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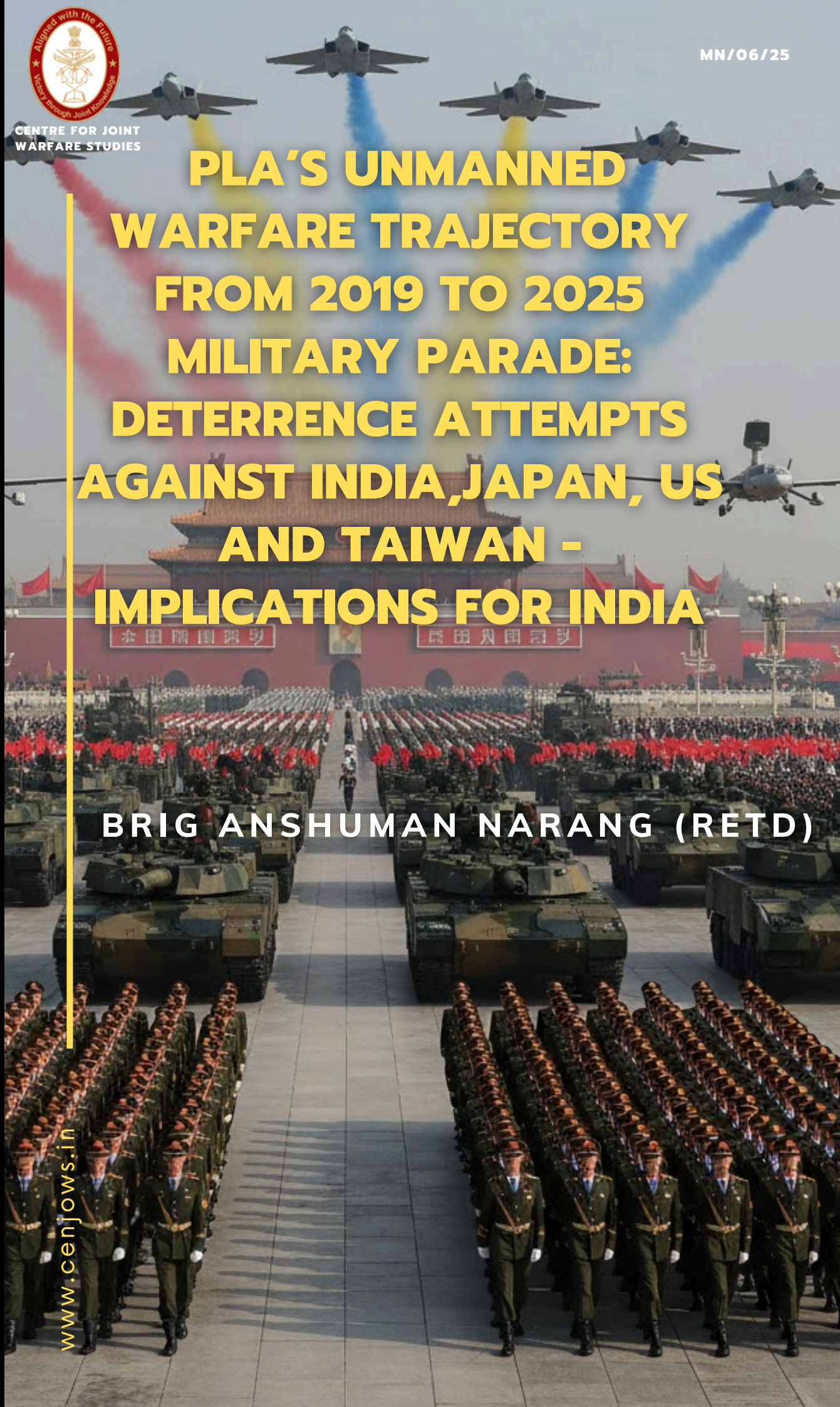
CENTRE FOR JOINT WARFARE STUDIES

PLA'S UNMANNED WARFARE TRAJECTORY FROM 2019 TO 2025 MILITARY PARADE: DETERRENCE ATTEMPTS AGAINST INDIA,JAPAN, US AND TAIWAN - IMPLICATIONS FOR INDIA



BRIG ANSHUMAN NARANG (RETD)

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PLA's UNMANNED WARFARE TRAJECTORY FROM 2019 TO 2025 MILITARY PARADE: DETERRENCE ATTEMPTS AGAINST INDIA, JAPAN, US AND TAIWAN -IMPLICATIONS FOR INDIA

Brigadier Anshuman Narang, Retired, is an alumnus of prestigious Rastriya Indian Military College. He holds the "Adani Defence Chair of Excellence" on UAS Warfare with Special Focus on Counter-UAS at CENJOWS.

Abstract

The People's Republic of China (PRC) grand military parade on 03 September 2025 was the highest form of global strategic signalling to US, Taiwan, Japan, India, the Western countries and the world to showcase People's Liberation Army (PLA) indigenous military prowess significantly enhanced in the last six years since the last grand military parade organised in 2019. The key takeaways were the comprehensive development of Multi-Domain Integrated Joint Operations (MDIJO) capabilities in every module paraded; the sophisticated technologies of mighty unprecedented industrial might; the massive strengthening of multi-domain precision strikes both in non-contact kinetic (NCK) and non-contact non-kinetic (NCNK) formats; a display of preparation of modern amphibious operations capabilities against Taiwan and high-altitude capabilities against India; noticeable progress on PLA's three modernisations-Mechanisation showing from 4th generation tanks to 5th generation aircrafts, Informatisation and Intelligentisation from tactical to strategic levels; and most importantly implementation of key lesson of Russia-Ukraine war of implementing Manned-Unmanned Teaming (MUMT) at sea, land and air and enhancing the scope of multi-domain unmanned combat. This monograph has hence examined the PLA's technological prowess displayed at each of the modules paraded-land, maritime, air defence (AD) and missile defence, information operations, unmanned operations, logistics support, strategic strike and aerial flypast module and the marching

contingent. It has thereafter examined the global implications with focus on India and essential recommendations for India.

Key Words
LZ-Land Operations Module, HZ-Maritime Operations Module, FK- AD and Missile Defence Module, XZ-Information Operations Module, WR-Unmanned Operations Module, GX - Aerial Flypast Module, HF— Logistics Support Module and ZL— Strategic Strike Module, PLA Ground Force (PLAGF), Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV)

Introduction

The PRC organised a grand military parade on 03 September 2025 to commemorate the 80th anniversary of victory over Japan in 1945. Although it's more symbolic to celebrate victory over Japan, the strategic messaging was to USA, Taiwan and India to display **PLA's full spectrum strategic deterrence of an untested military** from conventional to nuclear multi-domain strike capabilities displaying "Anywhere from Everywhere" concept; an all-weather 24x7 persistent Intelligence Surveillance (ISR) grid forming the basis of a Multi-Domain Kill Web (MDKW); enhancement of synergised Anti-Access Area-Denial (A2AD) grid across the Second Islands Chain (SIC); indigenisation of development of technologically sophisticated and advanced military platforms since 2019; incorporation of lessons of Russia-Ukraine, Iran-Israel and other ongoing military conflicts; and showcasing complete People's Armed Forces by integrating PLA with the new generation Reserves including Militia and the People's Armed Police Force (PAPF). **PRC is seemingly trying to match boots on ground with talented brains in a fully indigenous cloud.**

The parade also saw PRC's multi-dimensional whole-of-nation approach (WONA) showing off comprehensive national power (CNP). The parade was preceded by the SCO summit which was attended by the Indian Prime Minister Modi himself. The photo of the trio - Indian PM, Chinese and Russian Presidents two days before had already irked US President Trump who had gone to comment that US had lost India to China. On the diplomatic front, the PRC's 2025 Grand Military Parade witnessed the presence of 26 heads of countries close to the PRC. The two special guests on the occasion were the Russian President Vladimir Putin and the North Korean leader Kim Jong Un. While the parade displayed PLA's military proficiencies in the pursuit of a world-class military status, the indigenisation levels of the defence industry shown were a clear display of PRC's economic and technological prowess. On the cognitive domain, PLA's propaganda machinery left no stone unturned to augment the strategic signalling from one of the most impressive global military parades ever. The Communist Party of China (CPC) overall displayed the four complimentary pillars of the PRC's multi-dimensional CNP with finesse– Diplomatic, Information, Military and Economic. The strategic signals to India and its military were adequately amplified by the PRC's major official propaganda outlets Xinhua and PLA Daily.

The 2025 military parade was not only impressive in conduct and discipline but the largest ever too as indicated by an infographic prepared by Reuters.

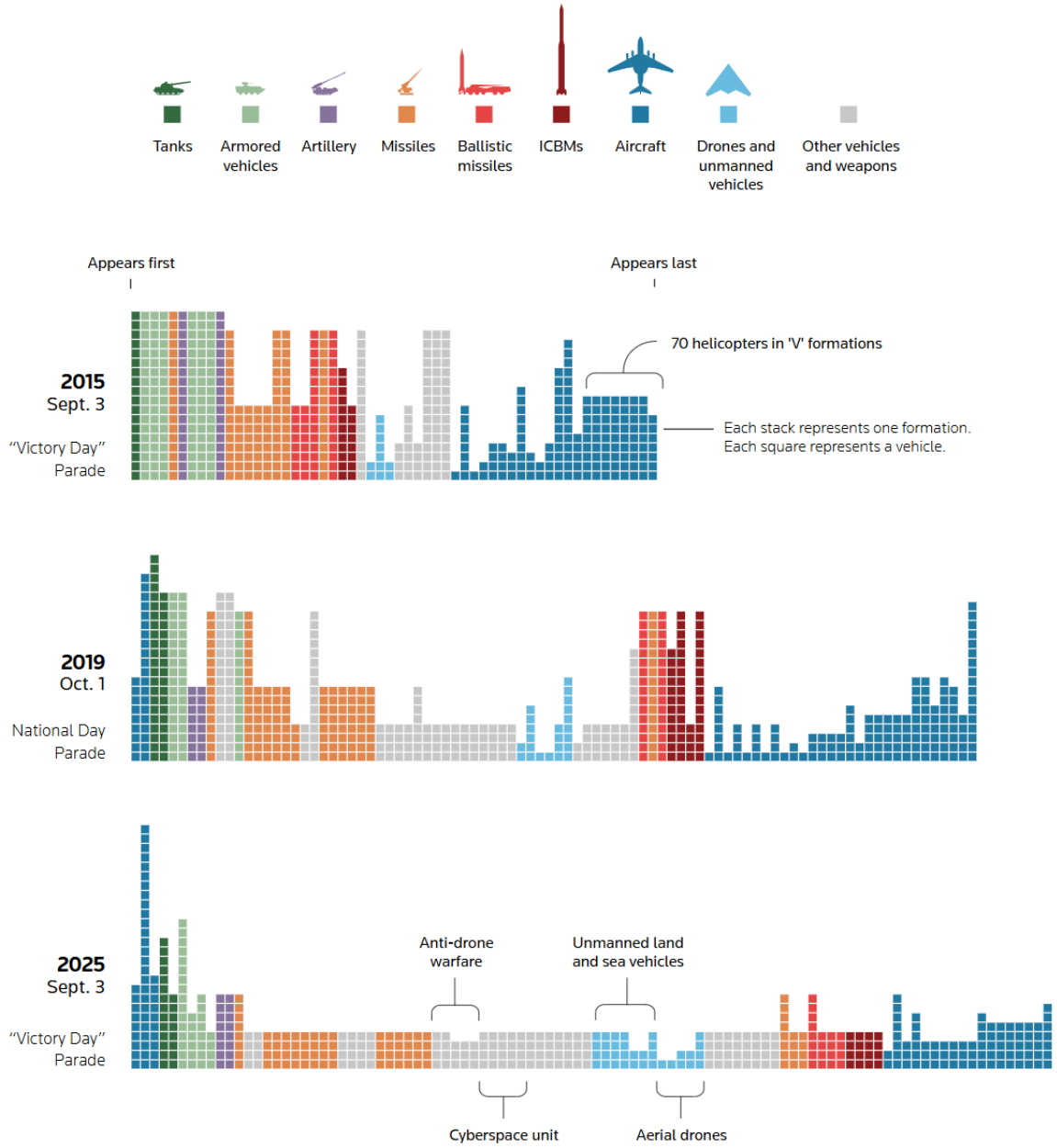

Figure 1: Reuters Comparison of PLA's 2015, 2019 and 2025 Military Parades
(Source – Reuters[1])

This monograph has thus examined the grand military parade through the nine modules paraded. It has thereafter examined the implications of the PRC's strategic signalling and the impact on India of PLA's military capabilities displayed by focusing on PLA's Western Theatre Command (WTC). With many potent implications for India, the monograph will conclude with the essential recommendations for India.

2019 vs 2025 Parade Modules

The PLA's 2019 grand military parade on the occasion of 70th anniversary of the raising of the PRC had nine main modules[2]

a) Land Operations Module (LZ).
b) Information Operations Module (XZ).
c) Maritime Operations Module (HZ).
d) AD and Missile Defence Module (FK).
e) Unmanned Operations Module (WR).
f) Logistics Support Module (HF).
g) Strategic Strike Module (ZL).
h) Special Warfare Group.
j) Counter Terrorism Group.

2025 Parade Modules. The 2025 paraded all those modules except the Special Warfare Group and the Counter Terrorism Group. While most of the platforms paraded in 2025 were new developments, some were upgrades of 2019 parade. While the 2019 parade saw the J20 aircraft, PCH-191 Multiple Launch Rocket System (MLRS) 370mm rockets and ZTL-11 assault vehicles, the 2025 paraded the improvised J20A and J20S fighter aircrafts, BRE10 Short Range Ballistic Missiles (SRBMs) on board the PCH-191 MLRS and the amphibious version ZTL-11A Wheeled Assault Gun Vehicles.

LZ Land Operations Module

The Land module comprised three combined arms assault formations from three main services- the PLAGF, PLAN Marine Corps (PLANMC) and PLAAF Airborne (AB) Corps and a LR strike team from the 76th Group Army (GA) ex WTC.

LZ 1 – PLAGF's Tracked Formations. The Ground Assault Team titled "King of Land Warfare" was from two different Heavy Combined Arms Brigades (CAB) from 82nd and 71st GAs. It included three types of tracked Vehicles ZTZ-99B Main Battle Tank (MBT, In service-2025), the newly introduced Type 100 series family of ZTZ-100 MBT (In service-2025) and ZBD-100 Combat Support Vehicle (In service-2025). **PLAGF introduced its 4th generation of mechanised equipment by introducing the Type 100 family**. PLA Daily's Weibo account and Xinhua claimed that[3]: -

> "*The 22 tanks of the ground assault team were arranged in an "arrow" shape. As the new generation of armoured equipment for the army's ground assault force, the 99B tanks, ZTZ100 tanks, and ZBD100 support vehicles on display fully demonstrated their powerful combat capabilities in terms of mobility, seizing key points, and breaking through difficulties. They are an important part of our army's high-tech equipment system. Based on the 99A tank, the 99B tank has greatly improved its capabilities in integrated joint operations, multi-target firepower strikes, manoeuvring in complex geographical*

environments, and sustained combat in severe weather conditions under information conditions through technology integration and function expansion. The ZTZ100 tanks and the ZBD100 support vehicles can carry out combat missions such as LR rapid deployment, campaign target capture, tactical deep assault, urban attack and defence operations, and joint fire guidance. The formation is mainly composed of a combined brigade of the 82nd GA. This unit is the first motorized unit, the first mechanized unit, and the first digital unit of our army."

Type 99B MBT. Based on the Type 99A tank, it has enhanced the integrated joint operations under informatised conditions, capable of multi-target fire strikes, mobility in complex terrain environments, and strengthening of crew's continuous combat capabilities in adverse weather conditions. [4] The T99B upgrade over 99A paraded in 2019, most probably includes a Remote Weapon Station (RWS) and automation of Machine Gun (MG) thereby strengthening its response against drones' threat. PLA's new amphibious hovercraft can carry Type 99B MBTs for over-the-horizon landings as per Chinese websites for Taiwan contingency.[5] The ZTZ99B MBTs paraded were LZ111, LZ121-LZ122, LZ131-LZ133, LZ141-LZ144, LZ151-LZ154[6].

Figure 2: ZTZ99B MBT
(Source – Toutiao[7])

Type 100 MBT. As PRC's first indigenous 4th-generation tank, the medium tank heralds the era of a new generation of PLA's armoured equipment. [8] As per inputs on Chinese internet and social media, ZTZ100's key features include an Unmanned Turret, 105mm gun, a crew of three soldiers with Augmented / Virtual Reality (AR/VR) goggles, remounted hybrid diesel electric engine, GL6 Active Protection System (APS), Active Electronically Steered Anetenna (AESA) radar for Counter-Unmanned Aerial Systems (C-UAS) and a 30 mm RWS. The appreciated 40 tons weight makes it a medium tank. [9] The ZTZ100 MBTs paraded were LZ161-LZ164.[10]

Figure 3: ZTZ100 Main Battle Tank
(Source: Strategy and Analysis Centre[11])

Type 100 Support Vehicle (LZ171-174). [12] As per Chinese websites, the Type 100 support vehicle features a revolutionary change in appearance and can silently approach the enemy in specific environments, avoiding revealing its position due to excessive noise. [13] The possible key characteristics of this new vehicle are a remote control turret; a crew of two soldiers; GL6 APS; a 30/ 35 mm gun; option for both recce / bomber drones; AESA radar for C-UAS; and smoke grenade launchers. [14]

Figure 4: ZBD100 Combat Support Vehicle
(Source: Strategy and Analysis Centre[15])

PLAGF's Fourth Generation Mechanisation. The key issues which emerge are: -

a) PLAGF has now established a layered tank response comprising heavy ZTZ T99B, newly introduced medium ZTZ100 and light MBTs ZTZ-15. In WTC, this kind of arrangement facilitates the Layered Security Strategy (LSS) wherein PLA was earlier trying to have three layers of response- first by ZTZ 15 light tanks by Xinjiang /Tibet Military Region (MR), T-96B MBTs by Heavy CABs of 76th / 77th GAs and last layer by the ZTZ99/99As of Heavy-CABs of 76th / 77th GAs.

b) ZTZ-99 family, with its latest upgrade ZTZ99B introduced, is here to stay.

c) The introduction of ZTZ100 MBT, its support vehicle ZBD100 and the ZRZ100 Unmanned Ground Combat Vehicle (UGCV) heralds the arrival of the fourth-generation Type-100 mechanised platforms' family.

