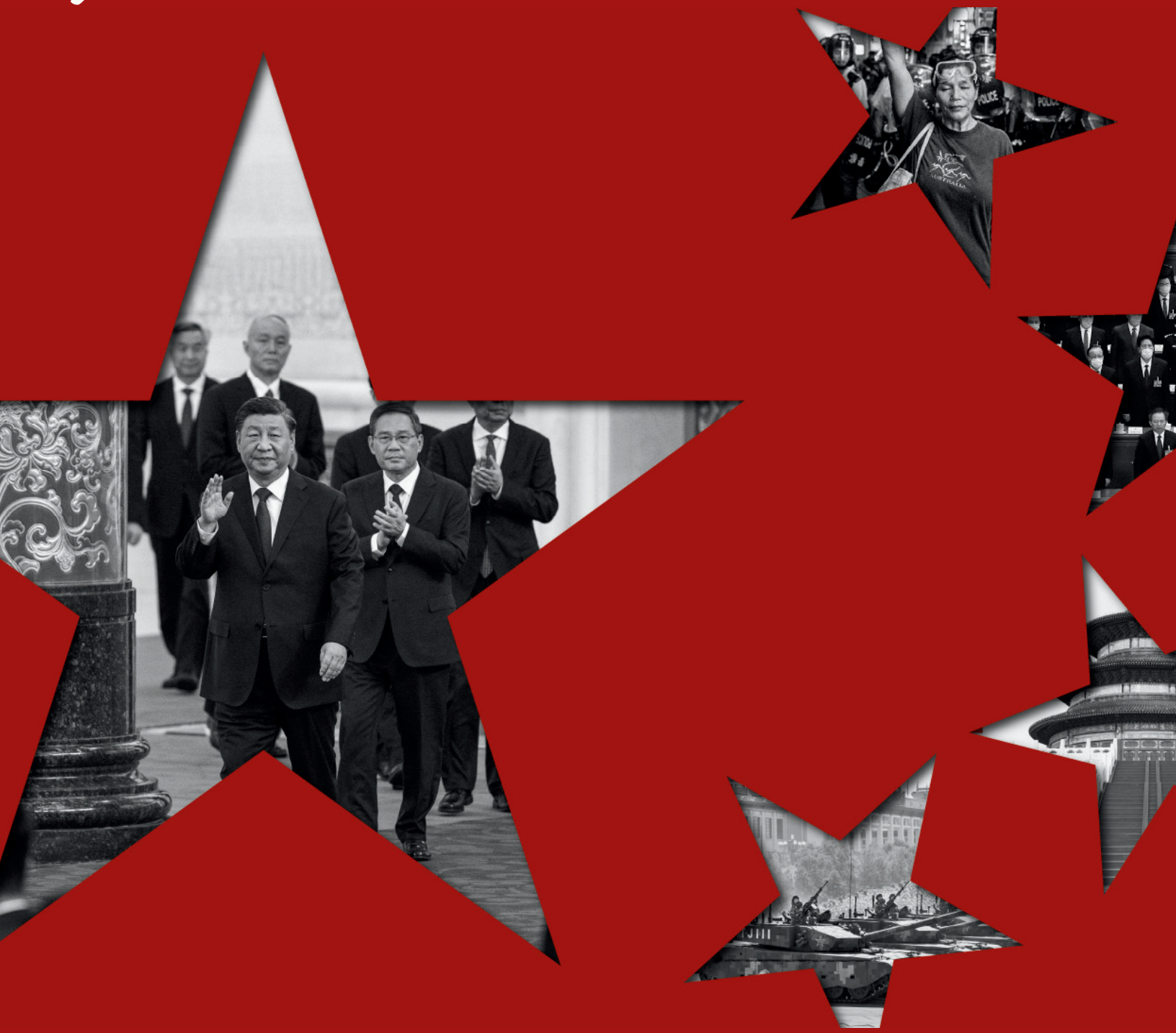
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President Donald Trump speaks to General Secretary Xi Jinping at Zhongnanhai during his visit to Beijing in May 2026. (Source: Getty)

Official Assessments Argue Beijing Has Strategic Initiative

J. Michael Dahm and M. Reece Breaux
November 3, 2026

Executive Summary

- Chinese Communist Party (CCP) insiders appear to be developing a consensus that portends a more confident foreign policy approach to Washington ahead of leadership summits in late 2026.
- Beijing regards the United States' apparent acceptance of a "constructive relationship of strategic stability" as a significant diplomatic achievement and evidence of an improving position for the People's Republic of China (PRC) relative to the ongoing decline of the United States.
- The PRC is evolving its foreign policy approach from exploiting opportunities toward actively shaping its external environment and seeking strategic initiative. This shift will likely make Beijing more demanding in negotiations with the United States. It remains unclear how that shift might translate into future military aggression or opportunism.

Foreign Policy

On October 16, 2026, Fu Xiaoqiang (傅小强), president of the China Institutes of Contemporary International Relations (CICIR), published a policy prescription for future relations between the United States and the People's Republic of China (PRC) in the influential Central Party School journal Study Times (Study Times, October 16). **[1]**

Fu's article closely tracks with PRC Foreign Minister Wang Yi's (王毅) detailed readout of Xi Jinping's mid-September 2026 state visit to Washington and his meeting with President Donald Trump (Xinhua, September 26). Wang underscored that Xi had solidified a new framework for PRC–U.S. relations: a "constructive relationship of strategic stability" (建设性战略稳定关系). Fu's article argued that the new relationship sets boundaries for competition, supports the PRC's core interests, and promotes future cooperation (Study Times, October 16).

The October 2026 article likely serves three overlapping purposes ahead of Xi and Trump's November and December meetings. Externally, it communicates Beijing's conception of a sustainable PRC–U.S. relationship to Washington. Domestically, it explains to Chinese policymakers how to operationalize the new great power relationship. Strategically, it presents the PRC and the United States as equals, making future U.S. accommodation of PRC interests both necessary and achievable (Study Times, October 16).

The October article is the latest in a series of writings showing a distinct trend in Chinese foreign policy prescriptions. The day before Xi's May 2026 summit with Trump, a CICIR research group published a report titled "World Transformation and a Way for China and the United States to Coexist" (世界大变局与中美共处之道). The article closely resembled Fu's latest piece and described PRC–U.S. relations as entering a prolonged period of "strategic stalemate" (战略相持). It argued for stable PRC–U.S. relations based on mutual respect, peaceful coexistence, and "win-win" cooperation (China's Diplomacy, May 13). Following Wang Yi's declaration of a new direction for bilateral relations, Fu's article establishes an overarching framework for interpreting, encouraging, or challenging future U.S. behavior. **[2]**

Fu: New Label 'Recalibrates Strategic Perceptions,' With Xi Steering Relations

Foreign Minister Wang described the expanded PRC–U.S. relationship designation as an important political achievement of Xi's September visit to Washington. He explained that both countries agreed to establish a "constructive relationship of strategic stability" based on three principles: "respect" (尊重), which entails "honoring each other's sovereignty and territorial integrity, the social systems and development paths chosen by each side, and each other's core interests and major concerns" (尊重彼此主权和领土完整，尊重各自选择的社会制度和发展道路，尊重对方核心利益和重大关切); "fairness" (公平), which implies "engaging in mutually beneficial cooperation, addressing differences through consultation, avoiding zero-sum games where one side wins at the expense of the other, and eschewing the pursuit of unilateral, absolute advantage" (开展互利合作，协商处理分歧，不搞你输我赢的零和博弈，不追求单方面的绝对优势); and "reciprocity" (对等), which signifies that "both nations are sovereign equals—with neither being superior or inferior to the other—rejecting hegemonic or bullying behavior, addressing each other's concerns on an equal footing, and fostering balanced cooperation across all areas" (两国主权平等，没有高低之分，不搞霸道霸凌，对等解决各自关切，平衡发展各领域合作) (Xinhua, September 26). **[3]**

Fu's article is aligned with Wang's explanation,

but he goes considerably further in his analysis. He argues that the designation has fundamentally "recalibrated strategic perceptions" (战略再校准) away from conflict and confrontation, even amid competition. Fu may be attempting to influence the internal American debate by praising what he called the pragmatic approach of those in the U.S. administration who sought to avoid the costs of confrontation, contrasting them with U.S. policymakers "shackled by a Cold War mentality" (深陷冷战思维桎梏) who cast the PRC as an enemy (Study Times, October 16).

The article argues that the PRC and the United States should set clearer national security boundaries, distinguishing between activities that directly affect sovereignty and other core interests that should remain outside competition. Fu further argues for decoupling security issues from trade and economic issues, strengthening crisis communication mechanisms, and expanding cooperation across areas ranging from people-to-people exchanges to transnational crime to artificial intelligence risk assessments.

In effect, Fu asserts that the new constructive relationship should prompt U.S. restraint on the PRC's core interests while preserving the benefits of commerce and cooperation in other areas. According to a 2025 State Council white paper on "China's national security in the New Era" (新时代的中国国家安全), the country's core interests principally include "state political power, sovereignty, national reunification and territorial integrity, the well-being of the people, and sustainable economic and social development" (国家政权、主权、统一和领土完整、人民福祉、经济社会可持续发展) (State Council Information Office, May 12, 2025). The language that the PRC's core interests "principally include" (主要包括) these elements allows Beijing to add additional items if necessary.

Fu appears to view agreement on the constructive relationship as committing Washington to Beijing's red lines—which Xi delineated in his 2024 meeting with President Biden as Taiwan, democracy and human rights, the PRC's development path and political system, and the PRC's development rights—thereby empowering it to steer the relationship (PRC Ministry of Foreign Affairs [MFA], November 17, 2024).

The Changing Character of Opportunity

The 2026 shift in Chinese foreign policy, especially toward the United States, aligns with how leadership has recently characterized the country's external environment. Since 2002, Beijing has assessed that an "important period of strategic opportunity" (重要战略机遇期) would facilitate its development. The United States was distracted by the Global War on Terrorism while the PRC enjoyed unfettered access to markets, technology, and capital, along with a relatively accommodating security environment. The optimistic assessment of the strategic environment survived the 2008 financial crisis and the rise of PRC–U.S. competition into this decade.

Xi's work report to the 20th Party Congress in 2022 replaced the 20-year window of strategic opportunity with a more sober judgment: the PRC faced a period in which "strategic opportunities, risks, and challenges coexist, with an increase in uncertain and unpredictable factors" (战略机遇和风险挑战并存、不确定难预料因素增多) (People's Daily, October 26, 2022). However, this did not end the PRC's opportunities. A Work Report study guide explained that the resulting task was to "discover opportunities, seize opportunities, and shape opportunities" (发现机遇、抓住机遇、塑造机遇), while simultaneously preparing for consequential risks (CCP Member Net, December 15, 2022).

The 2022 shift from exploiting opportunities to

actively shaping the international environment marked a significant evolution in the country's foreign policy approach. The 15th Five-Year Plan (2026–2030), published in March 2026, reaffirmed the coexistence of opportunity and risk while asserting that the PRC possesses favorable conditions to "actively manage international space and shape the external environment" (主动运筹国际空间、塑造外部环境) (National Development and Reform Commission, March 18; China Brief, April 4). A Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS) interpretation of the five-year plan presented this new formulation as evidence that the country is moving from adapting to the international system toward exercising greater initiative and shaping its external environment (CASS, January 27).

