



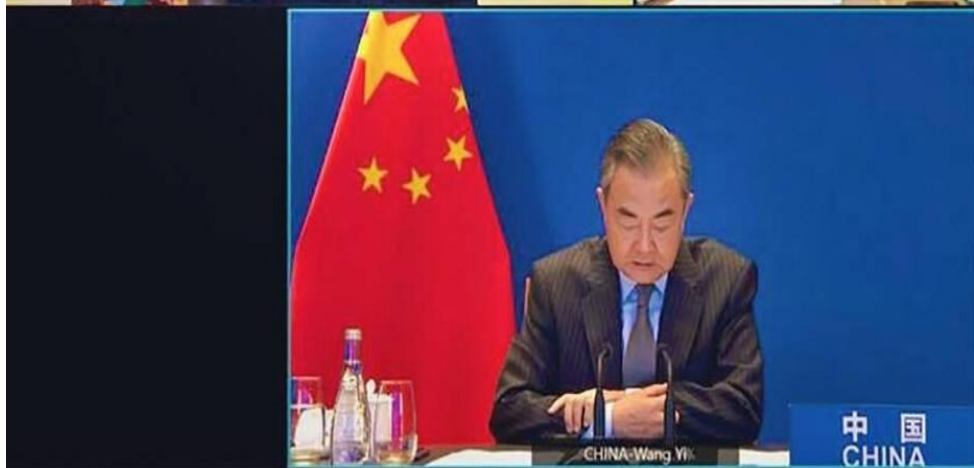
Delhi Policy Group

Advancing India's Rise as a Leading Power



DPG China Monitor

November 2021



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Delhi Policy Group

Core 5A, 1st Floor, India Habitat Centre, Lodhi Road, New Delhi- 110003

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ABOUT US

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DPG China Monitor

The DPG China Monitor features developments related to China during the month and is compiled by our research team comprising Brig. Arun Sahgal (Retd.), Senior Fellow, Dr. Angana Guha Roy and Sanket Joshi, Research Associates, from open-source reports and publications.

Cover Photograph:

Indian External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar chaired the 18th RIC Foreign Ministers meeting, November 26, 2021.

Source: Twitter/@DrSJaishankar

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Abstract

A month after the 13th round of Corps Commander-level talks, which had ended in deadlock, India and China held the 23rd meeting of the Working Mechanism for Consultation and Coordination on India-China Border Affairs (WMCC) on November 18. According to India's Ministry of External Affairs, both sides agreed to ensure a stable ground situation and work towards resolving outstanding issues along the LAC through dialogue and discussion. China's Foreign Ministry on its part highlighted that both sides had held candid discussions on developments in the India-China border areas.

Addressing a virtual meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation (SCO) Council on November 25, External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar underscored that any serious connectivity initiative must be transparent, consultative, participatory, and adhere to respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity. Foreign Secretary Harsh Shringla, at an online interaction on November 24, underlined that India is reviewing its trade and investment ties with China taking into account India's larger strategic and security interests.

Meanwhile, China accused India's Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) Gen. Bipin Rawat of instigating a "geopolitical confrontation" and violating strategic guidelines over his remarks that China is India's biggest security threat. Chinese state media referred to Gen. Rawat's comments as demonstrative of India's "high self-esteem alienation", highlighting that "the competition and cooperation relationship between China and India is plagued by India's 'high self-esteem' mentality".

After Pakistan, China has emerged as the closest ally of the Taliban, with increasing presence and influence in Afghanistan. China has also emerged as the largest provider of humanitarian aid, in return for which it has demanded that the Taliban clampdown on the Uyghur and Islamic State Khorasan Province (ISKP) extremists who pose a challenge to China in Xinjiang.

On November 9, India hosted the National Security Chiefs of key regional countries to discuss the Afghanistan situation. The discussion was attended by the NSAs of Russia, Iran, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. Pakistan and China were invited but decided not to attend. Post this dialogue, Pakistan hosted senior diplomats from the United States, China and Russia dubbed as the 'Troika Plus' in Islamabad to discuss the situation in Afghanistan and its implications. Afghanistan also remained the focus of discussions at the RIC (Russia-India-China) meeting held on November 26.

Despite an ongoing diplomatic tussle over a shipment of organic fertiliser from China that Colombo refused to accept citing quality issues, the Sri Lanka government awarded another major project to China for the construction of the second phase of Colombo Port's East Container Terminal (ECT).

China-US relations remained contentious, marked by military posturing and disagreements over trade issues and Taiwan. However, there were signs of some convergence over climate change and efforts to stabilise global energy prices.

To ease bilateral tensions, Chinese President Xi Jinping and US President Joe Biden held their first bilateral virtual meeting on November 15, 2021. President Biden conveyed that in the prevailing competitive scenario between the two countries, there should be guard rails for preventing tensions from escalating. President Xi on his part called for a return to a comprehensive China-US relationship based on mutual respect, peaceful co-existence, and win-win cooperation.

The US invited Taiwan to attend the Democracy Summit to be held on December 9-10, 2021. Chinese state media called the summit an "anti-China ideological clique" that manifests outdated authoritarianism of the US.

US-China strategic and military sparring continued in the South China Sea (SCS). The US and Japan, for the first time, held anti-submarine drills in the SCS reportedly to practise "targeting PLA Navy's conventional submarines". Meanwhile, continuing the trend of deepening Sino-Russian defence partnership, bombers from the two countries [Chinese H-6K and Russian Tu-95MC aircraft] concluded a joint strategic patrol over the Sea of Japan and the East China Sea. Chinese analysts described the joint patrol as a "warning to some countries outside the region", and "neighbouring countries part of AUKUS and QUAD, not to stir up trouble".

The US Department of Defence released its annual report on military and security developments involving China. The report highlighted that China is expanding its nuclear capabilities on land, sea and air, while estimating that China could have up to 700 nuclear warheads by 2027 and at least 1,000 by 2030. Expressing strong dissatisfaction at the report, China's Ministry of National Defence (MND) asserted that the Pentagon was "disregarding facts", "fabricating the so-called China military threat" and "making groundless accusations against China's nuclear capability development," while "interfering in China's internal affairs involving Taiwan and other issues".

China downgraded its diplomatic ties with Lithuania on November 21, after Taiwan opened a representative office in the capital city of Vilnius.

The sixth plenary session of the 19th Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (CPC) was held from November 8–11, 2021. CPC unanimously adopted a “historic resolution on the major achievements and experience of the party over the past 100 years”. The resolution established “Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era as the Marxism of contemporary China and of the 21st century”, and further strengthened Xi Jinping’s position as the CPC’s core leader.

President Xi Jinping virtually addressed the 26th session of the Conference of Parties (COP26) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) held in Glasgow. He presented a three-pronged strategy with emphasis on “upholding multilateralism”, “focusing on concrete action plans”, and “accelerating the green transition”.

Foreign and Security Policy

I. China-India Relations

October 2021 saw a dramatic deterioration in bilateral relations, with China hardening its stand on further disengagement and de-escalation.

