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In This Issue

CHINA: Hong Kong 47 Trial Will Most Likely Have Great Impact on Future Democracy	1
INDIA: Landing on Aircraft Carrier May Signal a Focus on Technology Development	2
PHILIPPINES: Likely to Seek More Western Support to Counter Beijing	3
PAKISTANS: Unclaimed Mosque Bombing May Indicate More to Come	4
ISRAEL: Drone Strike on Iranian Munitions Factory Likely Related to Nuclear Program	5

CHINA: Hong Kong 47 Trial Will Most Likely Have Great Impact on Future Democracy

Summary: The first round of trials for Hong Kong political activists will most likely damage the island's democratic integrity.

Development: On 6 February, the first trials began for 16 of the 47 Hong Kong political activists accused of subversion. The activists held a pre-election primary in 2020 to select candidates to compete with pro-Beijing legislatures. The police made the arrests in February 2021, citing the activists violated the Hong Kong National Security Law. The law passed only days before the primary elections, grants Beijing the ability to prosecute individuals for secession, subversion, terrorism, and collusion with foreign forces. If convicted, some activists face up to life in prison. Some scholars accused Beijing of abusing the law and using it as a ploy to gain more political control of the region, according to Amnesty International.

Analysis: The trial results could severely impact Hong Kong's autonomy. Because of the high-profile nature of the 47 arrested activists, a large conviction could inspire fear among other activist groups. The trials will likely lead to a smaller turnout of democratic candidates in future elections. This may lead to a heavily pro-Beijing government body, which could damage the country's autonomy.

[Nicole Bryant]

INDIA: Landing on Aircraft Carrier May Signal a Focus on Technology Development

Summary: The first successful landing of a fixed-wing aircraft on an aircraft carrier may highlight New Delhi's aspirations to prioritize domestic research and development of its military capabilities.

Development: On 6 February, the Indian Navy reached a historic milestone as pilots successfully landed the TEJAS MiG-29K fixed-wing aircraft on the aircraft carrier INS Vikrant. This represents the first time the Indian military landed a fixed-wing aircraft on an aircraft carrier. The Indian Navy stated, "It demonstrates India's capability to design, develop, and operate an indigenous aircraft carrier with an indigenous aircraft," according to NDTV. Despite the military previously relying on international aircraft equipment, New Delhi rejected deals to buy American F-35s and Russian MiG-21s. New Delhi has recently moved to use these variants as blueprints to create more homegrown fighter jets.

Analysis: The successful landing of the homegrown TEJAS variant jet on the INS Vikrant likely shows the direction New Delhi will take with domestic research and development. New Delhi's rejection of buying the F-35 and the MiG-21 may suggest the Indian military is starting to find a solid identity for different mission sets. Modifications of foreign aircraft could also indicate the need for more curated solutions to fit missions the Indian military faces regularly.

[Deeptankshu "Deep" Ganguly]

PHILIPPINES: Likely to Seek More Western Support to Counter Beijing

Summary: Manila and Beijing continue to fight over territorial claims in the South China Sea (SCS). Hostilities will likely increase if Manila seeks allied support to defend its territory.

Development: On 6 February, Manila's Coast Guard Commandant Admiral Artemio Abu announced an increased presence of military vessels in the SCS. Regional disputes have lingered over the past two decades as Manila and Beijing continue to fight over territorial claims in the SCS. Manila received a report last month regarding a Chinese Coast Guard vessel forcing a Filipino fishing vessel to leave the Second Thomas Shoal, even though that shoal lies within Manila's exclusive economic zone, according to Reuters. On 1 February, two Chinese Coast Guard ships and two militia vessels tailed a Filipino warship along the Mischief Reef in the SCS, according to *Bloomberg*. President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. stated that Manila would not concede its territorial claims and agreed to resume joint patrols with United States naval warships in the SCS.

Analysis: Increased aggression in the SCS will almost certainly influence Manila to seek allied support in its regional defenses. Manila will probably pressure the Chinese Coast Guard and militia vessels out of controversial territorial claims. If Manila attempts to redirect Chinese vessels out of unsettled territories, Manila will most likely avoid offensive military attacks toward the Chinese Navy.