A consistently invoked planning maxim, "time and momentum are on our side" (时与势在我们一边), connects the period of "strategic opportunity" to the present-day period of "strategic opportunity with greater risks." That optimistic assessment has shaped Beijing's foreign policy behavior over the past quarter-century. In an October 9 Study Times essay, Gao Zugui (高祖贵), dean of the Central Party School's graduate school, invoked the phrase and presented "时" (time or the historical moment) and "势" (momentum or trend) as key variables in an analytic framework asserting that both the current historical moment and the underlying trajectory of the international system strongly favor the PRC (Study Times, October 9).

Party-Aligned Assessments Herald American Decline

The evolution of Chinese foreign policy in 2026 also aligns with Beijing's official perception of a shift in the strategic balance of power. A number of Chinese policy analysts and influential academics have framed the PRC's rise against a rapid decline in the relative power and influence of the United States. In mid-2025, CICIR vice president Zhang Jian (张健) assessed the growing fractures among Western powers caused by aggressive U.S. policies (Contemporary World, July 2025). By October 2026, Gao's Study Times article described the United States as having fallen from the world's sole superpower to the strongest power in an emerging multipolar order. Gao's article assessed U.S. weakness in Washington's strategic retrenchment to a "Western Hemisphere fortress" (西半球堡垒), deepening conflicts with allies, and growing military and economic costs of the ongoing confrontation with Iran (Study Times, October 9).

Analysts writing in Party publications have seen the U.S.–Iran conflict as accelerating the decline in U.S. international influence that Beijing has long anticipated. Chen Wenxin (陈文鑫), director of CICIR's American Studies Institute, argued in April in the authoritative Party journal Qiushi that the war is exhausting American strategic resources, damaging its international credibility, worsening alliance relations, and exposing a growing mismatch between U.S. ambitions and capabilities. The article further asserted that the Iran conflict's impacts exceeded U.S. expectations, exacerbating political polarization and social fragmentation within the United States (Qiushi, April 16). An August 2026 PLA Daily article authored by Renmin University academics concluded that the Iran conflict is accelerating the erosion of U.S. dominance in the Middle East and creating opportunities for other countries to fill the power vacuum (PLA Daily, August 21). Beijing is keen to step into the gap: in late October, Wang Yi praised Xi's "series of proposals to maintain and promote peace and stability in the Middle East" (维护和促进中东和平稳定的系列主张) (MFA, October 23).

Official publications also cite the ongoing Iran

conflict as a conspicuous example of how Beijing might turn international disruption into diplomatic and commercial advantage. The joint statement from the ASEAN-China foreign ministers meeting envisaged an opening for the PRC to engage in practical energy security cooperation throughout Southeast Asia, born out of the Iran conflict (MFA, July 24). In a more recent People's Daily commentary, Lu Ruquan (陆如泉), president of the China National Petroleum Corporation Research Institute, argued that the country's energy reserves, diversified supplies, and growing exports of clean energy technologies could help stabilize global energy markets disrupted by the Iran conflict (People's Daily, September 30).

These assessments of U.S. diplomatic decline and the limits of U.S. military power exposed by the Iran conflict do not necessarily portend Chinese military aggression in the Taiwan Strait or elsewhere in Asia. Several analysts have expressed concern about improving U.S.-led security arrangements in the Pacific, even amid the perceived U.S. decline. The China Institute of International Studies (CIIS) has described such arrangements involving Japan, the Philippines, Australia, and South Korea as a "nested, multi-layered, grid-like Indo-Pacific mini-multilateral mechanism" (圈层嵌套的复合型、网格化"印太"小多边机制) (CIIS, March 5, 2025). **[4]** Even without U.S. military capabilities and regional security guarantees, Chinese military planners have likely drawn lessons from the Iran and Ukraine conflicts about the consequences of becoming trapped in a prolonged military campaign, which likely serves as an even greater deterrent against military overreach.

While most nations appear to accede to requests to define their relationship with the PRC on Beijing's terms, the United States has had a tortured history with these labels. **[5]** Even as different presidential administrations were seduced into "partnerships" or "relationships," the bilateral labels would inevitably atrophy. By 2018, the Clinton- and Bush-era "constructive strategic partnership" and "constructive cooperative relationship," along with the Obama-era "new-type great power relationship," had been eclipsed by "great power competition," a label Beijing has rejected as unhelpful (China Brief, June 5).

The current U.S. administration apparently embraced the May 2026 return to a mutually agreed label for the bilateral relationship (*White House*, May 17). Chinese accounts describe the "constructive relationship of strategic stability" as a "new orientation" (新定位) intended to provide strategic guidance for relations for at least the next three years (MFA, May 14). After Xi's September visit, the White House again confirmed that the two nations would build a constructive relationship of strategic stability "on the basis of respect, fairness, and reciprocity," mirroring the Chinese read-out (White House, September 25; MFA [English], MFA [Chinese], September 26).

Conclusion

The next tests for PRC–U.S. relations will be scheduled meetings between Xi and Trump at the November 18–19 APEC leaders' meeting in Shenzhen and the December 14–15 G20 summit in Miami. American policymakers should pay close attention not only to material agreements but also to Chinese readouts and the language Beijing uses to explain them. This includes whether Beijing invokes the "constructive relationship of strategic stability" to request or expect changes in U.S. policy toward Taiwan or regional alliances, or whether it translates claims of American decline to seek concessions on economic issues like tariffs or technology controls. Answers to these questions may offer insights into Beijing's perceptions of the PRC's relative strength and potential leverage against

the United States.

Chinese leaders do not believe dominance over the United States is imminent. Rather, they currently assess that their external environment increasingly favors the PRC. American policymakers and legislators should be sensitive to the possibility that consensus will continue to shift and calls for increased assertiveness may grow within the PRC's foreign policy establishment. In the near term, Beijing may pursue a seemingly benign initiative to test the limits of the newly established "constructive relationship of strategic stability." Beijing may also act quickly on its perceptions of a narrowing power differential with the United States and leverage its interpretation of the new bilateral relationship to seek advantages and concessions from Washington.

The United States may understand "stability" within the new relationship designation as managing risk while continuing to compete. Based on Wang and Fu's recent interpretations, however, Beijing expects the new framework to limit competition in ways that benefit the PRC's core interests. Conflating these two differing interpretations could increase, not reduce, strategic miscalculation between the PRC and the United States.

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Notes

[1] On October 29, 2026, Michael Kovrig, Thomas Shipley, and Patricia Xavier observed in China Brief that Beijing is using its proposed framing of the relationship to constrain U.S. behavior. In early June, Christopher Nye discussed the history of the framing, suggesting similarly that Beijing sought to curtail U.S. interference in what it claims are its internal affairs (China Brief, June 5, October 29).

[2] The China Institutes of Contemporary International Relations (CICIR) is the in-house think tank of the Ministry of State Security (MSS), China's principal external intelligence agency. CICIR is also known as the MSS 11th Bureau. In a 2026 interview, Fu Xiaoqiang explained that CICIR served the CCP Central Committee and was responsible for integrating its research with domestic and international strategic communication ("研宣融合") (Xinhua Think Tank Research, May 27).

[3] The MFA's English-language press release following the summit states the two leaders "agreed to build a constructive relationship of strategic stability based on respect, fairness and reciprocity." However, in Chinese-language versions of the release, the word used is not "reciprocity" or "reciprocal" (互惠). Instead, MFA uses "对等", which may mean "reciprocity" in certain contexts, but is more commonly translated as "equal in status; on an equal footing; or of equal standing (especially between two parties).

[4] The China Institute of International Studies (CIIS) is the official research institution and think tank administered by China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA).

[5] The PRC has organized virtually all external relations into a complex hierarchy of either "relationships" or "partnerships," and appends a

combination of adjectives to these categories to define different levels of diplomatic engagement. Chinese diplomatic "partnerships," in particular, are widely misunderstood as akin to business partnerships with shared risks and rewards. Instead, the PRC's relationship and partnership labels define the nature and scope of the relationship, identifying areas of overlapping interest for engagement, even when the two sides disagree on certain issues (China Brief, September 20, 2024).

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The Fifth Plenum of the Chinese Communist Party's Central Committee, held between October 26 to 29 in Beijing. (Source: Xinhua)

Military Makes up Majority of Expulsions at Fifth Plenum

Zi Yang
November 12, 2026

Executive Summary

- Two thirds of the Fifth Plenum's expulsions are tied to the national defense apparatus in the People's Republic of China (PRC). The backgrounds of expelled cadres suggest that neither professional credentials nor longstanding personal relationships with Xi offer reliable protection against disciplinary investigations.
- The ongoing purge mainly affected the People's Liberation Army (PLA) Army. The absence of Air Force expulsions, meanwhile, reinforces the assessment that the service may gain greater influence in the reconstructed PLA high command.
- Expulsions formalized at the plenum suggest that unjustified absence from major Party events is an unambiguous signal of political downfall: Eleven of the 16 expelled officers were absent from the Fourth Plenum in October 2025, while two others disappeared from public view immediately afterwards.
- Chinese anti-corruption watchdogs are keeping defense industry leaders under close scrutiny. Further investigations could disrupt the aerospace and shipbuilding sectors, creating new challenges for the PRC's defense industrial base and military modernization.

The Chinese Communist Party's (CCP) Central Committee recently concluded its Fifth Plenum, focusing on internal Party discipline, the centralization of power, ideological reinforcement, and personnel reshuffles (China Brief, November 3; IISS, November 4). One outstanding development was the expulsion of 33 Central Committee members from the Party (IDSS Paper, November 4). These involved 16 armed forces officers and 17 civilian cadres, six of whom were closely linked with defense state-owned enterprises (Zaobao, October 30). Although the promotion of Central Military Commission (CMC) Vice Chairman Zhang Shengmin (张升民) to the Politburo attracted considerable analyst attention, the mass expulsion of former military officers and defense industry leaders is of equal, if not greater, importance—revealing meaningful insights on the state of the Chinese armed forces.

Armed Forces Expulsions

At the top of the list of expelled military officers is former People's Liberation Army (PLA) general and CMC Vice Chairman Zhang Youxia (张又侠). As a decorated commander during the Sino-Vietnamese border conflict, Zhang also served on the Politburo throughout his tenure as CMC vice chairman from 2017–2026, serving as a critical link between top military and civilian decision-making organs. Despite his longstanding ties with Xi, Zhang somehow ran afoul of the Chinese leader and was removed and detained in January 2026, alongside Liu Zhenli (刘振立), a fellow Army general and war hero who served on the CMC and as the PLA chief of staff from 2022–2026. The Central Committee first expelled Zhang and Liu from the Party in September 2026, before it reaffirmed the decision at the Fifth Plenum (China Supreme Court, September 21)

Following Zhang and Liu is PLA Navy admiral Wang Renhua (王仁华), who served as secretary of the CMC political and legal affairs commission from 2019–2025, in charge of the military justice system and counterespionage. Wang disappeared in October 2025 and nothing was heard of him until his recent expulsion from the CCP (Caixin, October 28, 2025).

