

# COMPARATIVE

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## C O N N E C T I O N S

A TRIANNUAL E-JOURNAL OF BILATERAL  
RELATIONS IN THE INDO-ASIA-PACIFIC

### JAPAN-CHINA RELATIONS

## FEW POSITIVE SIGNS AND MUCH NEGATIVITY

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The tone of China-Japan relations became more alarmist on both sides with long-anticipated plans to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the normalization of diplomatic relations still clouded with uncertainty. Several related events were canceled or postponed *sine die*. Internationally, Prime Minister Kishida was exceptionally active, attending meetings of the Quad, the G7, NATO, and Shangri-La Dialogue, where he [delivered](#) the keynote address. A common theme was attention to a Free and Open Pacific (FOIP) and the need for stability in the region, both of which Beijing sees as intended to constrain China. At NATO, Kishida met with US and South Korean representatives for their first trilateral meeting in nearly five years and suggested the possibility of joint military exercises. Meanwhile, China continued pressure on Taiwan and the contested Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands. Although Foreign Minister Wang Yi and State Councillor Yang Jieqi were active internationally, Xi Jinping himself has not ventured outside the Chinese mainland since January 2020 save for a brief, tightly controlled visit to Hong Kong, which is unquestionably part of China.

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Speculation ranged from concern with his health to worries that he might be toppled by unnamed enemies—who these enemies are and what degree of influence they wield are the topics of much discussion, since Xi has through selective arrests of potential rivals and the country-wide imposition of his thoughts, effectively silenced public expression of dissident opinions.

After former Prime Minister Abe was assassinated on July 8 in an incident unrelated to foreign policy, the Chinese government sent condolences, though no Chinese representative attended the wake. A state funeral is to be held in the fall, with much speculation on who will represent the PRC.

### Politics

Japanese officials made numerous [attempts](#) to shore up Tokyo's position in visits or [discussions](#) with leaders of the South Pacific, [Africa](#), [Europe](#), the US, and Korea. Typically, the public statements of their deliberations were bland declarations on the need for maritime security and vaguely worded objections to those who would change the status quo through force though it is likely that private conversations were more specific. China, which had no doubt that it was the target of the allegations, countered with objections, some of which suggested that the meetings were instigated by the United States, and in others that they aimed at a [resurgence](#) of Japanese militarism or a re-creation of the Anglo-Japanese alliance of 19th century, with the UK also seeking to [regain](#) its past glory. Beijing must have been disconcerted when a representative of Komeito, the ruling LDP's junior coalition partner and normally anti-military, [stated](#) that Japan should discuss possessing the ability to strike enemy bases that are preparing for an attack. If adopted, this would provide an opening for pre-emptive military strikes, as more conservative voices have been arguing for some time, and hence mark a departure from Japan's long-held exclusively defense oriented policy. Thus far, while there has been much discussion of the issue, there has been no formal decision made.

Another irritant was Japan's increasing insistence on the importance of Taiwan to Japanese security, with former Prime Minister Abe [urging](#) allies to prevent China from taking Taiwan. In a startling departure from precedent, Taiwanese Vice-President William Lai was

permitted to visit Japan in July, with media referring to Lai by his official title, though he was on a private visit to attend Abe's funeral and therefore, according to the Japanese government, there had been no violation of Tokyo's one China policy. Objecting strongly, a Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson [insisted](#) that it was impossible for Taiwan to have a vice president, since Taiwan is a part of China. Adding to Beijing's ire, a supra-party delegation of Diet members visited Taiwan a few weeks later, which *Global Times* [denounced](#) as "nonsensical actions by politicians seeking Instagram-worthy publicity." The annual ritual [denunciation](#) of Japanese ministers who visited Yasukuni Shrine on or near the date of Japan's surrender after World War II was, by contrast, relatively subdued, being limited to "stern denunciations," possibly because neither Kishida nor higher-ranking officials attended. However, underscoring Beijing's concern with Japanese-Taiwan relations, on the eve of the surrender anniversary an article in *Renmin Ribao*, the official paper of the Central Committee, Zhong Sheng "Voice of the Central [Party]" a pseudonym for a highly authoritative entity, [issued](#) a litany of complaints against Japan including its most recent criticisms of China's "legitimate countermeasures in the Taiwan Strait."



