

Chinese Pulse

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CHINESE | PULSE



Justice Mission 2025

Taiwan Encirclement
Rehearsal

China's Zijin Mining
in Tibet

Beijing Hackers
Strike Cisco

China's cyber Blitz
Taiwan

Chinese Tourist's
Sacred Slur

PLA's Pakistan-
Bangla Bases Threat

FROM THE

EDITOR IN CHIEF

As 2025 closes, China's "Justice Mission" drills have turned the Taiwan Strait into a powder keg, encircling the island with 130 warplanes, live-fire rockets and blockade rehearsals that choke vital ports like Kaohsiung.

Rahul Mahajan



Triggered by Washington's record \$11.1 billion arms bonanza HIMARS, ATACMS, howitzers Beijing's message is clear:

"Reunification is when, not if." PLA rhetoric chains Taiwan in graphics of subjugation, it's a dress rehearsal for blockade testing hypersonic from Type 055 Armageddon. Taiwan, semiconductor destroyers to keep U.S. carriers at bay. This colossus—60% of global chips, 90% isn't sabre-rattling; it's rehearsal. Taiwan's advanced nodes—starves without sea semiconductor stranglehold 90% of lanes. Wargames warn: natural gas gone advanced chips means a blockade could torch global supply chains, erasing hundreds of billions in trade. Flights grounded, offshore links severed: the economic fallout ripples worldwide.

Xi's 2027 war-ready deadline looms, with PLA corruption probes no deterrent to modernization. Trump shrugs it off, yet approves the arms that lit the fuse. Taipei scrambles Abrams and HIMARS, but domestic rifts hobble its resolve. The Indo-Pacific teeters. Without crisis channels, a stray rocket or collision risks war. Leaders must forge deterrence, redundancies, and dialogue—now. Justice Mission 2025 isn't justice; it's a verdict on our complacency.

Beijing's fuse? Washington's jaw-dropping \$111 billion arms mega-deal, greenlit December 17-18: 82 HIMARS launchers, ATACMS missiles with 300km punch, 60 M109A7 howitzers, Javelins, and loitering munitions to supercharge Taiwan's porcupine defense.

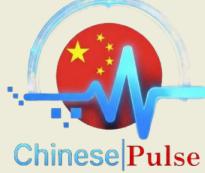
China roars "provocation," branding it fuel for "Taiwan independence." Enter YJ-20 hypersonic fired from Type 055 destroyers, a neon-lit A2/AD wall daring U.S. carriers to approach. This is no drill; it's a dress rehearsal for blockade testing hypersonic from Type 055 Armageddon. Taiwan, semiconductor destroyers to keep U.S. carriers at bay. This colossus—60% of global chips, 90% isn't sabre-rattling; it's rehearsal. Taiwan's advanced nodes—starves without sea semiconductor stranglehold 90% of lanes. Wargames warn: natural gas gone advanced chips means a blockade could torch global supply chains, erasing hundreds of billions in trade. Flights grounded, offshore links severed: the economic fallout ripples worldwide.

Japan eyes Taiwan as collective red line; Indo-Pacific volatility spikes. Absent Beijing-Taipei hotlines, miscalculation looms: a rocket astray, a frigate scrape, and flashpoint ignites. We stand at the precipice. Justice Mission isn't law—it's coercion, eroding rules-based order. Leaders: Arm allies, diversify chips (hello, Arizona fabs), build crisis bridges. Readers: Demand vigilance. History judges the watchful, not the willfully blind. The strait narrows; will we cross it in flames?

Rahul Mahajan
Rahul Mahajan



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CHINA UPDATE

JAN 2026

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China Pulse

Beijing Targets Tokyo With New Export Ban

China has banned exports of dual-use goods to Japan, escalating tensions after Tokyo's remarks on Taiwan. The move targets items with potential military applications. Japan protested, calling it discriminatory. Relations have soured amid radar incidents, Taiwan drills, and Xi's call for China and South Korea to unite against Japan's postwar stance.



Chinese Court Jails Former Provincial Leader Zhao Jinyun for Bribery, Stock Violations

Former Gansu vice-governor Zhao Jinyun was sentenced to 15 years in prison and fined 3.5 million yuan for bribery and insider trading, the Tianjin No. 2 Intermediate People's Court announced. From 2005 to 2024, Zhao and her husband, former tax official Bao Donghong, accepted over 54 million yuan in bribes related to contracts, permits, and appointments. She also profited illegally from stock trades using insider information. Zhao received a reduced sentence for cooperation and partial restitution.



CHINA UPDATE

JAN 2026

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China Pulse

First Seoul–Beijing Summit Since 2019

South Korean President Lee Jae Myung met Chinese leader Xi Jinping in Beijing, calling for a “new phase” in bilateral relations. His visit, the first by a South Korean leader since 2019, focuses on regional security and lifting China’s ban on Korean pop culture. Xi seeks closer ties with Seoul amid rising tensions with Japan.



China Stands by Tehran: Strategic Silence Amid Iran’s Deepening Unrest

China voiced opposition to any foreign interference in Iran amid nationwide protests over economic hardship that have spread to 78 cities and 26 provinces. Foreign Ministry spokesman Lin Jian urged stability, backing Iran’s sovereignty while calling for peace in the Middle East. The unrest, involving universities and labor groups, has left at least 20 dead and 51 injured, according to HRANA, despite intensified crackdowns by Iranian security forces.



TAIWAN ENCIRCLEMENT REHEARSAL



CHINA'S JUSTICE MISSION 2025: OVERVIEW OF CROSS-STRAIT MILITARY DRILLS

On 29-30 December 2025, China's simulations targeting key ports, amid PLA Eastern Theater Command disrupted air/sea traffic. The Pentagon views this within PLA's 2027 readiness trajectory.

a large-scale exercise encircling Taiwan with air, naval, rocket, and coast guard forces across seven zones. Triggered by a record \$11.1 billion US arms package approved days earlier including HIMARS, ATACMS, and howitzers Beijing linked the drills to warnings against "Taiwan independence" and external interference. Taiwan reported 130 aircraft crossings, live-fire rockets near its waters, and blockade

According to the Global Taiwan, on 29–30 December 2025, the PLA Eastern Theater Command launched "Justice Mission 2025," a large-scale joint exercise encircling Taiwan with air, naval, rocket and coast guard forces. Seven danger zones were declared around the island, effectively surrounding Taiwan and overlapping with key approaches to its major ports.

Taiwan's Ministry of National Defense (MND) reported around 130 PLA aircraft in a single 24-hour period, with roughly 90 crossing the median line of the Taiwan Strait one of the highest daily figures on record. Simultaneously, dozens of PLA Navy and China Coast Guard vessels operated around the island, including an amphibious task group with a Type 075 landing helicopter dock practising air-assault and port-seizure scenarios. Live-fire rocket launches landed closer to Taiwan's waters than in prior drills, with Taipei describing some impacts as the "closest ever Chinese live-fire exercise" near its territory.

Attacks also intensified around key democratic milestones, including President Lai Ching-te's first-year-in-office speech in May 2025 and Vice President Hsiao Bi-khim's address to the European Parliament in November. This pattern reveals a deliberate hybrid warfare strategy: using cyber tools alongside drills and propaganda to punish political expression, intimidate Taiwan's electorate, and warn foreign partners that visible support for Taipei will be met with coercive retaliation.

BLOCKADE REHEARSAL AND GLOBAL ECONOMIC STAKES

Ministry of National Defense of China  · Dec 29, 2025 

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Chinese PLA Eastern Theater Command Conducts "Justice Mission 2025" Drills x.com/ChinaMilBugle/...

China Military Bugle  @ChinaMilBugle

Chinese PLA Eastern Theater Command Conducts "Justice Mission 2025" Drills

东部战区开展“正义使命-2025”演习

Senior Colonel Shi Yi, spokesperson of the Chinese PLA Eastern Theater Command: Starting from December 29, the PLA Eastern Theater Command is dispatching its Army, Navy, and Air Force to the Taiwan Strait and surrounding areas to conduct joint live-fire exercises. The exercises will last for about 10 days. The main tasks include: 1) Conducting joint live-fire exercises in the Taiwan Strait and surrounding areas; 2) Carrying out joint maritime patrols and escort missions in the Taiwan Strait and surrounding areas; 3) Carrying out joint air patrols and escort missions in the Taiwan Strait and surrounding areas; 4) Carrying out joint live-fire exercises in the South China Sea and surrounding areas; 5) Carrying out joint maritime patrols and escort missions in the South China Sea and surrounding areas; 6) Carrying out joint air patrols and escort missions in the South China Sea and surrounding areas.

BREAKING NEWS



Ian Ellis  @ianellisjones · [Follow](#) 

Over the past 48 hours, China surrounded Taiwan and executed large-scale live-fire military exercises featuring simulated decapitation strikes and the seizure of key ports.

"It is a noose-style blockade. The operational scope is no longer limited to symbolic, isolated shows of [Show more](#)

TAIWAN'S 24-HOUR CONTINGUOUS ZONE

Taiwan's 24-hour contiguous zone, marking the closest live-fire exercise to date. Other operations involved:

- Integrated blockade and control, seizure of key ports and islands, and the capture of the coast included.
- Blockade on key ports and areas
- Joint sea and land combat readiness patrols
- Joint sea and land combat readiness patrols
- All-dimensional defense measures include the first unified chain