Liu Qingsong (刘青松) is a Navy admiral who served as the political commissar of the Eastern Theater Command from 2023–2025. He worked with the disgraced Eastern Theater Command Commander Lin Xiangyang (林向阳), who was purged in October last year (China Brief, November 25, 2025). Liu was one of at least 18 officers absent at the Fourth Plenum in October 2025 (Sing Tao Daily, October 27, 2025; BBC, November 7, 2025). His whereabouts remained unknown until his expulsion at the Fifth Plenum.

Army general Huang Ming (黄铭) first vanished from public view in July 2025 and was absent at the subsequent Fourth Plenum. The commander of the Northern Theater Command from 2024–2025, Huang was once regarded as a promising leader within the Army (Zaobao, August 3, 2024). His expulsion at the Fifth Plenum, however, sealed his fate.

Li Qiaoming (李桥铭) was another elite Army general with a long list of professional accomplishments. He rose from a simple soldier to become the fourth commander of the PLA Army in 2022. Yet Li was missing in action during the Fourth Plenum last year and was booted out of the National People's Congress (NPC) in February 2026 (Xinhua, February 26). His expulsion from the CCP at the Fifth Plenum made him the third Army commander to be purged since the post was created in 2015 amid changes to the military's organizational structure known as the "Deepening National Defense and Military Reform" (深化国防和军队改革).

Army general Li Wei (李伟) was the third political commissar of the now-disbanded Strategic Support Force and then became the first political

commissar of the Information Support Force, founded in 2024 to succeed the Strategic Support Force's cyber capabilities (Zaobao, April 20, 2024; China Brief, April 26, 2024 [a], [b]). Like Li Qiaoming, Li Wei failed to attend the Fourth Plenum and was removed from the NPC in February 2026. He was formally expelled from the Party at the Fifth Plenum.

Zhang Hongbing (张红兵) spent most of his career in the PLA Army before transferring to the People's Armed Police in 2022 as its political commissar, attaining the rank of general. He disappeared from public view for most of 2025, including the Fourth Plenum, and was expelled from the Party at the Fifth Plenum (Zaobao, December 24, 2025).

Wang Haijiang (汪海江) was regarded as a capable Army officer who fought in the Sino-Vietnamese border conflict (China Brief, June 7). He spent over a decade serving at senior PLA posts in Xinjiang and Tibet before becoming the Western Theater Command commander in 2021. He did not attend the Fourth Plenum in October 2025 and was expelled from the Party at the Fifth Plenum. The same fate befell Army lieutenant general Yang Cheng (杨诚), the political commissar of the Xinjiang military district from 2020–2025 who most likely maintained working relations with Wang Haijiang (Caixin, April 6, 2021).

Three former heads of CMC departments were also expelled following their absence from last year's Fourth Plenum. They were Army lieutenant general Wang Peng (王鹏), who headed the CMC training and administration department from 2021–2025; Army lieutenant general Liu Faqing (刘发庆), who led the CMC national defense mobilization department from 2021–2025; and Navy vice admiral Zhao Xiaozhe (赵晓哲), who previously oversaw the CMC science and technology department. Separately, Army lieutenant general Zhang Lin (张林), director of the CMC logistics support department from 2022–2025, was removed from the NPC last October and expelled at the Fifth Plenum (Zaobao, October 16, 2025).

Last but not least, Army lieutenant generals Zhong Shaojun (钟绍军) and Fang Yongxiang (方永祥) were both considered confidants of Xi. Zhong assisted Xi since the latter's tenure in Zhejiang in the early 2000s (VOA, August 29). After Xi came to power, he brought Zhong into the PLA as a senior colonel, despite having no military experience, to manage the crucial CMC chairman's office that supported Xi's daily work schedule (China Brief, September 14). Zhong subsequently became director of the CMC general office that provided administrative and logistical support to all CMC members, before eventually serving as political commissar of the National Defense University. He vanished in October 2025 and was removed from the NPC in August 2026, prior to his expulsion from the Party in October (Zaobao, October 29).

Fang succeeded Zhong in leading both the CMC chairman's office and CMC general office, indicating a high level of trust that Xi had in him (SCMP, October 26, 2024). Like many previously mentioned officers, Fang failed to attend the Fourth Plenum, with no news regarding his whereabouts until his expulsion from the CCP at the recent Fifth Plenum.

Defense Industry Expulsions

Other than military officers, Sun Shaopin (孙绍骋), former minister of veterans affairs from 2018–2022, was also expelled from the Party (Caixin, January 29). Moreover, one third of the 17 civilian cadres expelled at the Fifth Plenum were associated with state-owned defense enterprises. At the top of the expulsion list was Lei Fanpei (雷凡培). He had a long career in the country's aerospace industry, rising from an ordinary designer to become chairman of the

China Aerospace Science and Technology Corporation (CASC). From 2018–2022, Lei was the chairman of China State Shipbuilding Corporation (CSSC) (World Ships, October 31). From 2022–2025, Lei served as the deputy director at the Office of Central Military-Civil Fusion Development Commission (中央军民融合发展委员会办公室) (Zaobao, October 31, 2024). Despite being an experienced technocrat and crucial link between defense companies and policymakers, Lei was expelled from the Party at the Fifth Plenum.

Several other senior leaders from the defense sector were expelled at the same time. They include former chairman of the China National Nuclear Corporation Yu Jianfeng (余剑锋); former chairman of CASC Yuan Jie (袁洁), who was removed in 2024 likely in connection with the Rocket Force investigations that year (Radio Free Asia, April 15, 2024); Zhang Zhongyang (张忠阳), former chairman of CASC and head of the China Academy of Launch Vehicle Technology, the country's largest research, development, and production institution for carrier rockets and missile systems (Zaobao, January 30, 2024); Wen Gang (温刚), former chairman of Norinco and CSSC (Caixin, October 30); and Jin Donghan (金东寒), an engine and marine propulsion research specialist and former president of Shanghai University and Tianjin University. Jin spent decades researching engines for the PRC's defense industry and led the CSSC's Shanghai Marine Diesel Engine Research Institute that specializes in marine diesel and gas engines, power systems, electrical and automation systems, and energy equipment (163, January 15).

Scope of Purge Shows Inter-Service Political Priorities

As the largest PLA service, the Army predominated among those expelled, accounting for 11 of the 16 military officers. The Navy follows with three officers, Information Support Force and the People's Armed Police each account for one. Neither the Air Force nor Rocket Force saw any expulsions this time. While the lack of Rocket Force expulsions may be linked to the broad purges that decimated its top leadership in 2023 and the subsequent years, the absence of Air Force expulsions again highlights this service as the least affected by the purges so far. This reinforces the author's previous assessment that the Air Force is set to gain influence within the reconstructed PLA high command, as its senior leadership remains comparatively intact (The Diplomat, August 11).

The professional backgrounds of expelled officers also reveal important patterns in the direction of the purge. Military officers with extensive command experience constitute seven cases while political commissars account for six, followed by three defense technocrats. This shows that the commanders and commissars of major PLA organizations are most at risk. The authorities appear to make no distinction between commanders or commissars when conducting investigations. In comparison, defense technocrats, who tend to stay in the background, seem to be less affected by the current campaign. Interestingly, three expelled officers had close personal ties with Xi, with relations dating back years, if not decades. But this did not save them from being purged, indicating that Xi does not tolerate any malfeasance or signs of disloyalty among military officers, regardless of their personal relations with him.

Fourth Plenum Absences as a Potential Purge Indicator

Another recurring theme is the connection between the expelled and the Fourth Plenum. Out of 16 officers expelled at the Fifth Plenum, 11 were absent from the Fourth Plenum in October 2025, with two more—Wang Renhua and Zhong Shaojun—disappearing from public view

immediately after the gathering. This suggests that these 13 officers had likely been detained and placed under investigation around the time of the Fourth Plenum. This sequence teaches us that absence from key Party meetings is an early warning sign of political trouble and missing individuals are likely to end up as purge victims.

It is worth noting that several other officers absent from the Fourth Plenum have not yet been expelled. They include Commander of the Southern Theater Command Wu Ya'nan (吴亚男); Political Commissar of the Central Theater Command Xu Deqing (徐德清); Commander of the PLA Navy Hu Zhongming (胡中明), and Political Commissar of the PLA Rocket Force Xu Xisheng (徐西盛) (Sing Tao Daily, October 27, 2025; BBC, November 7, 2025). Despite having no news and public appearance since the Fourth Plenum, events at the Fifth Plenum suggest that they have met their downfall.

Turning to the defense industry, the affiliations of the expelled executives reveal a clear concentration of those associated with CASC and CSSC. Others were linked to the China National Nuclear Corporation, Norinco, and key research institutions developing missiles and marine engines. There may be parallels between the depth of corruption within these corporations and the quality of their equipment, echoing concerns previously raised about Rocket Force vulnerabilities (CNA, January 11, 2024). As investigations are likely to expand in these sectors, the disruptions could have negative consequences for the PRC's defense industrial base and military modernization.

Conclusion

The armed forces and defense industry cadres constitute a two-third majority of Fifth Plenum expulsions, an extraordinary development when personnel involved in national defense only account for a minority within the entire Party-state elite. While the rise of CMC Vice Chairman Zhang Shengmin reestablished formal communications between the Politburo and the PLA, the Fifth Plenum's expulsions offer broader insights into the state of the PLA. As Xi reconstructs the high command, the Fifth Plenum reminds us that trust between the commander-in-chief and his generals remains low (The Diplomat, July 6). While it is not difficult to appoint new people to top posts, building confidence and rapport is a long-term project that might be undermined by frequent leadership instability.

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Taiwanese comedian Huang Yi-hao. (Source: CNA)

Taiwan Attacks and Possible Violence in PRC Repression

Matt Brazil
November 5, 2026

Executive Summary

- The People's Republic of China (PRC) may be expanding its transnational repression campaign against Taiwanese individuals who speak out against the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) to include violent intimidation. Taiwanese comedian Huang Yi-hao was allegedly attacked by assailants in Taiwan acting on the instructions of an instigator in the PRC who sought to inflict serious injuries. Huang was likely targeted due to his xiangsheng comedy skit that satirized General Secretary Xi Jinping.
- Taiwan's role in Xi Jinping's vision to achieve "national rejuvenation" could result in more transnational repression against Taiwanese individuals. Beijing's enthusiasm for clamping down on dissent against the CCP may increasingly threaten the safety of individuals in Taiwan and the nation's sovereignty.
- Previous transnational repression cases involving Chinese-origin foreign nationals, Hong Kongers, Tibetan, and Uyghur activists show the willingness of the PRC to employ physical means outside its borders to intimidate individuals who voice undesirable opinions.
- Recent violence in PRC transnational repression has drawn comparisons to Soviet and Russian tactics, which include assassinations and attempted assassinations of political opponents abroad, such as the 2018 Salisbury poisonings in the United Kingdom. The extent to which the PRC is willing to employ lethal violence, however, as well as the level of direct state involvement in clandestine operations, remains unclear.

On September 11, a car collided with the Taiwanese comedian Huang Yi-hao (黃逸豪) as he was riding his scooter home in the Yonghe district of New Taipei. Huang suffered a bruised pelvis but escaped serious injury. What appeared to be a traffic accident soon became an investigation into a politically motivated assault.

On October 21, the Taiwanese public prosecutor's office charged five men with taking part in a plot funded by an unidentified individual in the People's Republic of China (PRC). According to the prosecutor's office, the suspects intended to break Huang's arms and legs to prevent him from performing on stage. His apparent offence was to have publicly mocked the General Secretary of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), Xi Jinping (Focus Taiwan, October 21).