Figure 5: Type 100 MUMT Family

d) The induction of ZTZ100 also paves the way for phasing out of all the obsolete T59 and T88A tanks from whichever CABs where they were still present. As the production speed of ZTZ100 increases, the ZTZ96 MBTs maybe the next tank series to be phased out.

e) As per analysis on Sino-Defence Forum on the evolution of the Type 100 family of ZTZ100 MBT and ZBD100 support vehicle, the bloggers feel that: "*It seems the assault and support units from Type 99 tank chief designer Mao Ming's conjoined tank design were split into two separate vehicles*."

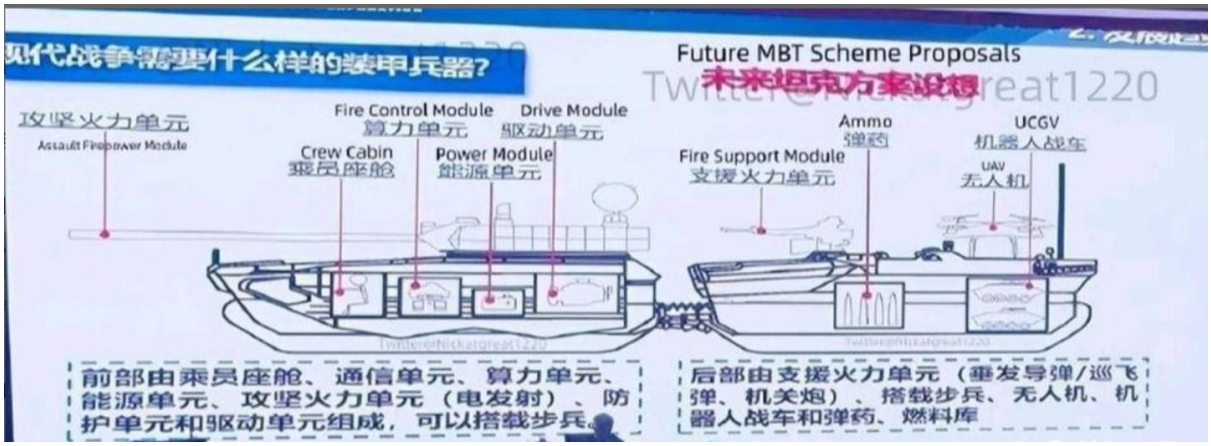

Figure 6: Mao Ming's Design for Future Cojoined Tank Design had a Support Vehicle with Unmanned Ground Combat Vehicles (UGCV)

(Source- Sino-Defence Forum)

f) The most interesting part of the above design is also the possibility of the ZBD100 Support Vehicle carrying UGCVs which will ensure PLA graduates to the next level of Manned-Unmanned Teaming (MUMT).

The induction of ZBD100 will automatically trigger the phasing out of ZST63 and ZSD-86 wherever balance in PLA. The composition of this new combat vehicle also indicates lesser focus on direct tank engagement.

Intelligentised Combined Arms Brigade "全能六边形战士" / Hexagonal Warrior.

Many Chinese websites claim transformation of PLAGF's CAB to an upgraded Land-based Intelligentised CAB nicknamed Hexagonal Warrior "全能六边形战士"[1]. There is no official confirmation as yet but multitude of unofficial Chinese websites are talking about it. The term "Hexagonal Warrior" could most probably mean "Multi-Domain" capabilities in six domains- Land, Air, EM, Cyber, Space and Cognitive or even the original Japanese six-dimensional indicators: power (lethality), speed (three-dimensional mobility), skill (training for MDIJO and MUMT), serve (AI-enablement), defence, and experience (surely short of battle experience but maybe on equipment and terrain); or as prevalent amongst the Chinese societal understanding first side indicating boundless learning, second depicting widening of horizons and knowledge refinement; third indicating well-rounded development, fourth depicting physical strength; fifth relaxation and sixth depicting positivity and optimism. Some interesting snippets of Chinese netizens on this brigade are elucidated below: -

a) The integration of tanks, eight-wheeled vehicles, and drones is driving the evolution of land-based CABs.
b) One such land-based CAB can easily overpower three old-fashioned heavy CABs. This claim is based on a simulation exercise wherein one of the article claims that "*Simulations show it can withstand three traditional heavy brigades: - 7 times faster response:* ***From target detection to firing takes only 12 minutes, while traditional brigades take more than half an hour****; - Fighting continuously for 3 days: 72 hours of high-intensity combat without taking a breath, while traditional brigades cannot withstand it for 48 hours; - Zero casualties crushing: Relying on unmanned units to charge, the casualty rate can be reduced by 90%, and it can also accurately strike the enemy's command centre, leaving the opponent "leaderless"*."[16]\
c) Future-oriented fighting force that is "thinking, coordinated, and with zero casualties".
d) PLAGF's disruptive evolution from "human wave tactics" to "unmanned legions".

[1] As per Chinese Baidu site, "Hexagonal Warrior" is a popular internet term that originated from the Japanese media "Tokyo Table Tennis News" using a six-dimensional radar chart to analyse the strength of table tennis players. In 2016, Tokyo TV evaluated Chinese table tennis player Ma Long as having achieved full marks in all six indicators: power, speed, skill, serve, defence, and experience. During the 2020 Tokyo Olympics, his all-around skills were called "Hexagonal Warrior" by the Japanese media.

e) Its core breakthrough lies in the combination of "intelligent brain +unmanned hands and feet.

One such article available on Toutiao[17] claims: -

> “In particular, the 3rd September’s military parade showcased so much intelligent equipment, so our CAB must also be upgraded. While Western countries haven't fully mastered the Heavy-CAB, our new land-based CAB has already emerged. The most fundamental transformation of the land-based CAB lies in the evolution of its command-and-control system (C4ISR). It is no longer a traditional hierarchical command structure, but has been incorporating a "combat cloud brain," becoming an intelligent decision-making centre driven by artificial intelligence (AI). It possesses full-domain situational awareness capabilities. By connecting high-resolution (HR) satellites, recce drones, ground sensors, and individual soldier terminals to the "cloud brain," it can integrate and process massive amounts of data in real time to generate a holographic battlefield digital sand table with centimetre-level accuracy and second-level updates. Enemy troop deployments, movements, and even camouflaged targets are all clearly visible. In this way, facing the ever-changing battlefield, AI assistance can analyse the situation in just a few seconds, generate multiple optimal tactical plans, and directly and accurately issue mission instructions to the most suitable combat units. It could be an unmanned tank, a LM, or a sniper team. This is tens or even hundreds of times faster than traditional human decision-making. At the same time, the "cloud brain" has adaptive and learning capabilities, learning the enemy's tactical habits from every engagement and every recce, continuously optimizing its own algorithms, and achieving the ability to "get smarter with each battle."

Command of Unmanned Equipment. Another article[18] emphasises that:

> “It can **simultaneously command and deploy over two hundred intelligent unmanned combat units**, **with a response speed eight times faster than the older brigades**. Moreover, as long as ammunition is plentiful, it can engage in continuous, high-intensity combat without rest, like it's on steroids. It has a crystal-clear view of every nook and cranny, essentially providing a full map of the battlefield! This isn't just a minor upgrade; once it's implemented, it's a true "transcendence" for the land forces.”

One Chinese article amplifies the MUMT concept of “Let the Machines take the first bullet” as: -[19]

> “*Land-based brigades employ a new tactic: "200 unmanned units as the vanguard." Imagine this: 200 drones forming a "swarm" that blots out the sky, 50 unmanned combat vehicles like a "pack of steel wolves" traversing the plains, robot dogs burrowing into ruins for reconnaissance, and laser cannons instantly destroying aerial targets*.” (While swarms have been displayed in various other PLA exercises, balance all the equipment was paraded on 03 September 2025). “***What used to require a company to fight to the death to seize a high ground can now be done by sending a few drones and ground robots****, and soldiers only need to act as "strategic chess players" in the rear.”* (While this surely is exaggerated propaganda in HAA along India-Tibet-Xinjiang border currently, this surely indicates the direction of future development). “*At an altitude of 5,000 meters on the plateau, where ordinary tanks cannot climb slopes and helicopters cannot take off, the Golden Eagle unmanned helicopter of the land brigade can still hover for 5 hours and maintain a 90% interception rate of laser cannons.*” (this claim needs corroboration)

On the issue of cross-domain recce and strike chain, the article claims an integrated kill chain cycle within the land-based intelligentised CAB: -

> “*Reconnaissance is handled by the BZK-005E drone, which can monitor targets hundreds of km away for 40 hours without landing, with a positioning error ≤3 meters; strikes are carried out by the Flying Dragon (Feilong) series of loitering munitions, and rocket artillery can fire dozens of them at a time, forming a "reconnaissance-strike network" in the air, which can both guide artillery fire to cover the positions and dive to destroy tanks; even support is "unmanned": unmanned transport vehicles automatically deliver ammunition, repair robots repair tanks on-site, and when the laser cannon runs out of power, the supply vehicle can be fully charged in 3 minutes. The most formidable weapon is the OW5-A50 laser cannon, with a power output of 50 kilowatts, equivalent to 500 microwave ovens operating simultaneously. It can burn through drones within 5 km as easily as cutting tofu. In 2025, it was tested in live-fire tests, hitting all 21 targets with 21 shots. It can take down a drone in as little as 3 seconds, and its electricity cost is 99% cheaper than traditional missiles.*”

On the issue of Intelligentisation / AI enablement, the article[20] goes on to claim that: -

> “*AI system in the command centre can process information from thousands of battlefield nodes simultaneously, and the transmission of instructions is faster than the blink of an eye (delay <1 second), and the decision-making efficiency is 60% higher than that of traditional CABs.*”

Equipment Profile of Land-Based Intelligentised CABs. On the issue of equipping these intelligentised CABs, Chinese article[21] goes on to claim: -

> "*A major characteristic of land-based CAB is the large number of unmanned equipment. These are no longer merely auxiliary forces as in the past, but have become equal to manned equipment, and even dominate in certain scenarios, serving as the main combat force. For example, aerial "swarms" consist of a large number of low-cost small drones forming a reconnaissance network to conduct wide-area surveillance, target designation, and battle result assessment. At the same time, LMs such as the "Feilong-60A" can be used like attack swarms. They can hover over the target area for a long time like a swarm of bees, and once the target is detected, they will immediately launch a "suicide" precision strike. There are also dedicated hunter-killer swarms, such as anti-radiation drones, specifically designed to hunt down enemy radar systems, opening electromagnetic windows for subsequent attacks. Ground assaults are handled by ground-based UGCVs like the medium VUT10 UGCV. Equipped with cannons or anti-tank missiles, it can perform forward assaults, fire support, and high-risk area clearing missions, thereby significantly reducing personnel casualties. Even auxiliary tasks such as logistical transport, casualty evacuation, and battlefield reconnaissance are handled by various unmanned supply vehicles and robotic dogs/wolves. Under the command of the "cloud brain" and in coordination with manned equipment, these unmanned combat groups form a special "manned decision-making, unmanned frontline" combat mode, giving them a super combat capability of "detection and destruction" VE37 EW vehicle, part of the electronic defence system, can jam remote-controlled bombs and suppress enemy communications; the VE38 is equipped with a laser system, capable of directly shooting down drones."*

The articles claim advantage over US Multi-Domain Task Force (MDTF) and Russian combined brigades: -[22]

> "*The US multi-domain task forces emphasize "cross-service firepower," but their drone numbers are less than a third of those in land-based brigades; the Russian reconnaissance and assault brigades rely on "Lancet" drones for guerrilla warfare, but lack a unified intelligent command system. Our (PLA) land-based brigades, however, employ "systematic intelligence"*".

On the future of these brigades, one article claims: -

> "*By 2030, land-based brigades* ***may possess quantum communication for eavesdropping prevention, exascale supercomputers for calculating battle situations, and drone***

> ***swarms autonomously evolving "new tactics"****... but its ultimate goal is not to be more powerful, but* ***to make warfare "unmanned and with low casualties."*** *After all, the best victory is to defend our homeland without shedding a single drop of blood. This is the "intelligent revolution" of the Chinese Army: using technology to* ***pull soldiers out of bloodshed, using algorithms to replace human waves, and using unmanned legions to safeguard peace****. The rise of the land-based brigades is not only a milestone for the Chinese military, but also tells the world: future wars will not be about numbers, but about intelligence*."

Exaggerated propaganda is a major characteristic of Chinese websites and media. However, a balanced assessment of recent Chinese military parade, its advancements indicates that a new intelligent CAB with MUMT is possible. The possible profiling could be as per figure below; -

Figure 7: Appreciated Organisation Structure of Proposed / Under Trial Concept of Land-Based Intelligentised CAB nickname “Hexagonal Warrior”
(Source – Author’s Appreciation)

LZ 2 – PLANMC’s Amphibious Assault Formation. The Amphibious Assault Team with PLNAMC’s slogan of “Tigers on Land, Dragons on Sea”, displayed new amphibious versions of existing wheeled equipment for Taiwan contingency. The amphibious modifications ZTL-11A Wheeled Assault Gun Vehicle (WAGV, LZ211-214, 221-224), ZBL-08A Wheeled Infantry Fighting Vehicle (IFV, LZ231-234) and PLL-09A Wheeled Self-Propelled Howitzer (SPH, LZ241-244)[23]. Xinhua news propaganda article and PLA’s Weibo account claimed that[24]: -

"*The amphibious wheeled IFV, amphibious WAV and amphibious wheeled SPH vehicles on review are all new domestically-produced equipment. They are the main combat equipment of the Marine Corps to carry out various military tasks such as amphibious landing operations, rapid seizure of key points in depth, and emergency response operations. They have strong amphibious mobility, ability to adapt to complex environments, communication and coordination capabilities, firepower strike and protection expansion capabilities, and are a powerful combat force support for the iterative upgrade of our army's amphibious combat capabilities. This formation is composed of members of the Marine Corps, a highly skilled force that is multi-functional, quick-response, and capable of all-domain operations. It is also an elite amphibious combat force dedicated to safeguarding China's overseas interests*."

Figure 8: PLANMC's Amphibious Upgrades of Existing Medium CAB's Wheeled Vehicles

(Source-Sino-Defence Forum)

A comparison of the standard ZTL-11 WAV paraded in 2015 and its amphibious upgrade paraded in 2025 indicates the addition of thicker armour plates; a better power pack; additional flotation devices on sides and front; and a new bow flap or trim vane design. Similarly, the ZBL-8A IFV and PLL-09A SPH wheeled vehicles paraded this time had additional flotation devices on the sides / rear and front for enhancing amphibious capabilities.

Figure 9: ZTL-11 WAGV Paraded in 2015 and ZTL-11A WAGV Paraded in 2025
(Source- Sino-Defence Forum)

The Type 05A amphibious assault vehicle boasts a water speed of 40 knots, claimed by Chinese websites to be more than twice that of the US AAV7.[25] The Marine Brigade paraded probably could be the 200th Medium CAB ex Northern TC (NTC) which has now been converted into a PLANMC's NTC's third marine brigade in addition to the existing 5th and 6th Marine CABs. This probably confirms various OSINT inputs of PLANMC's expansion from the earlier 6 CABs based force (2 each per TC) to a 15 brigades force comprising 6 Marine CABs, 3 SOF and 3 Aviation Brigades.[26] While there are simultaneous inputs of probable reduction of PLAGF SOF components from a brigade at GA to a Brigade at TC level with GAs only retaining one SOF battalion each probably, the PLANMC's SOF expansion is coherent with PLA's Taiwan reunification goal and treating maritime domain as the primary focus in PLA's dream to establish itself as a maritime power.

Components	Existing Earlier PLANMC since 2015	Planned Expansion
Marine CABs	6 – 2 each with STC (1st, 2nd), ETC (3rd, 4th) and NTC (5th, 6th)	9 – 3 each with STC, ETC and NTC; 200th Medium CAB has already got converted
Special Operations Force (SOF)	1 under PLANMC HQ	1 each with STC, ETC and NTC; 83rd GA's SOF brigade has already been transferred to PLANMC
Aviation Brigade	1 under PLANMC HQ	1 each under STC, ETC and NTC

Table 1: OSINT-based Appreciated Expansion of PLANMC

LZ 3 – PLAAF's Airborne Assault Team. A tracked CAB ex PLAAF's AB Corps with the slogan "Airborne Blade" claimed to show off PLAAF's rapid response and deep strike capabilities. The AB team paraded three new generation (NG) AB versions of APC (LZ301-302, 311-314), IFV (also being claimed as an Assault Vehicle or Fire Support Vehicle, LZ331-334) and 120mm Self-Propelled Mortar (SPM, LZ341-344)[27]. Xinhua news claimed that[28]: -

> "*As outstanding representatives of the domestically produced new tracked series of AB combat vehicles, the three types of equipment on*

review, namely the new tracked multi-functional transport vehicle, the new tracked AB combat vehicle, and the new tracked SPM vehicle, can meet the requirements of air transport and airdrop by large military transport aircraft, and are capable of LR air delivery and heavy-duty mobile support. They are the "airborne sharp blade" of our army for rapid response and deep strikes. This formation is mainly composed of a certain AB unit."