TIMELINE + SEQUENCE OF OPERATIONS

- On 29 Dec at 07:30, the PLAA announced Exercise "Justice Mission 2025" and the Maritime Safety Administration (MSA) issued a warning notice to the northern coast, including the east and west of Taiwan (from approximately 08:30 to 10:30 Dec).
- On 29 Dec at 08:00, the PLAA announced that the Taiwan Strait and surrounding areas to the north of Taiwan, including the east and west of Taiwan, were under a "no-go" zone, and the "no-go" training zone to the east of Taiwan (near Matsu).
- At 08:30, PLA naval forces carried out live-fire shooting with long-range precision strikes.
- At 08:45, the CCG announced that it was conducting live-fire exercises in the Taiwan Strait and near Taiwan's附属 islands of Matsu and Wuqiu Islands.
- On 29 Dec at 09:00, the PLAA announced that the Taiwan Strait and surrounding areas to the north of Taiwan, including the east and west of Taiwan, were under a "no-go" zone.
- At 08:00, PLA Ground Forces (PLAGF) based in Penghu conducted long-range attacks onto the north of Taiwan.
- At 09:30, the PLAA announced that it was carrying out live-fire exercises in the Taiwan Strait and near Taiwan's附属 islands of Matsu and Wuqiu Islands.
- At 10:00, the PLAA announced that it was carrying out live-fire exercises in the Taiwan Strait and near Taiwan's附属 islands of Matsu and Wuqiu Islands.
- At 10:30, the PLAA announced that it was carrying out live-fire exercises in the Taiwan Strait and near Taiwan's附属 islands of Matsu and Wuqiu Islands.
- At 11:00, the PLAA announced that it was carrying out live-fire exercises in the Taiwan Strait and near Taiwan's附属 islands of Matsu and Wuqiu Islands.
- At 11:30, the PLAA announced that it was carrying out live-fire exercises in the Taiwan Strait and near Taiwan's附属 islands of Matsu and Wuqiu Islands.
- At 12:00, the PLAA announced that it was carrying out live-fire exercises in the Taiwan Strait and near Taiwan's附属 islands of Matsu and Wuqiu Islands.
- At 12:30, the PLAA announced that it was carrying out live-fire exercises in the Taiwan Strait and near Taiwan's附属 islands of Matsu and Wuqiu Islands.
- At 13:00, the PLAA announced that it was carrying out live-fire exercises in the Taiwan Strait and near Taiwan's附属 islands of Matsu and Wuqiu Islands.
- At 13:30, the PLAA announced that it was carrying out live-fire exercises in the Taiwan Strait and near Taiwan's附属 islands of Matsu and Wuqiu Islands.
- At 14:00, the PLAA announced that it was carrying out live-fire exercises in the Taiwan Strait and near Taiwan's附属 islands of Matsu and Wuqiu Islands.
- At 14:30, the PLAA announced that it was carrying out live-fire exercises in the Taiwan Strait and near Taiwan's附属 islands of Matsu and Wuqiu Islands.
- At 15:00, the PLAA announced that it was carrying out live-fire exercises in the Taiwan Strait and near Taiwan's附属 islands of Matsu and Wuqiu Islands.
- At 15:30, the PLAA announced that it was carrying out live-fire exercises in the Taiwan Strait and near Taiwan's附属 islands of Matsu and Wuqiu Islands.
- At 16:00, the PLAA announced that it was carrying out live-fire exercises in the Taiwan Strait and near Taiwan's附属 islands of Matsu and Wuqiu Islands.
- At 16:30, the PLAA announced that it was carrying out live-fire exercises in the Taiwan Strait and near Taiwan's附属 islands of Matsu and Wuqiu Islands.
- At 17:00, the PLAA announced that it was carrying out live-fire exercises in the Taiwan Strait and near Taiwan's附属 islands of Matsu and Wuqiu Islands.
- At 17:30, the PLAA announced that it was carrying out live-fire exercises in the Taiwan Strait and near Taiwan's附属 islands of Matsu and Wuqiu Islands.
- At 18:00, the PLAA announced that it was carrying out live-fire exercises in the Taiwan Strait and near Taiwan's附属 islands of Matsu and Wuqiu Islands.
- At 18:30, the PLAA announced that it was carrying out live-fire exercises in the Taiwan Strait and near Taiwan's附属 islands of Matsu and Wuqiu Islands.
- At 19:00, the PLAA announced that it was carrying out live-fire exercises in the Taiwan Strait and near Taiwan's附属 islands of Matsu and Wuqiu Islands.
- At 19:30, the PLAA announced that it was carrying out live-fire exercises in the Taiwan Strait and near Taiwan's附属 islands of Matsu and Wuqiu Islands.
- At 20:00, the PLAA announced that it was carrying out live-fire exercises in the Taiwan Strait and near Taiwan's附属 islands of Matsu and Wuqiu Islands.
- At 20:30, the PLAA announced that it was carrying out live-fire exercises in the Taiwan Strait and near Taiwan's附属 islands of Matsu and Wuqiu Islands.
- At 21:00, the PLAA announced that it was carrying out live-fire exercises in the Taiwan Strait and near Taiwan's附属 islands of Matsu and Wuqiu Islands.
- At 21:30, the PLAA announced that it was carrying out live-fire exercises in the Taiwan Strait and near Taiwan's附属 islands of Matsu and Wuqiu Islands.
- At 22:00, the PLAA announced that it was carrying out live-fire exercises in the Taiwan Strait and near Taiwan's附属 islands of Matsu and Wuqiu Islands.
- At 22:30, the PLAA announced that it was carrying out live-fire exercises in the Taiwan Strait and near Taiwan's附属 islands of Matsu and Wuqiu Islands.
- At 23:00, the PLAA announced that it was carrying out live-fire exercises in the Taiwan Strait and near Taiwan's附属 islands of Matsu and Wuqiu Islands.
- At 23:30, the PLAA announced that it was carrying out live-fire exercises in the Taiwan Strait and near Taiwan's附属 islands of Matsu and Wuqiu Islands.
- At 24:00, the PLAA announced that it was carrying out live-fire exercises in the Taiwan Strait and near Taiwan's附属 islands of Matsu and Wuqiu Islands.
- At 00:00, the PLAA announced that it was carrying out live-fire exercises in the Taiwan Strait and near Taiwan's附属 islands of Matsu and Wuqiu Islands.
- At 00:30, the PLAA announced that it was carrying out live-fire exercises in the Taiwan Strait and near Taiwan's附属 islands of Matsu and Wuqiu Islands.
- At 01:00, the PLAA announced that it was carrying out live-fire exercises in the Taiwan Strait and near Taiwan's附属 islands of Matsu and Wuqiu Islands.
- At 01:30, the PLAA announced that it was carrying out live-fire exercises in the Taiwan Strait and near Taiwan's附属 islands of Matsu and Wuqiu Islands.
- At 02:00, the PLAA announced that it was carrying out live-fire exercises in the Taiwan Strait and near Taiwan's附属 islands of Matsu and Wuqiu Islands.
- At 02:30, the PLAA announced that it was carrying out live-fire exercises in the Taiwan Strait and near Taiwan's附属 islands of Matsu and Wuqiu Islands.
- At 03:00, the PLAA announced that it was carrying out live-fire exercises in the Taiwan Strait and near Taiwan's附属 islands of Matsu and Wuqiu Islands.
- At 03:30, the PLAA announced that it was carrying out live-fire exercises in the Taiwan Strait and near Taiwan's附属 islands of Matsu and Wuqiu Islands.
- At 04:00, the PLAA announced that it was carrying out live-fire exercises in the Taiwan Strait and near Taiwan's附属 islands of Matsu and Wuqiu Islands.
- At 04:30, the PLAA announced that it was carrying out live-fire exercises in the Taiwan Strait and near Taiwan's附属 islands of Matsu and Wuqiu Islands.
- At 05:00, the PLAA announced that it was carrying out live-fire exercises in the Taiwan Strait and near Taiwan's附属 islands of Matsu and Wuqiu Islands.
- At 05:30, the PLAA announced that it was carrying out live-fire exercises in the Taiwan Strait and near Taiwan's附属 islands of Matsu and Wuqiu Islands.
- At 06:00, the PLAA announced that it was carrying out live-fire exercises in the Taiwan Strait and near Taiwan's附属 islands of Matsu and Wuqiu Islands.
- At 06:30, the PLAA announced that it was carrying out live-fire exercises in the Taiwan Strait and near Taiwan's附属 islands of Matsu and Wuqiu Islands.
- At 07:00, the PLAA announced that it was carrying out live-fire exercises in the Taiwan Strait and near Taiwan's附属 islands of Matsu and Wuqiu Islands.
- At 07:30, the PLAA announced that it was carrying out live-fire exercises in the Taiwan Strait and near Taiwan's附属 islands of Matsu and Wuqiu Islands.
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TAIWAN'S 24-HOUR CONTINGUOUS ZONE

Taiwan's 24-hour contiguous zone, marking the closest live-fire exercise to date. Other operations involved:

- Integrated blockade and control, seizure of key ports and islands, and the capture of the coast included.
- Blockade on key ports and areas
- Joint sea and land combat readiness patrols
- Joint sea and land combat readiness patrols
- All-dimensional defense measures include the first unified chain

CHINA COAST GUARD

Yanbian Garrison in the PLA's Area of Operations

- CCG Enhance Operations
- PLA Day 1
- PLA Day 2
- CCG Day 1
- CCG Day 2

PLA NAVY SHIPS

PLA AIR FORCE (PLAAF)

CHINA COAST GUARD (CCG)

PLA ROCKET FORCE + PLAGF

PLA SHIPS AROUND TAIWAN

PLA MEDIAN LINE / ADIZ INCUSSIONS

PLA AIRCRAFT NEAR TAIWAN

A central feature of Justice Mission 2025 was simulated blockade operations against Taiwan's critical ports, especially Kaohsiung and Keelung. Analysts noted tactics geared toward cutting off maritime trade vital to Taiwan's energy and food imports, echoing wargame findings that Taipei could exhaust natural gas reserves within days under a sustained blockade.

Taiwan manufactures over 60 percent of global semiconductors and more than 90 percent of leading-edge chips used in smartphones, EVs and advanced computing.

TRIGGER: RECORD US ARMS PACKAGE AND HYPERSONIC SIGNALING

Washington approved an unprecedented \$11.1 billion arms package for Taiwan on 17 -18 December 2025 the largest single transfer ever featuring 82 HIMARS launchers, ATACMS/GMLRS munitions, 60 M109A7 howitzers, ALTIUS loitering munitions, Javelin/TOW anti-tank missiles, and network software to harden Taiwan's asymmetric defenses.

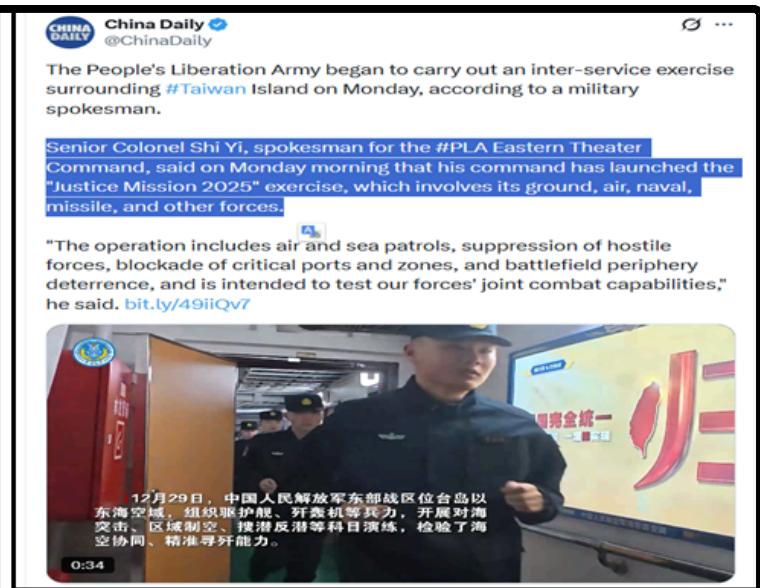
Beijing denounced it as breaching the "one China" principle, explicitly tying Justice Mission 2025 to this "provocation" supporting "Taiwan independence." China warned of imminent strait-wide crisis and publicized YJ-20 hypersonic anti-ship missile tests from Type 055 destroyers, bolstering A2/AD strategy to deter US carrier groups and allied intervention.

PLA BLOCKADE DRAINS TAIWAN'S GAS

A prolonged blockade or high-end conflict would choke global electronics supply chains, with some studies putting potential losses in the hundreds of billions of dollars and disrupting roughly one-fifth of world trade that transits the Taiwan Strait by value. During the drills, domestic and regional air traffic suffered: dozens of flights were cancelled or rerouted and connections to offshore islands such as Kinmen and Matsu were temporarily halted.



BEIJING'S MESSAGING AND STRATEGIC INTENT



PLA officials framed the December 2025 drills as resolutely punitive and deterrent. Eastern Theater Command Spokesperson Senior Colonel Shi Yi called it a "stern warning" against "Taiwan independence separatists and external interference." China Military Bugle declared reunification "how and when, not if," with graphics depicting Taiwan bound in chains under slogans vowing to "punish Taiwan independence" and "deter external meddling." PLA scholars stressed the "Justice Mission" name asserts legal legitimacy for sovereignty defense. Beyond rehearsals of blockade tactics and joint fires, the exercise tested multi-service C2 while signaling resolve ahead of the PLA's 2027 readiness deadline.

TAIWAN'S MILITARY AND POLITICAL RESPONSE

Taipei condemned the drills as "irrational and provocative," charging Beijing with endangering civilians through abrupt navigation/airspace

warnings that flout international norms and erode the rules-based order. Taiwan's MOFA warned of "grave damage" to regional stability across the strait and Indo-Pacific.



MND surged patrols, scrambled fighters, and staged readiness drills featuring M1A2 Abrams tanks at Tamsui River approaches while displaying HIMARS to signal long-range strike evolution. Amid opposition blocking Lai Ching-te's \$40B defense budget and impeachment bids, Beijing exploits fractures to undermine the DPP while elevating accommodationist factions.

US ASSESSMENTS AND THE 2027 DEADLINE

For Washington, Justice Mission 2025 is assessed within a broader pattern of PLA modernization and rehearsal for Taiwan contingencies. The Pentagon's 2025 China Military Power Report concludes that despite internal turmoil and corruption probes, the PLA is still on track to meet Xi Jinping's directive to be ready by 2027 to fight and win a war over Taiwan, if ordered.

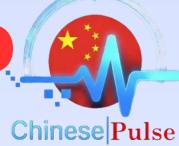
The report describes a portfolio of options under active development including amphibious invasion, large-scale firepower strikes and maritime blockade many of which have been tested in recent exercises since 2022. Justice Mission 2025 fits squarely within this pattern, emphasizing joint firepower, blockade tactics and anti-intervention capabilities designed to hold US and allied forces at risk out to 1,500–2,000 nautical miles.

Yet President Donald Trump publicly downplayed the immediate risk of conflict, telling reporters he was "not worried" and characterizing Chinese drills as part of a long-standing pattern, even as his administration approved the record arms package that helped trigger the latest escalation.

Taken together, Justice Mission 2025, record US arms sales, Japan's growing willingness to frame Taiwan as a matter for collective self-defense, and the PLA's 2027 readiness push are producing a far more volatile strategic environment. American and allied intelligence assessments underscore that Beijing is no longer content simply to deter a formal declaration of independence; instead, it is applying sustained coercive pressure to force movement toward unification on its terms.