Figure 1 Taiwanese vice president Lai Ching-te greets officials as he attends the funeral of late former Japanese Prime Minister Abe Shinzo in Tokyo. Photo: AFP via Getty Images

Moving beyond East Asia, Japan attempted to balance China by [offering](#) a generous aid package to Africa and by [seeking](#) to establish a multinational consortium to deal with Sri Lanka's massive debt problem. Chinese media [reacted](#) to these initiatives with derision. In Africa, Japanese officials contrast Chinese aid, with its heavy emphasis on eye-catching

buildings, sports stadia, and large infrastructure projects like port construction and railroad building, with the quieter and, they argue, ultimately more beneficial to development, Japanese emphasis on projects like education for rural areas and providing safe drinking water. Moreover, they point out, Chinese projects have had problems: railroads have lost money, ports have arguably been of greater economic and strategic value to China than to locals, and in one infamous example, the headquarters of the African Union was [discovered](#) to be bugged, allowing all its communications to be monitored by the Chinese. The Japanese acknowledge, however, that Africans seem to place greater value on the Chinese projects than those of Japan, and have suggested that better publicity might help. Details of the Sri Lanka debt relief project await the announcement of plans for the meeting of the consortium.

The Chinese government is aware that many of its citizens find Japanese culture attractive, with several recent incidents showing the sensitivity of the issue. In some cases, public opinion rather than party or government directives seem to have driven expressions of hostility. In July, a number of Chinese cities [canceled](#) their annual Matsuri festivals. Though tracing their heritage back to Shinto observances designed to show gratitude for the blessings of the gods, they gradually evolved into seasonal festivals to welcome events like the blossoming of cherry blossoms or parades to honor historical events; as imported into China, they serve strictly as entertainment. Yet August brought several [reports](#) of the harassment and detention of Chinese women who wore kimono. There is no evidence that wearers attached any political significance to their clothing. And, as some more knowledgeable individuals pointed out, although the kimono has become a symbol of Japan, its original design was borrowed from China.

There were a pair of bright spots, both in August. *Kyodo* [reported](#) a dinosaur-themed event sponsored by the Japanese embassy in Beijing in which 150 children and their parents heard a paleontologist explain that China and Japan were contiguous at the time the dinosaurs lived. An [article](#) in *China Daily* discussed the 30-year friendship between Xi Jinping and the Tsukamoto family of Osaka. A more nuanced article in the normally shrill *Global Times* [mourned](#) the death of Kazuo Inamori, a respected business management expert aged 90,

for his contributions to the development of bilateral trade and China-Japan friendship, though adding a warning that Tokyo must not cross China's red line on Taiwan.

The peculiar nature of the 7-hour mid-August [meeting](#) between top national security advisers—no flags, no handshakes, a terse delayed statement, and a photograph in which the two stood side by side, expressionless—aroused speculation that their governments might be seeking to assuage tensions without inflaming public opinion in each country. Veteran political analyst Funabashi Yoichi provided perhaps the most astute summation, [opining](#) that the two sides seemed to have been pulled back to their positions of 50 years ago, with both lacking domestic support for better relations. He advocated that they try to understand normalization as managing conditions rather than solving problems, this being, he said, the essence of competitive coexistence. As the report period closed, Chinese Ambassador to Tokyo Kong Xuanyou [urged](#) prudence on Japan's part, warning again that bilateral relations are at a crossroads and face a fresh round of conflicts.