The NG AB vehicles introduced have APS and have better carriage facilities by Y9 and Y20 transport aircrafts. The NG AB APC can carry two ATGMs, has 12.7 mm MG, and 35mm Grenade Launcher. The NG AB IFV has a remote-control turret, 30mm gun, 2 HJ13 ATGMs, and 4 unguided rockets. While one Y20 is expected to carry 3 IFVs, one Y9 can carry 2 of them.

Figure 10: PLAAF AB Corps NG AB Combat Tracked Platforms
(Source- Xinhua)

The CAB paraded is the only tracked AB CAB with PLAAF AB Corps – Unit 95969 (tactical number KJ60) or 134th Armoured CAB located at Xindian Village, Huangpi, Wuhan, Hubei with the honorary title “Shangganling Special Forces”. This new equipment was visible during CMC Chairman Xi Jinping’s visit to the PLAAF AB Corps HQ in October 2024.

Figure 11: 134th AB CAB's Equipment on Display in October 2024 during Xi's Visit

(Source- Joseph Wen[29])

LZ 4 – Long Range Artillery Strike. The PCH-191 MLRS were paraded for the first time in 2019 parade and were repeated this time. However, the PLAGF's LR Artillery Team, titled the "Army's Long Sword", paraded the newest BRE10 missiles (LZ431-434, 441-444) and the 370mm rockets (LZ411-414, 421-424). [30] While the confirmed range of NORINCO produced BRE10 missiles is 500km, many Chinese netizens claim as 600km. The 600km range most likely tested in Tibetan plateau is a higher range achieved due to the rarified high-altitude atmosphere. While the launchers belonged to the 76th GA as claimed by both Xinhua and PLA Daily, PLAGF has confirmed raised two Long Range Rocket Artillery Brigades (LLRAB) for both Eastern and Western TCs[2] with six battalions each corresponding to 108 launchers each. Xinhua news claimed[31]: -

> "*Guided by two guide vehicles, 16x191mm LR box MLRS passed through Tiananmen Square. The two 191 LR box-type rocket launchers unveiled this time feature LR, high accuracy, rapid response, a wide range of firepower systems, and integrated point-to-surface capabilities. Their box-type ammunition replenishment system significantly shortens combat preparation time.* ***Combining both campaign strike and tactical support****,*

[2] PLAGF had two LRRABs earlier for its Taiwan contingency under Guangdong and Nanjing MRs till 2015 reforms when they were merged in the GA Artillery Brigades (GAAB). Initially, they borrowed DF-11 SRBMs from the Second Artillery Corps (now PLARF) for few years. In 2000s, it inducted PHL-03 with 70 km range and then inducted the upgraded PHL-03A with 150 km range. However, even 150 km range didn't resolve PLAGF's requirements of striking Taiwan in support for its amphibious landing operations. Thus, with induction of PCH-191 in 2019, PLA raised the 1st LRRAB (MUCD-31622) under ETC around 2021-22 and then raised the 3rd LRRAB (MUCD-31652) with the WTC around 2023-24.

they can suppress and annihilate the enemy from a distance and destroy them with precision strikes, profoundly expanding the boundaries of land warfare capabilities and fully demonstrating the Army's primacy. A brigade of the 76th GA, which took the lead in organizing the LR artillery team, is a new force born in the new round of military reform. As a firepower unit born for and ready for combat, the brigade ***conducted live-fire exercises in difficult areas shortly after receiving new equipment****, achieving first-round hits and unanimous success with multiple types of ammunition against multiple targets. The formation achieved excellent results in the periodic assessment conducted by the superiors. Member Wang Guangjing was the only pilot in the entire equipment formation to receive a perfect score.*"

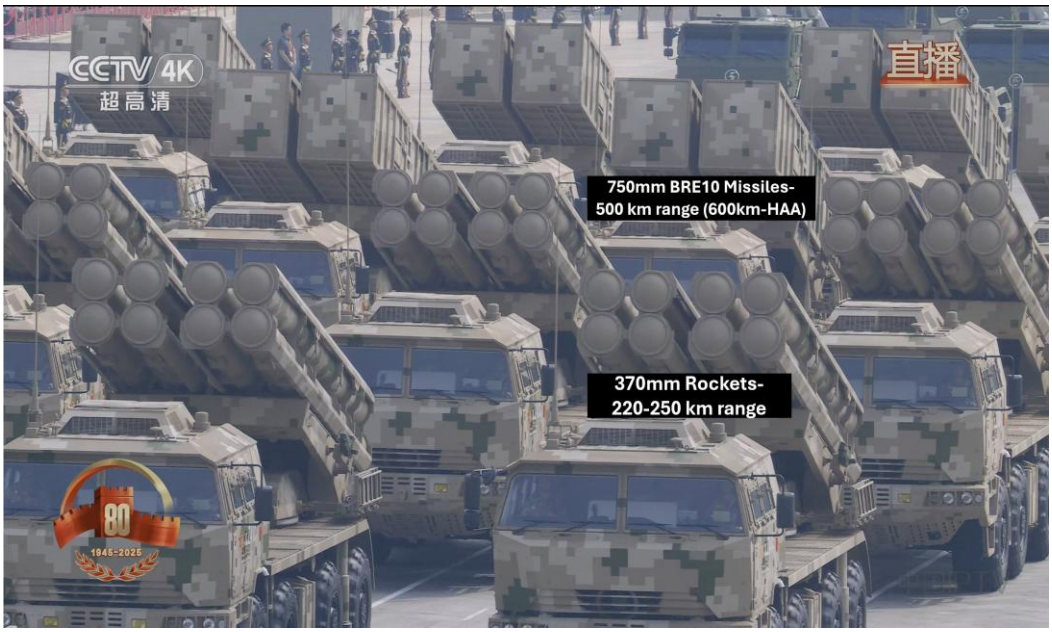

Figure 12: PCH-191 LR MLRS ex 76th Group Army / WTC
(Source- Xinhua)

In March 2025, PRC's official media People's Daily highlighted a new Loitering Munition (LM) the "Feilong-60A" specifically designed for SR-5 MLRS which is the export version of PCH-191. Since it is stored in launch canisters, it is claimed to be compatible with any Chinese modular rocket artillery system. [32] The Feilong-60A LM adopts a tandem wing layout wherein each pair of wings can be folded and thus can be stored in the launch box. It therefore achieves the integrated design of storage, transportation and launch. It obviates the requirement of external intelligence support since it can automatically network with rocket launchers, conduct battlefield reconnaissance, target identification and precision strikes. Feilong-60A can also be used with various types of cruise missiles by combining heterogeneous swarms for mixed combat. Based on their respective characteristics, it is claimed to be capable of intelligently assigning attack targets. Its multifunctional warhead is claimed to possess

both armoured piercing and surface-damaging capabilities. It can thus strike armoured vehicles, personnel, equipment and buildings within a certain range.[33] The possible variety of ammunition options for PCH-191 MLRS can be summarised as under: -

Type / Weight (kg)	Calibre (mm)	Range km	Warhead (kg)	CEP (m)	Guided	Box Carriage	Munition Options	Foreign Model
BRE 2	300	90	180	?	No	5 Rockets	HE, Penetration	
BRE 3	300	130-150	160	?	INS, GNSS	4 Rockets	HE	FD 140 A
BRC3	300	70	180	50	No	5 Rockets	Cluster-600 submunitions	
BRC 4	370	130	180	?	No	4 Rockets	Cluster-600 munitions	
BRE 6	370	220-250-290		<50	INS, GNSS	4 Rockets		FD 280
	610							FD 300
BRE8	370	280						FD 280
BRE 8 / 3640	750	290-360	480	<30	INS, GNSS	1 Missile	HEPF TBM / SRBM	FD 480
BRE 10 / <2500 ?	750	500-600	500-800	<10 ?	INS, GNSS, TIR?	1 Missile	TBM / SRBM	Super Fire Dragon
TL-7B	380	180	320		INS, GNSS	1 Missile	ASCM	
Fielong-60A	Endurance – 7 hours				INS, GNSS	6 LMs	LM	Flying Dragon

Table 2: PCH-191 Ammunition Variety with Characteristics
(Source-Author's Research)

Figure 13: Feilong-60A Loitering Munition
(Source- China Academy[34])

As one of the Chinese Netizens posted "*By launching 750mm LR missiles, we can hit New Delhi from the Sino-Indian border, which of course makes the Indians uneasy*" [35], the induction of PCH-191 has achieved PLAGF's decades old ambition of strengthening its integral deterrence significantly against India and Taiwan both without relying on PLAAF and PLARF. The following possibilities exist for the maximum number of PCH-191 battalions in PLA today.

Entity	PLA's Best Case Today	Balanced Assessment	PLA's Worst Case
1st LRRAB – ETC / 72nd GA	6 Battalions (108 launchers)	6 Battalions (108 launchers)	6 Battalions (108 launchers)
2nd LRRAB – STC	6 Battalions (108 launchers)	6 Battalions (108 launchers) raising?	Not raised
LRRAB – WTC / 76th GA	6 Battalions (108 launchers)	6 Battalions (108 launchers)	6 Battalions (108 launchers)
71st GAAB - ETC	2 PCH-191 Battalions	2 PCH-191 Battalion	None – merged in 1st LRRAB – **unlikely**
72nd GAAB – ETC	2 PCH-191 Battalions	1 PCH-191 Battalion	
73rd GAAB - ETC	2 PCH-191 Battalions	1 PCH-191 Battalion	
74th GAAB - STC	2 PCH-191 Battalions	2 PCH-191 Battalions	2 PCH-191 Battalions
75th GAAB - STC	1 PCH-191 Battalion	Nil	Nil
76th GAAB - WTC	2 PCH-191 Battalions (36)	1 PCH-191 Battalion (12)	1 PCH-191 Battalion
77th GAAB - WTC	Nil	Nil	Nil
84th GAAB / XMR - WTC	2 PCH-191 Battalions (36)	2 PCH-191 Battalions (24)	2 PCH-191 Battalions

85th / TMR GAAB - WTC	2 PCH-191 Battalions (36)	1 PCH-191 Battalion (12)	1 PCH-191 Battalion
78th GAAB - WTC	Nil	Nil	Nil
79th GAAB - WTC	Nil	Nil	Nil
80th GAAB - WTC	1 PCH -191 Battalion	1 PCH -191 Battalion	Nil – **unlikely**
81st GAAB - WTC	Nil	Nil	Nil
82nd GAAB - WTC	Nil	Nil	Nil
83rd GAAB - WTC	Nil	Nil	Nil
Taiwan Contingency	2 LRRABs + 6 GAABs – 22 PCH-191 Battalions	2? LRRABs + 5 GAABs – 16 PCH-191 Battalions	1 LRRAB + 1 GAAB – 8 PCH-191 Battalions
Indian Contingency	1 LRRAB + 5 GAABs – 14 PCH-191 Battalions	1 LRRAB + 4 GAABs – 11 PCH-191 Battalions	1 LRRAB + 3 GAABs- 10 PCH-191 Battalions
Total	3 GAABs + 9 GAABs – 34 PCH191 Battalions	3? GAABs + 8 GAABs – 26 PCH191 Battalions	2 GAABs + 4 GAABs – 18 PCH191 Battalions

Table 3: Possible PCH-191 Battalions held by PLA
(Source-Author's Research and Appreciation)

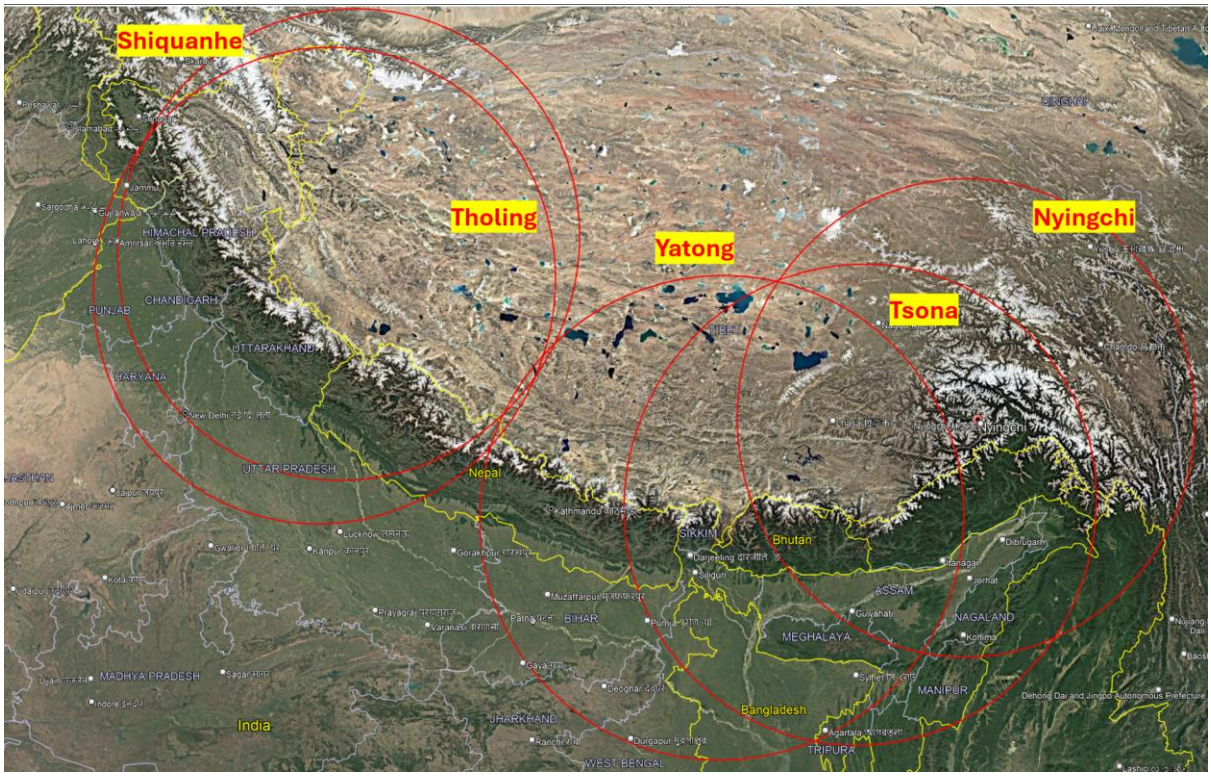

Figure 14: Reach of PCH-191 from Forward Locations Along India-Tibet Border

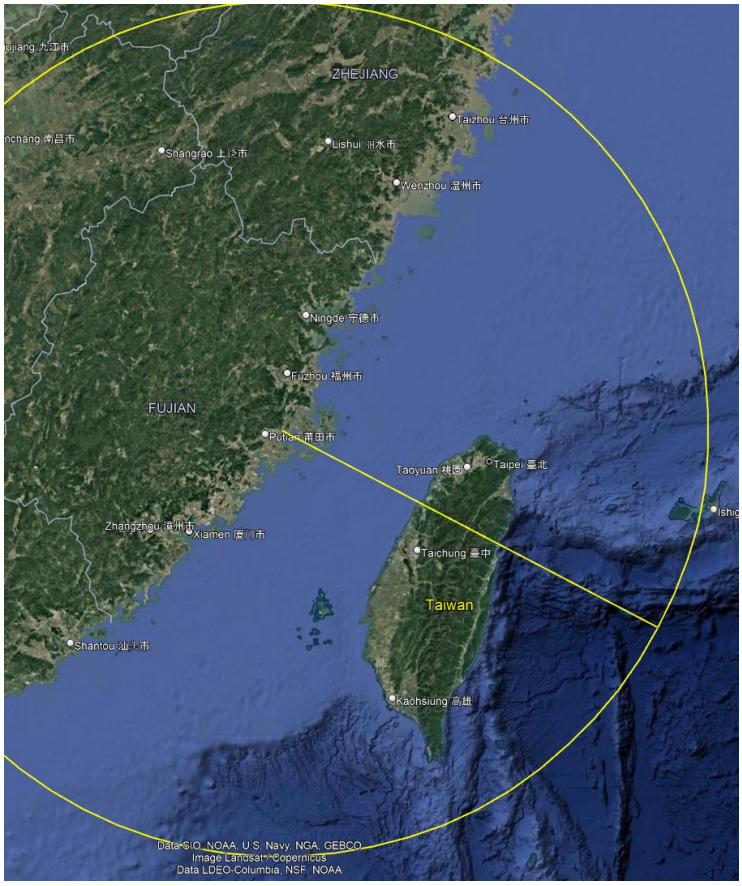

Figure 15: Coverage of Taiwan from Fujian in ETC

(Source-Toutiao[36])

HZ Maritime Operations Module.

The Maritime Operations Module comprised Multi-layered shipborne AD and C-UAS team, a multi-domain vectors launched cruise missiles team showing enhanced PLAN's LR strikes, and an Intelligentisation team which displayed autonomous torpedoes / sea mines.