A month after the 13th round of Corps Commander-level talks ended in deadlock, India and China held the [23rd meeting of the Working Mechanism for Consultation & Coordination on India-China Border Affairs \(WMCC\)](#) on November 18.¹ According to a Ministry of External Affairs statement, both sides agreed to ensure a stable ground situation and work towards resolving outstanding issues along the LAC through dialogue and discussion. Both sides also agreed to hold the 14th round of Corps Commander level military talks at an early date "to achieve the objective of complete disengagement from all the friction points along the LAC in the Western Sector in accordance with the existing bilateral agreements and protocols."²



Director-General of the Department of Boundary and Ocean Affairs of the Foreign Ministry, Hong Liang, and Additional Secretary of the East Asia Division of the Ministry of External Affairs of India, Naveen Srivastava, co-chaired the 23rd Meeting of the Working Mechanism for Consultation and Coordination on China-India Border Affairs via video link. [Source: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, PRC](#)

¹ "23rd Meeting of the Working Mechanism for Consultation & Coordination on India-China Border Affairs," [Ministry of External Affairs, India](#), November 18, 2021

² Ibid.

Echoing India's narrative of the WMCC, [the statement released by the Chinese Foreign Ministry](#) highlighted that both sides had candidly discussed development in the India-China border areas,³ and that "continuous efforts would be made to further de-escalate the border situation, and strive to shift from urgent dispute settlement to regular management and control".⁴

[According to a report in the Indian media](#), China has constructed a village comprising 100 homes on the banks of the Tsari Churiver in Arunachal Pradesh, located in territory claimed by India, in violation of bilateral agreements between the two countries.⁵ The Indian Army describes this type of encroachment as 'adverse occupation' by China, which has reportedly built as many as 628 border defence villages along the entire length of the LAC, stretching from eastern Ladakh to Arunachal Pradesh.⁶

Responding to media queries on November 11 over Chinese constructions in border areas, the MEA spokesperson said that India has "conveyed its strong protest toward such activities through diplomatic means and will continue to do so in the future... China has undertaken construction activities in the past several years along the border areas, including in the areas that it has illegally occupied over the decades. [India has neither accepted such illegal occupation](#) of our territory nor has it accepted the unjustified Chinese claims."⁷ However, [India's Chief of Defence Staff \(CDS\) Gen Bipin Rawat refuted](#) any transgression of India's perception of the Line of Actual Control by Chinese constructions.⁸

China accused India's Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) Gen. Bipin Rawat of instigating a "geopolitical confrontation" and violating strategic guidelines over his remarks that China is India's biggest security threat. [Chinese state media referred to Gen Rawat's statement](#) as an attempt to hype the China threat to arouse domestic support by pointing to an external threat.⁹ Another report referred to Gen. Rawat's comments as demonstrative of [India's "high self-esteem alienation"](#), highlighting that the "the competition and cooperation relationship between China and India is plagued by India's 'high self-esteem' mentality". It further mentioned that the "high aggression" shown by India

³ "India, China agree on early resolution of LAC issues," [The Indian Express](#), November 19, 2021

⁴ "China and India Hold the 23rd Meeting of the Working Mechanism for Consultation and Coordination on Border Affairs," [Embassy of PRC, India](#), November 18, 2021

⁵ "Village in area under China's 'adverse occupation' since 1959, can't do much: Official," [The Times of India](#), November 10, 2021

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ "Won't accept Chinese illegal occupation, says MEA," [The Times of India](#), November 12, 2021

⁸ "Pentagon report: Not accepted China's illegal occupation, says govt; CDS says no transgression," [The Indian Express](#), November 12, 2021

⁹ "The 'China threat' is a dangerous card for India to toy with," [CGTN](#), November 14, 2021

makes the "constructed hostility gradually becoming an inducement of competition that could force bilateral relations to the edge of crisis".¹⁰ The report concluded that "only by adhering to the peaceful concept of 'cooperation rather than competition' can China and India benefit their people and achieve common development."¹¹

The Pentagon's annual report on ['Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China'](#) claimed that China has been undertaking incremental and tactical actions to press its claims along the frontier with India.¹²

While delivering a virtual address at a meeting of the [Shanghai Cooperation Organisation \(SCO\) Council](#) on November 25, on China's BRI, External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar said that "any serious connectivity initiative must be transparent and conform to the most basic principle of respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity."¹³

Foreign Secretary Harsh Shringla, at an online interaction on ["Bharat@75: Empowering India"](#) organised by the Indian Chamber of Commerce on November 24, underlined that India is reviewing its trade and investment ties with China taking into account India's larger strategic and security interests.¹⁴ Furthermore, addressing [China's "aggressive posture and attempted multiple transgressions"](#) along the border in eastern Ladakh, he underlined the importance of focusing on the resolution of the military standoff in Eastern Ladakh for both countries to return to a normal relationship.¹⁵

II. China-South Asia Relations

The Taliban's takeover has enabled a greater Chinese presence in Afghanistan. After Pakistan, China has emerged as the closest ally of Taliban-led Afghanistan. Both countries are working towards restoring the commercial corridor, whilst China has announced [\\$31 million in humanitarian aid](#) to

¹⁰ "Trust and cooperation are keys to lasting China-India relations," [CGTN](#), November 22, 2021

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² "China taking incremental, tactical actions to press claims along frontier with India: Pentagon," [The Times of India](#), November 5, 2021

¹³ "Any serious connectivity initiative must conform to territorial integrity," [Mint](#), November 26, 2021

¹⁴ "India scanning options on trade, investment with China to ensure security: Shringla," [Hindustan Times](#), No

¹⁵ "Review of China trade via security prism: Foreign secretary," [The Times of India](#), November 25, 2021

Afghanistan.¹⁶ In return, China has asked for the Taliban's help in clamping down on Uyghur and Islamic State Khorasan Province (ISKP) extremists.¹⁷

India invited the national security chiefs of key regional countries to discuss the Afghanistan situation at a Delhi Dialogue held on November 9. [The discussion, attended by the NSAs](#) of Russia, Iran, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, focused on (i) regional challenges post the Taliban takeover; (ii) stability and humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan; and (iii) recognition of the current regime, which remains shy of including ethnic minorities and ensuring women rights.¹⁸ Although invited, Pakistan and China did not attend the event. A report published in the [Chinese state media](#) claimed that with China and Pakistan's absence, the meeting hosted by India failed to generate any tangible results.¹⁹



The Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi, meeting NSAs of seven regional countries in New Delhi, November 10, 2021. Source: [PM India Website/Photo Gallery](#)

Post the 'Delhi Dialogue', Pakistan hosted senior diplomats from the United States, China, and Russia, dubbed as the 'Troika Plus', to discuss the developing situation in Afghanistan.²⁰ [A joint statement](#) released after the meeting appealed to the international community to urgently provide humanitarian aid to the Afghan people. The statement also called on the Taliban to cut ties with

¹⁶ "China offers \$31m in emergency aid to Afghanistan," [BBC](#), September 9, 2021

¹⁷ "Taliban's growing proximity with China is an opportunity ISKP trying to leverage," [India Today](#), November 11, 2021

