data for military or intelligence purposes. The US government has also warned that the PRC is using DeepSeek to answer user questions with responses that reflect official CCP narratives, providing another avenue for cognitive warfare against the American public.[53]

Northeast Asia

South Korea

South Korean officials released new reports of PRC military activity and coercion in the Yellow Sea. The PRC is likely seeking to restrict South Korean and US access to the waters and support its maritime territorial claims. South Korean officials reported on June 27 that the PRC deployed five vessels—including two CCG vessels—to obstruct the South Korean *Onnuri* maritime research vessel as it approached a PRC structure in the Yellow Sea on February 26.[54] The new report revealed that the PRC response was far more organized and well-armed than originally believed. South Korea dispatched a Coast Guard vessel to assist the *Onnuri*, resulting in a two-hour standoff with the PRC vessels.

The *Onnuri* was attempting to conduct a survey near an unauthorized structure installed by the PRC in the South Korean-PRC Provisional Measures Zone (PMZ). The PMZ was established in 2000 in the overlapping areas of the South Korean and PRC exclusive economic zones (EEZ). The PRC has constructed three structures in the PMZ, despite the joint agreement between the PRC and South Korea forbidding any activity other than fishing from occurring in the PMZ. The PRC has maintained that these structures are for aquaculture, a claim that a US think tank, the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) cast doubt upon in a recent report.[55] CSIS posited that these structures could be dual-use, allowing the PRC to monitor South Korean and US forces' maritime activity.

South Korean officials also confirmed on June 27 that the PRC has deployed thirteen buoys in the Yellow Sea, the majority of which are concentrated in one area.[56] Buoys are typically evenly dispersed throughout a region to collect oceanographic data. The PRC may intend to use these buoys for route control in addition to data collection, potentially limiting South Korean and US access to those waters. The PRC is likely aiming to broaden its control of surrounding waters including the East China Sea and Yellow Sea. Enhanced PRC control of these waters would improve the viability of the PRC's anti-access/area denial strategy, delaying the United States and South Korea from reaching the Taiwan Strait in a conflict scenario.

Two PRC nationals were arrested for filming a US carrier at a South Korean naval base. South Korean authorities charged the pair under laws not commonly applied in previous espionage cases, which may reflect a stronger determination to punish PRC spying. On June 26, Busan police announced the arrest of two PRC nationals, both graduate students studying in South Korea, for illegally filming the Naval Operations Command facility and the aircraft carrier *USS Theodore Roosevelt*, docked at Busan to take part in the "Freedom Edge" trilateral exercise. A third student was charged without detention. The three captured hundreds of photos and several videos of South Korean and US military facilities from March 2023 to June 2024.[57] South Korea's police, National Intelligence Service, and military counterintelligence officials discovered that at least one of the students was a CCP member. Both students had contacts for PRC public security officials in their cell phones. According to investigators, the students also filmed a US nuclear-powered submarine, the *USS Springfield*, and shared their photos and videos of South Korean and US military installations and ships on Chinese social media. South Korean authorities concluded in their investigative report that the students acted under direction from Chinese intelligence.[58]

South Korean authorities issued new arrest warrants for the three students due to concerns over evidence destruction and flight risk. Two of the students are charged with violating the Protection of

Military Bases and Installations Act, and the main suspect faces additional espionage charges under Article 99 of South Korea’s Criminal Act, which punishes “benefiting the enemy by other methods.” The student is reportedly the first foreign national to be charged under Article 99 in South Korea.[59]

Article 99 concerns espionage carried out on behalf of an “enemy country.”[60] South Korean courts have traditionally interpreted this to refer exclusively to North Korea. Previous attempts to prosecute PRC operatives in South Korea under Article 98, which has the same stipulation for agents of an “enemy country,” have been rejected despite ample evidence of espionage activities.[61] Article 98, which carries a minimum sentence of seven years in prison and allows the death penalty for spying, is hotly debated in the South Korean media, and in 2024 an amendment to the law which would have changed its language to include espionage by any foreign nation failed to pass in the national legislature.[62] Article 99 also addresses espionage, but has a lower minimum sentence of three years imprisonment and does not carry the death penalty.[63] The application of Article 99 in this case may represent an attempt by South Korean prosecutors to establish precedent for punishing spying by nations not traditionally treated as “enemy countries” in South Korean law.

Iran

Iran may be seeking closer military cooperation with the PRC as an alternative to Russia, but the PRC has shown no willingness to assist Iran materially. Iranian Defense Minister Aziz Nasir Zadeh met with PRC Defense Minister Dong Jun on June 26 while attending the defense ministers’ meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, his first foreign trip since the Israeli and US strikes on Iran.[64] The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) was initially founded by the PRC, Russia, and central Asian nations in 2001 as a security and counterterrorism-focused organization and has since expanded to include India, Pakistan, Iran, and Belarus.[65] Iranian and Arab media speculated that one of Nasir Zadeh’s aims during the meeting was to secure a purchase of the PRC’s Chengdu J-10C multirole combat aircraft.[66] Some Arab news outlets reported that Nasir Zadeh and other officials initiated high-level talks to procure J-10s and advanced AWACS (Airborne Warning and Control System) equipment.[67] Iranian news outlet *Defa Press*, which is affiliated with the Iranian Armed Forces General Staff, published an article on June 29 supporting the purchase of the PRC fighter jets and claiming that Iran was “likely” to buy them.[68]

The PRC may be unwilling to sell Iran J-10s or other military equipment, however, due to its unwillingness to directly intervene in the Israel-Iran conflict. The Israel-Iran conflict has exposed the stark limits of Beijing’s commitment to its partners. Beijing has not directly sold weapons to Iran since 2005, instead limiting itself to selling dual-use equipment and materials such as drone parts and components of missile fuel.[69] It also has not directly intervened to help Iran in its conflict with Israel any more than Russia has, preferring to avoid risky foreign entanglements and maintain cooperative relations with Israel.[70]

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