HZ 1 – Shipborne / Carrier based AD / C-UAS. The shipborne / carrier-based AD Weapons Team with the slogan "Enemy-Defending Armor for Future Naval Battlefields" comprised four platforms- HHQ-9C LR SAM (In service-2025, HZ 111-114), HHQ-16C MR SAM (HZ 121-124), HHQ-10A Ultra Short SAM (HZ 131-134), and LY1 Laser CIWS (In service-2025, maybe 60-80 kilowatt, HZ141-144)[37]. Xinhua news propagated that[38]: -

> "*The naval and sky shield, armour against the enemy. A formation of ship-borne AD weapons, consisting of two guide vehicles and 16 transport vehicles. The four types of equipment on display form a 3D AD system that integrates both LR and short-range (SR) capabilities. The HHQ-9C missile primarily handles MR anti-missile and AD missions for surface ship formations, capable of intercepting incoming anti-ship missiles (AShM). The HQ-16C missile primarily handles MR anti-missile and AD missions for surface ship formations,*

capable of intercepting incoming AShMs. The HQ-10A missile is primarily used to intercept incoming AShMs. Laser weapons, with their outstanding advantages of precise destruction and sustained strikes, can operate in conjunction with other AD weapon systems to enhance comprehensive defence capabilities. The ship-borne AD weapons team was organized by a naval base."

HHQ-9C SAM. As a shipborne SAM, it's most likely to be employed for MR regional anti-missile and AD missions for surface ship formations with claimed capability to intercept incoming AShMs. [39]

HHQ-16C SAM. Although lesser range than HHQ-9C, and primarily in AD role, Chinese websites are claiming it has the capability to intercept incoming AShMs. [40]

HQ-10A SAM. Chinese websites claim that it is primarily used to intercept incoming AShMs. [41]

LY-1 Laser 100 Kw.Chinese netizens have claimed it as the largest electric laser cannon yet, with a primary mirror diameter exceeding one meter and an output power in the hundreds of kilowatts. It's appreciated to be used in an anti-missile and anti-aircraft role as well as for counter-recce and blinding countermeasures. The new shipborne laser weapon system has been equipped on the Type 055 destroyer. As per Chinese claims, it successfully intercepted a Mach 3 anti-ship missile in tests and shot down 12 drone target drones in succession. Its power adjustment accuracy is claimed to have reached the millisecond level.[42]

HZ 2 –AShM Team.Titled "Strategic Hammer" and "A Sharp Weapon to Strike Enemies at Sea" by Xinhua and PLA Daily, the team basically comprised YJ-15 carrier aircraft launched scramjet supersonic AShM (In service-2025, HZ 211-214, range 200-500 km?); YJ-19 air-breathing submarine launched hypersonic ramjet AShM (In service-2025, range -1440 km?, HZ 221-224); YJ-17 waverider ship launched hypersonic AShM (In service-2025, submarine launch?, range 1200 -1500 km?, HZ 231-234); and YJ-20 hypersonic AShM (In service 2024-2025, HZ 241-244). [43] The Xinhua claimed that: [44] -

"The eagle flies out of its sheath, commanding the sea and sky. A formation of anti-ship missiles, consisting of two guide vehicles and 16 carrier vehicles, passed through Tiananmen Square. The formation is composed of YJ-15 missiles and YJ-19, YJ-17, and YJ-20 hypersonic missiles. These four types of AShMs can be deployed on various platforms such as carrier-based aircraft, surface ships, and submarines. They have LR, high speed, and high destructive power, making them "sharp weapons" for striking enemies at sea. The YJ series of missiles have improved the three-dimensional anti-ship system and enhanced the PLAN's LR and rapid strike capability. They are a "strategic

hammer" for defending maritime rights and interests and competing for sea control. The AShM formation is mainly composed of a certain naval unit."

YJ15 Air Launched AShM. With a ramjet compact supersonic engine and a range of 200 km, with few internet sites also claiming 500 km range, two missiles can be carried per carrier aircraft. [45]

Figure 16: YJ15 Air Launched AShM
(Source- Sino-Defence Forum)

YJ17 AShM. Capable of UVLS launch, it's claimed to be a waverider hypersonic glider scaled down version of DF17 with a range of 1200-1500 km.[46]

Figure 17: YJ-17 AShM
(Source- Sino-Defence Forum)

YJ 20 AShM. Possibly UVLS launched, it's a biconical hypersonic/ aero-ballistic missile.[47]

Figure 18: YJ20 AShM
(Source- Sino-Defence Forum)

YJ-19 AShM. It's probably a submarine launched scramjet hypersonic missile with an estimated range of 1440 km. [48]

Figure 19: YJ19 AShM
(Source-Sino-Defence Forum)

HZ 3 – Under Water Weapons Team. With Xinhua's attributed slogan "Hiding in Ocean and Winning by Surprise", the team included AMB012 lightweight anti-submarine torpedo (HZ 311-314); AJC015 anti-submarine missile (rocket assisted torpedo, HZ 321-324); AQA010 submarine-launched guided heavy torpedo (HZ 331-334); and AQS003A Smart Torpedo (In service-2025, HZ 341-344). [49] Xinhua claimed that: - [50]

> *"The four types of equipment on display possess autonomous detection and 3D destruction capabilities. The light torpedo is a NG*

lightweight anti-submarine torpedo, the assisted torpedo is a rocket-assisted anti-submarine torpedo, and the heavy torpedo is a submarine-launched guided torpedo. All three types of torpedoes, independently developed by my country, can strike surface ships and destroy underwater targets. These new specialized mines, capable of autonomous identification and attack, are "sea-stabilizing weapons" capable of defending strategic points and delivering surprise attacks against enemy. The light, assisted, and heavy torpedoes on display boast fast reaction times, high accuracy, and significant destructive power. They can strike surface vessels directly at vital points and also penetrate underwater to destroy targets. Most of the officers and soldiers of the parade came from a naval base, which is one of the earliest naval bases established in the Republic."

Figure 20: AMB012 Lightweight Anti-submarine Torpedo
(Source-Sino-Defence Forum)

Figure 21: AJC015 Rocket Assisted Anti-Submarine Torpedo
(Source- Sino-Defence Forum)

Figure 22: AQA010 Submarine-launched 553mm Guided Torpedo
(Source – Sino-Defence Forum)

Figure 23: AQS003A Autonomous Sea Mine
(Source- Sino-Defence Forum)

FK AD and Missile Defence Module

The AD and Missile Defence Module comprised the NG radars and variety of systems displaying PLA's multi-tiered, multi-layered and multi-stage integrated defences against drones, aircrafts and missiles. PRC displayed these land-based platforms to show off the extended ranges of its Anti-Access Area Denial (A2AD) bubble from her mainland and offshore islands. The paraded multi-layered kill web systems showed off the essentials for any drone or aircraft kill chain- Detect, Classify / Identify, Acquire / Track, and Engage both Hard and Soft kill capabilities.

FK 1 – EW Detection Team. With the slogan 'The "Clairvoyant Eyes" Guarding National Aerospace Security', the Early Warning and Detection Team, an essential BMD pillar, paraded PLAAF's four NG LR early warning and detection radars (FK 111-114, 121-124, 131-134, 141-144) for stealth aircraft and missile detection.[51] Xinhua claimed that: -[52]

> "*Gaining insight into battlefield dynamics and seizing the initiative to win. The four types of equipment on display are all domestically produced NG highly mobile radars, featuring wide detection range, more combat functions, and stronger mobility. They are capable of LR and SR connectivity, collaborative networking, advanced technical systems, and diverse detection modes. They are capable of detecting stealth aircraft, ballistic missiles and other targets, and are the "clairvoyant" guarding the country's aerospace security. The early warning and detection team was led by a unit of the Air Force Radar Corps*."

FK 2 – SAMs Team. Paraded under the slogan “Building a Solid Barrier of AD and Sky Defence”, this integrated AD and BMD team paraded six types of SAMs with focus on LR / ULR SAMs basically. It included HQ-11 SHORAD (FK 211-214); HQ-20 MR-SAM (In service-2024-2025, FK 221-224), HQ-22A MR-SAM (FK 231-234), HQ-9C LR-SAM (In service-2024, Possibly negligible ABM, FK 241-244); HQ-19 ULR SAM and ABM against MRBM / IRBM (In service – 2024, range >1000 km, max 3000-5000 km?, FK 251-254); and HQ-29 Strategic SAM ABM against IRBM / ICBM (In service – 2025, FK 261-264) for upper BMD. [53] Xinhua propagated that: -[54]

> “*Pointing the sword to the heavens, we defend against the enemy from all directions. The six types of equipment on display, including the HQ-20, HQ-19, and HQ-29, were all independently developed, designed, and produced by my country. They can implement multi-stage and multi-layer anti-missile interception, and are mainly used to intercept targets such as helicopters, airplanes, and missiles, and to carry out long, medium, and short-range air defence and resistance. They are ready to respond to aerospace threats at all times and build a solid barrier for AD and space defence. The AD team is drawn from a certain Air Force SAM unit. Currently, the Air Force SAM unit has formed a combat system that combines long, medium and short ranges, high, medium and low altitudes, and possesses all-weather and all-round strike capabilities*.”

HQ 11 SHORAD. It’s a mobile point-defence SAM system intended to protect manoeuvre units, airfields and high-value sites from low-altitude threats of helicopters, close-in fixed-wing aircraft, cruise missiles, LMs and UAVs. It has a range of 5–20 km depending on missile variant.

Figure 24: HQ11 SR-SAM
(Source- Sino-Defence Forum)

Figure 25: HQ-20 MR-SAM
(Source- Sino-Defence Forum)

Figure 26: HQ22A MR-SAM
(Source-Sino-Defence Forum)

HQ9C LR SAM. PRC's exported HQ9P and HQ9BE SAMs were battle-tested against Indian military during Operation SINDOOR. They failed against India's BrahMos cruise missiles. HQ9C, an upgrade paraded on 03 September 2025, is claimed to intercept SRBMs at a slant range 5-260 km with some even claiming 300 km. It can handle 8 targets simultaneously with 16 missiles. HQ9C's possible upgrades over HQ9B would most likely include software upgrade, interception capability against BMs, enhanced range and better manoeuvrability to counter supersonic missiles like BrahMos.

Figure 27: HQ-9C LR-SAM
(Source-Sino-Defence Forum)

HQ-19 ULR SAM / ABM. This claimed ABM was first successfully tested in 1999. Multiple reports thereafter have claimed capability to hit targets at altitude of 200 km. While several tests have most probably been conducted in the 2010s, the Chinese MND claimed the confirmed missile capabilities in 2021 when it supposedly intercepted a missile in mid-course successfully. Its kinetic energy interceptor is claimed to be capable of striking its targets at Mach 10 outside the atmosphere. [55] The upgrades over HQ9 should include range (1000-3000 km); a theatre asset to counter MRBMs and maybe even and IRBMs (including HGVs) by upper-tier BMD and mid-course stage exo-atmospheric ABM. It may also be used in an ASAT role. Its 610A Radar has a detection range of 4000 km. It's claimed to be equivalent to US SM3 / THAAD.

Figure 28: HQ-19 ULR SAM / ABM
(Source- Sino-Defence forum)

HQ-29 Strategic SAM / ABM. It's PLA's NG exo-atmospheric or near-space air and missile defence interceptors possibly in the 40–70 km region. While exact capabilities are not known, it may either be capable of mid-course BMD against ICBMs including MIRV types or upper-tier intercept of SRBMs, MRBMS, and high-altitude CM or aircrafts. It may even have ASAT capability and some Chinese equate it to Russian S500. Thus, it maybe China's first operational kinetic hit-to-kill missile defence system, giving the PLA a true high-altitude intercept layer thereby establishing the upper tier of China's multi layered AD / BMD. With exact capabilities undisclosed, few Chinese

claims that it may be designed to intercept incoming ballistic missiles in their terminal or upper-atmospheric phase, complementing HQ-9B AD SAM and HQ-22 MR SAM by establishing a 300 km class engagement envelope. If the Chinese claims are proved correct and PLA has inducted them in adequate quantity, this will surely degrade US Deterrence.

Figure 29: HQ-29 Strategic SAM / ABM

(Source-Sino-Defence Forum)

Thus, the PLA's integrated AD and BMD capabilities displayed on the military parade, aimed to establish a multi-stage, multi-tiered and multi-layered grid as summarised by the illustration below.

Type	Aircraft Range	Missile Range	Altitude km	VLS (Target)	Stage
HQ11	30	5-20	15	8 (32)	Terminal
HQ20				8	Terminal
HQ22A	170		27	4	Terminal
HQ9C		SRBM 250-300	>27 (50?)	12	
HQ19		MRBM-1000-3000		6	Mid-Course
HQ29		IRBM/ICBM?		2	Mid-Course

Figure 30: PLA's Integrated AD and BMD Capabilities on Display at Parade

FK 3 – Low Altitude C-UAS Team. This dense anti-Drones "fire net" focussed on the low-altitude battlefield with both soft kill and hard destruction capabilities to win the unmanned aerial combat. The team included Mengshi-based Low-power Laser OW5-A10- (10 kw, FK 311-314) with possible focus on OFC FPV Drones; PLL601 / PLB 625 / Type 625 Terminal Gun-Missile AD System (In-service 2023, FK 321-324); New Terminal Missile-Gun Integrated AD system FK-3000/L (In-service 2025, FK 331-333) with 30 mm gun and 96 missiles; High-power laser OW5-A50 (50 kw, FK 341-343); and New High-Power Microwave (HPM, In-service 2025, FK 351-353). [56] The equipment displayed most probably belonged to the AD battalion of 32nd Mountain CAB ex PLAGF's 75th GA and PLAAF's SAM Brigade. Xinhua claimed that: -[57]

> "*The anti-drone artillery system, high-energy laser weapons, HPM weapons and other weapons on display in this formation are systematically built and can intercept targets such as drones and cruise missiles. They can achieve both soft kill and hard destruction, forming a powerful "iron triangle" to counter drones. The anti-UAV team is composed of a CAB and an PLAAF SAM brigade. Both units are heroic units tempered in the smoke of war*."

Lasers. The light-speed strike capability and zero recoil of laser weapons make them particularly suitable for engaging low-altitude, low-speed, and small UAS. PLA displayed two lasers on the parade OW5-A10 High Energy Laser Weapon System probably held by the AD Battalion in a CAB which is likely to achieve a range of 5 km with 10 kw power laser with possible focus against OFC First Person View (FPV) Drones; and OW5-A50 Laser Weapon System held either by PLAGF AD Brigade or more probably PLAAF's SAM Brigade with laser power generation capability of 50kw. Chinese online article even claimed that: - [58]

> "*During the 2024 Zhurihe exercise, a laser battery shot down 32 simulated suicide drones in 120 seconds, destroying over 100 drones in a single day—exercising counter-drone swarm tactics; intercepting 122mm rockets (interception rate ≥ 91%, according to CCTV's "Military Report" in March 2025); suppressing enemy anti-tank missile seekers, reducing the loss rate of MBTs*."

Figure 31: OW5-A-10 (10 Kw) Low-power Laser on Parade
(Source- Sino-Defence Forum)

Figure 32: OW5-A- High Energy Laser Weapon as per NORINCO's Display
(Source- Toutiao[59])

Figure 33: OW5-A-50 Kw High Power Laser Weapon System on Parade
(Source- Sino-Defence Forum)

A CCTV documentary also displayed the formation badge of one of the PLAGF soldier which indicated the establishment of C-UAS platoons in a CAB which could probably be within the organisation structure of a PLAGF AD Brigade or SAM Brigade or maybe even CAB's AD Battalion.

Figure 34: PLAGF Formation Sign Displaying the OW5-A50 Laser Weapon as part of a C-UAS Platoon

(Source- CCTV)

Gun-Missile Systems. Two gun-missile systems Type 625 and FK-3000 were paraded on 03 September 2025 thereby indicating the enhanced C-UAS capabilities with the CAB's AD Battalion.

Figure 35: Type 625 Gun-Missile AD System

(Source- Sino-Defence Forum)

Figure 36: Type 625 Gun-Missile AD System
(Source- Sino-Defence Forum)

In an October exercise by ETC's 72nd GA, the AD Battalion of 90th Light CAB (LD36) was confirmed to be showcasing the new HQ-13 SAM system in action. The HQ-13, also known in its export variant as the FB-10A, provides SHORAD against threats such as AGM-179/JDAM munitions, aircraft, and drones. It is capable of engaging targets at ranges up to 18 km and altitudes of 7,500 meters, utilizing a dual guidance system that combines IR imaging with radio command correction. It clearly proves the seriousness of PLA's prioritizing of C-UAS and precision-strike AD capabilities.

HPM. The Hurricane-3000 HPM C-UAS platform made its first active-duty appearance. It uses gallium nitride semiconductor technology, as per Chinese website, to achieve an output power of 2,000 megawatts at an effective range of 3,000 meters. It is claimed to simultaneously intercept 12 targets within 15 seconds. Thus, this cluster target processing capability will be very important for mitigating enemy's "swarm" tactics. Since HPM destroys the target's electronic systems directly through electromagnetic pulses, it theoretically possesses "near-unlimited ammunition" allowing it to continue fighting as long as sufficient power supply is provided. [60]

Figure 37: Hurricane 3000 HPM
(Source- Sino-Defence Forum)

Having learnt the Russia-Ukraine war lessons and watched Indo-Pakistan DRAMA conflict of May 2025 and Iran-US-Israel in June 2025, PLA went on to display an integrated convergent C-UAS, AD and BMD capabilities across all levels, stages and domains. The same is illustrated in various layers and organisational structures.

