

PLA drill features advanced missile

The People's Liberation Army has released a video of a recent exercise employing the advanced DF-16 medium-range ballistic missile, a weapon seen as filling a gap in the nation's arsenal.

Several launch vehicles carrying the ballistic missiles were seen in the footage that the PLA published on its video website, released to show the training of Rocket Force missile brigade soldiers around the Spring Festival holiday.

The participating units handled a number of scenarios, including chemical/biological contamination, countering satellite reconnaissance and electronic jamming. The crews practiced multiple maneuvers, such as rapid loading, redeployment and launch sequence, though the video showed no missile actually being launched.

Two types of DF-16 that appeared in the exercise are the bullet-shaped missile that is considered the original DF-16 and a new variant that features a maneuverable warhead and several extra fins.

The video represents the third time the DF-16 has been shown to the public. The missile made its debut at a military parade in Beijing in September 2015. In July, a television news program showed General Fan Changlong, a vice-chairman of the Central Military Commission, inspecting a DF-16 unit of the Southern Theater Command.

Though the PLA has never disclosed its ballistic missiles' specifications, experts said the DF-16 poses a challenge to foreign military installations along the first island chain, which is what the Chinese military calls the series of islands that stretch from Japan in the north to China's Taiwan and the Philippines to the south.

Xu Guangyu, a retired major general and now a strategy researcher, said that DF-16 has a strike range of more than 1,000 kilometers, filling the gap that previously existed with the absence of a medium-range ballistic missile in the PLA's arsenal. He said the missile also is able to reach Okinawa, a Japanese island about 400 km from China's Diaoyu Islands.

Shi Hong, executive editor of Shipborne Weapons, said the DF-16 was developed by China Aerospace Science and Industry Corp based on the DF-11 short-range ballistic missile and can carry a warhead of at least 500 kg. The missile has a strike accuracy as good as that of a cruise missile, Shi said. It is also able to maneuver in its final stage to penetrate enemy defensive firepower, he said.

Other PLA Rocket Force brigades also mobilized their DF-11, DF-15 and DF-21C ballistic missiles during training around Spring Festival, according to PLA media outlets.

In another development, Washington Free Beacon, a news website in the United

States that specializes in military affairs, reported on Jan 31 that China conducted the first flight of the DF-5C intercontinental ballistic missile in January. The missile carries 10 multiple independently targetable re-entry vehicles. The DF-5C is the latest variant of the three-decade-old DF-5 family, the report said.

An unidentified officer from the Defense Ministry's Information Bureau reached by Shenzhen TV on Saturday would neither confirm nor deny the DF-5C test, but said such tests are not aimed at any foreign nation or specific target.

[Statement from Jeremy Corbyn ahead of Benjamin Netanyahu's visit to the UK](#)

Jeremy

Corbyn MP, Leader of the Labour Party,

speaking ahead of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's visit to the UK,
said:

"When

Theresa May meets the Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu tomorrow, she has let it be known she will tell him that building settlements on occupied Palestinian land "undermines trust".

"That

is simply not good enough. The Israeli government's decision to build 3,000 new settlement homes in the occupied West Bank and East Jerusalem is illegal under international law and a threat to peace and international security.

"It

undermines still further the prospect of a two-state solution to the Israel-Palestine conflict, about which the Netanyahu government is increasingly contemptuous.

"Fifty

years after the United Nations demanded Israeli withdrawal from the territories occupied in the 1967 war and 70 years after the UN voted for the creation of a Palestinian state, the British government must act in support of peace and justice in the Middle East conflict.

"Theresa

May must make clear to the Israeli Prime Minister that the British government will stand unequivocally behind the rights of the Palestinian people, along with the many who support them in Israel, as well as human rights and justice across the region.

"She

must also demand an assurance from the Israeli Prime Minister that the improper interference by the Israeli embassy in British democratic politics exposed last month will not be repeated."

[Kunming airport warns drone owners to steer clear](#)



Changshui International Airport in Kunming, Yunnan Province. [Photo: China Daily]

Drones have been found at the clearance protection zone of an airport in southwest China's Yunnan Province, and local police are investigating.

Sources with Kunming Changshui International Airport in the provincial capital said Sunday that there were four or five incidents in the past two days of drones flying close to the airport.

“Regulations stipulate that unmanned balloons, kites, gliders and parachutes are not allowed within the clearance protection zone, about 1,028 square kilometers surrounding the runway,” an official said. “Those who violate the regulations are subject to fines up to 100,000 yuan (about 14,600 U.S. dollars).”

The flying of drones could pose a threat to aviation safety, though the incidents reported did not disrupt flights at the airport.

[Experiment zone in Qinghai to protect Tibetan culture](#)



A woman wearing traditional Tibetan costumes is seen during a fashion show held at Batang grassland of Yushu city of Yushu Tibetan autonomous prefecture, Northwest China's Qinghai province, July 26, 2016. [Photo/Xinhua]

The Ministry of Culture has agreed to build an experiment zone in China's northwestern Qinghai Province to protect Tibetan ecological and cultural

heritage.

According to Wang Dongmei, head of the culture and sports bureau in the Yushu Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture in Qinghai, the zone will cover the city of Yushu and its adjacent counties.

On the zone's protection list are the physical and cultural heritage items related to the local Tibetan people in the Sanjiangyuan area, which is home to the headwaters of the Yangtze, Yellow, and Lancang (Mekong) rivers, Wang said.

Yushu is home to seven national-level cultural heritage sites, 29 provincial-level sites as well as two historical villages. The song and dance, costumes of ethnic minorities, and metal forging techniques are all listed as intangible heritage in China.

Wang told Xinhua that Yushu has eleven national items of intangible heritage and 24 national "cultural inheritors."

"The experiment zone will help boost protection of Tibetan culture and local ecology as a whole, and sustainable development of the society and economy," said Tsering Teg, governor of Yushu.

Yushu has recovered from a magnitude 7.1 earthquake that hit the region on April 14, 2010. It affected 246,800 people, leaving 2,220 dead and more than 100,000 homeless.

[These disappointing proposals fall far short of what is needed – Healey](#)

Labour's Shadow

Secretary of State for Housing John Healey MP, responding to the government's announcement on renting, said:

"These disappointing proposals fall far short of what is needed.

"Government figures show that affordable housebuilding has fallen to the lowest level in 24 years, with the number of homes being built for social rent now at the lowest level since records began.

"Ministers continue to do next to nothing to help people who rent from a private landlord and have consistently blocked Labour's attempts to change the law to control costs and give renters security.

"Ministers even voted down Labour's efforts to ensure

that private rented homes were simply fit for human habitation.

"After seven years of
failure on housing, renters deserve better than this."