This incident raises the possibility that the PRC's security operations abroad are shifting direction—toward employing physical violence against its critics overseas. It is unclear, however, if this is a new tactic of limited importance, or a change of strategy that might eventually mirror the "active measures" and assassinations employed by Moscow (Marshall Center, June 2019). Determining this requires distinguishing between three issues: intimidation carried out by individuals sympathetic to Beijing, operations where the instigator has not been established, and coercive operations clearly directed by Chinese state agencies.

The PRC's use of pressure beyond its borders is nothing new, and its clandestine and covert activities in Taiwan appear to have increased in recent years (China Brief, November 10, 2023, May 9, 2025; Global Taiwan Institute, March 2025). But recent cases suggest an escalating and varied repertoire of methods, ranging from threats against relatives to surveillance, extraditions, renditions, sabotage, and, potentially, the use of violence by third parties. The Huang case could represent a further link in this continuum.

Two Attacks on Taiwanese Comedian Who Mocked Xi

Huang performs xiangsheng (相聲), or "crosstalk," a traditional Chinese form of comic dialogue. His December 2025 performance satirizing Xi Jinping circulated online and was apparently the trigger for his assault. On May 29, shortly before Huang was due to perform in Taipei, an assailant threw bags containing paint and human excrement into the venue.

In September, the public prosecutor's office charged two Taiwanese men in connection with the incident. It alleged that Liu Shengjie (劉昇傑), acting for an unidentified individual in the PRC, had recruited Guo Weihao (郭偉皓) to carry out the attack in return for a payment of TWD 50,000 ($1,600) (UDN; Focus Taiwan, September 29).

The next attack was more significant. According to the New Taipei City Public Prosecutor's Office, an individual in the PRC, known only as "K," offered a Taiwan-based intermediary, Zheng Boxuan (鄭博軒), TWD 450,000 ($14,000) to organize the attack aimed at seriously injuring Huang. Media reports said that Zheng had been monitoring Huang's movements since July and had fitted a GPS tracking device to his scooter. Prosecutors say that K sent Zheng an advance payment of TWD 250,000 ($7,600).

Zheng and another intermediary, You Weijie (游幃捷), allegedly recruited a driver and two accomplices. On September 11, the group waited near Huang's home. When he emerged, the driver struck him with their vehicle while a passenger filmed the collision. Subsequently, the conspirators allegedly obtained Huang's medical certificate on the pretext of helping him file an insurance claim and forwarded an image

to K. The instigator from the PRC reportedly refused to pay the remaining TWD 200,000 ($6,100) on the grounds that the injuries were not sufficiently serious (Taipei Times, October 21, UDN, October 21).

The incident exhibited characteristics often seen in a clandestine operation: surveillance of the target, "need-to-know" compartmentalized recruitment, financial inducements, a plausible cover story, and a requirement to document the outcome. It also differed from more common forms of CCP repression, however, such as non-violent intimidation against dissidents abroad and "law enforcement" actions taken against comedians inside the PRC (Index on Censorship, July 2023). The apparent intention in targeting Huang on the streets of Taipei was not simply to issue a warning but to inflict severe injury.

Attribution remains uncertain. Prosecutors have not publicly established K's identity or demonstrated that he was acting on behalf of a PRC entity, such as the Ministry of State Security or the Ministry of Public Security; and while the defendants have been charged, they have not been convicted. On October 28, the spokesperson for the PRC Taiwan Affairs Office, Chen Binhua (陈斌华), rejected the allegation of PRC involvement, accusing Taiwan's ruling Democratic Progressive Party of stirring up hostility toward the PRC (Taiwan Affairs Office, October 28).

Hong Kong and Thailand: Extradition and Control

A significant precedent illustrating Beijing's desire to exercise coercive power outside PRC territory emerged in 2015. That year, five men linked to the Hong Kong bookshop Causeway Bay Books (銅鑼灣書店), which sold politically sensitive publications concerning Chinese leaders, disappeared under suspicious circumstances.

The most striking case is that of Gui Minhai (桂敏海), a Swedish citizen and Hong Kong-based publisher. He disappeared from Pattaya, Thailand, on October 17, 2015, and subsequently appeared in Chinese state media, where he reportedly confessed to a previous traffic offence.

Another bookseller, Lee Bo (李波), disappeared from Hong Kong in December 2015 before reappearing in detention on the Chinese mainland. The Hong Kong authorities had no record of his lawful departure. Three other booksellers disappeared while visiting the Chinese mainland.

Human Rights Watch concluded that the five booksellers had been victims of an enforced disappearance orchestrated by the Chinese authorities. A Swedish government investigation characterized Gui's removal from Thailand as an abduction (Human Rights Watch, February 10, 2016; Government of Sweden, 2022). In 2020, the Chinese authorities sentenced him to ten years' imprisonment (Amnesty International, October 16, 2025).

These incidents demonstrated that Chinese authorities were prepared to use clandestine means to project jurisdiction abroad to neutralize individuals whose publications challenged political authority. They also highlighted the difficulty of identifying precisely which Chinese security or police agencies were involved.

In April 2020, Lam Wing-kee (林榮基), one of the five booksellers, was doused with red paint in Taipei shortly before the opening of a new bookshop. Three men from the region were convicted of the assault. Lam believed that Beijing was behind the attack, but the findings made public did not corroborate that idea (CNA Taiwan, April 22, 2020). This suggests that the attack on the comedian Huang may not have

been the PRC's first use of politically motivated violence in Taiwan, though Huang's case could signal a degree of escalation of such violence.

CCP Coercion Sans Abduction: 'Fox Hunt' and Pressure on Relatives

Physical abduction is just one method among many of extraterritorial coercion. Beijing launched "Operation Fox Hunt" (猎狐行动) in 2014 to return persons abroad suspected of corruption (China Brief, May 14, 2022). Some returns have taken place within the framework of formal legal cooperation. Others have involved methods described by the Chinese authorities as "persuasion to return" (劝返), which includes pressure exerted on the individuals abroad and their relatives in the PRC.

In 2022, the human rights nonprofit Safeguard Defenders documented the use of threats against relatives, restrictions imposed on family members, and other coercive methods to encourage targets to return from abroad. However, official Chinese reports do not always distinguish between coercion and genuinely voluntary return, so these cases must be treated with caution (Safeguard Defenders, January 17, 2022).

The United States has uncovered more directly verifiable examples. In June 2023, a federal jury convicted Michael McMahon, a retired New York police sergeant, along with two co-defendants in a case involving attempts to force a Chinese national residing in the United States to return to the PRC. McMahon, working as a private detective, followed his target and passed information to the Chinese authorities via third parties. Prosecutors established that Ministry of Public Security officers and the PRC public prosecutor oversaw an operation to threaten the target's family. McMahon was sentenced to 18 months' imprisonment in April 2025 (U.S. Department of Justice [DOJ], April 16, 2025). This operation showed collaboration between Chinese law enforcement, private detectives, and locally recruited intermediaries. The similarity in method to the Huang case in Taiwan is striking, though the objectives were different: the U.S. operation aimed at forced repatriation, while in Taiwan it allegedly aimed to inflict serious physical harm.

In a second instance, the Department of Justice alleged that individuals acting on behalf of Chinese intelligence services had organized the surveillance of dissidents and conspired to destroy works of art critical of Xi Jinping. A sculpture depicting Xi in the form of a coronavirus molecule was destroyed in California in 2021. The indictment cited GPS surveillance, hidden cameras, and a coordinator based in the PRC (DOJ, March 16, 2022). Earlier this year, security contractors working for the PRC consulates in Los Angeles and New York were observed harassing protestors, including with the use of pepper spray (China Brief, May 29).

These incidents suggest that certain elements of Operation Huang's operational methods—notably the surveillance and attacks on critics—already had precedents in Chinese activities abroad.

Uyghurs and Tibetans: Crackdowns Exploiting Families' Vulnerability

Other forms of repression are less visible but potentially more pervasive. Uyghur and Tibetan activists abroad have repeatedly described the efforts made by the Chinese authorities to stifle criticism by targeting their relatives in the PRC. Such pressure can take the form of detentions, threats, travel restrictions, interference with communications, and demands on exiles to provide information about diaspora communities.

A Human Rights Watch investigation published in August 2026 documented the pressure exerted on Australian Uzbeks who had travelled to Xinjiang. Those interviewed described police interrogations concerning activists in Australia and attempts to persuade them to cooperate in the surveillance of community organizations. Other Uzbeks reported that the authorities were using their access to relatives in Xinjiang to dissuade them from engaging in political activities (HRW, August 16).

The Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD) has documented similar efforts to use family ties, personal information, and intimidation to influence the behavior of communities in exile. The U.S. State Department's 2024 report on human rights described these practices, drawing on testimonies from Tibetan exiles (U.S. State Department, August 2025; TCHRD, April 9, 2025).

Such activities take their toll on critics without necessarily leading to high-profile incidents. Their effects are difficult to measure, as those who are intimidated may withdraw from public life without reporting the pressure they have faced.

Australia's domestic intelligence services have also warned of foreign governments attempting to coerce residents there. In its 2025 Annual Threat Assessment, the Australian Security Intelligence Organization (ASIO) described operations involving local surveillance, telephone harassment, and threats against family members. It did not publicly identify all the foreign governments involved, cautioning against attributing all such cases to the PRC (ASIO, February 19, 2025).

Taken together, these examples demonstrate that coercion exerted from abroad does not necessarily result in abductions or physical assaults. Their broader aim may be to influence an individual's behavior by making political engagement personally costly—and it may be that harsher measures are undertaken once others employing mere intimidation have failed.

Moscow Methods Could Preview Beijing's Future Behavior

Comparisons with Soviet and Russian intelligence services require caution and precision. The Soviet concept of "active measures" primarily encompassed covert political influence, disinformation, document forgery, the manipulation of front organizations, and other efforts aimed at influencing political outcomes abroad. Political violence, sabotage, and assassination formed (and still form) part of a related, but analytically distinct, repertoire of clandestine operations.

Contemporary Russian security services have demonstrated a willingness to resort to lethal violence abroad. A British public inquiry concluded in 2016 that the assassination in London ten years earlier of former Russian intelligence officer Alexander Litvinenko involved the Russian Federal Security Service and had likely been authorized by senior Russian leaders, including President Putin (Litvinenko Inquiry, January 2016).

In 2018, agents of the Russian military intelligence services attempted to assassinate Sergei Skripal in Salisbury using the nerve agent Novichok. A British inquiry, the report of which was published in December 2025, concluded that the Russian state authorities were responsible (The Dawn Sturgess Inquiry, December 4, 2025). German courts have also established that the murder of Zelimkhan Khangoshvili in Berlin in 2019 was carried out on behalf of the Russian state authorities (Berlin Court of Appeal, December 27, 2021).