At the same time, key crisis management channels between Beijing and Taipei remain largely absent, increasing the risk that a miscalculation during high tempo operations—such as a rocket landing on Taiwanese territory or a collision at sea—could spiral into a broader confrontation neither side currently seeks. Justice Mission 2025 thus illustrates not only the maturation of PLA operational capabilities but also the tightening window in which regional actors must strengthen deterrence, build redundancy into economic networks, and establish communication mechanisms capable of managing a crisis that is edging ever closer to the threshold of war

BEIJING HACKERS EXPLOIT CISCO ZERO DAY IN GLOBAL ESPIONAGE PUSH



From Beijing to Boardrooms: Cisco Hack Powers State Surveillance



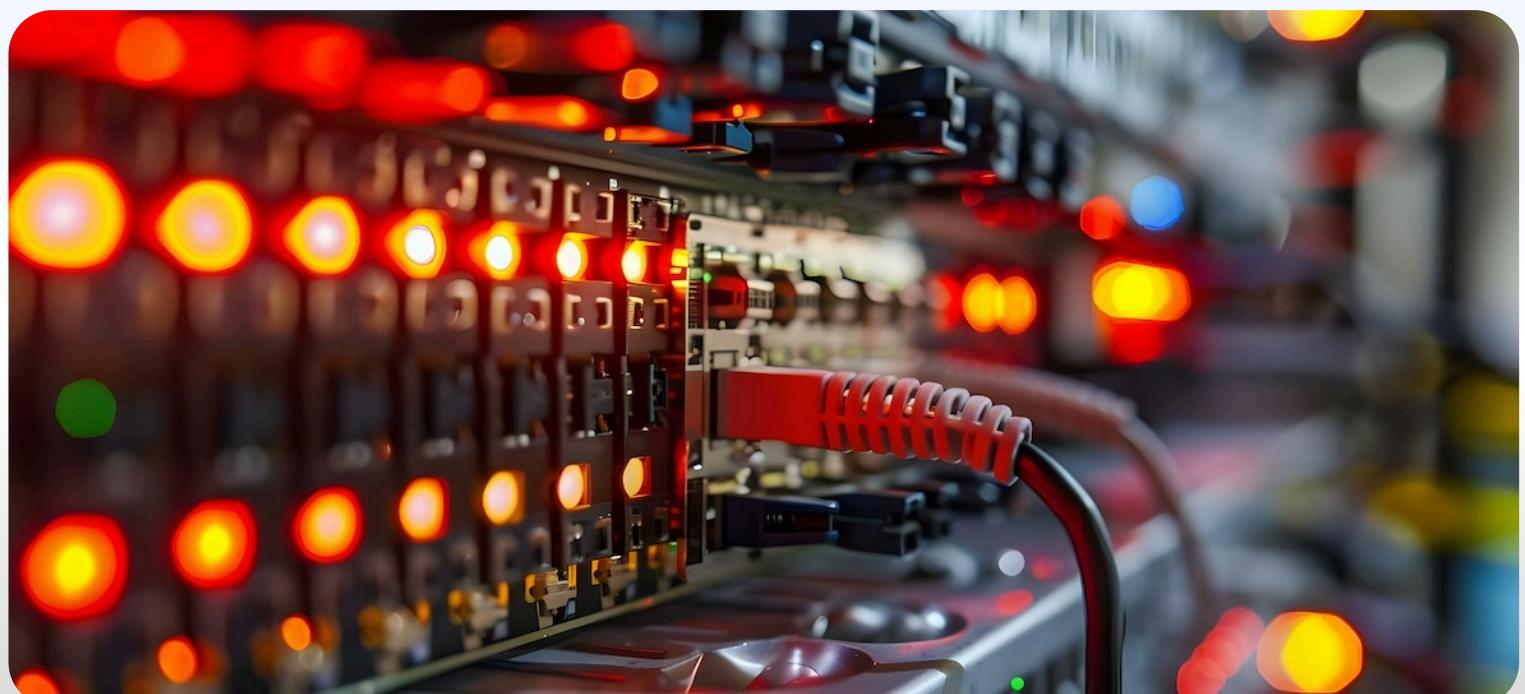
Cisco faces a growing security crisis after confirming that Chinese-linked hackers are exploiting a critical zero-day flaw in some of its most widely deployed email security products, enabling full takeover of vulnerable devices with no patch currently available.

The vulnerability, tracked as CVE-2025-20393, is an improper input validation flaw in Cisco's AsyncOS software that powers Cisco Secure Email Gateway and Cisco Secure Email and Web Manager appliances. Under specific conditions, it allows attackers to execute commands with unrestricted privileges, install persistent backdoors and effectively seize total control of affected systems.

According to the **cyberscoop**, AI tools have transformed the information ecosystem into a strategic weapon. Deepfakes, synthetic news anchors, and coordinated bot networks enable influence operations on a scale once unimaginable. What was once the domain of state-backed information units has become cheap, fast, and easy to replicate. Whoever controls the narrative can justify escalation, legitimize claims, and shape global perceptions without firing a single shot.

In July 2024, a deepfake audio clip of President Ferdinand Marcos Jr allegedly ordering an attack on China went viral across Philippine social media, igniting fear and confusion before authorities verified it as fake. The episode exposed a new vulnerability: AI can blur the line between truth and fiction so effectively that public reactions arrive long before official clarifications. The result is not just disinformation but potential diplomatic destabilization.

Behind the scenes, a complex web of propaganda networks thrives. Reports by PressOne.PH, Graphika, and Agence France-Presse reveal monetized, AI-powered content farms producing pro-China narratives or inflammatory war scenarios under the guise of "news." Fake accounts with AI-generated profile photos amplify these posts, making propaganda appear organic. Each misleading video or story often earning between US\$20 and US\$70 in ad revenue trades in outrage, not truth. Conflict, in the algorithmic age, has become content.



This digital conflict profits from public vulnerability. A study by the Philippine Presidential Communications Office found that over half of Filipinos struggle to identify fake news, and nine in ten encounter false information online. Such fragility makes the public fertile ground for manipulation. AI-generated propaganda doesn't just misinform it can manufacture consent for war, stoking nationalism and legitimizing calls for escalation despite the country's limited military readiness.

China's use of "cognitive warfare" adds another layer. AI-enhanced spokespersons, algorithmically tuned speech patterns, and emotionally charged narratives subtly shape perceptions rather than arguments. As cognitive warfare spreads, democratic deliberation risks being replaced by emotional conditioning a global concern that reaches far beyond the South China Sea.

Efforts to fight back are uneven. The Philippines is drafting AI regulation bills aimed at curbing deepfakes before the 2025 elections, but cross-border enforcement remains limited. China mandates labelling of AI-generated content, yet its regulations enforce compliance with state narratives rather than transparency.



Meanwhile, platforms like Meta and X have rolled back professional fact checking, leaving users to navigate a flood of deceptive content with little institutional support. Even the media's countermeasures pose ethical dilemmas. Manila's "transparency initiative," where journalists join naval missions to the disputed waters, promotes real-time reporting but risks blurring lines between state messaging and independent journalism. In information warfare, access can come at the price of autonomy.

The South China Sea has become a test case for the weaponization of AI in modern geopolitics. What begins here could soon echo in other contested zones the Taiwan Strait, the Arctic, or Africa's resource corridors. The implications are global: one-third of world trade sails through these waters. If AI-propelled misinformation inflames regional tensions or distorts policy decisions, the consequences will ripple through supply chains, alliances, and the very norms of international law.

To counter this tide, stakeholders must act collectively. Regulators need enforceable international norms on AI-generated content. Platforms must invest in deepfake detection and transparent algorithms. Civil society must expand fact checking networks and media literacy programs that treat misinformation as a national security threat.

The South China Sea's digital warfront shows the new shape of conflict one fought with algorithms, not artillery. The battle for territory has merged with the battle for truth, and the world is watching to see who wins.

CHINA UPDATE

JAN 2026

www.chinascoop.org

China Pulse

Ireland and China Unite Through Education

Irish Prime Minister Micheál Martin visited China to promote expanded educational cooperation. At an event hosted by the Irish Embassy, new joint programs between Chinese and Irish universities were announced, emphasizing quality and inclusivity. Over 110 joint initiatives now involve 12,000 students, with enrollment projected to surpass 15,000 by 2026.



China Sanctions Taiwan's Interior, Education Ministers and Prosecutor in New Pressure Tactic

China's Taiwan Affairs Office labeled Taiwan's Interior Minister Liu Shyh-fang, Education Minister Cheng Ying-yao, and prosecutor Chen Shu-yi as "Taiwan independence diehards," imposing lifetime bans on them, their families, and related businesses. Beijing accused them of promoting separatism and hindering cross-strait ties. Analysts say the move aims to intimidate Taiwan's judiciary, education sector, and government while reinforcing China's sovereignty claims over the island.



CHINA UPDATE

JAN 2026

www.chinascoop.org

China Pulse

Pakistan–China Ocean Research Cruise Begins

Pakistan's navy deployed the survey vessel Behr Masah for a joint Pakistan–China oceanographic mission to advance marine research in the North Arabian Sea. The collaboration aims to improve understanding of coastal and offshore ecosystems and support maritime planning, reflecting ongoing naval cooperation that includes exercises, training, and joint submarine projects.



China's Ideology Chief Orders Propaganda Focus on Economy Amid Slowdown

China's ideology chief Cai Qi urged propaganda officials to prioritize promoting the economy amid slowing growth, unemployment, and weak consumption. At a Beijing meeting, he called for stronger public opinion management, cyberspace control, and global communication. Cai and Li Shulei emphasized cultural preservation and Party leadership. The move follows Xi Jinping's push to project optimism and silence economic pessimism.



CHINA'S ZIJIN MINING

China's Zijin Mining: China's Push for Gold, Copper, and Control from Tibet to Ghana

China's Zijin Mining Group has become a key instrument in Beijing's drive to lock down strategic minerals from Tibet to Africa, tightening China's grip over critical supply chains and vulnerable states. Behind record profits and ambitious 2026 output targets



"Silent No More: Inside China's Bold Protests Against Zero-COVID Rule"

lies a geopolitical project that fuses aligning with China's long-term strategy of resource extraction with power to dominate minerals that underpin projection, entrenching Chinese military industries and green influence while exporting environmental technologies, damage, governance risks, and sovereignty erosion to frontline regions from the Himalayan plateau to Ghana and Kazakhstan.

Zijin Mining reported estimated 2025 net income of about 52 billion yuan (around 7.4 billion dollars), driven by record prices for copper, gold, and silver. This profit surge gives Beijing-backed capital even greater leverage to acquire assets abroad and deepen its control over critical supply chains.

The company plans double-digit growth in 2026, targeting 105 tonnes of mined gold and 1.2 million tonnes of copper, representing 17% and 10% year-on-year increases respectively. Such expansion is not just a business story but a geopolitical project,

Tibet: mining under occupation

A key driver of Zijin's growth is the expansion of its Julong copper mine in China's Tibet region, a territory whose political status and human rights situation are already deeply contested. Turning Tibet into an extraction frontier strengthens Beijing's economic grip over the plateau while marginalising local voices and accelerating environmental degradation in a fragile, high-altitude ecosystem.

Global acquisitions, local risks

Copper mining at scale in Tibet risks contaminating water sources that feed major Asian rivers, affecting downstream communities far beyond China's borders. By tying Tibet's economy to state-linked mining conglomerates, Beijing further normalises occupation under the guise of "development" and "green transition" rhetoric.

Zijin's march to a 100-tonne annual gold output target now expected two years ahead of schedule is powered by a wave of acquisitions, including gold mines in Ghana and Kazakhstan. These deals extend Chinese state-linked influence deep into resource-rich regions where governance challenges and debt vulnerabilities already create fertile ground for strategic dependence.

Its recently spun-off unit, Zijin Gold International, projects 2025 net profit of roughly 1.5–1.6 billion dollars, a year-on-year surge of about 212%–233%. With such cash flows, Chinese mining champions can outbid competitors, lock up future production, and quietly rewrite the rules of global resource governance in Beijing's favour.