Figure 2 Akiba Takeo, left, secretary-general of Japan's National Security Secretariat, meets with China's foreign policy chief Yang Jiechi. Photo: Xinhua via Kyodo

## Economics

Chinese economic planners struggled to cope with the continued decline of the property market, the country's worst drought in 60 years, and record-setting high temperatures; the projected 5.5% annual growth rate has been quietly dropped. The slowdown had adverse effects on China-Japan trade. Positive signs included the June opening of the Qingdao-Osaka fast logistics route, the first such since the RCEP trade agreement went into effect on Jan. 1. In the same month, there were [reports](#) of the continued success of Japanese fast fashion giant

Uniqlo despite the pandemic, which a Chinese source attributed partly due to Uniqlo's vertically integrated structure and partly because of its refusal to comment on the political matters which hurt many of its [less circumspect](#) rivals. Looking to the future, in August Japanese logistics company SBS Holdings [calculated](#) that buying electric vans assembled in China would lower its operating costs by 30% over gas-powered vehicles.

More typical was the revelation, also in August, that more Japanese companies, [concerned](#) with COVID-induced supply chain disruptions, higher wages in China, and issues of quality control, are moving facilities back to Japan or, in some cases, to Vietnam. In May, the Japanese government [passed](#) a law tightening access to semiconductor supply chains, artificial intelligence and other cutting-edge technologies through public-private partnerships. *Nikkei* [opined](#) that China-Japan financial cooperation might have hit its [high water mark](#) a decade ago.

## Defense

China continued pressure on the disputed Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands—Japan's defense ministry [reported](#) 17 intrusions of PRC coast guard vessels into Japanese-claimed waters as of mid-August—and increased the tempo of operations in the Taiwan Strait. Typically, the ships arrive in threes or fours, stay for a few hours closely shadowed by Japanese Coast Guard vessels, and then depart. The choice for Japan is whether to accept these efforts at China's creeping assertion of its claims to the area or to risk unwanted escalation by more strongly resisting them.

In May, satellite photography detected a mockup of a Japanese E-767 surveillance plane, presumably for targeting purposes, in the Xinjiang desert. If destroyed or disabled, Japan would be unable to [monitor](#) the Nansei Islands. Japanese sources expressed concern that the Chinese navy was about to [launch](#) its third aircraft carrier and that it had made advances in hypersonic weapons. The Fujian was launched on June 17 though is not expected to become fully operational before 2026 after being fitted out and operationally tested. The carrier will deploy to Hainan, in south China, where Japan, Taiwan and several Southeast Asian states will regard it as a threat. Although Chinese aircraft carriers operating around Japan represent a

threat to Japanese sea control in time of conflict, submarines could effectively cut lines of communication even before carriers arrive.



Figure 3 Satellite imagery depicting what is believed to be a model of an advanced-radar-equipped plane used by the Japanese Self-Defense Force in Xinjiang. Photo: 2022 Planet Labs PBC via Nikkei Asia

Japanese countermeasures include [efforts](#) to strengthen collaboration with the Five Eyes intelligence sharing group of Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, and the US, reinforcing its ties to the Quad, and plans to raise defense spending to 2% of GDP. None of these will be simple or easy. Japan has expressed willingness to participate in the Five Eyes arrangement but seems reluctant to commit, and there are misgivings within the Five Eyes group as to whether Japanese laws provide adequate protection for secrets that would be shared. If Japan were to join, it would be the only non-English speaking state in the group. As for the 2% increase, former Pentagon official Elbridge Colby argues that it would be too late to meet the threat. Colby [described](#) the presence of a Chinese carrier strike group near the Japanese home waters as a very serious and urgent problem, saying that if Taiwan falls to the PRC, China will be able to jeopardize and possibly cut Japan's sea lanes of communication to the south. Inadequate though the increase might be, powerful voices argue that the amount is excessive, might be better spent on pressing domestic issues, and would provoke strong countermeasures from China.