These cases differ fundamentally from the allegations concerning Huang in terms of their murderous intent, the established attribution to the state, and, in some cases, the use of specialized intelligence personnel or specific weapons. But there are similarities. Both the PRC's transnational repression and Russia's coercive operations abroad can exploit local contacts, conceal official support, and target individuals whose activities challenge the ruling power. Both can also have repercussions beyond the immediate victim by demonstrating that political opponents can remain vulnerable anywhere in the world. Lacking in the Huang case is hard evidence to link the attack on Huang to any PRC institution. If proven, however, it would raise the possibility that there is a convergence in coercive methods between the two partners. **[1]**

Taiwan's Centrality to Xi's Ambitions Heightens Risk

Taiwan may be a place where the CCP considers coercion to be a more justifiable and important tool than elsewhere. In China's Global Strategy under Xi Jinping, authors Steve Tsang and Olivia Cheung argue that Xi is pursuing a two-pronged strategy. The first aims to mobilize support in the Global South for changes in international governance that would steer the world toward a PRC-centered international order. The second aims to bring Taiwan under Beijing's control despite U.S. opposition. Success would demonstrate the return of China's preeminence and the decline of the United States' ability to preserve the existing regional order, hence Beijing's heavy-handed approach on Taiwan (Tsang and Cheung, 2026). **[2]**

This framework suggests a possible explanation for Beijing's desire to project coercive power beyond PRC borders to boost positive impressions of the PRC while suppressing adverse views. If the Party regards Taiwan's continued political independence as a challenge both to national rejuvenation and to the legitimacy of the CCP's rule, criticism emanating from Taiwan could take on a significance beyond its immediate audience. Mockery directed at Xi Jinping may undermine the carefully cultivated image of the leadership's authority.

Conclusion

The attack on Huang should be viewed in the context of the PRC's coercive practices abroad over the last decade. What sets the September 2026 incident apart is the alleged ordering of an act resulting in serious bodily harm against a comedian whose behavior involved publicly ridiculing Xi Jinping.

It remains unclear whether this represents a broader policy shift. Publicly reported incidents are not a perfect indicator of the frequency of such operations, and a single case is insufficient to establish a centrally authorized escalation. And the case itself currently lacks concrete information on the identity of "K," the source of the payments, and any link between the attacks in May and September, as well as documentation of comparable commissioned attacks against political critics elsewhere.

The current evidence does not yet justify describing the PRC as having adopted a Russian-style campaign of assassinations abroad, it does warrant further examination to determine whether Beijing is evolving toward greater reliance on locally recruited intermediaries and physical violence. That would have serious implications for the sovereignty and civil liberties of the societies in which such operations take place.

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and NSA, and as a graduate student at Harvard in their Regional Studies East Asia program. After a stint as the China specialist for the Commerce Department's Office of Export Enforcement, he was assigned as a Commercial Officer with the US Embassy, Beijing, where he both promoted and controlled US high technology exports to China.

Afterward, Matt spent 20 years as a security professional, performing investigations in China for a chip manufacturer, and leading the development of a security organization in China for an American specialty chemicals firm. His PhD dissertation at the University of Sydney (2013) described the place in the Chinese Communist Party of their intelligence organs. That and further research led to his contribution as the coauthor of Chinese Communist Espionage, An Intelligence Primer (2019). Matt is also the author of the China chapter in the Handbook of Asian Intelligence Cultures (2022). His next book concerns Beijing's contemporary worldwide espionage and influence offensive.

Notes

[1] Although not formal allies in the Western sense, the PRC currently labels its bilateral relationship with Russia as "a new era comprehensive strategic cooperative partnership" (新时代全面战略协作伙伴) and describes relations as "at their best in history" (处于历史最好时期) (MFA, accessed November 4).

[2] Steve Tsang and Olivia Cheung, China's Global Strategy under Xi Jinping (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2026), 31-33, 90, 158, 186–199.

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SoC Spacemit RISC-V M1, from a Milk-V Jupiter motherboard. (Source: Wikipedia/Popolon)

RISC-V Open-Source Chip Push Puts Strategy Over Capability

Sunny Cheung
November 10, 2026

Executive Summary

- The People's Republic of China (PRC) is expanding its use of RISC-V, an open-source chip design standard, as well as its influence over the international nonprofit organization that manages it. This follows growing fears in recent years of being cut off from chips designed by Western industry leaders such as Arm and Intel.
- PRC firms are now creating RISC-V chips not just for consumer devices but for servers and data centers, even though they are less powerful than proprietary chips. The V100, launched in October and co-created by a state-backed entity, is billed as the first general-purpose chip fully compliant with RISC-V server standards.
- National-level policy documents have traditionally avoided discussing RISC-V directly, but in September, the 15th Five-Year Plan for the Electronic Information Manufacturing Industry announced calls to advance RISC-V research, development, and industrialization, and to develop RISC-V chips for artificial intelligence (AI).
- RISC-V brings clear benefits for self-reliance, and the chips can be adapted, including being optimized for military use cases. Analysts in the PRC worry, however, about a "glass ceiling" for the chips, and even the state IT substitution program has noted that the share of RISC-V chips it has used to replace foreign technology in government systems is "negligible."

On October 19, Shenzhen-based chipmaker SpacemiT (进迭时空) and the state-backed XiangShan (香山) processor team launched the V100, a new 46-core server chip, at the sixth RISC-V Summit China. **[1]** Its makers bill it as the first general-purpose chip fully compliant with RISC-V server standards (21st Century Business Herald, October 19; Science and Technology Daily, October 20).

RISC-V is an open-source instruction set architecture (ISA), which is the language that processors run on. Unlike proprietary ISAs, such as Arm or Intel's x86 that are used in almost all of the world's computers and phones, anyone can use RISC-V without paying a license fee or requiring other permissions.

Arm and Intel processors, made by British and U.S. companies, must abide by licensing and export controls put in place by those countries' governments. By comparison, RISC-V is mainly overseen by RISC-V International, a Switzerland-based nonprofit that avoids such vulnerabilities.

The recently unveiled server chip is representative of broader trends in the sector within the People's Republic of China (PRC). Beijing initially began to view RISC-V as a way to counter the West's technological hegemony and extend its structural power in emerging technologies in the mid-2010s (China Brief, December 15, 2023). Since then, it has encouraged its development through state-led policy support, starting at the city level and moving up to the national level. Although the chips' capabilities remain behind those of Western rivals, they are increasingly being deployed in servers for data centers, not just embedded in consumer devices.

From City Halls to the Five-Year Plan

Since 2023, local-level support for RISC-V has been explicit, especially in first-tier cities like Shanghai, Beijing, and Shenzhen (China Brief, December 15, 2023). Beijing's Economic-Technological Development Area aims for a RISC-V industry worth more than renminbi (RMB) 50 billion ($7 billion) by 2030, at which point the national market will reach around RMB 220 billion ($21 billion), according to some estimates (Beijing Municipal Government, January 3, 2025; China Daily, October 22).

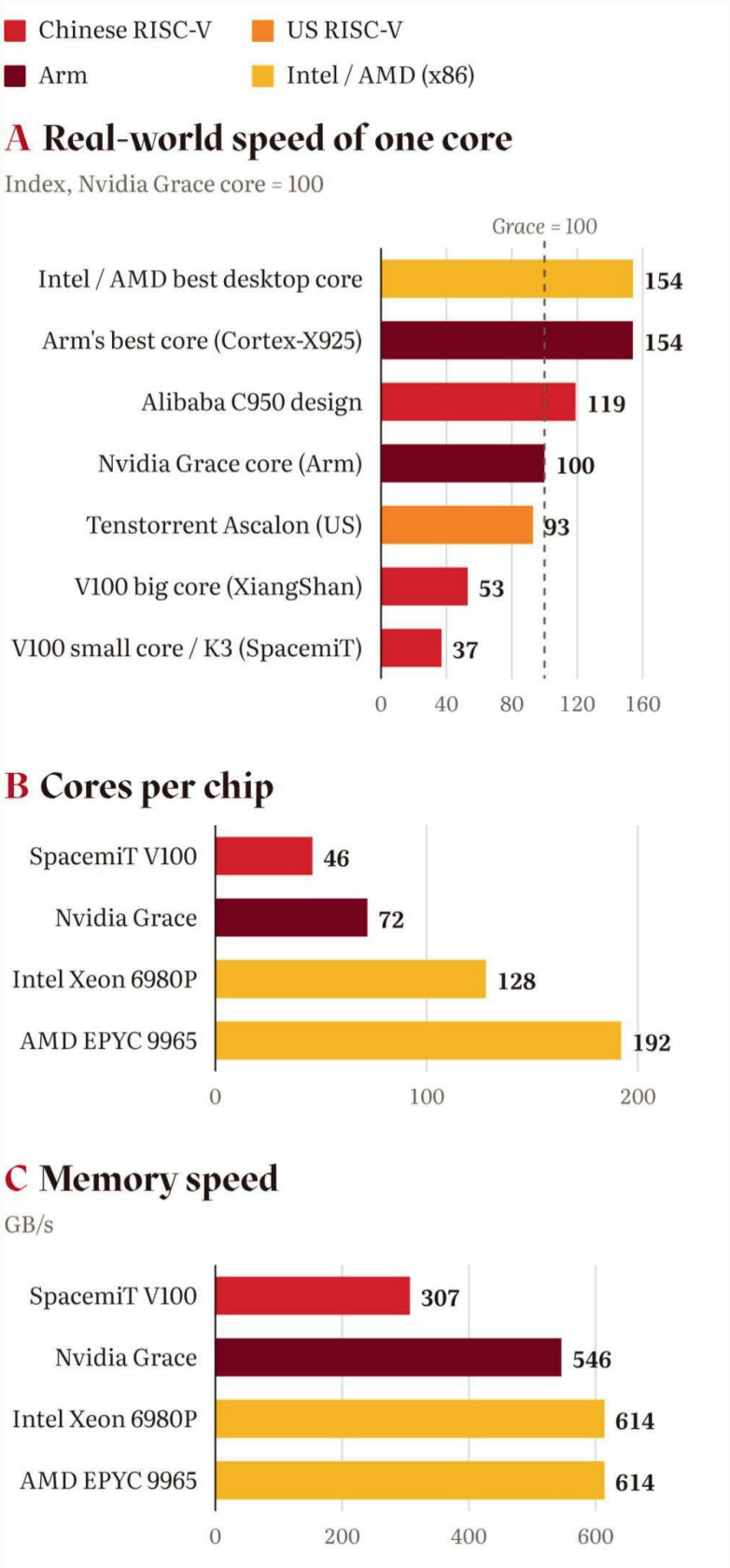
National-level documents have tended instead to use the term "open source" to implicitly refer to RISC-V. In mid-September, however, the 15th Five-Year Plan for the Electronic Information Manufacturing Industry announced calls to "advance the research, development, and industrialization of RISC-V" (推进第五代精简指令集 (RISC-V) 研发与产业化), and to support RISC-V artificial intelligence (AI) and embedded system chips (Ministry of Information and Industry Technology, September 15). **[2]**

Server Ambitions, Smartphone-Class Silicon

RISC-V's strength so far has been in cheaper control chips for appliances and cars, but newer chips signal data center servers as an emerging use case. The Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS) calls the open-source XiangShan core the most powerful of its kind in the world (China Daily, March 26). Beyond the latest processor from SpacemiT and XiangShan, Alibaba now offers a server-class design, the C950, that it says performs on par with Apple's M1 chip, which it released in 2020, on a standard performance test (The Register, March 25).

