



CHINA REFORM MONITOR

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Related Categories: Economic Sanctions; Human Rights and Humanitarian Issues; Military Innovation; NATO; China

GERMAN FIGHTER PILOTS ARE TRAINING PLA PILOTS IN CHINA

An unknown number of former German pilots are in China, earning huge salaries in return for training their Chinese counterparts. German officials believe the pilots have passed on military expertise and confidential operational tactics, and practiced attack scenarios, including an attack on Taiwan. "China is attempting, via external agencies, to recruit former NATO pilots as trainers," including "former German Bundeswehr pilots. A significant danger that not just basic flight proficiency will be imparted, but that relevant tactics, techniques and procedures will be manifested," the German Defense Ministry has confirmed. The Bundestag is also concerned about the "professional activity of public servants following the end of their employment," which represent an "outrageous, scandalous and problematic situation" and "an enormous security risk." (*Der Spiegel*, June 2, 2023)

U.S. SANCTIONS CHINESE FIRMS OVER FENTANYL-MAKING EQUIPMENT

The U.S. Treasury Department has slapped more than a dozen Chinese entities with sanctions, accusing them of shipping pill-presses that make counterfeit pills to disguise fentanyl, a synthetic opioid. The sanctions were directed at companies and individuals that produce, sell and transport the devices, which make illegal drugs look like legal pharmaceuticals. "Treasury's sanctions target every stage of the deadly supply chain fueling the surge in fentanyl poisonings and deaths across the country," said Under Secretary of the Treasury for Terrorism and Financial Intelligence Brian Nelson. (*CNN*, May 31, 2023)

THOUSANDS OF CHINESE MUSLIMS DEFEND THEIR MOSQUE

Thousands of Muslims belonging to the Hui ethnic group surrounded a mosque in Najiaying, Yunnan in a last-ditch effort to prevent authorities from removing its dome and minarets. Men and women, the elderly and children gathered around the mosque under the close watch of more than 1,000 police. "This is our last bit of dignity. It's like coming to our house to demolish our home. We can't allow that to happen," said one witness. The mosque's alteration comes amid a nationwide campaign to "Sinicize" religion. Police officers in riot gear blocked the mosque's entrance and used shields and batons to push back the crowd and beat protesters before arresting dozens of them. The authorities have encouraged the "organizers and participants" to turn themselves in and report on each other. (*CNN*, June 2, 2023)

CHINESE FIGHTER JET BUZZES U.S. MILITARY RECONNAISSANCE AIRCRAFT

The U.S. has accused a Chinese fighter jet of engaging in an "unnecessarily aggressive maneuver" while intercepting a U.S. military reconnaissance aircraft over the South China Sea. The Chinese J-16 fighter jet cut in front of the nose of the U.S. Air Force RC-135 aircraft, "forcing the U.S. aircraft to fly through its wake turbulence," said a statement from U.S. Indo-Pacific Command. The U.S. aircraft was conducting "safe and routine operations over the South China Sea in international airspace, in accordance with international law," according to the statement. (*CNBC*, May 30, 2023)

CHINESE WARSHIP NEARLY COLLIDES WITH U.S. DESTROYER IN TAIWAN STRAIT

A Chinese warship came within 150 yards of the destroyer USS *Chung-Hoon* during a rare joint U.S.-Canada mission through the Taiwan Strait. Journalists on the *HMCS Montreal*, the Canadian frigate participating in the mission, witnessed a PLA Navy ship speed up and cut in front of the *Chung-Hoon*, nearly causing a collision. When the Chinese vessel altered course, the Canadian crew called the American crew and warned them to slow down to avoid crashing into it. "This was intentional," said the *HMCS Montreal's* commander, Capt. Paul Mountford. While sailing together in the South China Sea prior to entering the Taiwan Strait, the *Chung-Hoon* and *Montreal* were shadowed by PLA Navy vessels. (*Global News*, June 4, 2023)