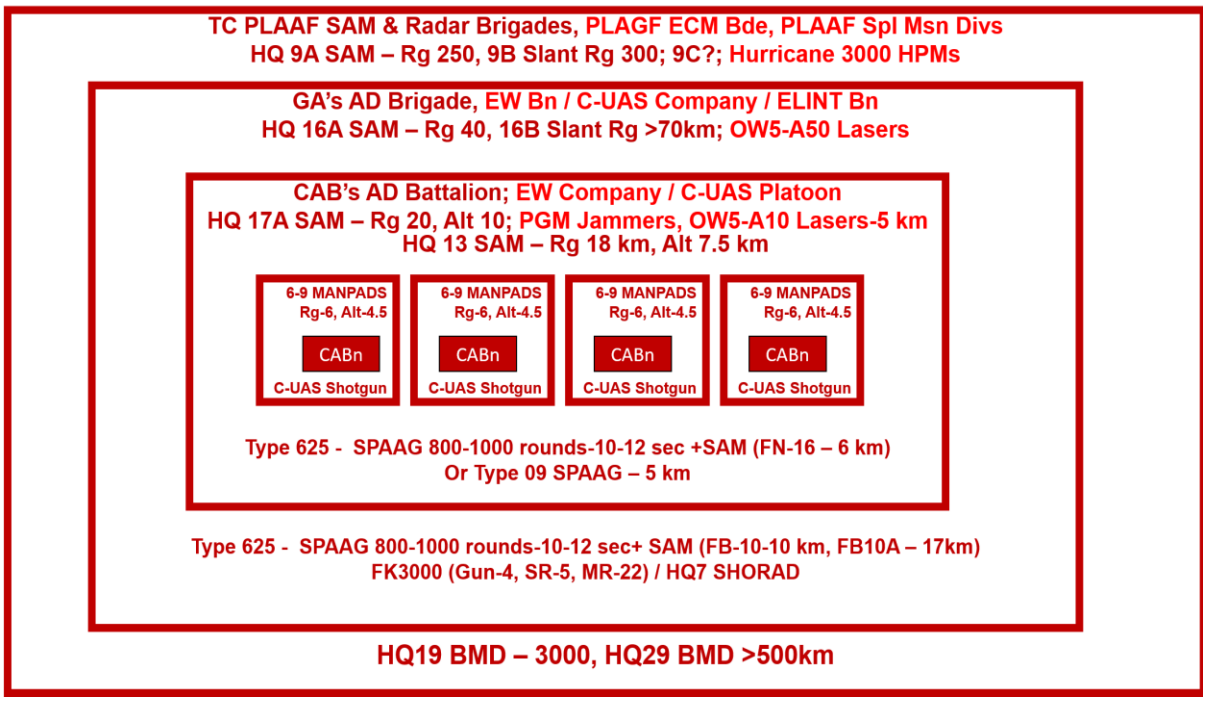

Figure 38: PLA's Multi-Stage Integrated AD, C-UAS and BMD Grid

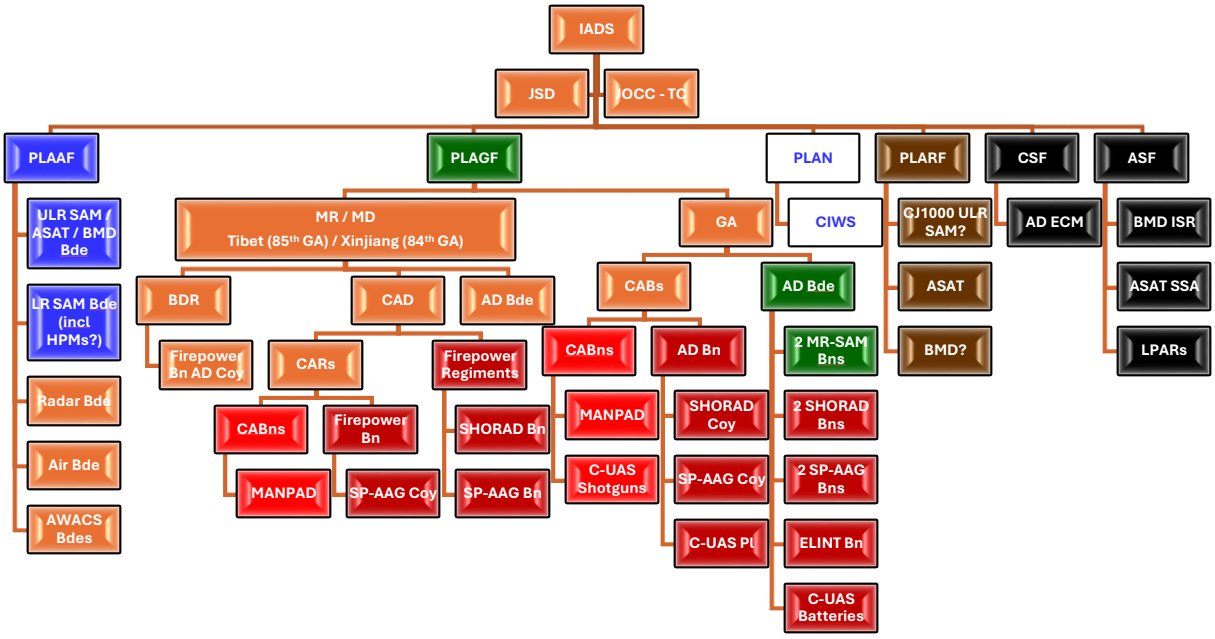

Figure 39: PLA's Multi-Tiered AD, C-UAS and BMD Grid

XZ Information Operations Module

The Information Operations Module paraded comprised of assets from the ISF, CSF, ASF and PLAGF.

XZ 1 – Cyberspace Team. The Cyberspace Operations Team under the slogan of "Forging Cyber Vanguards to Win the Invisible Battlefield" displayed capabilities for C2 integration, recce and perception, network and electronic confrontation. The emphasis of cyber for border defence needs to adequately noted. The team paraded three types of network warfare equipment vehicles (XZ 111-114, 121-124, and 131-134) and one type of cyber warfare equipment vehicles (XZ131-134). [61] PLA Daily and Xinhua together spread the propaganda that: - [62]

> "*China's cyberspace combat team forges cyber elites / pioneers to win the decisive victory on the invisible battlefield. The four types of equipment reviewed integrates command and control, reconnaissance and perception, and network and electronic confrontation. It has the characteristics of advanced technology, system integration, and rapid response. It is a cutting-edge force* ***that strengthens network border defence and empowers joint operations****. It is an important growth point for the generation of new combat capabilities of our army. The cyberspace combat team is composed of CSF.*"

Figure 40: Network Warfare Equipment Vehicle Displaying PLA's Cyber Over RF Operations Capabilities

(Source- Sino-Defence Forum)

Figure 41: Network Warfare Equipment Vehicles Type 2

(Source- Sino-Defence Forum)

Figure 42: Network Warfare Equipment Vehicle Type 3

(Source- Sino-Defence Forum)

Figure 43: Cyber Warfare Equipment Vehicle
(Source- Sino-Defence Forum)

XZ 2 – EW Team. The ECM team with the title "Electromagnetic Sword" comprised 16 vehicles of 5 different types of platforms in three-color camouflage pattern, combining mobility and concealment for aerial and Space EW. They belonged to the ASF and NTC PLAGF's 4th ECM Brigade or from the EW battalions /companies of the GAs. As per the commentators, they displayed capabilities for full-frequency detection and control, precise EM suppression, defend against aerospace recce and disruption of networks and supply chains. The emphasis on pre-emptive defeat indicated PLA's intention of achieving EM dominance before the main battle and thereby achieving decisive information dominance by denying enemy the use of EM spectrum. All Chinese websites spreading PLA's propaganda emphasised that although silent and invisible, PLA's EW platforms have become indispensable "force multipliers" and "keys to victory" on the modern battlespace.[63] Xinhua and PLA Daily claimed that: -[64]

> "The "Electromagnetic Sword" pre-emptively defeats the enemy. The 5 types of core electronic countermeasure (ECM) equipment on display are capable of full-frequency detection and control, precise suppression, and have the ability to defend against aerospace and break networks, communication links and supply chains. They are powerful weapons for winning in multi-domain joint battlefields. These equipment on display were all independently developed by our army. They are our army's main EW equipment in service, forming a three-in-one EW capability of "reconnaissance, attack and defence", and are the "electromagnetic sword" for seizing the initiative on the battlefield. The ECM team is drawn from a battalion of a base of the military aerospace force and a unit of the NTC Army."

Radar Jamming Vehicle. This platform primarily blinds and interferes with the enemy's radar system, thereby making it unable to accurately detect and track targets.[65]

Electronic Jamming Vehicle. The displayed platform is capable of integrating signal interception, frequency detection, and spectrum monitoring thereby becoming the "eyes and ears" of the battlefield. Within the communication EM spectrum, the system is capable of monitoring communication frequency bands and interfering with enemy C2 systems. [66]

Integrated EW System. The system has three-in-one EW capabilities of "reconnaissance, attack and defence". In addition to electronic reconnaissance (Electronic Support ES, or Electronic Support Measures, ESM) and attack (Electronic Attack, EA or ECM), it can also defend (Electronic Protection, EP or Electronic Counter Counter Measures, ECCM), thereby forming a complete EW chain. [67]

Figure 44: EW Vehicle XZ213 (Displayed 211-214 During Parade)
(Source- Sino-Defence Forum)

Figure 45: EW Vehicle XZ221
(Source- Sino-Defence Forum)

Figure 46: EW Vehicles XZ231-234
(Source- Sino-Defence Forum)

Figure 47: EW Vehicles XZ241-244

(Source- Toutiao)

EM Domain Capabilities Showcased. The EM weapons and equipment paraded on 03 September 2025 attempted to showcase PLA's several technological features and advancements:

a) **Integration** of ES / ESM, EA / ECM, and EP / ECCM indicating shift from PLA's erstwhile single function EW system to a system-wide integrated EW capability.

b) **Claimed High-Tech Performance**. Most Chinese websites claimed high acquisition accuracy of the displayed EW systems with good jamming effect, strong mobility, wider EM band coverage thereby intercepting more signals and achieving longer operating distance.

c) **Leapfrog Development**. As usual with Chinese media, they claim that PLA's EW equipment has achieved leapfrog development by transforming from "fixed" to "back-mounted" and then to "vehicle-mounted", thereby enhancing mobility and flexibility.

d) **All-Domain Operations**. Most importantly, Chinese websites claim **"pre-battle use and full-scale use"** of EM spectrum through an operational pattern of "all airspace, all time domain, all frequency domain, and all energy domain" for seizing EM dominance on the combat battlespace.

XZ 3 – ISF Team. The ISF team displayed the strategic satellite communication capabilities along with radio and air-ground network communication platforms. Xinhua claimed that: - [68]

"The Information Support Team's equipment consists of battlefield network cloud vehicles, digital empowerment vehicles, space-ground networking vehicles, and information fusion vehicles, which can quickly build a new network and information system and strongly support joint operations. The formation was spearheaded by the ISF, a key pillar in the coordinated development and utilization of network information systems. Adhering to information-led, joint- force strategies, the Force streamlines information links, integrates information resources, strengthens information protection, and deeply integrates into the military's joint operations system. Following the strategic imperatives of system integration and comprehensive support, the Force is building a network information

system that meets the requirements of modern warfare and possesses the unique characteristics of the PLA, accelerating the improvement of the system's combat capabilities with high quality."

+."

Figure 48- Battlefield Connected Vehicles XZ311-XZ314
(Source-Toutiao[69])

Figure 49: Digitally-enabled vehicles XZ321-XZ324
(Source-Toutiao[70])

Figure 50: Ground-to-Earth Network Vehicles XZ331-XZ334
(Source-Toutiao[71])

Figure 51- Information Fusion Vehicles XZ341-XZ344
(Source-Toutiao[72])

WR Unmanned Operations Module

The Unmanned Operations Module comprised multi-domain unmanned combat teams based on land, air and maritime domains. It manly included Multi-Domain Unmanned Vehicles (MDUVs) for MUMT, intelligentised autonomous vehicles for establishing Unmanned Underwater Wall (UUW), recce and strike drones and unmanned wingman aircraft to establish aerial MUMTs and ship-borne unmanned attack helicopters.

WR 1 – Unmanned Land Combat Team. The team mainly comprised UGVs and Robot dogs. The display of the ground-based quadruped bionic robot dogs showcased PLA's application of bionic robots. They are claimed to be using Chinese chips and are equipped with LiDAR and surround-view cameras to achieve 360-degree all-around perception. With a claimed 20-kg payload capacity and 10-km range, they can supposedly traverse terrain with 40-degree steep slopes and 30-cm obstacles. Thus, they are suitable for PLAGF's tactical missions, particularly reconnaissance and support missions in complex environments like urban areas. [73] The equipment paraded mainly was ATUGV – ZRY 222 (In-service 2024), wheeled ZRZ100 UGCV 12.7mm, tracked mine clearing UMCV GPJ221 (In-service 2025) and Unmanned CWB221 Drone Carrier / Utility Vehicle, Robotic Dog (In-service-2024). Xinhua's propaganda claimed: -

> "*Overcoming obstacles and achieving success, the unmanned land combat team passed through Tiananmen Square. The equipment on display included UGCVs for reconnaissance and assault, mine clearance and explosive device disposal, and squad support. The recce and assault unmanned vehicle is a new type of unmanned equipment capable of carrying out diverse military missions and is a crucial component in integrating modern unmanned equipment into existing combat systems. The mine clearance and explosive device disposal unmanned vehicle performs tasks such as mine clearance and explosive device disposal, path opening, and can be integrated into existing combat systems. The squad support unmanned vehicle,*

together with infantry, forms a squad combat unit, carrying out tasks such as ammunition supply, accompanying supplies and equipment, and, when necessary, evacuating casualties. This formation is mainly composed of the PLAGF's 71st GA."

All Terrain Unmanned Ground Combat Vehicle (ATUGCV) Tracked ZRY-222.The induction of this vehicle in PLA in 2024 with ETC PLAGF's 71st GA heralded the start of MUMT era.

Figure 52: ZRY222 Tracked Unmanned Fire Support Vehicle WR111-WR114
(Source-Toutiao[74])

Figure 53: ZRZ100 Wheeled Unmanned Combat Vehicle WR121-WR124
(Source-Toutiao[75])

Figure 54: GPJ221 Tracked Unmanned Obstacle Clearance Vehicle WR131-WR134

(Source-Toutiao[76])

Figure 55: CWB221 Wheeled Unmanned Transport Vehicles WR141-WR144 + Robot Dogs

(Source-Toutiao[77])

WR 2 – Unmanned Maritime. The focus of PLAN's latest unmanned maritime platforms, seems to be for employing them in covert deployment and blockade, autonomous detection and identification, and swarm networking attacks. [78] With the slogans "A Special Weapon for Innovative Naval Combat" and "Autonomous patrol, attacking the deep blue", Xinhua claimed that: -[79]

> "The new unmanned submarines, unmanned boats, and unmanned mine-laying systems on review in this formation have combat capabilities such as covert deployment and blockade, autonomous detection and identification, and cluster networking attack, and are "unique weapons" for maritime warfare."