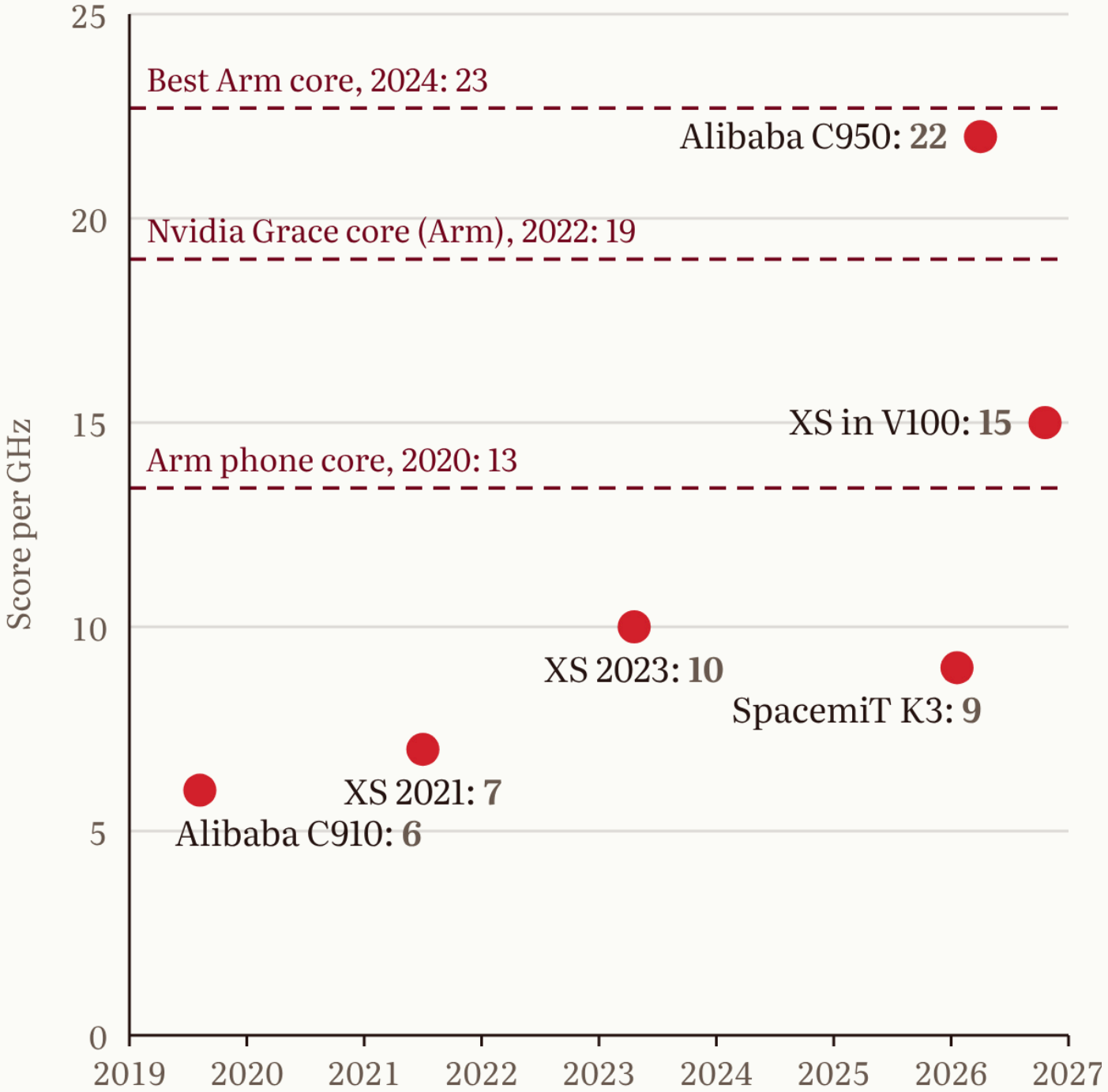
Engineers usually judge how well a core is designed via a two-step process. First, they run an industry-standard test, which times how long a processor takes to complete a set of tasks, and turns that time into a score. Second, they divide the score by the core's clock speed, which is the number of steps it takes each second, measured in gigahertz (GHz). The result measures how much work a core does in each step (see Figure

Figure 1: Per-clock Performance of Chinese RISC-V Cores, 2019–2026



(Source: Compiled by the author from Chen et al., 2020; Wang et al., 2024; RISC-V Summit North America, 2025; The Register, March 25; SpacemiT, September 24, GitHub, accessed October 27)

Figure 2: Chinese RISC-V Cores Underperform Western Proprietary Competitors



(Source: Compiled by the author from Nvidia, January 20, 2023, October 14; Tenstorrent, December 4, 2025; RISC-V Summit North America, 2025; Substack/Chester Lam, March 3; The Register, March 25; SpacemiT, September 24; GitHub; HMC-Tech, accessed October 27; Intel; AMD, accessed November 3)

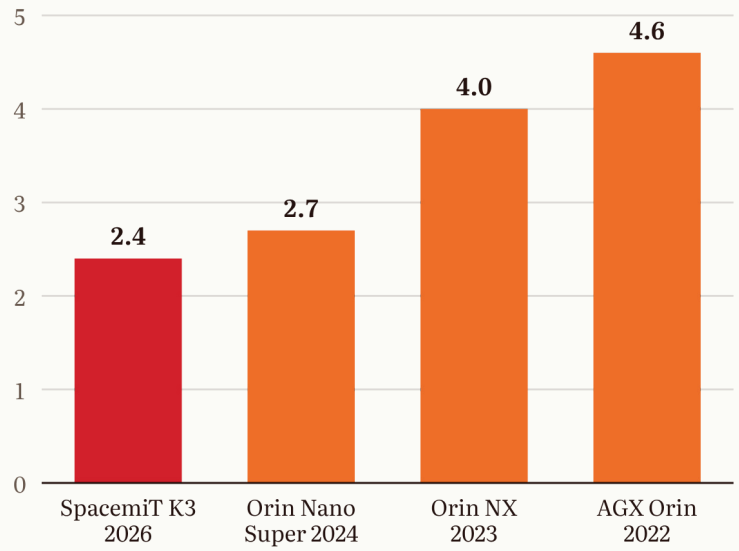
Figure 3: SpacemiT's K3 Less Efficient and Capable Than Western Alternatives

Key for charts A and B

SpacemiT K3 Nvidia Jetson Apple / Qualcomm (Arm) Intel / AMD (x86)

A AI work per watt

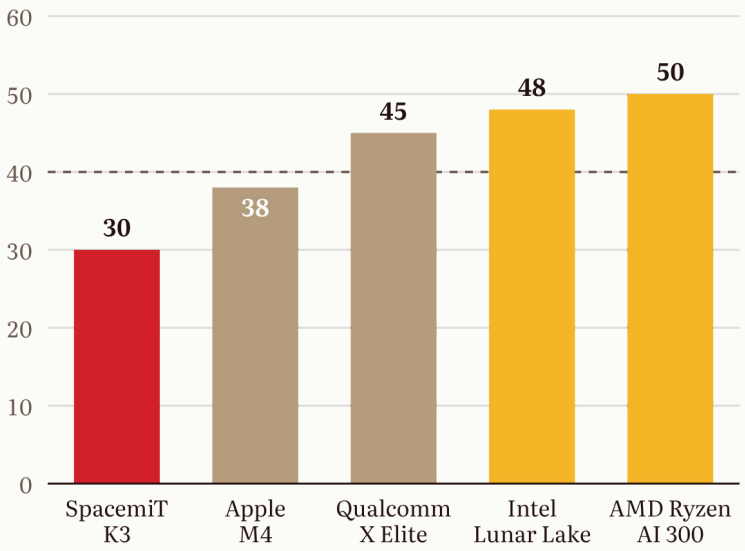
Robots and drones: K3 vs Nvidia Jetson



B AI work per second

Laptop chips, in TOPS

---- Microsoft "AI PC" minimum (40 TOPS)



(Sources: Apple, May 7, 2024; AMD, June 2, 2024; Intel, October 10, 2024; Nvidia, January 16, 2025, accessed November 3; Microsoft, December 19, 2025; SpacemiT, September 24; Qualcomm, accessed November 3).

l). On this metric, PRC progress is substantial: XiangShan's cores have roughly doubled since 2021.

CAS's self-tested, most capable RSIC-V core, however, comes from a computer simulation—they are yet to run the tests on physical chips. In an independent test run on SpacemiT's most recently commercially produced desktop and edge chip showed it as running slightly slower than the U.K.-designed Raspberry Pi 5 hobby computer, which was released in 2023 (CNX Software, January 23).

The speed that a core runs matters too, as a chip with a well-designed core may still lose out in the long term to a more basic chip whose core has a faster clock speed. Measured at the speeds they actually run, the best cores in the SpacemiT/XiangShan processor are well behind Nvidia's leading Grace server processor, and those produced by Arm and Intel (see Figure 2). Alibaba's C950, which it licenses to other chipmakers, comes close to or beats Grace based on the firm's internal testing. This kind of performance may only be good enough to support local, small scale compute projects and edge platforms. **[3]**

The gap is wider in advanced AI. RISC-V is a standard for general-purpose processors, and is not usually used for the graphics chips (GPUs) that run most complex AI models (Jon Peddie Research, December 29, 2025). By SpacemiT's own ratings, its chip's computing power is between 50–90 percent of Nvidia's similarly priced Jetson Orin Nano Super, which is used in robots and drones. Its AI engine also falls short of the minimum Microsoft sets for "AI PCs" (see Figure 3). **[4]** RISC-V, therefore, does little to address Beijing's lack of compute.

RISC-V Buys Assurance and Customization

RISC-V offers the PRC with two benefits: the assurance of sustainable access, and adaptability for military purposes, which would be risky use-cases for employing Western chips. The fear of being cut off from access to chips has been acute since Huawei learned in 2019 that its access to Arm's designs could be suspended (BBC, May 22, 2019).

As an open-source architecture, RISC-V can be modified and tailored to user requirements. In some instances, however, this has allowed it to be adapted for military purposes. A team at Information Engineering University, an institution affiliated with the People's Liberation Army, was able to customize command for data encryption to a small RISC-V chip, accelerating encryption by about seven times with only about two percent more circuitry. **[5]**

These benefits are another part of the reason why the PRC has pushed to deepen its influence over RISC-V at the international level. Chinese firms now hold half of the 24 top-tier memberships in RISC-V International (RISC-V, accessed November 3). U.S. firms are deepening their stake in the RISC-V ecosystem too. Nvidia said in July 2025 that its CUDA software, the backbone of AI computing, would support RISC-V processors, and Qualcomm bought the RISC-V server designer Ventana in December 2025 (The Register, July 21, 2025; Qualcomm, December 10, 2025).

Conclusion

Beijing continues to emphasize RISC-V to advance technological self-reliance and resilience. Although it is starting to use RISC-V chips in servers and data centers, the chips function at well below the capabilities of the most advanced processors. Analysts in the PRC have worried about a "glass ceiling" (玻璃天花板) for the chips, and even the state IT substitution program (信创) has noted that the share of RISC-V chips it has used to replace foreign technology

in government systems is "negligible (微乎其微)" (Sina Finance, April 7). It is nevertheless too soon to dismiss the hype over the PRC's RISC-V development.