These objections notwithstanding, the perception of maritime threat continues. An imbalance in air defense is also a concern, with Japan having approximately 300 fourth- and fifth-generation planes to China's 1,000: in one ameliorative effort, the Japanese and British governments are in talks to [develop](#) a successor to the ASDF's F-2 fighter jet, with input from Lockheed Martin of the US. In July, the defense ministry's Defense of Japan 2022 white paper [emphasized](#) the need for deterrence, taking note

of the PRC's ramping up civilian-military fusion and its "relentlessly continuing unilateral attempts to change the status quo through coercion near the Senkaku Islands" while creating faits accomplis in the South China Sea. Though the paper was sparse on details, measures to bolster the defense of the Nansei Islands are an important part of plans. Chinese state news agency *Xinhua* [responded](#) that the white paper was full of bias and showed a total disregard for facts.

### **The Future**

Both sides have publicly professed their desire for better relations but seem unable to transcend the issues that divide them while keeping mutually beneficial trade relations as stable as possible. No breakthrough seems likely. Two important indicators will be the rank of the official—if any—sent to represent China at Abe's state funeral in late September, and what level of attention each side will accord to commemorating the 50th anniversary of the normalization of China-Japan relations at the end of September. Seemingly most likely would be low-key occasions emphasizing burgeoning trade relations since 1972 and, on the Chinese side, the inclusion of pro-China Japanese nationals who will lavish words of praise on the bilateral relationship. With Xi Jinping virtually assured of a third term as PRC leader at the 20th Party Congress that will convene in mid-October and Kishida apparently secure as prime minister following a successful House of Councillors election, current tensions are likely to endure.

# CHRONOLOGY OF JAPAN-CHINA RELATIONS

## MAY—AUGUST 2022

**May 5, 2022:** US Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin, meeting with Japanese counterpart Kishi Nobuo, [reiterates](#) the US commitment to defend the contested Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands.

**May 7, 2022:** Foreign Minister Hayashi [visits](#) Fiji and Palau to discuss concerns over Chinese expansionism in the South Pacific in the wake of Beijing's security agreement with the Solomon Islands.

**May 9, 2022:** China's leading military newspaper [describes](#) Prime Minister Kishida's visit to Asian and European countries from April 29 to May 6 through the guise of a free and open Indo-Pacific as having strategic intentions of gathering support for the revision of Japan's constitution.

**May 10, 2022:** Responding to an LDP party member's criticism of Chinese air force planes entering Taiwan's air defense identification zone, a Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson [states](#) that "there is no reason for Japanese individuals to force themselves into the spotlight."

**May 11, 2022:** Spurred by concerns over China and Russia, Japan [passes](#) a law strengthening supply chains to procure semiconductors and other vital products and facilitate development of artificial intelligence and other cutting edge technologies through public-private partnerships.

**May 14, 2022:** *Yomiuri* [reports](#) that China will soon unveil its third aircraft carrier which, despite rumors to the contrary, may not be equipped with an electromagnetic catapult system since the required amount of electricity is not currently available.

**May 15, 2022:** *Yomiuri* [reports](#) Japanese and UK governments are coordinating in development of a successor to the ASDF's F-2 fighter jet, with Lockheed Martin to participate in a limited role.

**May 17, 2022:** Former Pentagon official Elbridge Colby [terms](#) the Kishida administration's plan to move toward spending 2% of GDP on defense as too late to meet the threat.

**May 19, 2022:** In a videoconference with Chinese counterpart Wang Yi, FM Hayashi [states](#) that Japanese public opinion is very critical of China, and expresses deep concern about Chinese activity in the East China and South China seas, Hong Kong, in Xinjiang, and in the Taiwan Strait. *Xinhua* omits Hayashi's words.

**May 20, 2022:** Satellite [photos](#) indicating a dummy Japanese E-767 surveillance aircraft that could be used for training to attack with missiles are [detected](#) in the Xinjiang desert.

**May 21, 2022:** A Japanese academic [urges](#) caution on Taiwanese lobbies in Japan who call for a version of the Taiwan Relations Act, which he worries will give China a pretext for aggression.