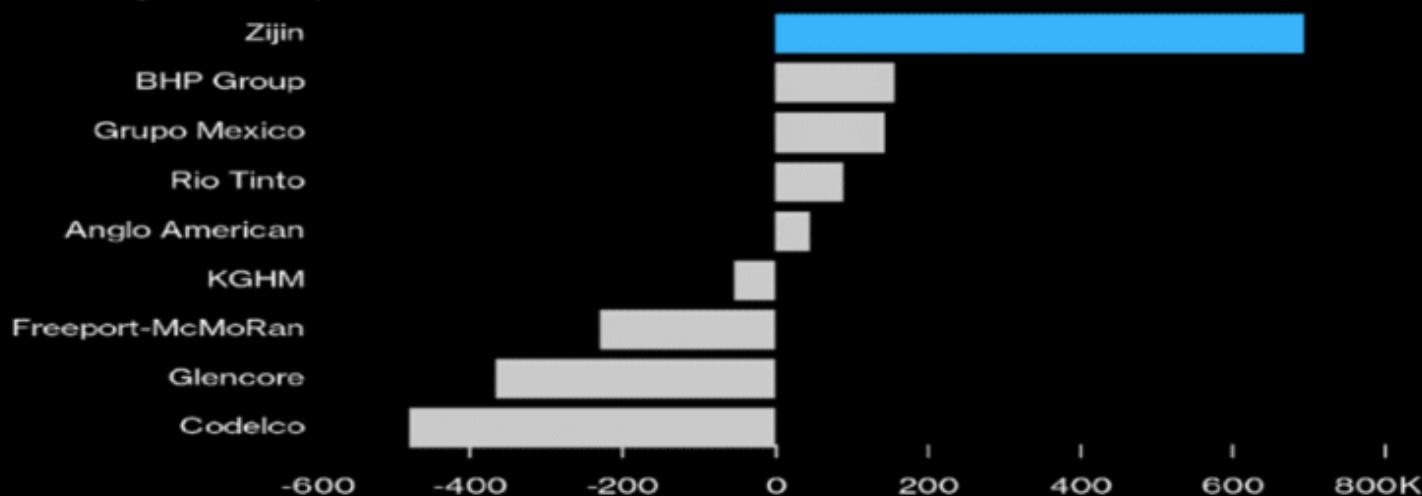
The company's pattern of buying high-quality assets across multiple continents has been praised by some market analysts, but for host countries it concentrates ownership in the hands of a foreign power with clear geopolitical ambitions. Communities in Africa, Central Asia, and Latin America have repeatedly raised concerns over labour practices, environmental standards, and the lack of transparent benefit-sharing in Chinese mining projects.

Zijin's Hong Kong-listed shares more than doubled to a record high in 2025, with the stock trading around HK\$36.50 at the end of the year. This stock market success translates into cheaper capital and greater firepower for further acquisitions, reinforcing a feedback loop in which financial gains fuel strategic expansion.

Over Recent Years, Zijin's Production Growth Has Outpaced Rivals

The Chinese miner has added close to 700,000 metric tons of mined production in under a decade

■ Change in mined production from 2015 to 2023 (in metric tons)



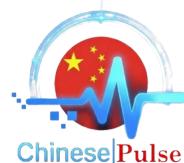
Source: CRU Group, Bloomberg

China's Zijin Mining Group aggressively expands in Tibet's Julong copper mine, commodities; copper is essential for turning the fragile Himalayan plateau into a resource extraction zone under the so-called green transition, while gold Beijing's control. Large-scale mining remains a backbone of financial accelerates ecological devastation: toxic resilience and sanctions-proof reserves. tailings pollute sacred rivers like the Brahmaputra and Mekong, threatening copper output and rapidly scaling gold downstream water security for millions production, Zijin strengthens China's in India, Bangladesh, and Southeast hand in any future economic or Asia. Glacier melt from mining geopolitical crisis where control of emissions worsens climate vulnerability, critical materials becomes a tool of while deforestation and habitat loss coercion.

drive biodiversity collapse. This state-backed plunder normalises occupation, success story, Zijin Mining's record exports environmental harm, and profits and output push expose a hard undermines regional sovereignty for reality: China is weaponising state-China's mineral dominance.

backed resource giants to entrench dominance from Tibet to Africa, reshaping regional power balances while local communities carry the environmental and sovereignty costs.

CARNEY'S CHINA GAMBLE: HUMAN RIGHTS ON TRIAL

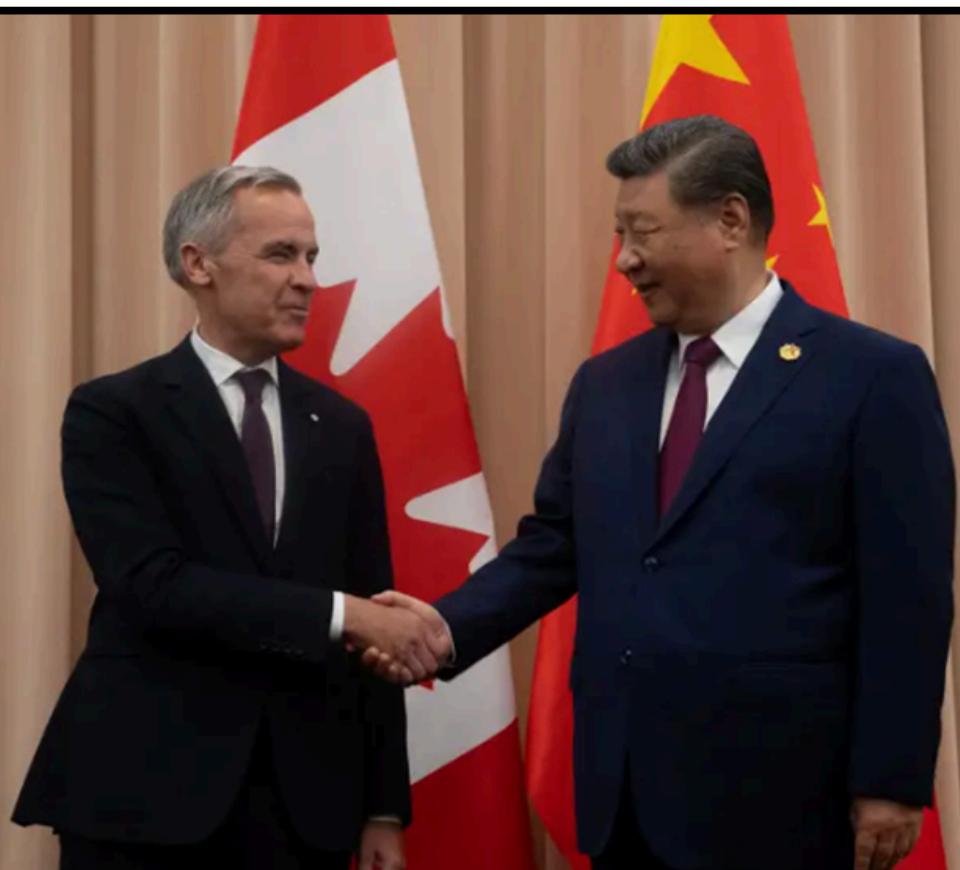


Mark Carney's China Visit Spotlights Human Rights Crisis Amid Strained Ties

Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney's visit to China from 13–17 January 2026 marks the first such trip by a Canadian prime minister in more than eight years, once again drawing global attention to Beijing's human rights record. This visit is not merely an effort to reassess bilateral relations; it is also a test of how firmly Canada upholds its commitment to human rights on the global stage. US-based human rights organization Human Rights Watch (HRW) has urged Carney to place human rights at the core of the visit. The organization argues that diplomatic engagement cannot be used to sideline China's widespread repression within its

borders or its growing extraterritorial impact. The trip comes amid deep mistrust and offers a decisive opportunity to confront these issues directly.

Bilateral relations deteriorated notably after Chinese authorities detained two Canadian citizens between 2018 and 2021 widely viewed as retaliation for Canada's arrest of Huawei executive Meng Wanzhou. HRW regards Carney's visit as a rare and critical window to apply direct diplomatic pressure over longstanding human rights violations.



HRW focuses particular attention on abuses against Uyghurs and other Turkic Muslim communities in Xinjiang, including mass detentions, forced labor, and the systematic destruction of cultural and religious life. According to HRW, the United Nations, and several governments, these abuses amount to crimes against humanity and represent one of the gravest human rights crises of our time. Carney is expected to ensure enforcement of International Labour Organization (ILO) conventions ratified by Canada and to take concrete action against persistent state-sponsored abuses. Despite import bans, goods produced through forced labor continue to enter Canadian markets, underscoring the urgent need for ethical trade practices.

Beyond Xinjiang, human rights violations in China have taken on a broad and systemic character. Labour rights have deteriorated nationwide, with trade unions banned, activists imprisoned, and peaceful protests routinely suppressed. In Hong Kong, nearly 300,000 Canadian citizens are witnessing the erosion of fundamental freedoms under national security laws that have severely weakened freedom of expression, peaceful assembly, judicial independence, and fair trials. HRW has called on Canada to demand the release of media entrepreneur and press-freedom symbol Jimmy Lai, who was convicted in December 2025.

As HRW Deputy Asia Director Maya Wang stated: "Prime Minister Carney should recognize that the Chinese government's deepening repression threatens not only the rights of people in China but increasingly Canada's core interests and values."

According to HRW, issues such as forced labour imports, the imprisonment of human rights defenders, overseas targeting of dissidents, and drone transfers should be raised during the visit.

Across China's Shadows of Repression

Human rights concerns should not be limited to Xinjiang alone. Taiwan continues to face military intimidation, hybrid warfare, and disinformation campaigns that undermine its democratic system despite Taiwan's importance to Canada's Indo-Pacific strategy. In Tibet, under the policy of so-called "Sinicization," monasteries are being demolished, religious practices restricted, nomadic communities surveilled, and centuries-old culture systematically erased developments documented by both HRW and the United Nations. In Inner Mongolia, the imposition of Mandarin only education and harsh crackdowns on protests further illustrate the suppression of minority communities. In all these cases, Carney is expected to support the principle of self-determination.



Maya Wang's stark warning underscores the decisive challenge facing Carney. This visit goes beyond diplomacy it represents a moral test for Canada, where economic interests and ethical obligations stand in direct tension. HRW argues that prioritizing human rights not only increases pressure on Beijing but also aligns Canada's foreign policy with democratic values, global responsibilities, and the expectations of its citizens. The decisions Prime Minister Carney makes today will determine whether Canada is remembered as a defender of economic expediency or as a symbol of ethical leadership.

satire



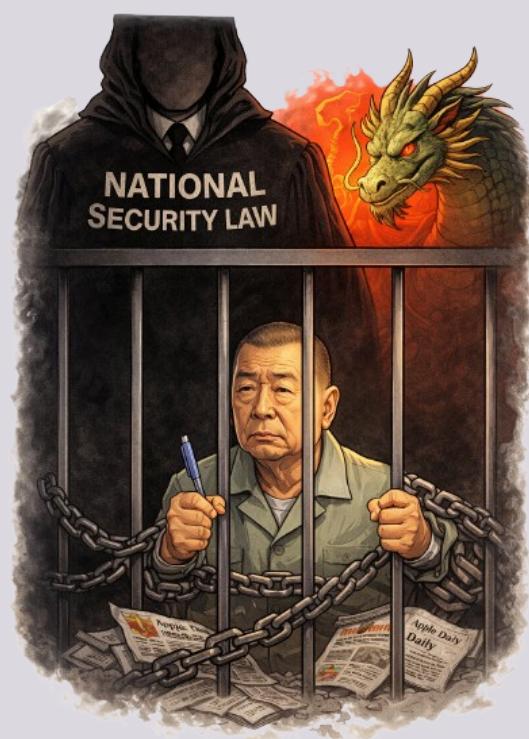
ESCAPED TIBET, TRAPPED BY CCTV



HACK FIRST. DENY LATER.



TURKEY HUGS CHINA, FORGETS UYGHURS.

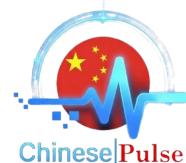


CHINA WATCHES, JIMMY'S PEN CHAINED

caricature



UYGHUR FOUNDER'S \$110M JOB REVOLUTION



From Chinese Dorm VPNs to SF AI Glory: Abdulla Ababakre's Unstoppable Code

San Francisco Abdulla Ababakre's build the confidence needed to land top-story reads like a modern Silicon Valley parable a tale of resilience. It all started in a cramped dorm room where bandwidth limits and blocked websites couldn't contain his curiosity. While most students followed the prescribed academic path, Ababakre defied convention. He secretly installed a VPN to access global coding tutorials, unlocking a digital world that reshaped his understanding of what was possible.