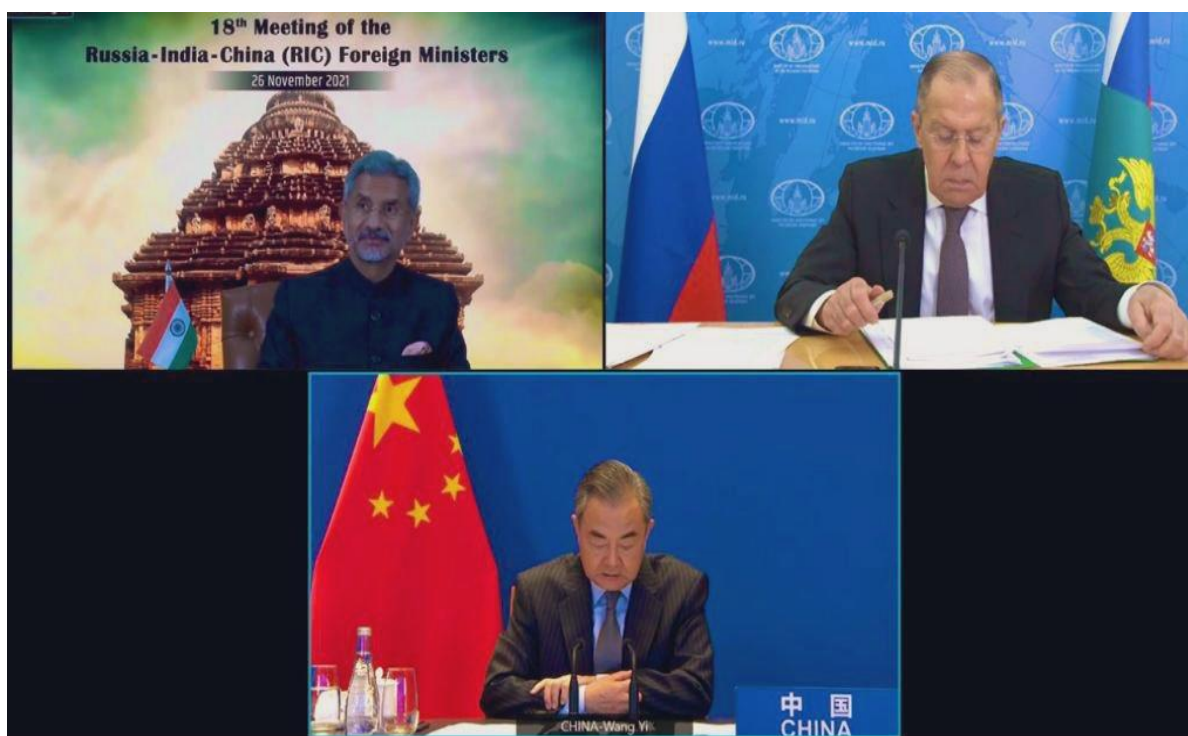
¹⁸ "Hosting NSA-level meet on Afghanistan in Delhi: A key step in India's quest to regain relevance in Afghanistan," [The Times of India](#), November 11, 2021

¹⁹ "With China, Pakistan's absence, India-hosted Afghan meeting unlikely to yield tangible results: expert," [Global Times](#), November 9, 2021

²⁰ "After skipping India's security dialogue on Afghanistan, China to attend Pakistan's Troika Plus meet," [The Indian Express](#), November 10, 2021

all international terrorist groups, and urged the Taliban to form an inclusive and representative government.²¹

Afghanistan's situation was a prominent point of discussion at the Russia-India-China (RIC) meeting. The Foreign Ministers of the three countries expressed concern over the deteriorating humanitarian situation in Afghanistan and the spread of drug trafficking from the country. They sought the formation of a truly inclusive government in Afghanistan, underscoring that lasting peace in the war-torn country hinged on the "urgent elimination" of UN Security Council-proscribed terror groups.²²



Indian External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar chaired the 18th RIC Foreign Ministers meeting, November 26, 2021. Source: [Twitter/@Dr S Jaishankar](https://twitter.com/DrSJaishankar)

At the same time, India urged Russia and China to ensure that there is no politicisation of humanitarian aid to Afghanistan, while proposing to provide 50,000 tonnes of wheat to Afghanistan through Pakistan.²³ On the Taliban's request, Pakistan has agreed to the transportation of this humanitarian aid to Afghanistan, the modalities for which are still to be worked out.

²¹ Ibid.

²² "India, China, Russia call for an inclusive government in Afghanistan," [Hindustan Times](#), November 27, 2021

²³ "Pakistan's move to allow India's aid to Afghanistan comes with a rider," [Hindustan Times](#), November 29, 2021.

China has emerged as a key defence exporter to Pakistan. During the month, [China delivered Pakistan its largest and most advanced warship](#), PNS Tughril.

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Bangladesh, meanwhile, has shown concerns regarding the quality and reliability of Chinese equipment. [The trainer aircraft delivered to Bangladesh have developed defects](#), and the quality of naval frigates China has delivered has also come under the scanner. In recent years, Bangladesh has acquired various items of military hardware from China including corvettes, naval guns, anti-ship missiles, and surface-to-air missile systems.²⁵

Protests organized by Human Rights groups and NGO erupted across Bangladesh, [voicing Chinese atrocities on minorities](#) in Xinjiang province.²⁶ At the same time, reports emerged that [China is playing a role in damaging Nepal's ties](#) with other countries through its influence operations.²⁷

In Sri Lanka, [China bagged another major project](#) with the award of a contract to construct the second phase of Colombo Port's East Container Terminal (ECT) to a Chinese firm. ECT was to be developed jointly by India and Japan under the terms of a 2019 tripartite agreement. However, Colombo cancelled the agreement earlier this year over disagreement on the terms and conditions of the contract.²⁸ Meanwhile, [spat](#) over a shipment of organic fertilisers that Colombo has refused to accept, citing quality issues.²⁹

III. China-United States Relations

China-US relations remained contentious, marked by posturing in the Indo-Pacific and disagreement over trade issues and Taiwan. However, there were signs of some convergence over climate change and the release of oil reserves to stabilise global energy prices.

Xi Jinping and President Joe Biden held their first bilateral meeting virtually on November 15, 2021. This followed a phone call that the two leaders had

²⁴ "As China Equips Pakistan With 'Stealth Technology', Should India Be Concerned With Sino-Pak Military Alliance?," [The Eurasian Times](#), November 25, 2021

²⁵ "Chinese arms to Dhaka fail quality and longevity tests, one after the other," [The Economic Times](#), November 4, 2021

²⁶ "Activists in Bangladesh protest against Chinese atrocities on Uyghur Muslims," [ANI](#), November 12, 2021

²⁷ "China involved in damaging Nepal's ties with other nations: Report," [ANI](#), November 17, 2021

²⁸ "China Bags Another Lucrative Port Deal in Sri Lanka," [The Maritime Executive](#), November 25, 2021

²⁹ "China, Sri Lanka in rare diplomatic tussle over fertiliser consignment," [Hindustan Times](#), November 13, 2021

exchanged on September 9. Although no joint statement was released, [the American readout underlined](#) that both sides discussed the complex nature of their ties and stressed the importance of managing competition responsibly. A range of items, including trade, cyber issues, climate change, Taiwan and Xinjiang were said to have been discussed.³⁰ In his opening remarks, President Biden stressed the importance of ensuring that the prevailing competitive scenario between the two countries did not lead to conflict. [President Xi, on the other hand, called for](#) developing a steady and sound China-US relationship based on mutual respect, peaceful coexistence, and win-win cooperation.