**May 22, 2022:** *Reuters* [reports](#) that Japan is asking its universities for greater scrutiny of foreign students and scholars to prevent technology leaks to places like China.

**May 23, 2022:** Quad members Australia, India, Japan, and the US [announce](#) a satellite-based plan to help Indo-Pacific countries track illegal fishing and unconventional maritime militias.

**May 24, 2022:** Prime Minister Kishida and President Biden [confirm](#) their commitment to oppose China's and Russia's expanding military activities in East Asia.

**May 24, 2022:** DM Kishi [describes](#) Beijing and Moscow's sending warplanes near Japan's airspace during the meeting of the Quad "provocative," with China responding that they were part of an annual military exercise.

**May 25, 2022:** *Global Times* [editorializes](#) that the Quad is an insidious effort to contain China.

**May 26, 2022:** Chinese military source reportedly [tells](#) *Yomiuri* that [drills](#) by aircraft carrier *Liaoning* off Japan from 3-20 May near Okinawa were to establish the capability for around-the-clock attacks on Taiwan.

**May 30, 2022:** *Nikkei* opinion [poll finds](#) the approval rating for Kishida's Cabinet reached the highest level since it was sworn in after Kishida and Biden affirmed the need to strengthen deterrence "with China in mind."

**May 30, 2022:** Komeito representative [states](#) that Japan should discuss possessing the ability to strike enemy bases that are preparing an attack.

**May 31, 2022:** Japan's foreign ministry [creates](#) internal strategy group tasked with monitoring Chinese activities.

**June 2, 2022:** Japan's Defense Ministry [announces](#) that its de facto aircraft carrier *Izumo* will make 12 ports of call that include four South Pacific states as well as fellow Quad members.

**June 2, 2022:** Japanese companies are cautiously [resuming](#) operations in Shanghai, though concerned about another extended lockdown and pessimism over how soon the Chinese economy will recover.

**June 3, 2022:** Japan announces [plans](#) to develop drones to support fighter aircraft, and is considering equipping drones with missiles that would intercept enemy-launched missiles. To be developed with the US to ensure interoperability, the drones will be equipped with artificial intelligence.

**June 3, 2022:** Chinese media [describe](#) reports that *Izumo* will participate in RIMPAC exercise and Indo-Pacific Deployment as further examples of Japan's violation of its pacifist constitution.

**June 4, 2022:** Japan's Foreign Ministry [protests](#) presence of Chinese ships apparently releasing observation equipment in Japan's EEZ about 73 km north of Ishigaki Island.

**June 4, 2022:** In response to strong concerns from the LDP, Japan's government [revises](#) a draft document with a timeline of five years for

comprehensive strengthening of Japan's defense.

**June 4, 2022:** *Nikkei* [assesses](#) that Japan's economic strength in Southeast Asia has declined relative to that of China, which does three times more trade with ASEAN countries even though Japan leads in accumulated investment.

**June 5, 2022:** *Jiji* [describes](#) mood ahead of the 50th anniversary of the normalization of China-Japanese relations as far from festive, as persistent tensions mean it will be difficult to hold large-scale government-sponsored events, leaving the private sector to play the major role.

**June 5, 2022:** Japanese government [establishes](#) 30-member team to designate by year's end the use of land plots viewed as important for national security, such as remote islands and areas near Self-Defense Forces bases.

**June 6, 2022:** Japan's defense ministry is [studying](#) the war in Ukraine to prepare a response to an invasion by an unnamed power and decide what equipment and what an enhanced budget should focus on.

**June 7, 2022:** In a telephone conversation with Japanese national security chief Akiba Takeo, his Chinese counterpart Yang Jiechi [states](#) that old problems in bilateral relations are intertwined with new ones and that challenges cannot be ignored.

**June 8, 2022:** [Elaborating](#) on the Yang-Akiba telephone call, *Global Times* asserts that "Japan needs a head blow to wake up."