[John Conrod]

PAKISTAN: Unclaimed Mosque Bombing May Indicate More to Come

Summary: The mosque bombing in Pakistan remains unclaimed by any groups. The group responsible may be waiting to voice its involvement until it carries out more attacks, likely targeting law enforcement.

Development: On 30 January, a suicide bomber attacked a full mosque in Peshawar, Pakistan. The bomber managed to bypass several layers of security consisting of police and counterterrorism forces called the Red Zone, according to *Reuters*. The suicide bomber attacked while everyone lined up for prayer, resulting in the death of at least 59 individuals and 170 individuals critically wounded. A majority of the victims consisted of law enforcement individuals, according to AP News. Ongoing investigations have officials struggling to identify the responsible actor. Officials have found traces of the explosives used in the attack and continue to question the attacker's ability to advance into the mosque without police forces catching them.

Analysis: The unidentified attackers may indicate future bombings in Pakistan, similar to the mosque suicide bombing. The motive behind the bombing could connect to anti-Islam sentiments if the attacker specifically targeted the mosque. However, the attacker probably focused their attack on police forces since they made up most of the victims. Police and counterterrorism forces will almost certainly analyze the explosive materials they recovered to help investigate ties to terrorist groups. The actor or group behind this attack could be waiting to claim ownership of the attack if they plan to conduct more. In claiming the attack too early, the responsible party could become vulnerable to law enforcement involvement before it can execute its remaining plans. If more attacks occur and law enforcement members remain a target, secondary attacks on first responders may take place.

[Savannah Gallop]

ISRAEL: Drone Strike on Iranian Munitions Factory Likely Related to Nuclear Program

Summary: Jerusalem most likely orchestrated a drone strike on a munitions factory in Iran to reduce its ballistic missile capabilities.

Development: On 28 January, at least three quadcopter drones, equipped with explosives, attacked a munitions factory responsible for producing ballistic missiles and drones in Isfahan. The type of quadcopter drone used in conjunction with the added weight of explosives suggests that the drone attacks originated from within Iran, according to *Critical Threats*. The Iranian defense ministry claimed the factory only suffered minor roof damage and shot down two of the drones. However, the actor responsible for the attack and the extent of damage to the factory remain unknown. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu vowed to block Tehran from obtaining nuclear weapons, including ballistic missiles. In 2018, Jerusalem leaked nuclear documents confirming Tehran planned to develop nuclear weapons.

Analysis: Jerusalem most likely attacked the munitions factory in Tehran due to the production of nuclear-capable ballistic missiles in Isfahan, slowing its nuclear program. Israeli agents within Iran likely launched the drones into the factory in Isfahan. Tehran almost certainly underplayed the damage caused by the drone attacks. Tehran likely will not blame Jerusalem for attacking the factory in the short-term. Jerusalem almost certainly will continue to sabotage Tehran's nuclear program. Tehran will most likely complete its nuclear program regardless of sabotage. A nuclear-capable Tehran will almost certainly severely escalate tensions on a local and global scale.

[Sebastien Bragg]

About GSIS

Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University's (ERAU) Bachelor of Science in Global Security & Intelligence Studies (GSIS) degree program at our Prescott Campus blends both academic and professional studies to equip students with the knowledge and skills necessary to become future leaders in intelligence, security, and law enforcement. The program provides students with a sound foundation in the liberal arts, including international relations, foreign languages and cultures, international law, foreign policy, political and military history, and other essential topics.

About EE

Eagle Eye Intelligence (EE) is an intelligence and research organization led by the students of the GSIS program at ERAU in Prescott, Arizona.

Dr. Philip E. Jones founded EE and Embry-Riddle's GSIS program in 2002, following a career with the Central Intelligence Agency and consulting work in international development and global security. Currently, Professor Dale R. Avery, a former career intelligence analyst, serves as EE's faculty advisor.

EE strives to provide actionable intelligence and analysis to its customers during the academic year. We are driven by a number of goals – continuous development, nonpartisanship, interdisciplinary studies, global awareness, and professionalism.

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Savannah Gallop, a senior in the GSIS program, currently serves as EE's Editor in Chief. For questions or comments, contact the team at editorsee@gmail.com or Professor Avery at 928.777.4708. If you use material from this publication, you should attribute: Eagle Eye Intelligence Edition 422, a publication created by students at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University in Prescott, Arizona.



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