HSU-100 UUV. HSU100, upgraded version of HSU001 UUV, maintains covert recce capabilities while strengthening its attack capabilities. [80]

Figure 56: HSU100 UUV WR 211-212
(Source-Toutiao[81])

Stealth UCSVs. The new Unmanned Combat Surface Vessel (UCSV), in white, grey, and blue naval camouflage, are claimed to have stealth designs. It can be optionally manned with possibly passive / active mine hunting Sonar. The convex polyhedral appearance, sharply defined superstructure, possibly radar-absorbing materials and concealed antennas facilitate stealth with the aim of reducing IR, visual, and acoustic signatures. The visible small-calibre rapid-fire gun, lightweight design, and streamlined shape indicate that the UCSV might possess high-speed mobile combat capabilities. [82]

Figure 57: Stealth UCSV WR 221-222
(Source-Toutiao[83])

AJX002 Unmanned Mine Laying System. With a length of approximately 18 to 20 meters and a diamond-shaped conning shell structure, this XLUUV or unmanned submersible is equipped with a pump-jet propulsion system to reduce its acoustic signature. [84]

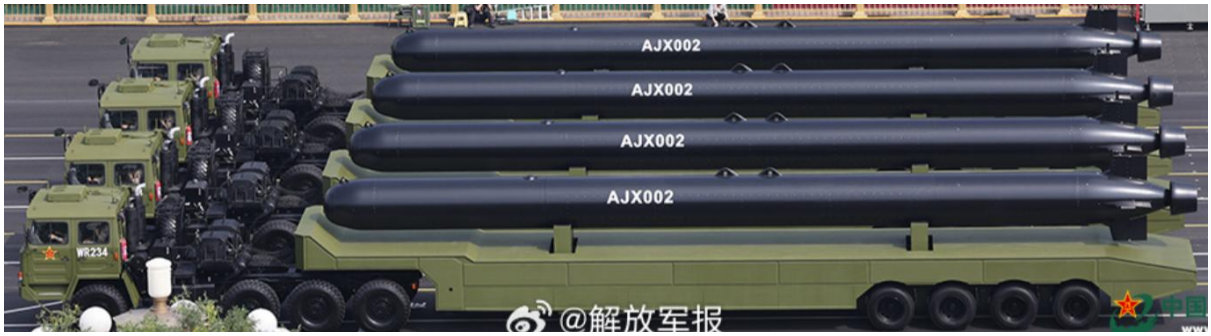

Figure 58: AJX002 XLUUV / Unmanned Mine-Laying System WR231-WR234
(Source-Toutiao[85])

HI Sutton, a PLAN analyst, appreciates that this PLAN XLUUV is similar to the Russian Poseidon UUV or US Orca XLUUV. He further claims that this marks PLAN's expansion into unmanned undersea warfare, a domain which has been traditionally dominated by the US Navy. AJX-002 XLUUV serves PLA's Dual-ocean strategy by extending its reach into the Western Pacific, Indian Ocean Region, and critical chokepoints (SCS, Malacca Strait). Most experts opine that the induction of this XLUUV complements PRC's A2/AD strategy by threatening enemy carriers, submarines, and maritime infrastructure in the Indo-Pacific Ocean.[86]

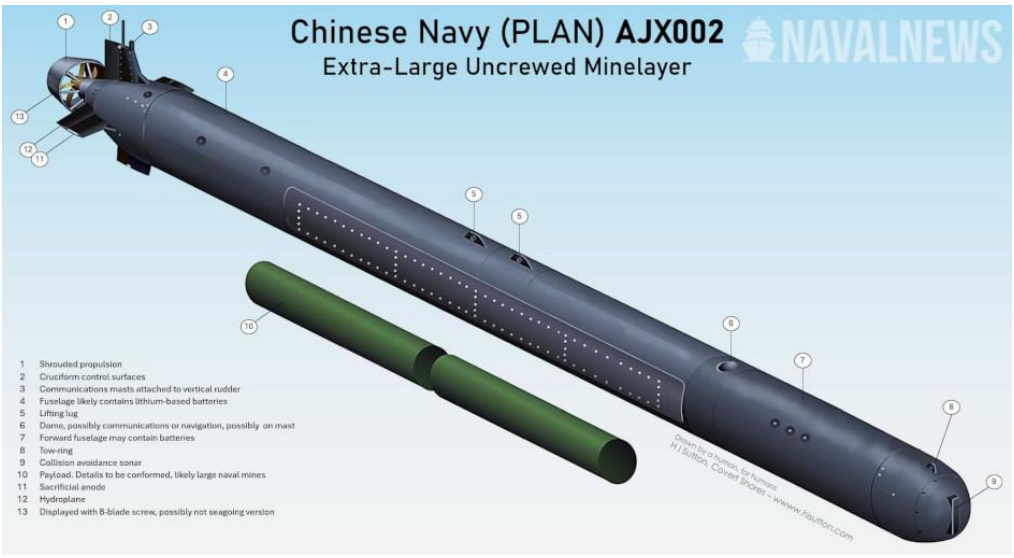

Figure 59: AJX002 XLUUV
(Source- HI Sutton[87])

WR 3 – Unmanned Aerial Team. Chinese claim that out of the six fixed-wing drones reviewed, five UCAVs employ stealth design. [88] With two propaganda slogans of "Innovating New Styles for Future Air Combat" and "AI, a battle for supremacy in the air and space", Xinhua claimed that: -[89]

"*The team's new reconnaissance and strike drones, unmanned wingman aircraft, ship-borne unmanned helicopters and other equipment can launch stealth attacks, cover a wide area, and coordinate autonomously, creating new styles of future air combat. The five types and seven kinds of equipment on display are new types of aerial unmanned equipment independently developed by my country. They have land-based and ship-based combat capabilities and are mainly used to perform various combat tasks such as battlefield reconnaissance, surveillance, and strikes*."

GJ-21 Naval Variant UCAV. GJ-21 paraded in this parade was a naval upgrade of GJ-11 UCAV paraded in 2019. It adopts a flying-wing tailless layout and a turbofan engine. GJ-11's claimed range is 2,000 to 3,000 km thereby enabling it to launch attacks outside the range of enemy AD networks. [90] Three GJ-11 UCAVs have been recently observed at the Shigaste Peace Airport in Tibet under WTC in August and September 2025. Both GJ-11 and GJ-21 are based on Sharp Sword UCAV program. However, GJ-21 has been adapted for maritime role, by including features like folding hinges for wings as visible in the picture below. It's appreciated that the PLAN's latest LHD Type 076 may be equipped with GJ-21 UCAV. An **aerial MUMT of J20S and GJ-11 UCAV has been displayed in the latest teaser in November 2025 by PLAAF.**

Figure 60: GJ-21 UCAV (Naval Upgrade of GJ11 UCAV) WR311
(Source-Toutiao[91])

Wing Loong-3. The Wing Loong-3 UCAV, claimed as the "star equipment" of the parade by few Chinese websites, is claimed to have a maximum take-off weight of 6.2 tons and a wingspan of 24 meters, maximum range of 10,000 km and ultra-long endurance of 40 hours. Thus, the Chinese websites claim that it can conduct long-term intercontinental surveillance and strike missions. With nine hardpoints, it can carry 16 missiles or guided bombs including the PL-10E AAM. It adopts the "loyal wingman" concept like the FH the Phenom-97A. It can form a MUMT combat mode with fifth-generation fighters particularly J-20S.[92]

Figure 61: Wing Loong III UCAV WR 321
(Source-Toutiao[93])

Type D Supersonic Collaborative Combat Aircraft (CCA) or "Stealth Unmanned Wingman". With diamond wings, the Type D CCA has canted tail fins, a dorsal engine intake and a single engine. This unmanned wingman model is optimized for flying air-to-ground missions carrying small PGMs. As per China Military Aviation Blog, it most probably entered service with PLAAF stationed in Southwest China (S/N 53x3x). [94]

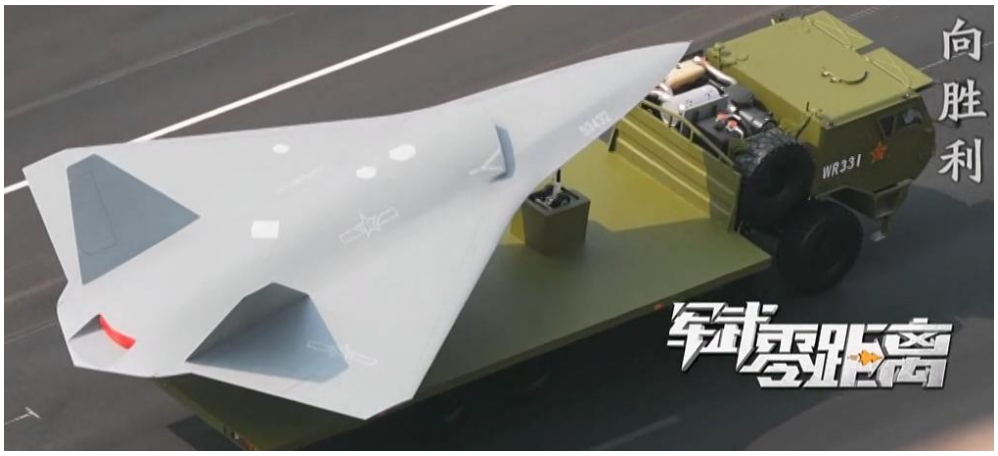

Figure 62: New Stealth Unmanned Wingman (1) / Type D WR331
(Source-Toutiao[95])

Type C Subsonic CCA or "Stealth Unmanned Wingman-2". This CCA has swept wings and canted tail fins as per Chinese Military Aviation Blog. With an internal weapon bay, a dorsal engine intake and a single engine, few western bloggers estimate it to be similar to American XQ-58A. It is appreciated that this unmanned wingman is suitable for flying air-to-ground missions carrying small PGMs. It also most probably entered service with PLAAF stationed in Southwest China (S/N 53x3x). [96]

Figure 63: New Stealth Unmanned Wingman (2) / Type C WR332 /53431
(Source-Toutiao[97])

Type B Unmanned Aerial Dominance Fighter (UADF). Type B is possibly a large supersonic UCAV or UADF for achieving air superiority for PLAAF. With tailless diamond wings and all moving wingtips, it features an internal weapon bay in the belly. It is estimated to have entered service with PLAAF in Southwest China. Developed most likely by 611 Chengdu Aviation Company, it adopts few 6th generation fighter technologies. A July 2021's satellite image showed the UADF prototype was being tested at Chengdu Aviation Complex. [98]

Figure 64: Type B (53536, WR 341) Unmanned Aerial Dominance Fighter
(Source- Chinese Military Aviation Blog[99])

Type A UADF. Developed by 601/Sichuan Aviation Company, it is appreciated to be a UADF or large supersonic UCAV. It adopts few 6th generation fighter technologies and is optimized for air superiority as per Chinese Military Aviation Blog. It features possibly partially foldable tailless lambda wings and all moving wingtips. The UADF has two internal weapon bays on both sides. Based on a single WS-10C engine (14 tons class), it has a TVC nozzle. It's appreciated to be capable of extreme high-g manoeuvring. It most likely entered service with PLAAF stationed in Southwest China (S/N 53x3x). [100]

Figure 65: Type A (53636, WR 342) Unmanned Aerial Dominance Fighter
(Source- Chinese Military Aviation Blog[101])

Unmanned Maritime Helicopters. The shipborne recce cum attacks unmanned helicopters looked similar in layout to the AR-500 or Sea Cavalry UAV series. It can most likely be fitted with sonobuoys, dipping sonar, or lightweight torpedoes. In its strike role, it can carry small precision-guided missiles (PGMs) for anti-armour or anti-personnel tasks. Its most probably designed for shipborne deployment on Type 052D destroyers, Type 055 cruisers, and Type 075 amphibious assault ships.

Figure 66: New Shipborne Unmanned Helicopters WR351-WR354
(Source-Toutiao[102])

HF Logistics Support Module.

The logistics support module showcased PLA's system-wide combat support capabilities by JLSF and PLAGF's logistics echelons.

HF 1 – Field Logistics Support. This team mainly comprised Field ambulances, Field tent hospital systems, Refuelling trucks, Base-based hot food and fast-food support systems. The new field hospital can deploy 100 beds within 30 minutes and is capable of performing surgeries around the clock. [103] PLA Daily and Xinhua further claimed that: -[104]

"*Logistics Support Team displayed a new generation of support equipment for the JLSF.* ***It has the characteristics of mechanization, informatization, and intelligence.*** *It is fully functional, convenient and fast, and can well meet the strategic and campaign support needs under modern war conditions. It enriches and improves our army's modern logistics support system and greatly enhances joint support capabilities. The logistics support team is drawn from the JLSF.*"

Figure 67: Field ambulance HF111-HF114
(Source-Toutiao[105])

Figure 68: Field Tent Hospital System HF121-HF124
(Source-Toutiao[106])

Figure 69: Refuelling trucks HF131-HF134
(Source-Toutiao[107])

Figure 70: Base-based Hot Food Fast Food Supply System HF141-HF144
(Source-Toutiao[108])

HF 2 – Mobile Maintenance / Repair. This team comprised two echelons of Equipment and Armoured repair vehicles. The all-terrain repair vehicle utilizes a hydraulic-mechanical composite transmission, increasing off-road repair efficiency by 50%. The equipment remanufacturing system on display can restore battle-damaged tanks to battlefield condition within 72 hours; this technology originates from a military-civilian integration project.[109] Xinhua's propaganda further elaborated that: -

> "*The new repair vehicles, wheeled equipment rescue and repair vehicles, dismantling and repair vehicles, and electromechanical inspection and maintenance vehicles on review are known as the "armoured hospital" of weapons and equipment. They are a new generation of rescue and repair equipment for our army and have all-weather and all-area equipment support capabilities. The new repair vehicle is mainly used to inspect and repair various types of wheeled vehicles and light weapons of our army; the dismantling and repair vehicle is mainly used to complete the lifting operations and replacement and repair of large components under field conditions; the electromechanical inspection and maintenance*

vehicle is a comprehensive maintenance operation unit with complete functions under field conditions; the wheeled equipment rescue and repair vehicle integrates towing, hauling, lifting, emergency repair and other functions, and is mainly used for the rescue and repair of large special wheeled equipment. This formation was independently drawn from a CAB of the NTC PLAGF."

Figure 71: Light-duty Repair Vehicles HF211-HF224
(Source-Toutiao[110])

Figure 72: Wheeled Rescue and Repair vehicle HF221-HF224
(Source-Toutiao[111])

Figure 73: Car Dismantling, Repair, and Maintenance HF231-HF234
(Source-Toutiao[112])

Figure 74: Electromechanical Testing and Repair Vehicle HF241-HF244
(Source-Toutiao[113])

ZL Strategic Strike Module. The Strategic Strike Module displayed PLA's Strategic Deterrence both in the conventional and nuclear by parading Multi-Domain Cruise Missile, Hypersonic Missile and two Nuclear Missile Teams.

ZL 1 – Multi-Domain Cruise Missile Formation. Paraded under the slogan "A Powerful Weapon for Multi-Domain Deterrence and Victory", this team displayed cruise missiles by air – PLAAF's CJ-20A ALCM (range >2000 km?); sea – PLAN's YJ-18C LACM (range >500 km? In service-2025) and from land – PLARF's latest CJ-1000 HCM (range >5000 km? In service –2025). Xinhua emphasised that: -[114]

> "*The formation adopts a joint formation mode of the Navy, Air Force and Rocket Force. The Changjian-20A, YJ-18C & Changjian-1000 missiles on display are "acupoint-pointing" weapons for carrying out long-range precision strikes, multi-domain deterrence and victory. The Changjian-20A missile is the PLLAF's new ALCM, the Yingji-18C missile is the PLAN's new LACM, and the Changjian-1000 missile is the PLARF's new HCM. The formation is mainly composed of an Air Force aviation division, a Navy base, and a Rocket Force base.*"

CJ 20-A LACM. It's a stealthy LACM launched by H-6K/N bombers possibly with a standoff LR nearly between 1,500–2,000 km with some Chinese accounts even claiming 2,500 km. It has enhanced precision with four guidance modules of INS, Beidou GNSS, TERCOM and Terminal IR (TIR) and can deliver a weapons payload of nearly 500 kg conventional high-explosive or possibly nuclear warhead.

Figure 75: Changjian-20A Land-Based Cruise Missiles ZL111-ZL114, ZL121-ZL124

(Source-Toutiao[115])

Figure 76: YJ-18C Long-Range Stealth Supersonic Cruise Missile ZL131-ZL134

(Source-Toutiao[116])

CJ-1000 Hypersonic Intermediate Range Cruise Missile (IRCM). If the Chinese claimed range of 5000 km is true, it's PLA's first hypersonic IRCM providing it "Everywhere from Anywhere" conventional strike capabilities against India. An upgrade over CJ100 which has a range of 2000 km, it should ideally replace the CJ10 and CJ10A missile launchers held with PLARF's 623 Missile Brigade which covers both Taiwan and Indian contingencies. In case one more new brigade is raised, it further strengthens PLA's A2AD capabilities in the SIC.

Figure 77: Changjian-1000 ULR Land-Based Cruise Missile ZL141-ZL144
(Source-Toutiao[117])

Figure 78: Reach of CJ-1000 from PLARF's 623 Missile Brigade Garrison
Note- 623 Missile Brigade currently holds CJ-10A cruise missiles

ZL 2 – Hypersonic Missiles. Claiming Hypersonic missiles as "A New Killer Weapon for All-Weather Operations", PLA's hypersonic missiles teams comprised PLAAF's YJ-21 ALBM (In-service-2022), PLARF's DF-17 (also paraded in 2019), and PLARF's newest ASBM DF-26D IRBM. Xinhua elaborated that in order to defeat strength with speed, and strike at top speed: -[118]

> "*A hypersonic missile formation passed through Tiananmen Square. YJ-21, DF-17 and DF-26D missiles have fast flight speed, strong penetration capability and high hit accuracy. They are new killer weapons with all-weather combat capabilities. The hypersonic missile formation is organized by relevant units of the PLAAF and PLARF according to actual combat conditions, and all the officers and soldiers on parade are from key posts and front-line combat positions*."

Figure 79: YJ-21 Airborne Hypersonic Ballistic Missiles ZL211-ZL214, ZL221-ZL224
(Source-Toutiao[119])

Figure 80: Dongfeng-17 Hypersonic Tactical Missiles ZL231-ZL234
(Source-Toutiao[120])

Figure 81: Dongfeng-26D Long-Range Anti-Ship Ballistic Missile ZL241-ZL244
(Source-Toutiao[121])

ZL 3 – Nuclear Missiles Team – 1. **This was the show stopper as it displayed PRC's multi-domain nuclear deterrence by parading PLA' nuclear triad for the first time** Xinhua both exemplified the strategic signalling by stating that:[122] -

> "*The nation's most important weapon, its cornerstone, made its stunning debut on the morning of the 3rd, receiving the inspection of the nation and its people. The "Jinglei-1" air-based long-range missile, the "Julang-3" submarine-launched ICBM, the "Dongfeng-61" land-based ICBM, and the new "Dongfeng-31J" land-based ICBM on display for the first time demonstrated our army's "three-in-one" strategic nuclear force based on land, sea and air, and* ***are the strategic "ace" and "trump cards" for safeguarding national sovereignty and defending national dignity***. ***It is the first concentrated display of our army's "trinity" strategic nuclear power of land, sea and air***. *The first formation of nuclear missiles is composed of a mixed group of troops from an Air Force base, a Navy base, a brigade of a Rocket Force base, etc*."