Chinese President Xi Jinping meets US President Joe Biden via video link, November 16, 2021. Source: [Xinhua/YueYuewei](#)

Calling the first virtual summit “timely”, [Chinese state media stressed that the summit offered](#) “a more positive and forward-looking agenda for the two countries whose interests align more than they diverge.”³¹ Immediately after the Xi-Biden summit, the [United States and China agreed to relax visa restrictions](#) on their respective foreign correspondents.³²

Prior to the Xi-Biden summit, [US national security adviser Jake Sullivan had remarked during an interview](#) that “The goal of America’s China policy is to create circumstances in which two major powers are going to have to operate in an international system for the foreseeable future, and we want the terms of that ... to be favourable to American interests and values.”³³

The US invited Taiwan to [Biden’s Democracy Summit](#) to be held on December 9-10, 2021. The summit will focus on challenges and opportunities facing

³⁰ “Readout of President Biden’s Virtual Meeting with President Xi Jinping of the People’s Republic of China,” [White House](#), November 16, 2021

³¹ “Xi-Biden summit to anchor China-US ties,” [China Daily](#), November 18, 2021

³² “China, U.S. reach consensus on journalists’ visa: report,” [CGTN](#), November 17, 2021

³³ “Interview With National Security Adviser Jake Sullivan,” [CNN](#), November 7, 2021

democracies.³⁴ China denounced the US move and [Chinese state media called the summit an 'anti-China ideological clique'](#) that manifests outdated authoritarianism of the US.³⁵

Meanwhile, Taiwan hosted two delegations of US lawmakers during the month. During these meetings, [President Tsai Ing-wen conveyed that](#) Taiwan will set up an office to handle veteran's affairs in Washington next year. President Tsai also thanked the US for helping Taiwan develop its first F-16V fighter jet squadron.³⁶ Denouncing the visits, [Chinese state media underlined China's intent](#) of undertaking severe military action in response.³⁷ This was followed by a staged [joint combat readiness patrol near the Taiwan](#) strait.³⁸

A [US government report](#) published on November 17 called for improved military deterrence and arms sales to Taiwan in light of the growing challenges posed by the PLA in the Taiwan Strait.³⁹

China joined a US initiative to release oil reserves in a bid to stabilise oil prices. During the [COP 26 climate summit in Glasgow](#) (October 31-November 12), China and the US pledged to boost climate cooperation. They called for stepped up efforts to achieve the targets set out in Paris Agreement in 2015.⁴⁰

IV. China-European Union Relations

[China downgraded its diplomatic ties with Lithuania](#) on November 21, warning it to keep away from 'great power' rivalry after Taiwan opened a representative office Vilnius, Lithuania.⁴¹ Denouncing Lithuania's decision, Chinese [Ministry of Foreign Affairs spokesperson Zhao Lijian](#) marked, "The obvious reason that Lithuania has come to this state is at the instigation of some major country, and in the bargain sacrificed its own interests..." "We call on these countries to prioritise their own interests, uphold international justice, and not be manipulated by a certain major country and become entangled in pointless

³⁴ "The Summit for Democracy," [US Department of State](#), February 2021

³⁵ "Summit for democracy an 'anti-China ideological clique'; US definition of 'authoritarianism' outdated," [Global Times](#), November 24, 2021

³⁶ "Taiwan to set up veterans office in Washington, Tsai Ing-wen tells visiting US Congress group," [South China Morning Post](#), November 26, 2021

³⁷ "Washington, DPP authority should know the price of US lawmakers' rampant acts: Global Times editorial," [Global Times](#), November 26, 2021

³⁸ "China carried out 'combat readiness patrol' as US lawmakers visited Taipei," [The Straits Times](#), November 26, 2021

³⁹ "U.S. gov't report calls for reforms to deter China in Taiwan Strait," [Focus Taiwan](#), November 18, 2021

⁴⁰ "U.S.-China Joint Glasgow Declaration on Enhancing Climate Action in the 2020s," [US Department of State](#), November 10, 2021

⁴¹ "China downgrades diplomatic ties with Lithuania in solemn protest," [Global Times](#), November 21, 2021

confrontation.”⁴² Chinese state media criticized Lithuania for [“wrongly” playing “Taiwan card”](#) to contain China.⁴³

While urging Europe to brace itself against Beijing's economic “coercion” by getting more involved in the Indo-Pacific”, foreign minister Gabrielius Landsbergis reiterated that Lithuania will adapt to “short-term” economic pain from China over its moves to enhance ties with Taiwan.

Following the diplomatic row, EU officially stated that it “does not regard the opening of a representative office in or from Taiwan (as opposed to an embassy or consulate) as a breach of the [EU’s one-China policy](#)”.⁴⁴ The EU delegation met President Tsai Ing-wen on November 4 assuring EU’s support for Taiwan. [China condemned the visit](#) calling it breach of one- China policy.⁴⁵

A section of US lawmakers in Washington indicated their [support for Taiwan by introducing a resolution](#) declaring support for Lithuania’s strengthening ties with Taiwan.⁴⁶ Additionally, the US has offered US\$600m to cushion impact from row with Beijing over Taiwan.⁴⁷

In Germany, as Olaf Scholz is set to form a government with support from the Green Party and Free Democratic Party, [the coalition agreement text contains](#) references to human rights abuses in Xinjiang, the erosion of rights in Hong Kong, and the situation involving Taiwan.⁴⁸ Further describing China as a “systemic rival”, it calls for “a comprehensive German, China strategy within the framework of the common EU-China policy.”⁴⁹

[EU approved sanctions renewal](#) against four Chinese officials and one Chinese entity on human rights grounds. China has threatened to scrap the ratification of a December 2020 trade deal over the issue.⁵⁰ Meanwhile, the [EU criticised the](#)

⁴² “China warns Lithuania to keep away from ‘great power’ rivalry in Taiwanese office row,” [“South China Morning Post](#), November 22, 2021

⁴³ “Lithuania will shoot itself in the foot over Taiwan provocation,” [China Daily](#), November 21, 2021

⁴⁴ “China warns Lithuania to keep away from ‘great power’ rivalry in Taiwanese office row,” [“South China Morning Post](#), November 22, 2021

⁴⁵ “Beijing fires warning at EU after MEPs meet Taiwan president,” [Politico](#), November 4, 2021

⁴⁶ “U.S. senators introduce resolution to support Lithuania-Taiwan ties,” [Focus Taiwan](#), November 6, 2021

⁴⁷ “Lithuania seeks more EU support as US offers US\$600m to cushion impact from row with Beijing over Taiwan,” [South China Morning Post](#), November 20, 2021

⁴⁸ “German coalition seals deal for new government, new tough-talking China policy,” [South China Morning Post](#), November 25, 2021

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ “EU sanctions against Chinese officials extended,” [EU Observer](#), November 25, 2021

[firing of Chinese water cannon](#) at supply boats from the Philippines in the disputed South China Sea.⁵¹

Even as China-EU relations nosedived, Beijing was persistent in its attempt to woo European powers over bilateral economic prospects. Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi held a virtual meeting with his Hungarian, Italian and Dutch counterparts over economic cooperation and infrastructure investments.