Born into a Uyghur family and educated at a Chinese university, he charted a path of his own making, moving from a student hacker of restrictions to a global innovator whose tools are now used by tens of thousands of engineers worldwide.

According to the MSN, today, Ababakre stands at the helm of Interview Coder, a San Francisco-based platform that uses artificial intelligence to prepare developers for high-stakes technical interviews. Over 97,000 engineers across the world rely on his software to sharpen their coding skills and simulate recruiter sessions, and

success that reflects his own journey from uncertainty to innovation. It all started in a cramped dorm room where bandwidth limits and blocked websites couldn't contain his curiosity. While most students followed the prescribed academic path, Ababakre defied convention. He secretly installed a VPN to access global coding tutorials, unlocking a digital world that reshaped his understanding of what was possible. "I wanted to see how products actually worked, not just read about them," he recalled later. That decision was the first of many small rebellions that would define his career.



By his second year, his focus had shifted from passing exams to mastering interviews at top-tier tech companies like Tencent and Alibaba. He immersed himself in algorithms, problem-solving, and communication techniques until the offers started rolling in. Yet, instead of settling into comfort, he chose risk. Long before “founder” became a fashionable title, Ababakre was experimenting with products of his own code heavy side projects built late at night, driven more by curiosity than ambition.

By his final year, he'd founded a small student-run startup lab and learned to pitch real investors. One of them, reportedly a Fortune 500 executive, saw promise in the young developer's persistence and provided seed funding. The validation gave him the courage to take the next leap across continents.

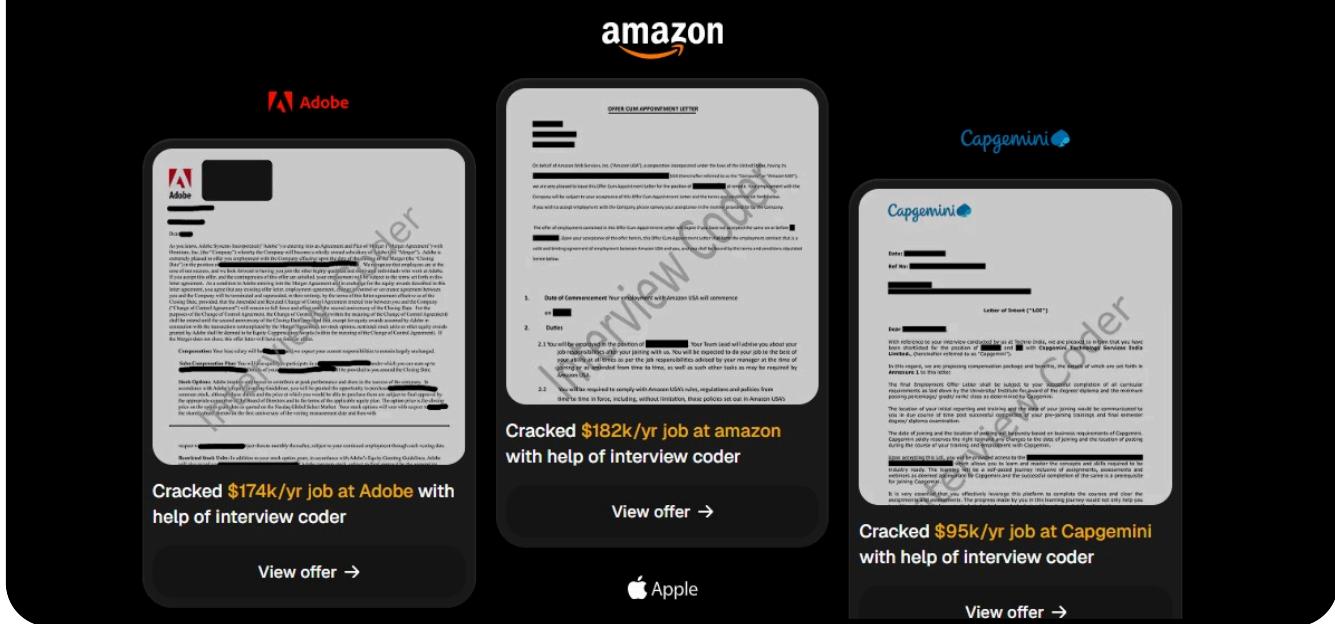
After graduation, San Francisco became his proving ground. The early phase was gruelling long commutes, odd jobs, sleepless weeks coding inside his car. But what others might see as struggle, he treated as training. Working with early-stage founders, he absorbed the startup culture, learning how to prototype fast, raise funds, and build around user feedback. Each setback became a lesson, each rejection a data point.

In 2025, his experience culminated in the launch of Interview Coder, an AI-powered desktop application built for one purpose helping engineers ace technical interviews. The software mirrors real interview conditions and uses AI coaching to refine answers, explain concepts, and track improvement over time.

The December 2025 release of Interview Coder 2.0 marked a turning point. The update added real-time audio transcription that captures spoken questions during live sessions, alongside more than 20 stealth features allowing users to practice discreetly. It also introduced adaptive coding guidance an AI assistant that diagnoses bugs as users type and a simplified one-time \$799 lifetime license instead of recurring fees. “Our mission has always been simple,” Ababakre says. “We want to remove every barrier between capable engineers and great opportunities. Interview Coder 2.0 was built entirely from what users needed most less anxiety, more support, real results.”

The results have been striking. By late 2025, the platform had surpassed 97,000 downloads, with over 41,000 users landing job offers that collectively added more than \$110 million in new annual compensation. For a product that started in a dorm room, its reach now spans the globe from Bangalore and Berlin to Seoul and San Francisco.

10,000+ Developers cracked Job Offers by using Interview Coder



Interview Coder brings hope to thousand of young Job aspirants

Today, Ababakre leads a distributed team of developers and designers while continuing to explore new frontiers in AI-driven productivity. Alongside Interview Coder, he co-founded NinjaTools, a creative automation platform, and Viral Product Lab, a micro-studio for fast product experimentation. All of his ventures share the same core principles: build fast, listen hard, and design with empathy.

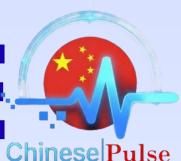
Abdulla Ababakre's journey captures the essence of 21st century entrepreneurship: boundaryless, digital-first and propelled by personal conviction. From quietly cracking firewalls to building tools that empower engineers everywhere, his story is proof that the most transformative innovation often begins where the rules end.

PLA MILITARY UPDATE

PLA

PEOPLE'S LIBERATION ARMY

PLA MILITARY UPDATE



TIANMA 100

Tianma 1000 unmanned transport drone completes maiden flight in Shaanxi, excelling in plateau ops, short runways, 1-ton cargo airdrops, 8km altitude, and AI landing/loading.

PEACEKEEPERS DEPLOY

China's 6th PLA peacekeeping helicopter unit from 82nd Group Army departed Jan 6 for UNISFA Abyei mission, handling transport, patrols, and rescue for a year. Second batch due mid-January.



CAVE ASTRONAUTS

China's 28 astronauts completed first cave-training mission in Chongqing, enduring cold, damp caves for exploration, science, and team psych drills over nearly a month.





Type 052D guided-missile destroyer Loudi (Hull

TYPE 052D LOUDI

Type 052D destroyer Loudi (Hull 176) commissioned into PLA Navy in Nov 2025, boasting upgraded radar, weapons, and networks for superior air/missile defense, anti-ship, anti-submarine, and command roles.

GENERAL PROMOTION

Xi Jinping promoted PLA's Yang Zhibin (Eastern Theater) and Han Shengyan (Central Theater) to general, highest active rank, at Beijing ceremony.



HARMONY MISSION 2025

PLA Navy's Silk Road Ark hospital ship arrives in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, for 7-day visit – first ever – kicking off Harmony Mission 2025 with medical exchanges, public access, and joint drills.



CHINA'S CYBER BLITZ TAIWAN



TAIWAN UNDER FIRE: BEIJING'S ASSAULT ON DEMOCRACY AND CHIPS

Chinese state-linked cyber incidents per day in 2025, up 6% from operations against Taiwan's critical infrastructure surged again in 2025, underlining how Beijing is waging a long-term hybrid campaign to coerce a democratic neighbour it claims as its own. This escalation is not "normal" espionage; it is strategic pressure designed to make Taiwanese society feel permanently vulnerable while giving China options to disrupt the island in a crisis. Taiwan's National Security Bureau says Chinese cyberattacks on its critical infrastructure averaged 2.63 million

cyber incidents per day in 2025, up 6% from 2024 and 113% from 2023, indicating a sustained, industrial-scale campaign rather than background noise. The sharpest increases hit the energy sector, where attack volumes reportedly surged by up to 1,000%, and emergency services and hospitals, which suffered at least 20 ransomware incidents in 2025. These numbers mostly represent attempted intrusions, not confirmed breaches, and the NSB has not disclosed how many led to successful compromises or major outages.

That lack of transparency itself is concerning because it magnifies psychological pressure while obscuring the true operational impact on Taiwan's civilian systems, **as per Reuters**.

Taiwan's National Security Bureau (NSB) reports that Chinese cyberattacks closely track Beijing's military and political pressure on the island. Out of 40 PLA "joint combat readiness patrols" around Taiwan, cyber activity spiked during 23, linking digital operations with aircraft and naval incursions.

CIVILIAN INFRASTRUCTURE UNDER FIRE

Taiwan's National Security Bureau highlights that Chinese cyber targeting of hospitals, energy, emergency services, and telecoms directly endangers civilians by risking treatment delays, power or logistics disruption, and communications sabotage. Ransomware against hospitals threatens patient safety and sensitive data, while intensified attacks on energy and emergency systems could cripple disaster response if successful. Telecommunications networks face man-in-the-middle and infrastructure-probing operations that facilitate espionage and potential shutdowns. Although Beijing denies involvement, the scale, target selection, and synchronization with PLA activities indicate a coordinated state strategy, not isolated hackers.

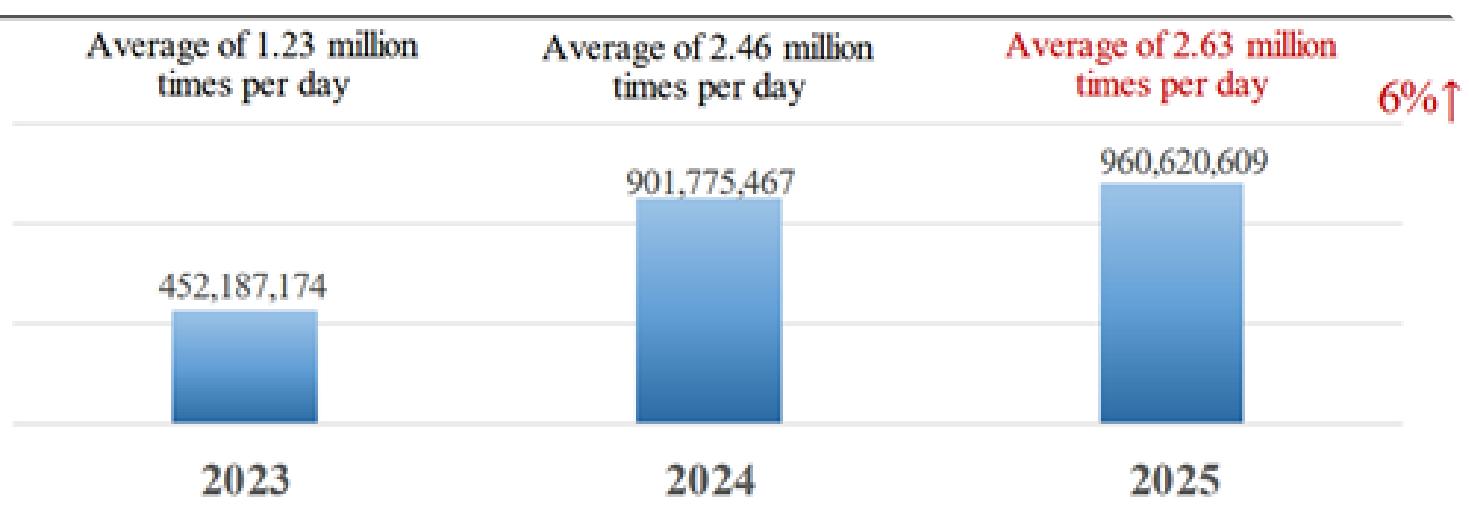
Taiwan's NSB warns that Chinese cyber operations against its semiconductor ecosystem amount to economic warfare,

Attacks also intensified around key democratic milestones, including President Lai Ching-te's first-year-in-office speech in May 2025 and Vice President Hsiao Bi-khim's address to the European Parliament in November. This pattern reveals a deliberate hybrid warfare strategy: using cyber tools alongside drills and propaganda to punish political expression, intimidate Taiwan's electorate, and warn foreign partners that visible support for Taipei will be met with coercive retaliation.



not just disruption attempts. Science parks hosting TSMC and key suppliers are prime espionage targets, with attackers seeking to steal advanced technologies and intellectual property from chipmakers and high-tech firms. These incursions are intended to boost China's technological self-reliance and improve its position in the U.S. China tech rivalry while weaponising Taiwan's central role in global supply chains to gain leverage over governments and corporations dependent on its chips.

