

20.7.21

*DAILY*  
**CONVERSATIONS  
IN CHINESE  
MEDIA**



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**ORGANISATION FOR RESEARCH ON  
CHINA AND ASIA**

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## I. Social Media Chatter in China

- **Flooding in Henan province:** Trending on Baidu. The flooding in Germany and Belgium has also been given extensive coverage in the news so as to assure the public that flooding in Henan is not due to ill-infrastructure but rather a natural tide. Social media is also ripe with help calls by Chinese citizens stranded in trains for over 44 hours; Weibo is also facilitating rescue missions in Zhengzhou. Concurrently, videos of heroic Chinese citizens helping each other and showing collective strength amidst flooding are also doing rounds.
- **Ridicule of India's goal to build third aircraft carrier:** At present, India has INS Vikramaditya and INS Virat (yet to be commissioned). It is planning to build INS Vishal; China's own third homegrown aircraft carrier Type 003 (see images 1,2 and 3) is poised to be launched by end of year. Ridicule of India's capability shows mindset in China that does not view India as a competent rival, but rather a smaller power attempting to take on Beijing's might.
- **Political satire gaining momentum:** While banned or quickly removed when directed against the CPC, recently political satirists in like with Chinese ideology have gained momentum on Weibo and Baidu. These commentaries are mocking countries that are questioning China with visuals of what is wrong within those countries themselves. Famous ones are the 'Blood Cotton Initiative', 'The Last G7' (which also mocked India's COVID-19 situation) and anti-Australia propaganda.
- **Documents and statements by international experts speaking out against politicization of virus theory are doing rounds:** Lancet and Zenodo both respectively released joint statements by leading medical experts stating that virus lab-leak theory is not founded; these have been doing rounds in Baidu with examples of how Beijing was internationally wronged even as it tried to help adding to China's Health Silk Road narrative.

## II. News in China

- Crackdown under NSL continues in Hong Kong: 3 top staff members of pro-democracy paper Apple Daily have been arrested with charges of colluding with foreign forces to endanger national security.
- Live drills in Karakoram Valley: As per PLA Daily, China has conducted live-fire assessment drills in KV.

- Taiwan to open a representative office in Lithuania: It will mark Taiwan's first European office to have the name 'Taiwan' in it. Chinese news and social media has shown resentment, with Chinese FM spokesperson Zhao Lijian asking the Baltic state to return to 'One China'. Lithuania plans to open its own representative office in Taipei soon.
- A verified PLA buff channel "Liujun Taolue" (六军韬略) has called for all-out war with Japan should it try to defend Taiwan. It has laid out a post-war strategy which calls for dividing Japan into four countries and a vassal state post its 'defeat' at the hands of the PLA. The pre-war strategy focuses on two-pronged attack on Taiwan and Japan. Such narrative shows increased focus within China for 'reunification' with the mainland of Taiwan –and is poised to move next towards Hong Kong and the Tibet question.
- "Pegasus" leak in China is doing the rounds especially as diplomats from China have also emerged on the list of people being monitored. Meanwhile Chinese opposition parties are using this as an opportunity to open discussion about crackdown on dissent within China itself.

### III. India Watch

- While India's goal to build a flat-topped superior power projection aircraft carrier is crucial to offset China's PLAN's maritime power, it is taking a backseat in light of PLAN's rapid encroachments in the Indian Ocean. Focus is instead reportedly going to building nuclear-powered attack submarines (SSNs), especially as China has built Renhai class destroyers in just 5 years. With China's 19th CPC Central Committee creating the new centennial goal of building a "fully modern military" by 2027 (centennial of the PLA), move towards defence development is being spurred by Xi and the CPC along the lines of patriotism and national duty. India's Project-75 is looking to therefore build 6 conventional submarines to boost naval capabilities.
- Taiwan is quickly emerging as the next big confrontation zone –with the third US plane landing in Taiwan to deliver diplomatic packages. China's gray-zone warfare and wolf-warrior diplomacy as well as open admissions to not ruling out use of force in Taiwan's reunification with Chinese mainland must be viewed with serious caution by India. New Delhi must decide its own course of action should a Chinese attack on Taiwan indeed take place.

- China is reportedly developing a new air base near Ladakh to overcome limitations in its fighter aircraft operations along the LAC. The development is taking place close to the Eastern Ladakh area in Shakche town, Xinjiang. The creation of this base will have major security ramifications for India.
- China's 'Little Pink' -netizens who attack those who slight China -have begun speaking on Taiwan with more focus again.

### Images 1-3: China's Type 003 aircraft carrier



Image 1



Image 2



Image 3