RISC-V currently also enjoys support from U.S. companies. This makes the international standards that govern RISC-V an important battle ground in the competition to shape this arena of open-source technology. It remains unclear, however, whether the United States will seek to build a U.S.-led ISA ecosystem or discourage U.S. and allied firms from taking part in Chinese-led RISC-V projects. Neither option is cost-free, although if Washington does not take action, a key part of the semiconductor supply chain could end up being controlled by Beijing.

Sunny Cheung is a Fellow for China Studies at The Jamestown Foundation.

Notes

[1] A core is the part of a processor that reads and carries out software instructions.

[2] The plan was released by the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology (MIIT) and the National Development and Reform Commission, but grew out of work by eight agencies that drafted the country's first national guidance on RISC-V in 2025 (Reuters, March 3, 2025).

[3] For Figure 2, panel A estimates the real speed of a single core by multiplying its points per gigahertz by the clock speed at which it actually ships, and shows the result relative to a core in Nvidia's Grace server processor (set at 100). Intel and AMD do not publish comparable SPECint2006 figures, so their desktop cores are set equal to Arm's Cortex-X925, which independent testing by Chips and Cheese found to be within the margin of error of the fastest AMD and Intel cores on the newer SPECint2017 test (Chips and Cheese, March 3). Panels B and C compare whole server chips. The first is the number of cores. Each core works on its own task, so more cores means more work at once. The second is memory speed, or bandwidth: how many gigabytes of data a chip can move to and from its memory each second. In large data-center jobs this is often the real limit, because even a fast core sits idle while it waits for data. The lower panels of Figure 2 compare other measures of performance for entire server chips. The V100 has 46 cores; Nvidia's Grace has 72; and the top Intel and AMD server chips have 128–192. The V100 also moves data to and from memory at about half their speed. It draws far less power, however, at 120 watts, compared to about 250 for Grace and 500 for the Intel and AMD chips (GitHub, accessed October 27).

[4] Figure 3 measures AI performance in trillions of simple calculations per second (TOPS). Since AI models run on vast numbers of such calculations, higher TOPS values translate to faster AI. The left panel divides TOPS by the power a chip draws, in watts, to show energy efficiency, which matters most in battery-powered robots and drones. The right panel shows raw TOPS for laptop chips. Companies quote TOPS in different ways that can double or even quadruple the headline number, so the chart puts every chip on the same basis. Even if the SpacemiT processor reaches 30 TOPS, this is still short of Microsoft's bar of 40. By The Register's estimate, even Alibaba's best design would roughly match Apple's M1 (The Register, March 25).

[5] Zhang Xiaolei, Dai Zibin, Guo Pengfei, et al., "Design and Verification of a RISC-V-Based AES Cryptographic Acceleration Engine [基于RISC-V的AES密码加速引擎设计与验证]," Application of Electronic Technique [电子技术应用] 49, no. 2 (2023): 39–44. Results are from FPGA prototypes built on the open-source Hummingbird E203

core.

To read this article on the Jamestown website, click here.



Grocery stores in PRC are now being required to remove packaging bearing Mbappé's image before selling an energy drink he endorsed during the 2026 World Cup. (Source: Wechat groups)

Beijing Uses Mbappé Controversy to Export Censorship

Shijie Wang
November 3, 2026

Executive Summary

- French soccer player Kylian Mbappé has unexpectedly found himself the subject of a political controversy in the People's Republic of China (PRC) following the resurfacing of an interview in which he discussed a meme that compared him to Mao Zedong. The controversy originated on fan community platform Dongqiudi and spread into a nationwide "cancellation" campaign against Mbappé due to his perceived slight against the Chinese people and nation.
- The PRC is leveraging this controversy and its ensuing public anger to show the world that access to the Chinese market is contingent on adherence to the political sensitivities of the Party-state, effectively globalizing its political correctness preferences and censorship.
- Party-state organs such as China Central Television (CCTV) and the Zhejiang provincial propaganda department have latched onto the controversy and issued statements condemning Mbappé, his club Real Madrid, and the Spanish soccer league La Liga. CCTV has suspended all broadcasts of La Liga matches in the PRC, and Mbappé's Chinese commercial partners have withdrawn support.
- Analysts have speculated that the Party felt compelled to respond to this controversy due to its direct reference to Mao Zedong. A comparison of other previous instances of individuals and corporations accused of "insulting China" have not always been met with a similar level of response from Party-state organs.

On October 26, a fan account on the social media platform X uploaded a clip from an April interview featuring French soccer player Kylian Mbappé. Asked which meme of himself he found the funniest, Mbappé mentioned one with his face put onto the body of a "Chinese dictator." The video then showed a meme depicting him as Mao Zedong (Australian Broadcasting Corporation, October 27). That evening, the biggest football news and fan community platform in the People's Republic of China (PRC), Dongqiudi (懂球帝), issued a statement claiming that Mbappé's remarks had "hurt the feelings of Chinese fans and the Chinese people" (伤害了中国球迷和中国人民感情), though it declined to translate them (Dongqiudi, October 26). PRC brands including Mengniu (蒙牛) and Eastroc Beverage (东鹏特饮) soon announced that they were ending their commercial partnerships with Mbappé (Cailian Press, October 27). CCTV also announced it was suspending broadcasts of Mbappé's league, La Liga, along with any advertisements featuring him. It demanded public apologies from the player himself, his team Real Madrid, and La Liga (Beijing News, October 27).

An old interview conducted outside the PRC had unexpectedly subjected the player, his club, and his league to both commercial and political pressure from Beijing. The controversy also quickly spread beyond PRC, turning into a global spectacle over an alleged "insult to China" (辱华).

The controversy first gained traction through the active intervention of Dongqiudi. Less than 20 minutes after its statement declared Mbappé's remarks as "unacceptable" (不能接受的), the community was already awash with attacks on the player and Real Madrid. The anger soon spread to other Chinese-language social media platforms. There has been speculation about the timing of the clip surfacing several months after its release, Dongqiudi explained in a statement that one of its editors simply saw the clip while browsing online at night (Dongqiudi, October 31).

Two Explanations

PRC state media intervened the following morning when CCTV announced the suspension of La Liga broadcasts and demanded public apologies from Mbappé, Real Madrid, and the league. Two explanations for its decision. One is that Beijing may have viewed the emerging calls to boycott Mbappé as an opportunity: Responding forcefully to a foreigner could demonstrate to domestic audiences that it was defending national dignity, while simultaneously using public pressure to constrain the words and actions of individuals and entities abroad.

This geopolitical reading is not fully supported by the evidence. Several senior soccer journalists at Titan Sports Weekly (体坛周报), a PRC sports newspaper, privately offered a different explanation. They said Beijing was displeased that Dongqiudi had stirred up the controversy without permission, but found it difficult to remain silent because Mao Zedong's name was implicated (Author's interview, October 28). **[1]** According to these journalists, once Dongqiudi's statement provoked a strong reaction among some netizens, the political instinct to defend Mao's legacy increased the cost of silence for Beijing. These opposing explanations, however, remain unreconciled.

Similar past controversies show that grassroots accusations of "insults to China" do not necessarily prompt the same response from Beijing. In 2019, for instance, some nationalists accused the fashion retailer Zara of "insulting China" by featuring a Chinese model with visible, natural freckles, claiming that the advertisement portrayed Chinese people as unattractive and that the brand had failed to observe Chinese beauty standards. Some official media, however, did not support the accusations. China Youth Daily (中国青年报) publicly rejected it, warning against

abusing the label "insult to China"; the Global Times, meanwhile, praised the model's appearance as "iconic" (The Paper, February 17, 2019; BBC, February 18, 2019). The preceding year, Italian fashion house Dolce & Gabbana was likewise embroiled in controversy for creating a promotional video for a Shanghai show that featured a model eating Italian food with chopsticks. At the time, despite online outrage, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs explicitly stated that it "did not want it elevated to a diplomatic issue" (不希望它上升为外交问题) (People's Daily, November 22, 2018).

These cases show that Beijing is often inclined to avoid diplomatic escalation, but the involvement of Mao in Mbappé's case made such restraint unsustainable. Officials who choose to let the matter quietly subside are highly likely to be accused in future political struggles of failing to uphold the Party's own political principles.

Exporting Censorship

Whether Beijing initially sought to exploit the controversy or felt compelled to respond, its subsequent handling followed a familiar pattern. Beijing has long exploited foreign individuals' and firms' dependence on the PRC market to force them to submit to its political will. **[2]** This approach brings the censorship faced by PRC citizens to foreign nationals, wherever they may be. Mbappé's income from commercial deals in the PRC, Real Madrid's sponsorship, and La Liga's broadcasting partnership all provide channels for such a pressure campaign. Raising the economic cost of refusing to yield allows Beijing to make non-PRC citizens heed its standards of political correctness even when speaking outside PRC. **[3]**

Beijing's previous pressure campaigns have gone beyond sports. In 2018, German auto manufacturer Mercedes removed an advertisement quoting the Dalai Lama and publicly apologized, but the People's Daily still criticized its apology as lacking in sincerity. The following day, Daimler's top executives wrote to the PRC's ambassador to Germany to apologize again (People's Daily, February 6, 2018; Xinhua, February 8, 2018). That same year, international hotel chain Marriott apologized repeatedly over a Tibet-related controversy, but was still ordered to shut down its Chinese-language website and app for a week. It subsequently announced the dismissal of employees involved, tighter reviews of political-sensitive content worldwide and additional staff training (Xinhua, January 11, 2018; Shanghai Observer, January 17, 2018). That same year, Versace, Coach, Givenchy, Calvin Klein, Asics, Gap, and Swarovski all issued similar public apologies to the PRC, but these are only a small number of commercial entities that have been pressured into making such statements. **[4]**

Conclusion

Mbappé, Real Madrid, and La Liga president Javier Tebas have all apologized to the PRC for Mbappé's remarks, but as of November 3, CCTV still had not resumed La Liga broadcasts (Lianhe Zaobao, November 3). CCTV's most recent stance has been to demand that Mbappé "mend his ways" (痛改前非) and said it would "listen to his [future] words and watch his [future] actions" (听其言更观其行) (CCTV, October 27).

Beijing's demands for obedience can extend from requesting a public apology to requesting changes to an entity's internal management. On October 29, Zhejiang provincial propaganda department criticized Real Madrid even after its formal apology for offering "no internal accountability and no commitment to corrective measures" (没有内部追责，也没有整改承诺). It described this as evidence of the club's "dismissive and perfunctory attitude" (轻慢与敷衍), demanding that a Spanish club incorporate the PRC's political standards into its management (WeChat/Zhejiang Propaganda, October 28). Once someone crosses the red line to

"insult China," Party organs feel that they retain the power to decide on the requisite concessions for punitive actions to end. What is clear from recent history, however, is that a public apology has yet to prove a reliable guarantee against further political interference from Beijing.

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Notes

[1] In a speech in 2013, Xi Jinping explicitly linked a repudiation of Mao to whether the Party and PRC's socialist system could survive. He also identified the rejection of Soviet Communist Party history and its leaders as an important cause of the Soviet Union's final collapse (Qiushi, March 31, 2019). Article 28 of the Regulations on Party History Study and Education (党史学习教育工作条例), issued by the CCP Central Committee in 2024, further required units (单位) at all levels to implement the "responsibility system for ideological work" (意识形态工作责任制) and actively oppose misconduct such as "vilifying Party and state leaders" (诋毁党和国家领导人) (Cyber Administration of China, February 19, 2024).