**June 10, 2022:** In a [keynote](#) speech to the Shangri-La Dialogue (SLD), Kishida says that Ukraine could be tomorrow's East Asia, chiding China for not complying with the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea and stating that unilateral attempts to change the status quo by force in violation of international law are continuing.

**June 11, 2022:** [Speaking](#) at the SLD, Japanese DM Kishi says that joint military operations by Russia and China are upending international norms and that Japan is on the front lines of the increased tensions.

**June 11, 2022:** [Responding](#) to Kishida's speech, former vice-president of the PLA's Academy of Military Science states "on the so-called issue of unilateral attempts to change the status quo by force in the East China Sea, it was Japan who firstly and illegally 'nationalize' [sic] the Diaoyu Islands and other relevant island [sic] around the region."

**June 11, 2022:** Head of *Yomiuri's* international news department [argues](#) that, faced with China's militaristic rise and North Korea's missile development, the Japanese public has given up its utopian dream and now supports strong defense spending.

**June 12, 2022:** On the sidelines of the SLD and marking the first [meeting](#) between Chinese and Japanese defense ministers since 2019, Kishi raises "serious concerns" over the continuation of joint Sino-Russian military exercises around Japan to counterpart Wei Fenghe.

**June 17, 2022:** Japan's defense ministry [reports](#) that two Chinese navy vessels, one of which is a destroyer, are spotted navigating through the Tsugaru Strait toward the Pacific with seven Russian navy vessels, including a destroyer and an intelligence-gathering ship, and may be conducting joint training exercises when the Chinese vessels are deployed in the Pacific.

**June 18, 2022:** Having [confirmed](#) Chinese construction work suspected to be for gas field exploration in contested waters, the Japanese government lodges a protest over this and repeated intrusions by Japanese ships into waters around the contested Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands.

**June 21, 2022:** Chinese luxury market analyst *Jing Daily* [attributes](#) Japanese fast fashion behemoth Uniqlo's exceptional success despite the pandemic partly to its refusal to comment on political matters such as sourcing of cotton from Xinjiang, which has hurt several of its rivals.

**June 23, 2022:** [Citing](#) the launch of the PRC's third aircraft carrier and the joint Chinese-Russian circumvention of Japan's home islands, *Asahi*, normally accommodative to Chinese government positions, editorializes that China's "reckless military buildup is needlessly stoking tensions."

**June 24, 2022:** Japan Coast Guard [confirms](#) that two China Coast Guard vessels intruded into Japanese territorial waters off the Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands and stayed for 64 hours, repeatedly attempting to approach a Japanese fishing boat.

**June 26, 2022:** *Global Times* reports first successful voyage of the "golden channel" Qingdao-Osaka fast logistics route since the RCEP trade agreement came into effect on January 1.

**June 27, 2022:** [Speaking](#) at the G7 summit in Germany, Kishida takes the unusual step of criticizing China by name, saying "The G7 countries need to present measures to deal with China's unfair and opaque financing for development projects."

**June 28, 2022:** At G7 press conference, Kishida [says](#) he wants to hold summit talks with Xi Jinping; although there are no plans for a summit, it's important to keep dialogue at various levels.

**June 28, 2022:** In response to Kishida's efforts to broaden NATO's concerns to the Indo-Pacific, *Global Times* [cites](#) Mencius saying that a gentleman [NATO] should not stand under a dangerous wall, and that the sewage of the Cold War should not be allowed to flow into the Pacific Ocean.

**July 2, 2022:** Aiming to bolster Japan's ability to defend the Nansei Islands from Chinese expansionist activities, the defense ministry [contracts](#) for the delivery of 12 next-generation offshore patrol vessels (OPVs) from fiscal year 2023.

**July 4, 2022:** Japanese government lodges [protest](#) to Beijing through diplomatic channels about the passage of a Chinese frigate through the contiguous zone around the disputed Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands, the fourth such instance since June 2018.