V. China-Russia Relations

Amidst growing synergy in Russia-China relations, the latter is growing impatient over the lack of progress on the Belt and Road Initiatives proposed by China. China has called for closer ties with Russia's law-making bodies to lay a legal foundation for greater economic integration and political security. Military cooperation has so far been the focus of China-Russia relations. Amidst growing US pressure, China and Russia are moving closer to a de-facto military alliance.⁵² Both countries have further agreed to [enhance investment cooperation](#) and links in [sci-tech innovation cooperation](#).⁵³⁵⁴

[In a joint opinion piece](#), Chinese and Russian ambassadors to the US, Qin Gang and Anatoly Antonov criticised the upcoming Summit for Democracy as an evident product of Washington's Cold War mentality, which will only create new "dividing lines".⁵⁵

As President Joe Biden's administration remained non-committal on granting India a waiver from the US CAATSA, [India joined Russia and China to criticise the United States](#) for imposing unilateral sanctions on other countries going beyond the curbs mandated by the United Nations Security Council (UNSC).⁵⁶

Democracy and Human Rights

At a hearing in Brussels on November 9, a special committee looking at outside interference and disinformation at the [European Parliament raised the alarm](#)

⁵¹ "EU sides with Philippines over South China Sea water cannon incident," [South China Morning Post](#), November 22, 2021

⁵² "China looks for firmer legal ground for economic ties with Russia," [South China Morning Post](#), November 27, 2021

⁵³ "China, Russia enhance links in sci-tech innovation," [China Daily](#), November 27, 2021

⁵⁴ "China and Russia agree to enhance investment cooperation," [Global Times](#), November 26, 2021

⁵⁵ "China, Russia jointly decry US democracy summit, call for past lessons to be remembered," [Global Times](#), November 28, 2021

⁵⁶ "India sides with Russia, China over criticism on US sanctions in trilateral meet," [Deccan Herald](#), November 27, 2021

over China's growing efforts to disrupt democratic processes in the EU.⁵⁷ The European lawmakers urged the European Union to take action against the perceived threat, demanding a special task force to be established for "monitoring interference coming from China".⁵⁸



Xi Jinping, Li Keqiang, Li Zhanshu, Wang Yang, Wang Huning, Zhao Leji and Han Zheng attend the sixth plenary session of the 19th CPC Central Committee held in Beijing from November 8 to 11, 2021. Source: [Xinhua/Xie Huanchi](#)

Taiwan's invite to Biden Democracy Summit elicited critical response in Chinese state media. A global Times editorial stressed that instead of following the notion of democracy propagated by western powers, [China has built a people-centred socialist democracy](#) and efficient market economy based on China's political system.⁵⁹ Another commentary asserted "[democracy and human rights are no longer the exclusive preserve of the West](#)", and the West is no longer the only one entitled to speak on those issues. After China eradicated absolute poverty and built a moderately prosperous society in all respects in

⁵⁷ "EU lawmakers raise alarm on China's efforts to 'interfere in European democracies'," [South China Morning Post](#), November 9, 2021

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ "Vigorous Chinese democracy vs aging Western one: Global Times editorial," [Global Times](#), November 13, 2021

2020, more and more Chinese people are talking about democracy and human rights with confidence, even in international arenas.”⁶⁰

China criticized the US led democracy during diplomatic talks this month. During a virtual discussion with his [Iranian](#) and [Hungarian counterpart](#)(November 24th and 25th) Foreign Minister Wang criticized US led democracy summit from which China, Iran and Hungary are excluded.^{61,62} During the meeting Foreign Minister Wang referred to United States trying to impose its definition of democracy on others and of using it to promote the independence of Taiwan.⁶³

Sixth Plenary Session

The [sixth plenary session](#) of the 19th Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (CPC) was held from November 8 – 11, 2021.⁶⁴ CPC unanimously adopted a “historic resolution on the major achievements and experience of the party over the past 100 years”.⁶⁵ According to a Xinhua report, “CPC had adopted first such resolution in 1945 before the victory against Japanese aggression, and the second in 1981 marking reforms and opening of the Chinese economy”.⁶⁶ General-Secretary of CPC Central Committee Xi Jinping stressed that “summarizing Party’s major achievements and historical experience will help unite the CPC while leading the nation toward the path of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics”.⁶⁷ Importantly, the resolution establishes “Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era as the Marxism of contemporary China and of the 21st century”.⁶⁸ The Party has further “strengthened Xi Jinping’s core position in the CPC Central Committee, a reflection of common will of the Party, the armed forces, and the Chinese people of all ethnic groups”.⁶⁹ As per the resolution, CPC’s ten [valuable historical experiences](#) include: “upholding the Party’s leadership”, “putting the people first”, “advancing theoretical innovation” [adapting Marxism to Chinese context], “staying independent”, “following the Chinese path”, “maintaining a

⁶⁰ “China adheres to people-centric democracy,” [China Daily](#), November 25, 2021

⁶¹ “Wang Yi Holds Video Meeting with Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian,” [Embassy of China, India](#), November 24, 2021

⁶² “Wang Yi Holds a Virtual Meeting with Hungarian Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade Peter Szijjarto,” [Mission of People’s Republic of China, European Union](#), November 25, 2021

⁶³ “Let the people decide: China says the US is not the only judge of what democracy looks like,” [South China Morning Post](#), November 26, 2021

⁶⁴ “China Focus: CPC’s third resolution on history and its future-looking plenum”, [Xinhua](#), November 13, 2021.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

global vision", "breaking new ground", "standing up for ourselves [party and the nation], "promoting united front", and "remaining committed to self-reform".⁷⁰

Trade and Economy

China's economy is reportedly poised to further [slowdown in 2022](#) owing to outbreak of the Delta variant of coronavirus, and Beijing's crackdown on country's property sector.⁷¹ Morgan Stanley has forecasted country's 2021 fourth quarter GDP growth to fall to 3.3 percent with overall yearly growth of around 8.1 percent.⁷² Importantly, Fitch forecasts China's economy to grow by 5.2 percent in 2022.⁷³ Amidst this, China's central bank adviser warned about country facing "[quasi-stagflation](#)" risks⁷⁴; however, National Bureau of Statistics continued to maintain that China was on a path of "sustained [economic recovery](#) with retail sales and industrial production growth beating expectations".⁷⁵ Chinese analysts believe "Beijing will hit a pause button to [balance growth and debt management](#) with more pro-growth policies in 2022".⁷⁶ Reportedly, [Foreign Direct Investment](#) (FDI) into mainland China rose by 17.8 percent in the first 10 months of 2021 to USD 142.01 billion.⁷⁷ Meanwhile, data from General Administration of Customs pointed toward "China's [foreign trade](#) rebounding above the pre-pandemic levels".⁷⁸

President Xi Jinping virtually addressed 26th session of the [Conference of Parties \(COP26\)](#) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) held in Glasgow.⁷⁹ Chinese President presented three-pronged strategy with emphasis on "upholding multilateralism", "focusing on concrete action plans", and "accelerating the green transition".⁸⁰ Importantly, President Xi underlined the "responsibility of developed countries in tackling climate change as well as providing support to the developing countries for the

⁷⁰"CPC's ten valuable historical experiences mentioned in the communiqué", [CCTV](#), November 15, 2021.

⁷¹Amanda Lee and Frank Tang, "Property, Covid-19 challenges to remain with China's economic slowdown to continue in 2022", [South China Morning Post](#), November 18, 2021.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Amanda Lee, "China facing 'quasi-stagflation' risk as rising factory prices increase pressure on slowing economy", [South China Morning Post](#), November 22, 2021.

⁷⁵Orange Wang and Andrew Mullen, "China's economic recovery stabilises as retail sales, industrial production growth beat expectations", [South China Morning Post](#), November 18, 2021.

⁷⁶Amanda Lee and Frank Tang, "Property, Covid-19 challenges to remain with China's economic slowdown to continue in 2022", [South China Morning Post](#), November 18, 2021.