[2] The most prominent example came in 2019, when PRC authorities enacted similar restrictions on the U.S. National Basketball Association following a tweet from the Houston Rockets' general manager Daryl Morey that voiced support for pro-democracy protestors in Hong Kong.

[3] W. D. O'Connell, "Silencing the Crowd: China, the NBA, and Leveraging Market Size to Export Censorship," Review of International Political Economy 29, no. 4 (2022): 1112–34, https://doi.org/10.1080/09692290.2021.1905683.

[4] These cases are documented in Hoffman, Samantha, China's Mobilization State, The Jamestown Foundation, 2026, p.77.

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The Fifth Plenum of the 20th Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party held between October 26-29, 2026 in Beijing. (Source: CCP Members Net)

Fifth Plenum Breaks Personnel Records

Christopher Nye
November 3, 2026

Executive Summary

- The Fifth Plenum of the 20th Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) set records for low attendance and large-scale disciplinary measures in the post-Mao Zedong era.
- Zhang Shengmin was added to the Politburo, but there were no promotions to the Central Military Commission. Amid the purge, the military has all but vanished from the Central Committee: only five of its 44 military members formally attended.
- Central Committee vacancies were not fully filled at this plenum. It filled only ten of 24 vacant full-member seats and skipped five alternate members.

The Fifth Plenum of the 20th Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) announced the Party leadership's latest personnel decisions publicly for the first time. The meeting, which closed on October 29, was attended by 162 full and 117 alternate members. This constituted fewer than three-quarters of the 376 elected in 2022, making it the lowest attendance since the Mao Zedong era (Associated Press, October 29). **[1]**

The plenum confirmed disciplinary measures on a scale unprecedented since the Cultural Revolution. It targeted 24 full members and 10 alternates, expelling 33 while stripping Li Yunze (李云泽) of his Party posts (Xinhua, October 29). **[2]** Since the 20th Party Congress, plenums have removed 51 full and alternate members (People's Daily Online, July 18, 2024, October 24, 2025; Xinhua, October 29).

The plenum allowed General Secretary Xi Jinping to take stock of the purge, both to give it legitimacy and as a precondition for staying in power at the 21st Party Congress. Beyond breaking personnel records, the plenum adopted a Decision on comprehensively and strictly governing the Party (全面从严治党).

Only Five Military Members Attend Plenum

The addition of Zhang Shengmin (张升民) to the Politburo was the plenum's most prominent move. Zhang is the first Politburo member added mid-term since Huang Ju (黄菊) in 1994 (South China Morning Post, October 29). As secretary of the Central Military Commission (CMC) Commission for Discipline Inspection from 2017, Zhang oversaw the current military purge. His promotion can be seen as Xi rewarding him for this work. It was also a practical necessity. The Politburo is the de facto highest body of power, and by convention it includes military representatives in decisions on major national affairs (The Telegraph, October 30). After then-CMC Vice Chairman Zhang Youxia (张又侠) was placed under investigation in January, the Politburo had no functioning military representative (Ministry of National Defense, January 24; Central News Agency, October 29). Given that many Politburo decisions bear on the military, a body that meets and votes without a single soldier present does little to rally the armed forces around Xi.

Zhang's promotion cannot mask the military's absence from the Party's upper ranks. Of the Central Committee's 44 military members, 25 have been confirmed as expelled from the Party (Brookings Institution, October 23; Xinhua, October 29). Only five formally attended the October plenum: Zhang; Minister of National Defense Dong Jun (董军); and three officers who have been removed or have retired, namely former Academy of Military Science President Yang Xuejun (杨学军), former Southern Theater Command Deputy Political Commissar and South Sea Fleet Political Commissar Yang Zhiliang (杨志亮), and former Air Force Deputy Commander Yu Qingjiang (俞庆江) (X/@cnpoliwatch, October 29). **[3]** Among the remaining military members, only Zhang still holds real power.

The CMC has yet to gain any new members beyond Xi and Zhang. Neither Dong, defense minister since late 2023, nor the four officers promoted to general since the purge began, have been elevated to the body (Xinhua, December 22, 2025, July 3). **[4]** Xi would be expected to rebuild the high command before the People's Liberation Army's (PLA) centenary in 2027, but he is clearly in no hurry and instead may plan to overhaul the CMC at the 21st Party Congress (Nikkei Asia, August 6). Zhang Shengmin will likely remain, however. Xi still needs a veteran general to help him control the military, and his entering the Politburo greatly improves his chances of staying on.

Promotions of Alternates Break with Convention

This plenum did not follow the constitutionally mandated procedure for filling vacancies. When a full member's seat falls vacant, whether for political reasons or through death, the Party Constitution requires that it be "filled by alternate members of the Central Committee in order of the number of votes they received" (由中央委员会候补委员按照得票多少依次递补) (People's Daily Online, October 26, 2022). The number of full members should thus stay constant, but this time was different.

First, not all vacancies were filled. Plenum communiqués show that, since 1989, seats vacated through disciplinary action have always been filled at the same plenum. The 20th Central Committee's Third Plenum filled all three vacancies, and its Fourth Plenum filled all eleven (People's Daily Online, July 18, 2024, October 24, 2025). This time, however, only ten of 24 were filled, leaving 191 full members on the books. The shortfall was not for lack of alternates. Promotions stopped at Liu Qiang (刘强), 38th on the list, with more than 100 names below him (People's Daily Online, October 22, 2022).

Second, promotions skipped a number of alternates instead of strictly following the vote order. This practice began at the 18th Central Committee's Seventh Plenum in 2017, which passed over Liu Xuepu (刘学普), Zhu Yanfeng (竺延风), Zheng Qunliang (郑群良), and Zhao Jin (赵金) (Xinhua, November 14, 2012, October 14, 2017). Those skipped have likely run into political trouble, which makes the practice a leading indicator of the purge. Fang Yongxiang (方永祥) and Fang Hongwei (方红卫), passed over at the Fourth Plenum, were expelled from the Party at this one (People's Daily Online, October 24, 2025; Xinhua, October 29). Others were skipped because poor health leaves them unfit to serve.

This time, five alternates were skipped: Fu Wenhua (付文化), Cong Liang (丛亮), Ji Lin (吉林), Zhu Wenxiang (朱文祥), and Zhu Hexin (朱鹤新) (Lianhe Zaobao, October 30). Fu and Zhu Wenxiang both come from the People's Armed Police and have likely been caught up in the military purge (Caixin, July 11, 2014, March 14, 2025). Ji, a Communist Youth League veteran, was removed early as Party secretary of the Central Institute of Socialism in September 2024 and has long been sidelined (China Economic Net, September 27, 2024). Cong, a former subordinate of Vice Premier He Lifeng (何立峰), moved in 2024 from deputy head of the National Development and Reform Commission to deputy director of the State Council's Development Research Center, a posting he was likely given for health reasons (The Paper, July 5, 2024). Finally, Zhu Hexin missed the plenum and was skipped, yet on October 30 he chaired a Party group meeting on the plenum as head of the State Administration of Foreign Exchange. His situation is unclear (State Administration of Foreign Exchange, October 30).

Conclusion

Xi's main political goal now is to secure another term at the 21st Party Congress. That requires not only a firm grip on power but also a case that his continued rule is legitimate and natural. The Fifth Plenum is the last plenum before the congress that can take stock of the term. **[5]** Xi had to use it to resolve the problems of legitimacy created by the purge, and personnel changes were central to that effort.

The Fifth Plenum has not ended the purge. Former Minister of Agriculture and Rural Affairs Han Jun (韩俊), Navy Commander Hu Zhongming (胡中明), Western Theater Command Political Commissar Li Fengbiao (李凤彪), Air Force Political Commissar Guo Puxiao (郭普校), and others missed the plenum, yet no action against them has been announced. Dozens of

members are in the same position. Li and Guo were removed as deputies to the National People's Congress in June (Xinhua, June 26). The Sixth Plenum, which will be convened ahead of the 21st Party Congress, will almost certainly deal with another batch.

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Notes

[1] Among plenums since the end of the Cultural Revolution that published attendance figures, the previous low was 84.4 percent, at the Third Plenum of the 11th Central Committee in 1978 (People's Daily Online, December 22, 1978). At the 12th Plenum of the Eighth Central Committee in 1968, during the Cultural Revolution, only 40 full members attended. Together with 10 members added on the spot and 9 alternates, the attendees made up about 30 percent of the members elected at the Eighth Party Congress (Institute of Party History and Literature of the CCP Central Committee, December 25, 2012).

[2] The previous record was 15, at the 18th Central Committee's Seventh Plenum in 2017 (Xinhua, October 14, 2017).

[3] Central Committee members are elected for a five-year term, and stripping a member of Party posts requires a two-thirds vote at a plenum (People's Daily Online, October 26, 2022). Retirement or removal from a military post during the term does not affect membership.

[4] The four include: Eastern Theater Command Commander Yang Zhibin (杨志斌), Central Theater Command Commander Han Shengyan (韩胜延), Air Force Commander Wang Gang (王刚), and CMC discipline chief Zhang Shuguang (张曙光).

[5] A Sixth Plenum will be held before the 21st Party Congress, but it will effectively be a preparatory meeting for the congress. Such plenums are usually held a few days before the congress opens to review the work report and the draft amendments to the Party Constitution, and they do not serve as interim reviews. The Seventh Plenum of the 19th Central Committee, for example, closed on October 12, 2022, four days before the 20th Party Congress opened on October 16 (Xinhua, October 12, 2022).

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Notes

[1] The official English translation of 事业单位 is "public institutions." This article uses "public service units" to convey the term's meaning more precisely. According to official figures from 2014, the PRC had 1.11 million public service units with 31.53 million authorized staff positions (Ministry of Justice, May 15, 2014).

[2] Possibly with external audiences in mind, the official English-language version omitted the requirement in Article 6 that public service units "arm their minds with Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era" (用习近平新时代中国特色社会主义思想武装头脑) and the reference to "inspection tours" (巡视巡察) in Article 18 (Xinhua, October 26).

[3] Time-limited certificates and the temporary withholding of certificates both predate the new regulations. The regulations elevate these provisions from the lower-ranking Implementing Rules (实施细则) of the Office of the Central Institutional Organization Commission into administrative regulations (Beijing Municipal Government, January 24, 2014).

[4] In 2021, the presidency of the China Law Society's Criminal Law Research Society (刑法学研究会) passed from Beijing Normal University professor Zhao Bingzhi (赵秉志) to Jia Yu (贾宇), then chief procurator of Zhejiang Province and now president of the Shanghai High People's Court. That same year, the presidency of its Constitutional Law Research Society (宪法学研究会) passed from Renmin University of China professor Han Dayuan (韩大元) to Zheng Shuna (郑淑娜), a former deputy director of the Legislative Affairs Commission of the National People's Congress Standing Committee. In 2022, the presidency of its Criminal Procedure Law Research Society (刑事诉讼法学研究会) passed from China University of Political Science and Law professor Bian Jianlin (卞建林) to Jing Dali (敬大力), a former chief procurator of Beijing (Supreme People's Court, December 11, 2021, November 27, 2022; Constitutional Law Research Society, November 3, 2021).

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