**July 5, 2022:** Veteran Japanese political analyst Yoichi Funabashi [argues](#) that Japan and China look as if they are being pulled back to the starting point of normalization 50 years ago, with both lacking domestic support for better relations.

**July 6, 2022:** Japanese defense ministry official [expresses](#) “serious concern” about the numbers of Chinese and Russian warships circumnavigating Japan, with speculation centering on their checking SDF surveillance capabilities and tracking systems, with information being shared between the two countries.

**July 8, 2022:** *Global Times* [describes](#) late former Prime Minister Abe as a controversial figure who ruined his contribution to bilateral ties by visiting the Yasukuni Shrine, “denying” Japan’s invasion history, and declaring that a Taiwan emergency is a Japanese emergency.

**July 8, 2022:** Japanese government lodges a diplomatic [protest](#) after two Chinese Coast Guard ships stayed continuously in the territorial waters around the disputed Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands for 64 hours and 17 minutes from July 5-7, the longest single intrusion since 2012.

**July 11, 2022:** Taiwan Vice President William Lai becomes the most senior official to [visit](#) Japan since Tokyo broke relations in 1972 to recognize the PRC.

**July 11, 2022:** According to a Japan expert at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, Japan [saw](#) in the NATO summit an opportunity to join with the US and some European countries to encircle China, possibly intervene militarily in the Taiwan question, and consolidate the Japan-US alliance thus increasing US military presence in the region.

**July 12, 2022:** China’s foreign ministry [lodges](#) “stern representations” with the Japanese government over Taiwanese vice-president William Lai’s attending Abe’s funeral.

**July 15, 2022:** US satellite operator Planet Labs [releases](#) photographs from base in Xinjiang showing a mockup of a Japanese SDF aircraft destroyed, apparently from a missile.

**July 16, 2022:** Taiwan’s China-leaning opposition party the KMT’s decision to lower the flag at its Taipei headquarters to half-staff in honor of former PM Abe draws [criticism](#) from the party’s more assertively pro-China faction.

**July 18, 2022:** Draft basic guidelines [indicate](#) that Japan is to invest heavily in high-tech areas that involve the nation’s security.

**July 21, 2022:** A Chinese navy ship [sails](#) through Japanese territorial waters, the sixth such intrusion of the year and the first since April.

**July 22, 2022:** Defense of Japan 2022 takes [note](#) of China’s ramping up civil-military fusion, its “relentlessly continuing unilateral attempts to change the status quo by coercion near the Senkaku Islands, and the creation of *faits accomplis* in the South China Sea” and highlights the need for deterrence.

**July 25, 2022:** *Xinhua* [responds](#) to the white paper by describing it as showing a total disregard for facts and full of bias.

**July 27, 2022:** Stating that Japan must be able to deal with the drastically changing security environment, LDP Secretary-General Toshimitsu Motegi [urges](#) that defense spending increase from 5.4 trillion yen in fiscal year 2022 to the mid-6 trillion range in 2023.

**July 27, 2022:** At least seven Chinese cities [cancel](#) annual Japan-themed Matsuri festivals after some incidents, including a woman who enshrined Japanese war criminals at a Nanjing temple and, separately, unspecified comments by others that were made during the public debate over former Japanese prime minister Abe.

**July 28, 2022:** *Global Times* [denounces](#) the cross-party visit of Japanese lawmakers to Taiwan as nonsensical actions by politicians seeking Instagram-worthy publicity.

**July 29, 2022:** Speaking at CSIS, Foreign Minister Hayashi [emphasizes](#) China’s behavior in the Indo-Pacific, saying the “logic of brute force” was gaining traction over the rule of law.

**Aug. 3, 2022:** Japan’s government [protests](#) after five Chinese missiles shot in retaliation against Taiwan hosting US Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi land in Japan’s EEZ.

**Aug. 4, 2022:** In response to Japan signing a G7 letter of protest against Chinese actions against Taiwan, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi [cancels](#) meeting with counterpart Hayashi that

was to be held on the sidelines of the ASEAN meeting.