⁷⁷"China's FDI inflow up 17.8 pct in first 10 months", [Xinhua](#), November 15, 2021.

⁷⁸ "China's imports, exports rebound above pre-virus levels in Jan-Oct, but pressure persists", [Global Times](#), November 07, 2021.

⁷⁹"Xi calls for stronger actions to jointly tackle climate challenge", [Xinhua](#), November 01, 2021.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

purpose".⁸¹ Meanwhile, People's Daily argued that "a divided America [US] casts a shadow on global [response to climate change](#)".⁸² "Washington's commitment to curtail greenhouse gases is mainly dependent on who is in The White House", it added.⁸³

November 11, 2021 marked 20th anniversary of China's accession to the [World Trade Organisation](#) (WTO).⁸⁴ Xinhua commentary stressed that "Double Eleven was one of the most important economic events in the history of China and that of the modern world, which created a win-win outcome for both".⁸⁵ "China's opening-up over the past two decades has injected new vitality in country's development and the growth of global economy", Xinhua added.⁸⁶ As China marked Double Eleven, the United States and its allies [criticised China's economic policies](#) over the past 20 years at a closed-door WTO meeting.⁸⁷ Xinhua slammed Washington's projection of China as "free rider" in global economy by asserting that China is a "major global growth driver, not a free rider". "Free rider myth rather exposes Washington's self-centrism and double standards in global economic activities", it added.⁸⁸ President Xi Jinping during his virtual meeting with US President Joe Biden stressed that "US businesses are welcome in China, but warned against [politicisation of trade](#) [bilateral economic issues]".⁸⁹ [Taming soaring oil prices](#) is an emerging area of cooperation between China and United States, as releasing oil from strategic reserves to stabilise global oil prices was reportedly discussed between President's Xi and Biden.⁹⁰ China is also eyeing a substantial rise in the import of [Liquefied Natural Gas](#) (LNG) from the US, which has become second largest LNG supplier to China overtaking Qatar.⁹¹ In the aftermath of Presidential meeting, Chinese Premier Li Keqiang, Vice President Wang Qishan, and Vice Premier Liu He underlined Beijing's intent of [further opening the economy](#).⁹² Importantly, Vice President Wang stressed that "China cannot

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Dennis Meng, "A divided America casts a shadow on global response to climate change", [People's Daily](#), November 04, 2021.

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ "How 'Double Eleven' 20 years ago benefits the world", [Xinhua](#), November 11, 2021.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ "China a major global growth driver, not free rider", [Xinhua](#), November 10, 2021.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ Frank Tang and Amanda Lee, "China's Xi says US businesses are welcome, but politicising bilateral economic issues is not", [South China Morning Post](#), November 16, 2021.

⁹⁰ Catherine Wong and Frank Tang, "US asks China to release oil reserves as part of discussions on economic cooperation, source says", [South China Morning Post](#), November 17, 2021.

⁹¹ "China eyes substantial rise in US LNG imports", [China Daily](#), November 18, 2021.

⁹² Orange Wang, "China steps up opening up, supply chain security charm offensive in wake of Biden-Xi summit", [South China Morning Post](#), November 17, 2021.

develop in isolation from the world and nor can the world develop without China".⁹³

Amidst this, Shanghai hosted fourth '[China International Import Expo](#)' (CIIE) with emphasis on low-carbon and green development.⁹⁴ Xinhua stressed that the "unstoppable popularity of CIIE has once again demonstrated global confidence in China's high-level opening-up, passion for sharing development opportunities, and a common will to build open global economy".⁹⁵ Meanwhile, President Xi Jinping virtually addressed Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) CEO Summit. He called on Asia-Pacific to "strive hard to meet the goal of building an Asia-Pacific [community with a shared future](#)".⁹⁶

As China's real estate sector remains marred in a debt crisis, Beijing plans to roll-out a nationwide [property tax](#) [excluding rural households].⁹⁷ In light of this, Chinese analysts warned that "a hard landing of the real-estate market poses limited threat to the country's financial system but could have a severe impact on China's real economy [as reflected by third quarter slowdown]".⁹⁸ "Property tax is needed but China must avoid its serious negative effects on property sales in the near term", they added.⁹⁹ Amidst President Xi Jinping's 'common prosperity' call and Beijing's crackdown on property sector and big-tech, "[investor sentiment](#) is becoming increasingly cautious over China".¹⁰⁰ Reportedly, "Entrepreneurs and high-net worth individuals are planning to relocate their wealth overseas and obtain foreign green cards" [permanent resident status].¹⁰¹ In another development, even as China adopted a three-child policy, "public willingness to give birth remains sluggish".¹⁰²

Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) contribute substantially to China's economy in employment generation. Newly established '[Beijing Stock Exchange](#)' (BSE) started trading on November 15, "unleashing power of small

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ "CIIE concludes with China's commitment to more opening up", [Xinhua](#), November 10, 2021.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ Xi Focus: Xi urges Asia-Pacific to stride toward community with shared future, [Xinhua](#), November 11, 2021.

⁹⁷ Jane Cai, "Property tax concerns for China's homeowners, buyers amid Xi Jinping's common prosperity drive", [South China Morning Post](#), November 23, 2021.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ He Huifeng, "China's crackdown on education, property leave wealthy in crisis mode, and some are looking for an escape route", [South China Morning Post](#), November 14, 2021.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² Ibid.

[enterprises] for Chinese economy".¹⁰³ China Securities Regulatory Commission lauded BSE as "another landmark in country's capital market reforms and development".¹⁰⁴

Defence and Security

US Department of Defence released its annual report on military and security developments involving China. Among other important details, the Report underscores that "China is expanding its [nuclear capabilities](#) on land, sea, and air, estimating that the country could have up to 700 nuclear warheads by 2027 and at least 1,000 by 2030".¹⁰⁵ Expressing strong dissatisfaction at the Report, Chinese Ministry of National Defence (MND) asserted that Pentagon was "disregarding facts", "fabricating the so-called China military threat", "making [groundless accusations](#) against China's nuclear capability development" while "interfering in China's internal affairs involving Taiwan and other issues".¹⁰⁶ As the Biden administration reviews US Nuclear Posture, Global Times editorial argued that Washington should adopt "[no first use of nuclear weapons](#)".¹⁰⁷ Importantly, it called upon Beijing to "strengthen its nuclear deterrence [second-strike] capabilities".¹⁰⁸

In a strategic development of great significance, western media highlighted China's path-breaking [second missile launch](#) during its recent hypersonic missile test.¹⁰⁹ Reportedly, neither US nor Russia possess this capability.¹¹⁰ As the "hypersonic missile can be steered towards a target, the second missile launch could be used to target adversary's defences".¹¹¹ Earlier, Gen. Mark Milley, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff had described China's hypersonic missile test as being very close to a "[Sputnik moment](#)".¹¹²

¹⁰³"Beijing Stock Exchange starts trading, unleashing power of small for Chinese economy", [Xinhua](#), November 15, 2021.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵ Minnie Chan, "China building up nuclear arsenal in response to US pressure", [South China Morning Post](#), November 04, 2021.

¹⁰⁶ "MND: China firmly opposes U.S. report on Chinese military and security developments", [Ministry of National Defense of the People's Republic of China](#), November 06, 2021.

