



## The People's Liberation Army Air Force Turns 70

**OE Watch Commentary:** On 9 November, the Chinese state media outlet *People's Daily* announced that President Xi Jinping had visited the China Aviation Museum in the Changping District of Beijing to congratulate the People's Liberation Army Air Force (PLAAF) ahead of their 70th anniversary celebration, which took place on 11 November. President Xi began his visit by presenting a flower basket outside of the museum to honor PLAAF soldiers and subsequently visited an exhibition illustrating the history and achievements of the PLAAF. According to the article, "Xi Jinping emphasized that the People's Liberation Army Air Force stands at a new historical starting point. We must thoroughly implement the party's strong military ideology and strategy in the coming era, bear in mind our original mission while carrying forward the glorious tradition, dare to innovate, strive to build the People's Liberation Army Air Force into a world-class air force, and constantly create new and greater achievements!"



Chengdu J-10 of the 'August 1st' Aerobatic Team.

Source: Peng Chen via Wikimedia Commons. [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:August\\_1st\\_\(aerobatic\\_team\)](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:August_1st_(aerobatic_team)), CC BY-SA 2.0

In preparation for the 70th anniversary of the PLAAF's founding, Chinese government outlet *Xinhua News Agency* published an article on 3 November boasting of a "new leap" in combat capabilities and aviation technology. The article claims the PLAAF has accelerated its equipment upgrades since the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, which began on 8 November 2012. Domestically produced fighter planes including the J-10B, J-10C, J-16, J-20, Yun-20, H-6K, and the Air Police (空警)-500 have "successfully installed" new upgrades including early warning devices, reconnaissance equipment, and upgraded bombing capabilities within each aircraft structure. The H-6K bomber has recently "cruised around the island of Taiwan" while the J-20 stealth fighter plane "carried out practical training on the sea," potentially signaling the PLAAF's interest in developing air presence within the region.

According to the Hong Kong-based *South China Morning Post*, China's new supersonic arsenal can give the H-6N bomber force greater reach. Citing official Chinese military sources, the article claimed the upgraded H-6N bomber can now carry "CJ-100 supersonic cruise missiles or the WZ-8 supersonic stealth spy drone, increasing its maximum strike range to 6,000km (3,728 miles)." The new H-6N bomber was unveiled most recently at China's National Day Parade on 1 October and featured two distinctive upgrades including an aerial refueling probe on the planes' noses and a semi-recessed area on their bellies. An anonymous PLAAF source claimed the newest upgrades allow the H-6N bombers to carry oversized weapons payloads to the required altitude and launch coordinates. **End OE Watch Commentary (Hartnett)**

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## Continued: The People's Liberation Army Air Force Turns 70

**Source:** Li Xuanliang & Zhang Yuqing, "Xi Jinping: Build the People's Liberation Army Air Force Into a World-Class Air Force," *People's Daily*, 9 November 2019. <http://military.people.com.cn/n1/2019/1109/c1011-31446538.html>

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**Source:** Zhang Yuqing, Huang Shubo, & Wang Zhijia, "A New Leap In the Combat Capability of the People's Liberation Army Air Force Aviation System," *Xinhua News Agency*, 3 November 2019. [http://www.xinhuanet.com/2019-11/03/c\\_1125187402.htm](http://www.xinhuanet.com/2019-11/03/c_1125187402.htm)

*Since the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, the air force has accelerated the upgrading of its equipment. The domestically-produced new fighters such as the J-10B/C, J-16, J-20, Yun-2 and Air Police-500 have been successively installed. With the three-generation machine as the main body and the fourth-generation machine as the backbone, early warning, sniper, bombing, reconnaissance, transportation and other aircraft upgrades have been added.*

*Entering a new era, the air force aviation police patrol the East China Sea and South China Sea, and cruise around the island. The far-sea ocean training is normalized, systematic, and the new track is continuously extended. The multi-type fighters such as the H-6K cruised around the island J-20 fighters carried out practical training on the sea, and the Sino-Russian Air Force combined air strategy achieved a new leap in combat capability.*

**Source:** Minnie Chan & Liu Zhen, "China's new supersonic arsenal could give H-6N bomber force greater reach, military experts say," *South China Morning Post*, 10 November 2019. <https://www.scmp.com/print/news/china/military/article/3036994/chinas-new-supersonic-arsenal-could-give-h-6n-bomber-force>

*China's new H-6N strategic bomber could carry CJ-100 supersonic cruise missiles or the WZ-8 supersonic stealth spy drone, increasing its maximum strike range to 6,000km (3,728 miles), military sources said.*

*When a flight of three H-6Ns passed over Beijing during rehearsals for the October 1 military parade to mark the 70th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic, military experts and aircraft enthusiasts reported two distinct new features: an aerial refueling probe on the planes' noses and a semi-recessed area on their bellies.*

*The latest designs suggested that the planes could carry oversized weapons payloads to the required altitude and launch coordinates, the air force source said.*



**China's cyber policy appears to have three vectors—peace activist, espionage activist, and attack planner—that dominate China's cyber policy. Some are always hidden from view while others are demonstrated daily. Three Faces of the Cyber Dragon is divided into sections that coincide with these vectors.**

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