Figure 82: PLA's Nuclear Triad Being Paraded for the First Time
(Source- Xinhua[123])

Figure 83: Thunder-1 Type Air-Launched Tactical Ballistic Nuclear Missile ZL311-ZL314

(Source-Toutiao[124])

JL-3 Intercontinental Nuclear SLBM. It's important to highlight US DoD 2024 report here on the impact of PLAN's induction of JL-3 SLBMs and patrolling by Type-94 JIN class SSBNs: -[125]

> "*6 operational Type 094 JIN-class SSBNs are conducting sea deterrent patrols. The PLAN's JIN SSBN is equipped to carry up to 12 SLBMs, JL-2 (CSS-N-14) and JL-3 (CSS-N-20),* ***representing the PRC's first viable sea-based nuclear deterrent****. With 6 operational SSBNs, the PLAN has the capacity to maintain a constant at sea deterrent presence. With a range of approximately 3,900 nm, a JIN equipped with the JL-2 would have to operate in the mid-Pacific Ocean to threaten targets in the western half of the continental United States (CONUS) (as well as Hawaii and Alaska) or east of Hawaii to threaten targets on the East Coast of the United States.* ***PRC sources claim the JL-3 has a range of over 5,400 nm, which would allow a JIN armed with this missile to target portions of CONUS from PRC littoral waters***."

Figure 84: JL-3 Submarine-Launched Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles ZL321-ZL324

(Source-Toutiao[126])

DF-61 ICBM. DF-61 ICBM almost has the same design specifications of 2.4m x 22.4m as the DF-41 ICBM paraded in 2019.

Figure 85: Dongfeng-61 Land-Based ICBM ZL331-ZL334
(Source-Toutiao[127])

DF-31 BJ ICBM. The J stands for 井 as per various Chinese bloggers which implies 发射井, or "launch silos". Thus, it means that a DF-31BJ （东风31乙）is designed specifically for silos and maybe inducted in a possibly new raised silos base of PLARF. DF-31BJ is most probably 2.6m x 19.2m as per the inputs on Sino-Defence Forum.

Figure 86: Dongfeng-31BJ Land-Based ICBM ZL341-ZL344
(Source-Toutiao[128])

ZL 4 – Nuclear Missiles Group – 2. Although the last platform to be paraded, it displayed PLA's assured nuclear strike capability to strengthen its "No-First Use" nuclear posture. PLA Daily and Xinhua elucidated that: -

> "*Nuclear Missile Second Team unveiled the "Dongfeng-5C" liquid intercontinental strategic nuclear missile. 12 large missile transport vehicles came carrying the "Dongfeng-5C" liquid intercontinental strategic nuclear missile. The second nuclear missile team is the final team of the equipment team. The "Dongfeng-5C" liquid intercontinental strategic nuclear missile is an important component of my country's strategic counterattack system.* ***It has a global strike range, full-time alert, effective deterrence, and the use of force to stop war and stabilize the world****. The formation was organized by a base of the Rocket Force.*"

Figure 87: Dongfeng-5C Land-Based Fixed ICBM Consists of ZL411-414 (Upper Stage Warhead), ZL421-424 (Intermediate Stage), and ZL431-434 (Third Stage)
(Source-Toutiao[129])

Aerial Flypast Column

The Aerial Flypast column comprised eight teams of aircrafts which could establish a complete aerial kill chain executing the various tasks to detect, classify / acquire, strike, refuel and strike. Xinhua described the column as

> "*Air echelon was organized as a combat system, encompassing multi-domain combat capabilities across the three services: land, sea, and air. These capabilities include EW and command, strategic projection, and counter-offensive strikes. Furthermore, each echelon featured mixed formations based on actual combat requirements. Some echelons featured a variety of aircraft types, and many were reviewed with weapons and equipment mounted, highlighting the integration of elements and the integration of systems*."[130]

Helicopters Team. The helicopters team, primarily from PLAGF, included a Z-20 (with CCP flag) with two Z-10; a Z-20 (with PRC flag) with two Z-10; Z-20 (with PLA flag) and two Z-10; 26 Z-19s in a "80" formation; seven Z-20T (entered service 2024) and three Z-8L displaying slogans and flags that read "The People Will Prevail," "Peace Will Prevail," and "Justice Will Prevail."

AEW&C Team. This team included PLAAAF's KJ-500A EW aircrafts (In service 2020) and four J-16 fighter jets, PLAN's Carrier Based KJ-600 AWACS (In Service 2025) and four J-15T carrier-based aircraft (In Service 2024). Xinhua claimed that[131]

> "*The KJ-500A, with its aerial refuelling capability, significantly enhances its comprehensive EW and joint command and control capabilities, both in LR manoeuvres and in complex environments. The KJ-600 is a Chinese-developed, carrier-based fixed-wing AWACS aircraft, capable of early warning, detection, and combat command*."

The KJ-500A EW aircraft has the capability to be refuelled in the air, which greatly enhances its comprehensive EW and joint command and control capabilities in long-range manoeuvrability and complex environments. The KJ-600 EW aircraft is a carrier-based fixed-wing EW aircraft independently developed by China, with functions such as EW detection and combat command. [132]

Special Mission Team – ISR and EW. The Special Mission Team included three new Y9 series aircrafts- PLAN's Y-9FQ anti-submarine patrol aircraft and four J-16, Y-9Z electronic reconnaissance aircraft and two J-16, Y-9LG radar jammers and two J-16. **Y9Z had earlier infringed Japanese airspace in August 2024**.[133] Xinhua news claimed that[134]

> "The *Y-9 anti-submarine patrol aircraft, Y-9Z electronic reconnaissance aircraft, and Y-9 radar jammers made their first collective appearance as the new special support forces of the Navy and Air Force, forming a special aircraft echelon with 6 J-16 fighter jets. The Y-9FQ anti-submarine patrol aircraft is a new type of anti-submarine patrol aircraft independently developed by my country. It has a variety of submarine search methods and is an important force for responding to and handling maritime and air situations. The Y-9 electronic recce aircraft is a new type of recce aircraft independently developed by my country. The Y-9LG radar jammer is an EW aircraft specializing in radar jamming missions. Depending on the tactical purpose and escort aircraft model, the J-16 fighter jets reviewed carried different weapons and equipment mounted on them, highlighting their combat orientation*."

Y-9 is PRC's latest indigenous anti-submarine patrol aircraft. It has a variety of anti-submarine search methods and is an important force, from Chinese perspective, to respond to and deal with maritime and air situations. The Y-9 electronic recce aircraft is a new indigenous recce aircraft recently developed by China. The Y-9 radar jamming aircraft is an EW aircraft specializing in radar jamming missions. [135]

Transport Team. The transport team comprised three transport aircrafts each of Y20A and Y20B variety. Xinhua's propaganda article elucidated that[136]: -

> "*The Y-20A transport aircraft, a new generation large multi-purpose transport aircraft independently developed by my country, is the main force of our military's strategic projection capabilities. The Y-20B transport aircraft, developed based on the Y-20A, is capable of air transport, airdrop, and airborne operations. Both aircraft can perform diverse missions, including rapid, mobile deployment around the clock, large-scale strategic projection, and non-combat military operations.*

The six transport aircrafts on review were from a unit of the Air Force Aviation Corps."

Y-20A, PRC's indigenous transport aircraft, forms the main combat force for PLA's strategic airlift. The Y-20B transport aircraft was developed based on the Y-20A and has the capabilities of airlift, airdrop, and airborne landing. They can all perform a variety of missions, including all-weather rapid deployment, large-scale strategic projection, and non-war military operations. [137]

Bombers - LR Strikes. The Bombers team comprised three aircrafts each of PLAAF's H-6K, nuclear capable H-6N and PLAN's H-6J. Xinhua reported on all three aircrafts that[138]: -

"*As a new domestically-produced LR strategic bomber, the H-6N can be refuelled in the air, capable of carrying out long-range raids, large-area cruises and strikes outside the defence zone, and is an important force in resolutely defending the country's core interests. The H-6K aircraft, known as the "God of War in the Sky", is a new type of bomber independently developed by my country. It has the capabilities of long-range raids, large-area cruises, and strikes beyond the defence zone. It is an important air-based long-range strike force. The H-6J aircraft that flew over Tiananmen Square is a new type of bomber independently developed by my country. It has the capabilities of LR raids, large-area cruises, and precision strikes outside the defence zone. It can be integrated into system joint operations and is LR, precise air strike force for military struggles in the maritime direction*."

The H-6N, indigenous LR strategic bomber, provides the aerial portion of PLA's nuclear triad. The H-6K is PLAAF's latest modified indigenous bomber, and is called the "God of War in the Sky". The H-6J bomber is PLAAF's bomber version for maritime military battles. All the three variety of bombers can be refuelled aerially and thus are supposedly capable of LR strikes, large-area patrols, and stand-off attacks [139]

Air-to-Air Refuelling (AAR) Aircrafts. The AAR Team comprised YY-20 (In service 2021) and two H-6K, YY-20 and two J-16, YY-20 and two J-20. The display of this team was a clear US Operation "MIDNIGHT HAMMER" effect wherein USAF bombers had flown in from US with AARs to directly bomb Iranian nuclear facility in June 2025. PLAAF thus displayed a team of its latest H6K bombers and AAR to show that they also have a similar capability. Xinhua reported that[140]:

"*The YY-20 is a new generation of AAR aircraft independently developed by my country. It is mainly responsible for providing aerial refuelling support for aviation units' combat operations, daily training and exercises, and can also undertake the same various air delivery missions as the Y-20A. The Y-20As on parade were from an Air Force*

aviation unit, the earliest transport aircraft unit in the entire military and the first to be equipped with the Y-20A."

Fighter Jets Team. The Fighters Team, most probably belonging to 1st Air Brigade, comprised J-16D, two J-20 and two J-35A (In service 2025); and a completely fifth generation echelon J-20S (In service 2025), two J-20A (In service 2025) and two J-20. Xinhua claimed that: -

> *"As a new type of stealth fighter independently developed by my country, the J-35A can perform air control combat missions and various ground and sea assault missions. It is a large-scale component force of the stealth and anti-stealth combat system. The J-20S is a new stealth multi-role fighter jet independently developed by my country, featuring a tandem two-seat cockpit.* ***J-20S pilots stated that the J-20S's entry into service will reshape the rules and completely change the future battlefield****. The J-20A is an upgraded version of the J-20 and will be the spearhead of future air combat operations.* ***The J-16D is a new type of EW aircraft*** *independently developed by my country."*

Figure 88: Fighter Jet Formation Comprising J-35A, J-20S, J-20A, J-20, and J-16D
(Source- Toutiao[141])

The **J-20A** single-seat upgrade, as per Chinese websites, features a raised cockpit, enlarged spine, reshaped nose cone, optimized WS-15 air intake, and has new replaced software and sensors, thereby achieving better transonic performance. [142] An "upgraded version" of the J-20 aircraft, it's expected to spearhead PLAAF's future air combat operations. [143]

The **J-20S**, claimed as world's first 5th generation aircraft with a two-seat configuration, saw its prototype appear in 2021, was officially announced at the Zhuhai Airshow in 2024 and made its static debut at the 2025 Changchun Exhibition. As per Chinese assessments, it probably entered service in September 2025, with the PLAAF's Central Flight Test and Training Base's 172nd Brigade. Despite its two-seat design, it maintains stealth capabilities, features a multi-screen rear cockpit for managing unmanned wingmen, and integrates EW and command functions. Its PL-17 ULR AAM can supposedly pose a threat to EW agencies 400 km away. [144]

The **J-20S** is PRC's indigenous new-generation, medium-to-long-range, heavy, two-seat, multi-role stealth fighter. All Chinese websites spread the propaganda that this aircraft possesses precision ground and sea strike capabilities, outstanding situational awareness, electronic jamming, and tactical C2 capabilities. The major improvements in J-20S include optimized avionics and engines, and an extended cockpit design. As a two-seat fighter, the J-20S also serves as a trainer aircraft, with the rear seat for instructors and the front seat for trainees. [145]`

In the **Aerial MUMT mode**, the pilot would be in the front seat, with the rear seat occupied by the weapons operator, responsible for operating air-to-air weapons, air-to-ground weapons, air-to-air radar, and most importantly the variety of "Loyal Wingmen" UCAVs / CCA / UADF displayed in the aerial unmanned module. Thus, the J20S facilitates a cluster combat mode in which one manned aircraft can command four UCAVs. [146]

The J-35A can perform air superiority missions as well as various ground and sea attack missions, forming a significant component of a stealth and anti-stealth warfare system. The J-35A adopts a conventional layout with a single-seat, twin-engine configuration, blended wing-body design, twin swept-back outward-canted vertical tails, and all-moving horizontal stabilizers, integrating overall aerodynamics and stealth design. It is primarily designed for air superiority combat, while also being capable of surface warfare. Its main missions include seizing and maintaining air superiority, striking enemy third/fourth-generation fighters and ground/sea air defences, and intercepting enemy fighters, bombers, cruise missiles, and other aerial targets. [147]

The **J-16D,** variant of the J-16 fighter jet, is PLA's new indigenous multi-purpose EW aircraft having integrated combat capabilities of "recce, attack and defence". It supposedly can jam enemy radars and fire control systems thereby effectively countering advanced AD systems composed of elements such as EW detection, C2, and interception and strike. Since it can protect other aircraft from enemy attacks, it accompanies other fighter jets in combat, as per numerous Chinese websites, to form a relatively complete avionics warfare system, and improve PLAAF's information level to better execute missions., It carries the EW pods under its wings, and mounts anti-radar missiles (ARMs) on the hardpoints on the fuselage thereby enabling it to engage enemy radar. Several antennas are mounted around the fuselage, and two large ELINT pods are located at the wingtips. The J-16D is claimed to have a transmit power exceeding 10 kilowatts and an active phased array radar with 2,000 active T/R cells. [148]

It's claimed that the KG800 ECM pod carried by the J-16D EW aircraft that followed closely behind had effectively jammed foreign military radar systems in the East China Sea AD Identification Zone. Japan's Ministry of Defence's 2025 China Security Report

states that the J-16D EW aircraft, equipped with a gallium nitride active phased array radar, has a 40% greater electromagnetic suppression radius than the US EA-18G. [149]

Carrier Based Fighters. The carrier team, belonging to PLAN's first ever carrier aviation brigade, comprised J-15DH EW aircrafts, two J-15T and two J-35; J-15DT EW and four J-15T. J-35, with WS-13E twin engine, can achieve a speed of 1.8 mach. The first electromagnetic catapult launch aircraft carrier Fujian underwent its sea cum flight trials from 24 to 29 September 2025 with these latest aircrafts. Xinhua claimed that[150]:

> "*PRC's independently developed heavyweight carrier-based fighter, the J-15T, is equipped with an EM catapult launch system and possesses both missile and glide capability. The J-15DH is a Chinese-developed carrier-based EW aircraft. The J-15DT is a Chinese-developed carrier-based EW aircraft that is both missile- and glide-compatible. As a new type of Chinese-developed stealth carrier-based fighter, the J-35 is a landmark equipment in the PLAN's transition from a near-shore defence role to a far-sea defence role. The carrier-based aircraft echelon was formed under the leadership of a naval aviation brigade, the first carrier-based aviation brigade formed by the Chinese Navy*."

As per OSINT assessments, the J-15 family now includes the ski-jump EW version J-15DH. The J-15T includes several variants such as the buddy refuelling version, the catapult-launched version, and the catapult-launched EW version J-15DT. The J-15DT is claimed to be the most powerful derivative model currently available, specifically designed to be compatible with aircraft carriers capable of electromagnetic catapults. [151] The J-15DT is an indigenous carrier-based EW aircraft with both missile and ski-jump capabilities. The J-15DH is an indigenous carrier-based EW aircraft. [152]

The J-35 aircraft, is the latest indigenous stealth carrier-based fighter jet for the PLAN to realize the transformation from a near-sea defence type to a far-sea defence type. As per Chinese netizens, it represents the future of China's carrier-based aircraft. Its twin-engine turbofan WS-19 supposedly produce 24 tons of thrust, a flight speed of Mach 2.2 and have a frontal radar cross-section of only 0.01 square meters. The naval version of the J-35 can carry four YJ-21 AShMs. [153]

The trainers team included five each of JL10 and J10S. Additionally, the Ba Yi demonstration, comprising 7 J10 aircrafts flew past at the end.[154]

Marching Columns. The Marching Columns included the National Flag Guard formation carrying the flags of PRC, CPC and PLA; Battle Flag Formations carrying the flags of various battles fought with Japan; service contingents from PLAGF, PLAN, PLAAF and PLARF; the contingents from all four arms- JLSF and the latest ones which made debut and paraded in their combat uniform- ASF, CSF and the ISF; PAPF; Reserve and a women Milita contingent which specialised in tunnel warfare, mine

warfare, signal warfare and advanced technologies; and UN peacekeeping force. The Military Band with a strength of 1,000 troops formed the first and last groups and are claimed to be the largest band paraded in a military parade. The key Xinhua and PLA daily claims on various marching contingents are elaborated below: -

JLSF. "*The Joint Logistics Support Force's contingent includes officers, NCOs, conscripts, civilian personnel, and other elements of the military. Male members carried individual combat assault backpacks, while female members carried new medical backpacks*."[155] The emphasis on inclusion of civilian personnel is important particularly for ensuring close civil-military fusion at the lower echelon logistics support both in wartime and peacetime.