¹⁰⁷ "US should announce 'no first use of nuclear weapons,' with no strings attached: Global Times editorial" [Global Times](#), October 31, 2021.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹ Chinese hypersonic test included path-breaking second missile launch, say US reports, [South China Morning Post](#), November 23, 2021.

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹¹ Ibid.

¹¹² Sara Sorcher and Karoun Demirjian, "Top U.S. general calls China's hypersonic weapon test very close to a 'Sputnik moment'", [The Washington Post](#), October 27, 2021.



USS Milius (DDG-69) and an unidentified Japan Maritime Self Defense Force submarine held anti-submarine warfare exercise in South China Sea, November 16, 2021. Source: [USNI News](#)

US-China strategic and military sparring continues in South China Sea (SCS). US and Japan for the first time held [anti-submarine drills](#) in SCS reportedly practicing "targeting PLA Navy's (PLAN) conventional submarines".¹¹³ Highlighting, PLAN's advanced submarine technologies, Chinese analysts claimed that "US and Japan's attempts to hunt PLAN submarines [conventional or nuclear-powered] is a day dream, as the SCS is far too big, even after counting on the Australian Navy".¹¹⁴ "China should continue to train its naval forces and prepare for war; PLAN submarines should not only be in South China Sea but also in other countries water's to break strategic encirclement by countries such as US and Japan", analysts added.¹¹⁵

A commentary on PLA Daily raised questions about Washington's [Defence Secretary Austin's] ["integrated deterrence"](#) concept that reportedly emphasises "use of existing capabilities while building new ones and deploying them in a networked manner to forge credible deterrence".¹¹⁶ PLA Daily commentary

¹¹³Deng Xiaoci, "With eye on China, US, Japan stage anti-submarine drills in S. China Sea", [Global Times](#), November 17, 2021.

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁵ Ibid.

¹¹⁶ "America's "integrated deterrence" faces multiple obstacles", [China Military Online](#), November 04, 2021.

stressed that this approach faces multiple obstacles including “restricted [limited] US defence budget”, “division among allies” and “uncertainty of R&D in cutting edge technologies”.¹¹⁷

As US-China tensions on Taiwan showed no signs of abating, People’s Daily continued to highlight “US history of [provoking wars abroad](#)”.¹¹⁸ It specifically shed light on US military’s covert operations such as “Operation North woods in Cuba aimed at carrying out series of false flag terrorist attacks against its own troops and civilian population to frame the Cuban government under Fidel Castro”.¹¹⁹ Other operations described by People’s Daily include “Gulf of Tonkin incident that escalated into the [Vietnam War](#)”¹²⁰, “baby incubator story that aggravated the [first Gulf War](#)”¹²¹, and “[CIA’s Operation Mockingbird](#) manipulating international public opinion by bribing journalists”.¹²² As Taiwan vowed to strengthen its defence capabilities with new submarines and fighter aircrafts, Chinese experts maintained that “Taipei cannot change [widening military gap](#) with the mainland”.¹²³ To drive home the point, in October 2021 PLA sent nearly [200 aircrafts for exercises](#) near island of Taiwan to “deter secessionists and foreign interference”.¹²⁴ Notwithstanding above, US guided missile destroyer [USS Milius](#) sailed through the Taiwan straits on November 23.¹²⁵

In a strategic move aimed at [containing ‘AUKUS’](#), Chinese President Xi Jinping showed Beijing’s willingness to sign protocol to the ASEAN treaty keeping nuclear weapons out of the region.¹²⁶ AUKUS remained a major topic of discussion at [Beijing Xiangshan Forum](#) 2021 with Chinese scholars claiming

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

¹¹⁸ Chen Zi, “Operation Northwoods against Cuba reflects U.S. history of provoking war abroad”, [People’s Daily](#), November 10, 2021.

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

¹²⁰ Chen Zi, “Gulf of Tonkin Incident a clear-cut example of US escalation, warmongering towards other countries”, [People’s Daily](#), November 11, 2021.

¹²¹ Chen Zi, “Baby incubator” lie reflects US history of fanning hatred, triggering war”, [People’s Daily](#), November 12, 2021.

¹²² CIA’s Operation Mockingbird a precursor of US manipulation of world public opinion, [People’s Daily](#), November 09, 2021.

¹²³ XuKeyue, “Taiwan’s new submarine, warplanes cannot change widening military gap with mainland: experts”, [Global Times](#), November 15, 2021.

¹²⁴ Liu Xuanzun, “PLA sent nearly 200 aircraft near Taiwan in record month”, [Global Times](#), November 01, 2021.

¹²⁵ “US makes security risk by sending destroyer to Taiwan Strait: PLA spokesperson”, [Ministry of National Defense of the People’s Republic of China](#), November 23, 2021.

¹²⁶ Amber Wang, “China backs nuclear weapon-free zone in Southeast Asia in move to contain Aukus”, [South China Morning Post](#), November 24, 2021.

that "the trilateral partnership is a 'serious shock' to the existing international nuclear order".¹²⁷

Continuing the deepening [Sino-Russian defence partnership](#), bombers from the two countries [Chinese H-6K and Russian Tu-95MC aircraft] held joint strategic patrol over the Sea of Japan and the East China Sea.¹²⁸ Global Times report stressed that "amidst Western provocations and growing instability, all three military branches of China and Russia have carried out strategic cooperation in 2021 safeguarding world strategic stability".¹²⁹ Chinese analysts described the joint patrol as a "warning to some countries outside the region", and "neighbouring countries part of AUKUS and QUAD, not to stir up trouble".¹³⁰ Importantly, [Chinese and Russian Defence Ministers](#) held a virtual dialogue reviewing "comprehensive strategic partnership and the new breakthroughs achieved in joint exercises".¹³¹

PLA Air Force has deployed domestically developed [WZ-7 high-altitude reconnaissance drone](#) for full combat training.¹³² Chinese strategic experts claimed that "WZ-7's flight duration and range are comparable to those of civilian aircrafts; normally a civilian aircraft can fly for 12 hours over 10,000 Km".¹³³ Reportedly, America's Global Hawk drone was first such UAV to have range of over 10,000 Km.¹³⁴ In recent years, PLA has deployed a number of domestically manufactured combat systems including 'J-20 stealth fighter', 'Y-20 transport plane', 'KJ-500 early warning aircraft' and 'HQ-9B air-defence (S-300 equivalent) missile system' [in the past [HQ-9B](#) was reportedly deployed close to Indian territory in Eastern Ladakh].¹³⁵ Reporting these developments, the state media asserted that "PLA Air Force has reached a milestone by crossing the threshold to that of being strategic air-force".¹³⁶ Further, the [electronic warfare\(EW\)](#) version of J-16 fighter aircraft 'J16-D' has joined combat

¹²⁷"AUKUS, a hot topic at Beijing Xiangshan Forum Webinar 2021", [China Military Online](#), October 28, 2021.

¹²⁸Wang Qi, "Chinese, Russian bombers hold joint patrol, safeguarding world strategic stability amid Western provocations", [Global Times](#), November 19, 2021.

¹²⁹ Ibid.

¹³⁰ Ibid.

¹³¹ "Chinese, Russian defense ministers hold talks via video link", [China Military Online](#), November 23, 2021.

¹³² "China's latest WZ-7 recon drone deployed for combat training ahead of PLA Air Force's 72nd anniversary", [Global Times](#), November 10, 2021.