CHINA'S CYBERATTACK AGAINST TAIWAN FROM 2023 TO 2025



Taiwanese reports identify four Chinese cyber tactics: vulnerability exploitation, DDoS attacks disrupting services, social engineering via phishing, and supply chain compromises. These align with Taiwan's Phase Seven Cyber Security Program (2025–2028), which bolsters infrastructure resilience, grows its cybersecurity sector, and fosters public-private cooperation amid active 2026 defense tenders.

India bolsters Taiwan's cyber defenses through QUAD cybersecurity pacts and indigenous tech like DRDO's AI threat detectors, showcasing democratic resilience against coercion. China, conversely, deploys state-orchestrated 2.63M daily attacks ransomware on hospitals, DDoS on energy grids, IP theft from TSMC synced with PLA patrols, recklessly endangering civilians in a desperate hybrid war to subjugate its neighbor.

Yet these measures are only part of what is required. Chinese cyberattacks on Taiwan are not isolated crimes; they are a deliberate, state-directed assault on a neighbouring democracy's hospitals, energy grid, and technology base, conducted in parallel with air and naval intimidation. The pattern described in recent reporting is a warning: unless Beijing faces coordinated diplomatic, economic, and technological pushback for this behaviour, hybrid attacks on Taiwan and by extension on the wider rules-based order will continue to escalate.

CHINA'S CORRUPT SUPERPOWER FACADE

Xi's Endless Corruption Purge

China wants to be seen as the next global superpower, but the case of former Gansu vice-governor Zhao Jinyun shows how deep corruption is eating away at the foundations of that dream. A court in Tianjin has sentenced the 60-year-old official

to 15 years in prison for bribery and insider trading, after finding that she took more than 54 million yuan in bribes and abused insider



"Tianjin No. 2 Intermediate People's Court"

information for stock trading over many years, while rising through important posts in land, infrastructure and finally the provincial government.

This remind that behind the image of discipline and control lies a system where public power can be turned into private cash. In just the first half of 2017, more than 210,000 officials were disciplined, showing how routine these abuses have become in everyday governance. A

From this single case, it is easy to move to the wider pattern inside China's civilian bureaucracy, where corruption has become a permanent feature rather than an exception. Since Xi Jinping launched his anti-corruption campaign in 2012, official figures and outside studies indicate that millions of officials have been investigated and punished, and

That structural problem sits at the heart of China's economic machine. When officials sell access to land, contracts and licenses, projects are chosen for political connections and kickbacks instead of quality.

including more than 120 senior national and provincial-level leaders and over 3.7 million cadres by 2021.

One-Man Rule Over Legal Systems

Private businesses must navigate hidden “fees” and risk arbitrary crackdowns, which discourages investment and innovation and weakens the long-term strength China needs if it wants to compete with advanced economies like the United States, Japan and the European Union. On paper, Beijing promotes efficiency and high-tech development, but under the surface, many key decisions are still decided by personal ties and envelopes of cash, not open rules.

The anti-corruption campaign itself also exposes internal weakness rather than pure strength. Xi relies heavily on the Central Commission for Discipline Inspection and its local branches to run a permanent drive against “tigers and flies,” using party investigations and internal procedures that operate above the normal legal system. This allows the top leadership to remove rivals and tighten control over the party and state, mixing genuine corruption cases with political purges and creating a climate of fear among officials at all levels. Instead of building stable institutions that can function on their own, the system becomes even more dependent on the will of one man and his inner circle, which is a fragile model for any country that claims to be a future world leader.

The same dynamic is now clearly visible inside the People’s Liberation Army and China’s powerful state-owned arms companies, which Beijing counts on to back its ambitions in the South China Sea, around Taiwan and across the globe. Over the last few years, a wave of corruption probes and purges has hit top generals and defence industry bosses, including leaders in key missile and equipment departments, signalling serious problems in the very units that are supposed to deliver China’s most advanced weapons. These investigations reveal allegations of bribery, promotion buying and misuse of funds in sensitive programs, raising questions about how reliable China’s military really is behind the parade ground.

The cost of these purges is measurable. A detailed study based on Stockholm International Peace Research Institute data shows that while the combined revenues of the world’s 100 largest arms producers grew by about 5.9 percent in 2024, the eight major Chinese firms in that list suffered a 10 percent fall in arms revenue, dropping to roughly 88.3 billion US dollars. Some of the steepest declines came from giants like NORINCO and CASC, where leadership upheavals and delayed contracts linked to corruption cases disrupted production and slowed key projects.

2027 WORLD-CLASS?

FAKE—DISTRICT, DELAYS COLLAPSE!



This means that, even as global demand for weapons rises due to wars and tensions, China is the only major producer moving backwards because its own internal clean-up has jammed the gears of its military-industrial engine.

For a country that openly declares its goal of building “world-class” armed forces by 2027 and a “modern socialist power” by mid-century, these internal setbacks are more than just temporary bumps. When arms contracts are postponed or cancelled, when managers are removed and engineers live in fear of being dragged into political cases, the entire research and production chain slows down, making it harder for China to field new ships, missiles and aircraft on schedule. At the same time, constant purges at the top of the PLA show that Xi does not fully trust his own generals, which limits the regime’s confidence in its ability to wage and sustain a serious conflict abroad.

All of this creates a sharp contrast between China’s outward ambition and its inward reality. Beijing talks about reshaping global supply chains, rewriting rules in international institutions and challenging US dominance, but at home it is still fighting basic battles against bribery in provincial governments and graft in the missile industry. Powerful officials like Zhao Jinyun can quietly enrich themselves for nearly two decades, and major arms companies can see their revenues fall while their foreign competitors grow, because the political system encourages loyalty over law and secrecy over transparency. A state built on such shaky internal foundations may look strong in propaganda, but in practice it remains a rising power weighed down by the corruption it cannot escape.

X CORNER



China Trolled in Caracas: Maduro's "Friend" Left in the Dust

Otto Huang  @OttoHuang120

Translated from Chinese [Show original](#)

Venezuela bought scrap metal from China.
The US military advances unhindered 😊

Rate this translation:  



0:07

⋮

PAPR® POP

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⋮

Translated from Spanish [Show original](#)

China offers to collaborate with Venezuela, Colombia and the entire region to defend against Trump

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0:06



Inconvenient Truths — Jennifer Zeng R...  @jenniferze... · Jan 4 ⋮

Beijing's Shield Fails! Venezuela's "Strongest Air Defense in South America" Collapses in U.S. Military Action

For years, the Venezuelan military poured vast sums into acquiring Chinese-made military equipment, building what it claimed was the "most modern" defense system in

[Show more](#)



Shanaka Anslem Perera  @shanaka86 · Jan 5 ⋮

China just declared war.

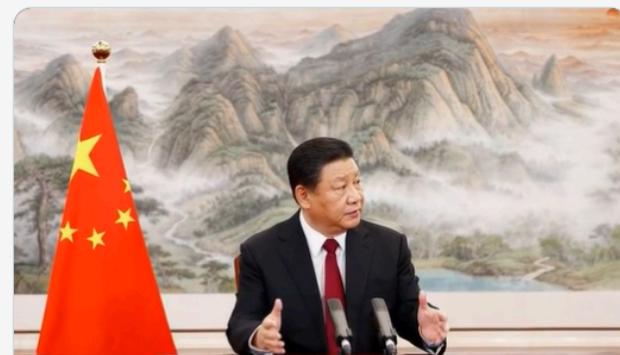
Not with missiles. With lawyers.

"Chinese interest in Venezuela will be protected by law."

Read that again. Beijing didn't threaten military action. They announced something far more dangerous to American power:

They're going to make regime change

[Show more](#)



X CORNER



Fujian Fantasy: EMALS Launch or Epic PLA Flop?

China's newest Fujian carrier, with U.S.-style electromagnetic catapults for J-15T, J-35 stealth, and KJ-600 aircraft, departed Qingdao into the Yellow Sea amid rising tensions with Japan, Taiwan, and Philippines. Beijing aims to push beyond the First Island Chain, normalizing extended Pacific ops.



China's New SSBN Hunts from the Deep

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X CORNER



WAR 
@warsurveillance



Fujian Fantasy: EMALS Launch or Epic PLA Flop?

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Defesa Sul Global 
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PEOPLE'S DAILY



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Beijing

Radars

Fail

Real

War

Test

XI'S TECH JUNK
- VENEZUELA PROOF

VENEZUELA OP REVEALS CHINA FLAWS

U.S. Forces Dismantle \$5B Chinese Radars in 30-Min Caracas Blitz

In a humiliating 30-minute blitz on 03 January 2026, U.S. forces dismantled Venezuela's Chinese-built air defenses around Caracas.

Over 150 platforms F-22s, F-35s, B-1 bombers, MQ-9 drones swarmed in, blinded radars worth \$5 billion, and vanished. Caracas's Integrated Aerospace Defense Command (CODAI) lay paralyzed, its "stealth-killer" Chinese radars reduced to useless scrap.



Venezuela relied on China Electronics Technology Group radars like the JYL-1 three-dimensional surveillance and JY-27 metric-wave systems, marketed as "stealth hunters" capable of tracking F-35s. US forces degraded these sensors through intensive jamming and power outages, blinding early warning and isolating the network. This initial phase prevented effective use of Russian S-300V and Buk-M2 systems, with at least two Buk-M2s confirmed destroyed.

With radars offline and data links severed, US special operations achieved total air superiority in minutes. The 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment (Night Stalkers) deployed MH-60M Black Hawks, MH-47G Chinooks, and MV-22 Ospreys for air-mobile insertions, supported by Delta Force (1st SFOD-D). Only one helicopter was hit but returned safely, while Venezuelan 9K338 systems saw limited use.

According to the Eurasian Times, Loss of air cover and command-control left Venezuelan ground units, armor, and fire support static amid electronic saturation. Units lacked real-time sensor integration, fires, and maneuver coordination. EA-18G Growlers from USS Gerald R. Ford overwhelmed defenses.

Structural Weaknesses in Chinese Systems

Chinese export air defenses failed in Venezuela due to poor electronic warfare resistance, rigid centralized command structures, and opaque proprietary software that crippled adaptability. Downgraded versions supplied to clients like Venezuela had inferior processing power and encryption compared to PLA systems, amplifying vulnerabilities. Reliability faltered in humid conditions with corrosion and sensor drift, while heavy reliance on Chinese technicians for spares and updates created strategic dependencies, leaving networks decaying amid sanctions.

On 06 Jan 2026, Taiwan Vice Defense Minister Hsu Szu-chien cited the US raid on Caracas, which arrested Maduro and exposed Chinese JY-27A "anti-stealth" radars' failure to detect F-22s/F-35s, as proof of US technological superiority. Poor maintenance, spare part shortages via civilian channels, and inadequate Chinese support left over 60% of Venezuela's radars offline, per a Miami institute report. Analysts stress networked IADS and upkeep are vital; this humiliation for Xi undermines China's arms export ambitions amid Taiwan tensions.

Operational letdowns of Chinese air defenses in Latin America and Africa expose recurring issues: corrosion in humid environments, sensor drift from poor sealing, and designs optimized for peacetime demos rather than sustained combat.

Sanctions and political rifts sever support lifelines, as clients lack source code access for independent repairs, leading to network decay. The US Venezuela operation proved integrated multidomain ops blending EW, intel, stealth strikes, and SOF—overmatch isolated hardware, validating superiority in resilient C4I architectures over brittle exports.