Reserves. "*Wearing armbands of various military branches, members of the reserve force team marched through Tiananmen Square. The grass green of the Army, the blue and white stripes of the Navy, the sky blue of the Air Force, the orange-yellow of the Rocket Force, the deep space blue of the Military Space Force, the cyber grey of the Cyberspace Force, the quantum purple of the Information Support Force, and the pine green of the Joint Logistics Support Force, the military flags and armbands of the eight major military services of the entire army are all gathered in the reserve force formation. The team members are drawn from reserve brigades and regiments, covering all walks of life including industry, agriculture, commerce, education, and military*."[156] Even before the key lessons of role of reservists in Russia-Ukraine War, Xi Jinping had emphasised on the mobilisations of reserves. The CMC has now been able to ensure that reserves are created for all the four arms and four services and also the five theatre commands (TCs) and the two key MRs – Xinjiang and Tibet.

Militia. "*The militia platoon, representing the vast number of* ***basic militia and ordinary militiamen*** *across the country and shouldering the important task of showcasing the militia style of the new era, marched through Tiananmen Square.* ***The militia formation is composed entirely of female militia members****. This is the first time that the militia has appeared in a military parade.* ***The militia is an important component of China's "three-in-one" armed forces****. During the War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression, the militia made indelible contributions to victory and wrote an immortal chapter in the people's war*." The aspect of "three-in-one" armed forces is extremely important as it points towards not just MDIJO but a whole-of-nation multi-dimensional approach which extends beyond PLA to include People's Armed Police Forces (PAPF) and Reserves including militia. While PLA's strength is at a strength of approximately 20 lakhs, Militia is at a strength of 80 lakhs and Reserves at a strength of 5 lakhs.

Battle Flag Formations. The battle flag formations mainly comprised Mengshi 6x6 modified vehicles QX101-QX105 ex WTC; vehicles QD101-QD105 ex ETC; vehicles QN101-QN105 ex STC; vehicles QB101-QB105 ex NTC and vehicles QZ101-QZ105 ex CTC.[157]

Implications

The key implications are discussed in this section. **Most importantly, this parade was PRC's strategic signal to the world particularly USA, Taiwan, Japan and India that PLA has indigenous MDIJO capabilities to achieve all-weather full-spectrum strategic deterrence. While it's ISR capabilities particularly through ASF's Positioning Navigation Timing Remote Sensing Communication (PNTRSC) constellations provide it assured multi-tiered detection, identification, classification and tracking capabilities in conjunction with all other services and arms, its multi-domain capabilities provide it the hammer at tactical, operational and strategic levels to strike all targets everywhere in the world from anywhere in PRC, while simultaneously intercepting multi-stage enemy's drones, rockets, artillery, missiles and air launched stand-off weapons. Since most of PLA's weapons and complete manpower remains untested in battle, it's extremely short of real battle experience. Apropos, most of its weapons, except small UAVs and commercial satellite imageries, have not found much use in key conflicts recently**. As one Russian drone supplier highlighted that while Chinese have advanced significantly in defence technology, their combat platforms are not battle hardened and thus do not perform well in combat.

However, Operation SINDOOR highlighted that while HQ-9 may have succeeded against aircrafts, it failed miserably against cruise missiles. Thus, Chinese weapons do not perform as claimed but the quantum paraded on 03 September 2025 and quality claimed is unprecedented. Thus, even by reducing the non-performance allowance and drastically reducing the propaganda claims, the PLA's capabilities must be noted and accounted for in threat mitigation plans. In any case, all good armies prepare for the worst case-scenario by granting enemy the maximum capabilities, but hope for the best. Hence, all implications and recommendations will cater for PLA's enhanced capabilities.

Enhanced Multi-Domain Kill Web for Second Islands Chain (SIC). PLA, through this parade, displayed a distinct enhanced reach in to the SIC with a variety of strike weapons and suitably complementary ISR assets particularly considering ASF's space-based satellites. The strengthening of multi-domain anti-access/area denial (A2/AD) operations is strengthened by a variety of newly paraded platforms: -

a) Carrier launched aircrafts J-15 and J-35 paraded and displayed thereafter on its two carriers Shandong and latest Fujian.
b) LHD Type 076, Sichuan, launched UCAVs including GJ-21, UADF Type A and Type B.
c) Land based PLARF's MaRV ballistic missiles, HGVs and HCM CJ-1000.
d) Ship and even submarine-based PLAN's array of missiles comprising HGV YJ-17, HCM YJ-19 and ballistic missile YJ-20.
e) PLAAF's latest H-6K bomber and PLANAF's H6J launched ALBM YJ-21, HCM and HGV.

f) Large-scale deployment of PLAN's UUVs and USVs by effectively extending the operational depth.

Modern UCAVs Array. PLA has a large variety of UCAVs - GJ-11 (paraded in 2019) with GJ-21 as its upgraded naval variant paraded this year; CH-7, WZ-8, and WZ-9; UADF / CCA Type A, Type B, Type C and Type D; unknown UADF/CCA that wasn't paraded, GH-xx and WZ-xx. There have been many OSINT rumours of unmanned H20 bomber too which many experts have been rejecting now. Additionally, Chinese NORINCO and others are claiming to produce Iranian Shahed / Russian Geran class LMs like Feilong 300A and PD2900 kamikaze drones at about 10,000 USD. **Citing Operation SINDOOR example**, **these companies are further trying to sell them at much cheaper rates to Pakistan if it buys them in bulk**. [158]

Strengthened C-UAS Architecture. The combined use of high-energy lasers and HPMs with AD-gun missile system has significantly strengthened PLA's C-UAS network thereby integrating point and area defence capabilities.

Impact on India

Non-Contact DRAMA / Kinetic Strike Capabilities. Within WTC itself, PLA has the capabilities to launch a first DRAMA LR multi-domain precision strike on nearly 580 plus operational and strategic targets (>100 km across LAC) by 2700 plus munitions (with many of them at hypersonic and high supersonic speeds) by nearly 600 weaponised platforms as elaborated in the table below. This is one broad but conservative theoretical estimate discounting tactical platforms.

Asset	Quantum of Platforms	Strike Capabilities	Number of DMPIs
PLAGF >348 targets			
PCH-191 BRE-10 Missiles	168 launchers – 2 missiles each	336 missiles	168 – >350 km across LAC
PHL-03A 300 mm Rockets – Guided & unguided	>96 launchers – 12 rockets each	1152 rockets	96 - >100 km across LAC
CH-4 UCAVs	> 4 battalions – 8 drones simultaneously	>48 weapons	>24 across India if not intercepted
LMs – ASN301, Fielong 60A etc	Unknown numbers – Minimum 20 launchers	240 LMs	>60
PLARF – Bases 62 and 64 >84 targets			

DF-26 – 624, 625, 626, 646 & 647 Missile Brigades	~ 180 launchers	180 missiles	>60
DF-17- 627 Missile Brigade	~18 launchers	18 missiles	>6
CJ-10A/ CJ1000 – 623 Missile Brigade	~18 launchers	18-54 missiles	>18
PLAAF > 150 targets			
2 J-20A (or better) Brigades	Assuming 20% for ground – 10	40 bombs	>10
>2 J16 Brigades - 48 aircrafts	Assuming 40% for ground - 20	240 bombs	>20
>20 H6K Bombers stationed in WTC	20 aircrafts	80 missiles	>20
178th UAV Brigade – GJ-11 UCAV, BZK-005/006, GJ-1/2, WL-1/WD-1, WZ-7/EA-03 J11	20 UCAVs simultaneously	160 PGMs	>40
PD 2900 / Fielong 60A 300A other LMs	Unknown numbers – Minimum 20 launchers	240 LMs	>60
Total	>598 platforms	>2752 munitions	>582 targets

Table 4: WTC's Single Multi-Domain Precision Strike Capabilities

Widening Asymmetry. It's absolutely clear that PLA's asymmetry with Indian military is widening at a rapid pace as summarised in the table below.

Domain	Paraded Capability	Organisation Introduced	Quantity Advantage	Quality	Widening Asymmetry with India	Indian Vision
Space	ASAT ECM	ASF- 2024	>1000 satellites (>300 defence)	Domain specialist force, 24x7 all-weather PNTRSC coverage	Numbers, Organisation, Coverage	52 defence satellites by 2030
Air	5th Generation aircrafts, ALBM, Hypersonic LACMs	Aerial MUMT, Carrier Aircraft brigades	>200 indigenous annual aircrafts production, Weaponised	6th generation aircraft J-36 & J-50 flown; AAR, Bombers	Aircraft engines & generation; stand-off ranges;	6th generation aircraft with collaboration; indigenous engine

			Drones, decoys		drones' components	
Land	4th generation MBTs, ULR HCM, Hypersonic conventional IRBMs, NG Radars, PCH-191 MLRS, Multi-layered AD / BMD / C-UAS	Land MUMT, possibly land-based "Hexagon Warrior" Intelligentised CAB, LRRAB	SSM & AD / BMD numbers; MLRS; Indigenous Families of wheeled & tracked vehicles	Hypersonic missiles, 4th generation indigenous vehicles, A2AD & Multi-stage BMD; APS & C-UAS for tanks;	Reach of ULR Rockets, SP Artillery & SSMs	Rudra Brigade, Ashni Platoon, Shaktibaan Regiments
Sea	Multiple YJ AShMs including hypersonic types, Multi-layered AD & C-UAS	3rd CBG Fujian, Expanded PLANMC	Combat ships, carriers, USVs	MDA, Amphibious operations, Hypersonic Missiles	Ship density, Amphibious capabilities, LR AShMs, CBGs	
Sub-surface	Nuclear SLBM, Unmanned Underwater Wall, Variety of torpedoes		UUVs, submarines, Torpedoes	Ocean bed survey, Autonomous detection	Submersibles, XLUUVs	
Cyber	Network & Cyber Warfare vehicles	CSF- 2024	Cyber offence, cyber talent base	INEW doctrine, APT	Data sovereignty	Cyber offensive
EM	full-frequency detection & control, precise EM suppression	ISF – ICBs for each TC	OFC layout; Satellite Communication	Quantum communication	Satellite constellations	Defence Communication Agency

Cogniti ve	ISF	Base 311	Intelligentise d bots	Cognitive AI	Bots & Fifty Cents Army	
Overall	MDIJO; 3-in-1 People's Armed Force – PLA, Reserves including Militia & PAPF	One Ministry for border & coastal defence (since 2017)	Indigenous mass manufacturin g; Time spent in completing kill chain	Integration & Convergence – Combat Cloud Brain; Informatisatio n & Intelligentisati on	Doctrine, Organisatio n Structures, MDIJO experience 10 years old TCs; PAPF equipping	2025 – Year of Reforms, Theaterisatio n

Table 5: Widening India-China Multi-Domain Military Asymmetry

Recommendations

While the recommendations list maybe endless, the top priority and immediately required essential steps are listed below for consideration.

Mission Sudarshan Chakra. While the defensive mission Chakra must be capable of operationally capable of intercepting 600 plus drones / LMs, 1000 plus rockets, 500 plus missiles, and 200 plus aircrafts at operational and strategic levels simultaneously, the offensive portion must be able to hit beyond Tibet and Xinjiang into Chinese mainland for meaningful deterrence posture by penetrating A2AD bubble comprising 42 PLAGF AD Battalions (>14 CABs, 4 CADs and 4 GA AD Brigades), 4 PLAAF's integrated AD cum BMD Brigades in addition to PLAAF's AD, AEW&C and ASF's BMD assets. **With PLA's rapid pace advancements in hypersonic speed platforms, the decision time has been drastically reduced. Thus, the time available for location of interception and mirroring response will be very minimal from the PM to the soldier pressing the button. Thus, there is an urgent need to streamline 24x7 detection cum ISR, streamline the procedures and doctrine and flatten the decision cycles**. India also needs to establish multi-stage, multi-tiered and multi-layered defensive dome integrating AD, BMD and C-UAS across all services and government agencies from tactical to strategic levels.

Assured Conventional Second-Strike Capability. In the modern era of pre-emptive non-contact DRAMA strikes, it is essential to ensure that SSM launchers, AD assets and airfields withstand enemy's first strike can coherently respond mirroring the geopolitical target value objectives. Thus, multi-domain survivability and proactive responsiveness within acceptable timeframe are absolutely essential for maintaining national prestige. In Operation SINDOOR, India denied this opportunity to Pakistan on both 7 and 10 May 2025. Thus, India must similarly be prepared to withstand the first strike of China to undertake responsive strike on PRC's Sichuan province and beyond.

24x7 All Weather Strategic ISR Grid. The essentials for a responsive strategic ISR grid facilitating the major steps of Multi-Domain Kill Web – Detection, Identification / Classification and Tracking are: -

a) Accelerate the execution of 52 satellites as part of SBS-III program.
b) Enhance the scope of SBS-III program to ensure minimum 12 operational NAVIC satellites, 18 ELINT satellites, 2 AIS satellites, 12 SAR spanning X and C bands, 6 HIS with adequate data library, 12 low inclined LEO high-resolution EO satellites.
c) Have an operational satellite communication grid at the earliest by a suitable combination of 4 GEO and an independent LEO constellation. Rather than relying on Starlink for remote areas connectivity, India must launch its own LEO communication constellation even at the cost of launching satellites from foreign launch locations to overcome own launch cadence limitations of single launch centre.
d) Develop a VLEO constellation of satellites.
e) Build a web of High-Altitude Pseudonymous Satellite (HAPS) UAVs or balloons to ensure persistence of LR ISR.
f) Build a web of large phase array radars for both BMD and Space Situational Awareness.

Precision Denial and Counter ISR. Indian military must build the capabilities to deny PLA the precision and persistent ISR. The key essential steps are: -

a) A network of ASAT lasers and jammers particularly for strategic infrastructure.
b) Offensive cyber capabilities to disrupt PLA's multi-domain kill web.
c) Swarm of Beidou and multi-band GNSS jammers and spoofers at critical operational and strategic locations.
d) SDR and QAI enabled C-UAS detection and soft-kill grid.
e) Low-cost drone interceptors at tactical and operational levels.

Multi-Domain Strikes. The essentials for India to execute multi-domain strikes are: -

a) Develop a combination of conventional hypersonic IRBMs, MRBMs and ULR HCMs force at the earliest.
b) Make a universal launcher merging Pralay SRBMs, Pinaka rockets, Cruise missiles and LMs.
c) Enhance the target tracking capabilities to undertake strikes against moving targets like ships etc.
d) Improve the indigenous target acquisition accuracies to less than 3 metres including height accuracies.
e) Synchronise joint strike doctrine by ensuring cost-effective weapon-target-sensor matching.
f) Establish MUMTs from tactical to strategic levels to undertake the first strikes,

g) Stitch tailor-made Quantum AI enabled multi-domain kill webs for Indian conditions which can reduce the decision and communication timeframe significantly.

Zero-Cost Maximum Benefit. There are many essential steps which require no budgets but just require ruthless execution by overcoming turf wars – doctrinal finalisation and execution; talent retention and harnessing policies for domain specialisation and super-specialisation in selected domains like Space, Cyber, Cognitive etc; organisational reforms to ensure multi-domain joint task forces; and indigenously generated AI foundational models with smooth data sharing.

Conclusion

The grand military parade while being mainly directed towards USA and Taiwan had major hints towards India. While PLA remains an untested military with major propaganda campaigns, the technological quantity and quality paraded on 03 September 2025 clearly proves widened asymmetry with India both qualitatively and quantitatively. While Indian military's manpower ratios both quantitatively and qualitatively cannot be matched, PLA's WTC is advancing significantly-technologically, equipment wise, organisationally and doctrinally. **India must act now to stop the widening asymmetry and finally start reducing it. Any further delay in technology adoption, talent and subject specialisation, organisational reforms and doctrinal evolution will only lead to national humiliation.**

India needs to significantly accelerate its Mission Sudarshan Chakra, SBS III and military reforms simultaneously. While 90% planning for theaterisation maybe complete, India needs to innovatively develop Multi-Domain Joint Task Force structures to persistently conduct surveillance of the strategic depths of China, denying the same to PLA, pre-bunk PRC's IW campaigns, intercept as much as possible PLA's DRAMA strikes, be prepared to conduct an assured second strike conventionally on mirroring value objectives both NCK and NCNK types, and be combat ready for escalation to full-scale war. A minimum credible full-spectrum strategic deterrence does not only require political intent only but also ruthless achievement of desired capabilities and the conveyance of those capabilities to PRC, CPC and PLA in no uncertain terms.

About the Author

Brigadier Anshuman Narang, Retired, is an alumnus of the prestigious Rastriya Indian Military College. He holds the "Adani Defence Chair of Excellence" on UAS Warfare with special focus on Counter-UAS at CENJOWS. He is the Founder and Director of an independent Think-Tank "Atma Nirbhar Soch" and Advisor at Suhora Technologies. A keen China watcher, OSINT expert, reputed speaker and author of three books and numerous other publications, his PhD topic is "Chinese RMA and Centennial Goals -

Implications for India". As a gunner officer, he has the unique distinction of having been Brigade GSO-1 and Colonel GS of key armoured formations. He raised a new Surveillance and Target Acquisition Regiment along Western borders. He has attended courses in all quad countries- American Artillery's Captain Career Course, Australian Joint Warfare Course and Japanese National Institute of Defence Studies Course. He took voluntarily retirement after commanding a prestigious Composite Artillery Brigade in October 2024 along India's Northern Borders to pursue in-depth research of India's adversaries, military technological advancements and conflicts world over. He has pioneered many OSINT, ISR, sUAS and FPV drones, Space, missiles, artillery and Mechanised warfare initiatives both during service in Indian Army and post premature retirement as a veteran.

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