¹³³ Ibid.

¹³⁴ Ibid.

¹³⁵ Ibid.

also see, Manjeet Negi, "India closely monitoring Chinese surface-to-air missile batteries deployed close to LAC", [India Today](#), April 12, 2021.

¹³⁶ "China's latest WZ-7 recon drone deployed for combat training ahead of PLA Air Force's 72nd anniversary", [Global Times](#), November 10, 2021.

training.¹³⁷ Chinese analysts asserted that “J16-D is a multirole aircraft that can jam enemy radars and is designed to [accompany the J-20](#) and J10-C fighter aircrafts.¹³⁸ Another Chinese researcher stressed that “J16-D was very similar to F15-E Strike Eagle of the US Air Force, while claiming Chinese dogfight training and aircraft designs were inspired by their American peers”.¹³⁹ “As the US conducts team training for their F22s, F35s, and F15-Es, the Chinese aircrafts will also work in tandem, because in future combat the focus will not be on a single type of aircraft”.¹⁴⁰

President Xi Jinping chaired CPC Political Bureau meeting to review [China's National Security Strategy](#) (2021-25), regulations on awarding military honours and the 2021 advisory report of the national science and technology commission.¹⁴¹ Beijing aims to prioritise political along with economic, social, and sci-tech security.¹⁴² President Xi in his remarks asserted that “no concession will be made on issues concerning China's core interests and national dignity”.¹⁴³ He also spoke about “upholding CPC's absolute leadership over the Chinese armed forces”.¹⁴⁴

As regards achieving military modernization by 2027, President Xi emphasised the importance of “quicken the development of [military logistics](#)”.¹⁴⁵ Reacting to reports in the western media highlighting the possibilities of China launching its [type 003 aircraft-carrier](#) equipped with electromagnetic catapults in next three to six months, Global Times report claimed that US media was hyping “China threat theory to get more funds for the military as also to vilify China among US allies”.¹⁴⁶

Technology

Beijing hosted '[Cyberspace Civilisation](#)' conference reportedly promoting ideals of “clean and civilised [within Marxist framework] internet seeking

¹³⁷ “J-16D joins realistic combat training”, [China Military Online](#), November 08, 2021.

¹³⁸ Minnie Chan, “China's new J-16D electronic attack jet joins combat training with other warplanes”, [South China Morning Post](#), November 09, 2021.

¹³⁹ Ibid.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.

¹⁴¹ “CPC leadership reviews documents on national security strategy, military honors regulations, sci-tech advisory report”, [Xinhua](#), November 18, 2021.

¹⁴² Ibid.

¹⁴³ Ibid.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

¹⁴⁵ “Xi urges high-quality development of modern logistics for China's armed forces”, [Xinhua](#), November 23, 2021.

¹⁴⁶ LengShumei and Liu Xuanzun, “US media hype Chinese aircraft carrier progress and anti-carrier capability ‘to boost military funding, rally allies’”, [Global Times](#), November 10, 2021.

increased international cooperation in the cyberspace".¹⁴⁷ Chinese official's highlighted top 10 achievements in creating cyberspace civilisation including – guidelines to sensor "unhealthy content", "data protection laws", "list of government approved internet news providers", and "guidelines to punish users and institutions in case they bypass country's great firewall and access censored information from abroad".¹⁴⁸ Amidst this, US companies LinkedIn and Yahoo exited Chinese market owing to greater compliance requirements under country's data protection laws.¹⁴⁹

During the month, Chinese state media accused India of "destroying [destabilizing] [regional cyber stability](#)".¹⁵⁰ Chinese anti-virus company 'Antiy Labs Li Bosong' reportedly busted [India's phishing activities](#) targeting Chinese defence and military departments.¹⁵¹ A commentary on PLA Daily claimed that "organisations launching cyber-attacks against China are backed by the Indian state; such attacks against neighbouring countries will create major hurdles in future [cyber security cooperation](#) in SCO and BRICS".¹⁵² "US, India, and Japan are weaving a cyber-security encirclement around China by conducting cyber-attacks, gathering data for origin tracing [COVID-19], and stealing other sensitive information", it added.¹⁵³

China's [big-tech crackdown](#) is said to be taking a heavy toll on companies such as Alibaba that witnessed a sharp year-on-year decline in net income for September 2021 quarter; its adjusted profit also fell considerably.¹⁵⁴ A report by South China Morning Post (SCMP) highlighted that "Alibaba's exceptional growth days are over as consumer spending weakens in China".¹⁵⁵ Even as China's biggest online shopping event '[Single's Day](#)' saw sales worth CNY 540 billion [USD 84.4 billion], it reportedly was hit by "rising anti-consumerism sentiment".¹⁵⁶ Simultaneously, "[job growth is shrinking](#) in Chinese Big-tech

¹⁴⁷ Coco Feng, "Beijing promotes ideal of clean, civilised internet as it seeks increased international cooperation in cyberspace", [South China Morning Post](#), November 19, 2021.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid.

¹⁵⁰ Lu Chuanying, "India, new destroyer of regional cyber stability", [China Military Online](#), November 23, 2021.

¹⁵¹ "China busts cyberattacks from India targeted at China's defense and military departments", [Global Times](#), November 01, 2021.

¹⁵² Lu Chuanying, "India, new destroyer of regional cyber stability", [China Military Online](#), November 23, 2021.

¹⁵³ Ibid.

¹⁵⁴ Tracy Qu, "Alibaba's era of exceptional growth is over as Chinese consumer spending power weakens, say analysts", [South China Morning Post](#), November 19, 2021.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid.

¹⁵⁶ Cyril Ip, "Singles' Day sales hit by rising anti-consumerism sentiment, China's youth warn of vicious circle", [South China Morning Post](#), November 12, 2021.

companies while wages remain stagnant".¹⁵⁷ Employment generation in semiconductor industry remains robust, but country's [chip output fell](#) in October 2021 "signalling supply bottlenecks amid global chip shortage".¹⁵⁸

People's Daily continued to highlight integration of 5G into country's [industrial internet](#) reportedly improving quality and efficiency in sectors such as iron and steel, mining, etc.¹⁵⁹ In another technology related development, the concept of 'Metaverse' has gathered momentum across the digital world especially after Facebook's parent company re-branded itself as 'Meta'. Chinese Big-tech companies such as Tencent and Alibaba have also reportedly registered a number of [metaverse-related trademarks](#).¹⁶⁰ Metaverse can be referred to as "immersive virtual world where digital representations of people interact in multiple ways including for commerce, social interactions and play".¹⁶¹ In light of this, researchers at state-affiliated think tank 'China Institutes of Contemporary International Relations' warned of "national security risks involved with Metaverse".¹⁶²

¹⁵⁷Coco Feng, "Hiring among internet giants falls amid China's tech crackdown, but remains robust in semiconductors", [South China Morning Post](#), November 11, 2021.

¹⁵⁸Che Pan, "China's semiconductor output drops again in October, signalling bottlenecks amid global chip shortage", [South China Morning Post](#), November 15, 2021.

¹⁵⁹"5G energizes China's iron and steel industry", [People's Daily](#), November 17, 2021

¹⁶⁰XinmeiShen, "Chinese state-owned think tank flags national security risks of metaverse, citing potential political and social problems", [South China Morning Post](#), November 01, 2021.

¹⁶¹ Ibid.

¹⁶² Ibid.



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