For governments from Pakistan to Myanmar and across parts of Africa, the lesson from Caracas is stark. "Cost-effective" Chinese air defences risk building illusion, not deterrence systems that look formidable on parade, bristle with radar dishes and missile tubes, and generate impressive talking points for domestic audiences, yet buckle when confronted by U.S.- or NATO-level aerospace power. The Venezuelan example shows how quickly a supposedly dense, layered shield can collapse if its core technologies are untested, over-marketed and structurally dependent on a foreign supplier.

In an era defined by stealth aircraft, long-range precision strike, offensive cyber operations and dense electronic warfare, national survival cannot rest on unproven, politically convenient technology. States that choose Chinese systems as the backbone of their air defence may find, as Caracas did, that what they purchased was not a shield but a façade one that crumbles in its first real encounter with modern high-intensity conflict.

AI FUELS SOUTH CHINA SEA PROPAGANDA WAR



The South China Sea's New Front: War in the Digital Domain

Artificial intelligence (AI) is intensifying one of Asia's most volatile geopolitical flashpoints—the South China Sea.

The conflict between the Philippines and China is no longer limited to coast guard maneuvers and diplomatic notes; it now plays out in digital spaces where AI-driven propaganda distorts reality, manipulates perceptions and stirs nationalist emotions.

According to The Fulcrum, AI tools have transformed the information ecosystem into a strategic weapon. Deepfakes, synthetic news anchors, and coordinated bot networks enable influence operations on a scale once unimaginable. What was once the domain of state-backed information units has become cheap, fast, and easy to replicate. Whoever controls the narrative can justify escalation, legitimize claims, and shape global perceptions without firing a single shot.

In July 2024, a deepfake audio clip of President Ferdinand Marcos Jr allegedly ordering an attack on China went viral across Philippine social media, igniting fear and confusion before authorities verified it as fake. The episode exposed a new vulnerability: AI can blur the line between truth and fiction so effectively

that public reactions arrive long before official clarifications. The result is not just disinformation but potential diplomatic destabilization.



AI-Driven Disinformation in the South China Sea Dispute

Behind the scenes, a complex web of propaganda networks thrives. Reports by PressOne.PH, Graphika, and Agence France-Presse (AFP) reveal monetized, AI-powered content farms producing pro-China narratives or inflammatory war scenarios under the guise of "news." Fake accounts with AI-generated profile photos amplify these posts, making propaganda appear organic. Each misleading video or story often earning between US\$20 and US\$70 in ad revenue trades in outrage, not truth. Conflict, in the algorithmic age, has become content.

This digital conflict profits from public vulnerability. A study by the Philippine

Presidential Communications Office found that over half of Filipinos struggle to identify fake news, and nine in ten encounter false information online. Such fragility makes the public fertile ground for manipulation. AI-generated propaganda doesn't just misinform, it can manufacture consent for war, stoking nationalism and legitimizing calls for escalation despite the country's limited military readiness.

Cognitive Warfare

China's use of "cognitive warfare" adds another layer. AI-enhanced spokespersons, algorithmically tuned speech patterns, and emotionally charged narratives subtly shape perceptions rather than arguments. As cognitive warfare spreads, democratic deliberation risks being replaced by emotional conditioning a global concern that reaches far beyond the South China Sea.



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Efforts to fight back are uneven. The Philippines is drafting AI regulation bills aimed at curbing deepfakes, but cross-border enforcement remains limited. China mandates labelling of AI-generated content, yet its regulations enforce compliance with state narratives rather than transparency. Meanwhile, platforms like Meta and X have rolled back professional fact checking, leaving users to navigate a flood of deceptive content with little institutional support.



ORBIT DISRUPTS INDO- PACIFIC WARFARE

Even the media's countermeasures pose ethical dilemmas. Manila's "transparency initiative," where journalists join naval missions to the disputed waters, promotes real-time reporting but risks blurring lines between state messaging and independent journalism. In information warfare, access can come at the price of autonomy.

The South China Sea has become a test case for the weaponization of AI in modern geopolitics. What begins here could soon echo in other contested zones the Taiwan Strait, the Arctic, or Africa's resource corridors. The implications are global: one-third of world trade sails through these waters. If AI-propelled misinformation inflames regional tensions or distorts policy decisions, the consequences will ripple through supply chains, alliances, and the very norms of international law.

To counter this tide, stakeholders must act collectively. Regulators need enforceable international norms on AI-generated content. Platforms must invest in deepfake detection and transparent algorithms. Civil society must expand fact checking networks and media literacy programs that treat misinformation as a national security threat.

The South China Sea's digital warfront shows the new shape of conflict one fought with algorithms, not artillery. The battle for territory has merged with the battle for truth, and the world is watching to see who wins.

CHINESE SOCIAL MEDIA CORNER

TRENDING ON WEIBO



Capital Veterans

2 hours ago Official Weibo account of Beijing Municipal Bureau of Veterans Affairs

#Current Affairs Mini-Lesson# A quick overview of the important speeches at the Fifth Plenary Session of the 20th Central Commission for Discipline Inspection in one infographic! Let's study and understand together! (Xinhua News Agency) #The Path of Anti-Corruption with Chinese Characteristics Must Be Firmly Continued# #Capital Veterans#



8

3

34



Pear tree melting

1-5 11:42 from the iPhone client

[#Chinese People's Liberation Army Hong Kong Garrison Official X Account Officially Launched#] On January 4, the official X (formerly Twitter) account of the Chinese People's Liberation Army Hong Kong Garrison (@PLA_HongKong) was officially launched. The first post focused on the theme of "Guardians of Hong Kong", fully demonstrating the mission of the Hong Kong garrison to firmly implement the "one country, two systems" principle, perform Hong Kong's defense duties in accordance with the law, and resolutely safeguard Hong Kong's prosperity and stability. The launch of the official X account of the Chinese People's Liberation Army Hong Kong Garrison is a vivid practice of the Hong Kong Garrison taking the initiative to expand external communication channels and tell the story of the "Xiangjiang Defenders", and it is also an important measure to further condense the strong positive energy of loving the motherland, Hong Kong and the garrison. #环球时报#

Fifth Plenary Session of the 20th Central Commission

Xi Jinping stressed continuing China's unique PLA Hong Kong Garrison launches official X anti-corruption path at the 20th CCDI's fifth account (@PLA_HongKong) on Jan 4, debuting plenary session on Jan 12, urging stronger Party with "Guardians of Hong Kong" post. It leadership and stricter governance in the 15th promotes "one country, two systems," defense Five-Year Plan's first year. His speech offers duties, and stability—expanding outreach to theoretical depth and practical guidance for share Xiangjiang Defenders' story and foster Party prosperity and national strength.

Hong Kong PLA X Launch

patriotic energy.

MOST WATCHED VIDEO ON BILIBILI



"China Shock 2.0" Goes Nuclear

On January 7, 2026, the Chinese Embassy in the US dropped a slick AI-generated rap video titled "Breaking News: Another China Shock" on social media, roasting American panic over Beijing's tech and manufacturing boom. The animated clip stars a freaked-out bald eagle lamenting China's EV, solar, and rocket surge as "Shock 2.0," flipping U.S. "overcapacity" fears into panda-powered innovation flex.

PLA'S PAKISTAN-BANGLA BASES THREAT

China's South Asian Military Push: A Calculated Assault On India's Strategic Stability

The Pentagon's 2025 Military Power Report has exposed what Indian security planners have long suspected: China is actively pursuing a network of overseas military facilities in South Asia, with Pakistan and Bangladesh emerging as critical nodes. Far from being benign logistical arrangements, these moves represent a deliberate and destabilising attempt to project Chinese military power into India's most sensitive strategic space directly threatening the Siliguri Corridor, India's lifeline to its northeastern states.

Any PLA presence in Bangladesh or Pakistan would dramatically compress India's strategic depth around the Chicken's Neck. Even so-called "dual-use" facilities ports, airfields, or intelligence hubs could be rapidly militarised during a crisis. This would enable China to exert pressure from the east while Pakistan applies force from the west, creating the very scenario Indian defence doctrine has long warned against: coordinated, multi-front coercion. The inclusion of Bangladesh in this emerging alignment elevates the risk from a two front challenge to a potential three-front contingency.

These developments fit seamlessly into China's "String of Pearls" strategy, designed to encircle India through a chain of military-access points stretching from the Horn of Africa to Southeast Asia. PLA bases or access arrangements near the Bay of Bengal would complement China's established military base in Djibouti, its naval foothold in Gwadar, and its leverage over Hambantota port in Sri Lanka. Together, these positions erode India's natural maritime advantage and challenge its role as the primary security provider in the Indian Ocean Region.



Siliguri Flashpoint: Dhaka's PLA Pivot

Equally damaging is the impact on India's neighbourhood diplomacy. Bangladesh hosting PLA facilities would mark a fundamental shift in regional alignments. Decades of trust-building between New Delhi and Dhaka grounded in shared security concerns, counterterrorism cooperation, and economic interdependence would be severely undermined. India would be forced to reassess Bangladesh not merely as a partner, but as a potential operational variable in future conflicts. This militarisation of bilateral relations is a direct consequence of China's interventionist approach.

This evolving situation imposes heavy and sustained costs on India's military posture. Maintaining permanent high readiness in the northeast requires continuous deployment of air power, missile systems, ground forces, and air defence assets. Over time, this strains defence budgets, logistics chains, and personnel, while diverting attention from other critical priorities such as maritime expansion and western border management. China's strategy is thus not only confrontational but also economically and operationally This militarisation of bilateral relations is a direct consequence of China's coercive interventionist approach.

The growing military density around the Siliguri Corridor also significantly increases the risk of miscalculation. With Indian, Chinese, and potentially allied forces operating in close proximity, the probability of intelligence misreads, accidental encounters, or rapid escalation rises sharply. What was once a strategic vulnerability becomes an active flashpoint one where even limited incidents could spiral into wider confrontation.

China's actions further deepen its already extensive military integration with Pakistan. The Pentagon's separate treatment of Pakistan reflects the maturity of this defence partnership. Pakistan's intelligence establishment has long viewed the Siliguri Corridor as a pressure point against India.

China's Proxy Power Play

Diplomatically, the June 2025 Kunming trilateral involving China, Pakistan, and Bangladesh deliberately excluding India signals a clear attempt to marginalise New Delhi within its own region. Such exclusionary groupings weaken South Asian multilateralism and undermine India's regional leadership, replacing bloc-based geopolitics. At a broader level, China's military push risks turning South Asia into a theatre of great-power competition. Smaller states may feel compelled to hedge, militarise foreign policy decisions, and invite external powers into regional disputes. This erodes strategic stability and leaves diminishing space for diplomacy.

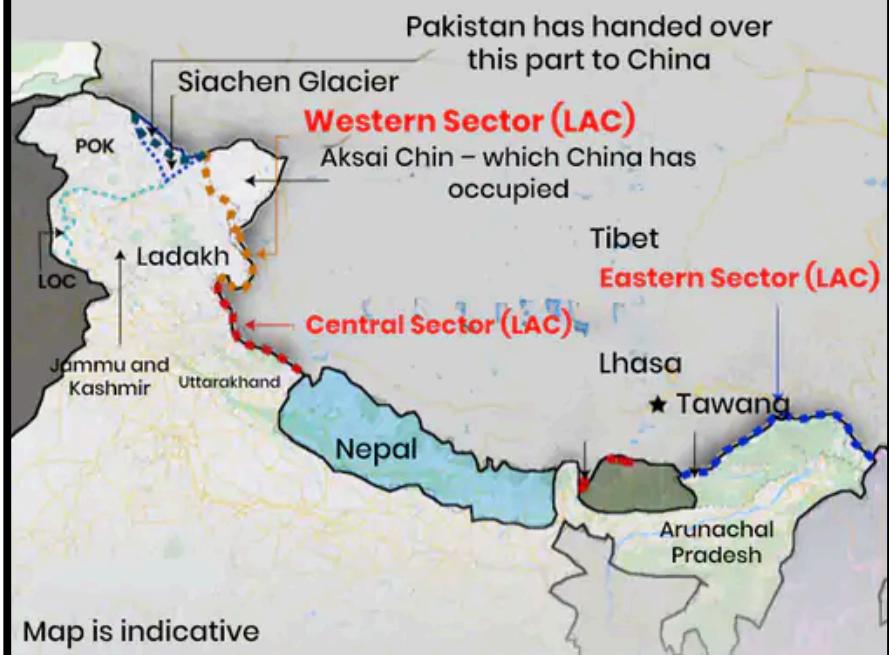
India's maritime security is equally at stake. PLA access near the Bay of Bengal would allow China to monitor Indian naval movements, challenge the effectiveness of the Andaman and Nicobar Command, and threaten vital sea lanes of communication. Even without permanent bases, access agreements send a powerful psychological signal of China's intent to operate inside India's core strategic environment undermining deterrence and forcing reactive countermeasures.

Most dangerously, normalising PLA overseas basing in South Asia sets a precedent that will be difficult to reverse. It legitimises Chinese military expansion and constrains diplomatic resistance in the future. If unchecked, this trajectory will force India into deeper reliance on external partners, potentially narrowing its strategic autonomy.

China's ambitions in South Asia are neither defensive nor cooperative. They represent a calculated effort to reshape the regional balance of power at India's expense. Recognising this reality is the first step toward countering it decisively.

INDIA-CHINA BORDER IS DIVIDED INTO THREE SECTORS

India and China share a border of about 3,500 kilometres. This border is known as the Line of Actual Control (LAC).



CHINA'S COMMAND GRIP

China's plan to build military bases in 21 countries



CHINESE TOURIST'S SACRED SLUR

We've had enough: Tibetans speak out after sacred rituals Are defiled

The video is difficult for Tibetans to watch not because it is graphic, but because it is humiliating.

Circulating widely on Chinese social media, the footage shows a Chinese tourist inside a Tibetan Buddhist monastery casually drinking liquid from a shrine altar before pouring the remainder into a butter lamp. In a single sequence, the tourist desecrates two of the most sacred elements of Tibetan Buddhist ritual. For Tibetans, both inside Tibet and in exile, the act is not ignorance. It is an insult.

Online, Tibetan reactions were immediate and furious. The behaviour was condemned as a "shameless provocation," a "blatant insult," and a calculated trampling of cultural and religious boundaries. "Monasteries are not a stage for tourists to gain attention," one Tibetan netizen wrote, urging judicial authorities and cyber police to intervene. Another stressed that this was not about unfamiliarity with customs. "This is not simple disrespect. It is humiliating. This is an open provocation. The bottom line of culture cannot be trampled."



Shrine Purity Shattered

At the core of the outrage lies the desecration of sacred objects. Shrine offerings are consecrated and reserved exclusively for ritual purposes. Butter lamps, lit as acts of devotion, symbolize purity, compassion, and enlightenment. Drinking from an altar and contaminating a butter lamp is not merely rude; it renders these sacred items spiritually defiled and unusable. For monks and devotees, it is an assault on the sanctity of worship itself.

Yet this incident also exposes a deeper life under China's governance of Tibet. Monasteries are increasingly treated as scenic backdrops rather than living spiritual institutions. Visitors ignore basic expectations of reverence, silence, and restraint. What should be spaces of contemplation and devotion are reduced to spectacle.

Worse still is the rise of performative disrespect, fuelled by social media. Sacred spaces are transformed into stages for viral attention, where shocking behaviour becomes currency. This not only humiliates Tibetans but also poisons genuine cultural exchange, alienating visitors who approach Tibetan culture with sincerity and respect.

The anger is intensified by what Tibetans see as systemic impunity. Despite the viral spread of the footage, there has been no visible response from Chinese authorities. This silence is especially glaring in a system known for its relentless censorship. Bhuchung K. Tsering of the International Campaign for Tibet pointedly noted the contradiction: Chinese censors are omnipresent, yet when Tibetan religious sentiment is violated, enforcement disappears.

Renowned Tibetan writer and poet Tsering Woeser has linked such incidents to long-standing official tolerance.

Under the banner of "cultural tourism" promoted as one of Tibet's "nine major industries" tourists have effectively become untouchable. "The outrageous behaviour of tourists is a direct result of long-term tolerance," she wrote. Authorities, she argued, have chosen to look away, allowing offenses to multiply while Tibetans are left with anger instead of justice.

This dynamic reflects an unequal power structure in which Tibetans feel unable to defend their most sacred spaces. Complaints go unanswered, violations go unpunished, and resentment accumulates. Over time, repeated desecration normalizes the trivialization of Tibetan Buddhism itself, hollowing out centuries-old traditions.

The consequences extend beyond religious offense. Public humiliation of deeply held beliefs fuels resentment and threatens social harmony in an already fragile region. Tibetan netizens warned that such unchecked behaviour does not strengthen unity it fractures it.

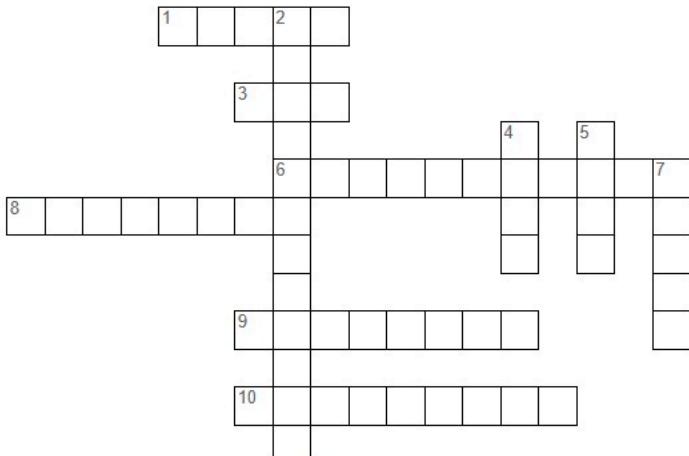
This incident is not an aberration. It is the predictable outcome of policies that prioritize profit and control over dignity and belief. Until China enforces meaningful protections for Tibetan monasteries, educates visitors, and holds violators accountable, sacred spaces will remain exposed and Tibetans will continue to watch their spiritual heritage treated as disposable.

SNAP TRIVIA !



Chinese Pulse

INSIDE MODERN CHINA



DECODE THE PROPAGANDA

Official language. Unofficial meanings.

Instructions: Read each headline and select what it actually implies.

LEVEL 1 – WARM-UP

1. Headline: "Vocational Training Capacity Further Optimised"
A) Expansion of technical colleges
B) Internships for rural youth
C) Detention and ideological re-education in Xinjiang
2. Headline: "Online Rumours Dealt With According to Law"
A) Fact-checking initiative
B) Arrests and censorship of critical voices
C) Media literacy campaign
3. Headline: "Grassroots Stability Measures Strengthened"
A) Community development funding
B) Expanded surveillance and police presence
C) Disaster-relief coordination

Across

- 1 Tibetan capital, home to Potala Palace
- 3 Abbreviation for disputed waters in Asia
- 6 High-profile campaign targeting graft and party discipline
- 8 "Great" barrier of China's internet
- 9 China's long-term global infrastructure and trade initiative
- 10 Ideological concept Xi elevated to guide policy

Down

- 2 System monitoring and scoring citizens' online and offline behavior
- 4 Branch of armed forces focused on land operations
- 5 China's national currency
- 7 Region with unique culture and religion in western China

LEVEL 2 – READ BETWEEN THE LINES

4. Headline: "Ethnic Unity Activities Deepened Across Regions"
A) Cultural exchange programs
B) Forced assimilation and suppression of local identity
C) Language preservation initiatives
5. Headline: "Historical Nihilism Firmly Opposed"
A) Academic peer review of history
B) Censorship of alternative historical narratives
C) Museum modernisation
6. Headline: "Legal Rectification of Key Sectors Underway"
A) Anti-monopoly reform
B) Crackdown on targeted industries and individuals
C) Judicial transparency initiative



7. Headline: “Party Leadership Strengthened Over All Work”
 A) Administrative streamlining
 B) CCP control superseding state and civil institutions
 C) Civil-service reform

8. Headline: “Ideological Guidance Enhanced in the New Era”
 A) Public policy consultation
 B) Mandatory loyalty to Xi Jinping Thought
 C) Civic education expansion

9. Headline: “Safeguarding National Security in Cultural Spaces”
 A) Protecting heritage sites
 B) Policing art, film, academia, and religion
 C) Tourism regulation

10. Headline: “Preventive Governance Mechanisms Improved”
 A) Early-warning disaster systems
 B) Pre-emptive repression before dissent emerges
 C) Public health surveillance

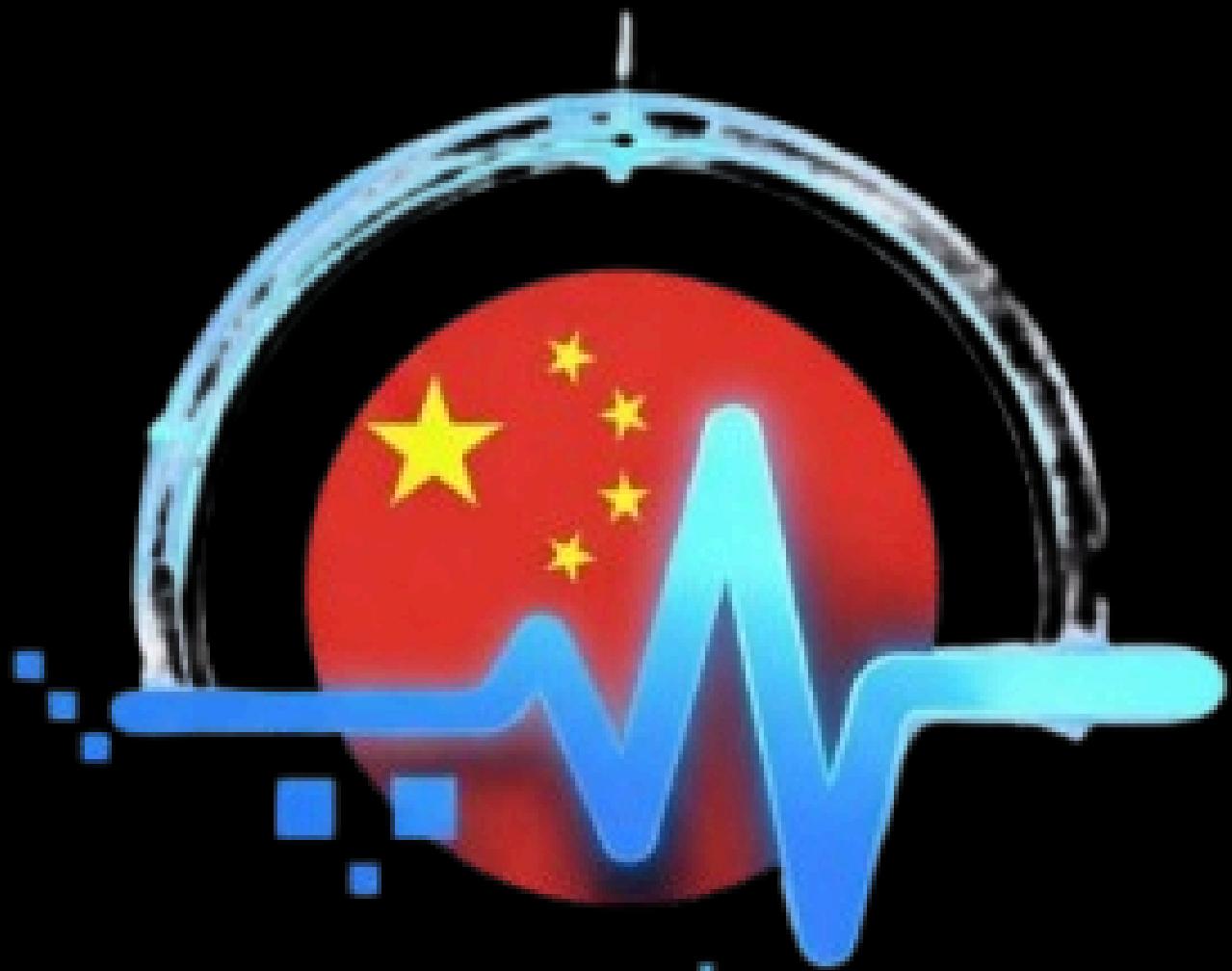
11. Headline: “Orderly Religious Management Implemented”
 A) Registration of temples
 B) State control and reshaping of religious belief
 C) Funding for religious tourism

12. Headline: “Whole-Process People’s Democracy Demonstrated”
 A) Competitive multi-party elections
 B) Carefully managed participation without real choice
 C) Direct referendums

SCORE YOUR SECRETS



1-C, 2-B, 3-B, 4-B, 5-B
 6-B, 7-B, 8-B, 9-B, 10-B
 11-B, 12-B



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