**Aug. 10, 2022:** Newly appointed Defense Minister Hamada Yasukaza expresses [concern](#) about China's military exercises near Taiwan and pledges to increase the defense of Japan's southwestern islands.

**Aug. 11, 2022:** Huang Xingyuan, representative director of the Japan-China Friendship Center, [advises](#) Japan to rectify its mindset of relying on China for its economy and the US for security and to drop its emphasis on the US-Japan alliance.

**Aug. 12, 2022:** Japanese logistics company SBS Holdings [calculates](#) that buying electric vans assembled in China will lower its operating costs by 30% over gasoline-powered vehicles.

**Aug. 13, 2022:** Economics Minister Nishimura Yasutoshi [visits](#) Yasukuni Shrine, the first member of Kishida's Cabinet to do so.

**Aug. 14, 2022:** Reacting to Nishimura's visit and the 77th anniversary of Japan's surrender after World War II, *Global Times* [observes](#) that more countries are becoming concerned that Japan may return to militarism. It does not mention any specific countries.

**Aug. 14, 2022:** About 150 children and parents [attend](#) the showing of a dinosaur-themed film at the Japanese embassy in Beijing, with a paleontologist explaining that Japan and China were contiguous at the time the dinosaurs lived.

**Aug. 14, 2022:** In the 17th such [intrusion](#) so far this year, two Chinese Coast Guard ships enter Japanese waters around the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands.

**Aug. 14, 2022:** China's Foreign Ministry [issued](#) stern representations to Japan over its ministers' behavior in visiting the Yasukuni Shrine.

**Aug. 16, 2022:** On the eve of the anniversary of Japan's surrender after World War II, Zhong Sheng "Voice of the Central [Party]" a pseudonym for a highly authoritative entity, issues a [litany](#) of complaints against Japan including its most recent criticisms of China's

legitimate countermeasures in the Taiwan Strait.

**Aug. 16, 2022:** *Nikkei* [reports](#) a rise in anti-Japanese sentiments in China, resulting in the cancellation of events and removal of paintings that public opinion regard as "too Japanese."

**Aug. 16, 2022:** Four Chinese Coast Guard vessels [enter](#) Japanese territorial waters near the disputed Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands.

**Aug. 18, 2022:** Chinese state councilor Yang Jiechi and head of Japan's national security secretariat Akiba hold [talks](#) on the security implications of China's recent activities in areas surrounding Taiwan

**Aug. 19, 2022:** In a telephone conversation with Solomon Islands Foreign Minister Jeremiah Manele, FM Hayashi expresses Tokyo's [concerns](#) about the security pact that the Solomons concluded with China in April.

**Aug. 21, 2022:** With a Taiwan contingency in mind and mindful of the missile gap with China, the Japanese government announces plans to [station](#) more than 1,000 long-range missiles, most of them from Kyoto to the Nansei Island chain.

**Aug. 21, 2022:** Chinese military experts [respond](#) that there is no connection between Tokyo's decision to deploy more and longer-range missiles and Chinese actions; the true motivation is to revise Japan's pacifist constitution and enhance its military power.

**Aug. 22, 2022:** Japan's Defense Ministry announces plans to [equip](#) MSDF vessels engaged in long-term voyages with the system offered by SpaceX to boost telecommunications capabilities and resolve the issue of manpower shortages in the MSDF.

**Aug. 22, 2022:** Mindful of Chinese and Russian advances in hypersonic missile technology, Japan's budget [requests](#) for fiscal 2023 will include funds to strengthen Japan's capability for detection and interception.

**Aug. 23, 2022:** In what appears to be an attempt to soften relations ahead of the September commemoration of the 50th anniversary of mutual diplomatic recognition, an article in

*China Daily* [describes](#) the 30-year friendship between the Tsukamoto family of Osaka and Xi Jinping.

**Aug. 23, 2022:** To stem the [exodus](#) of domestic firms from defense-related production, Japan's Defense Ministry will seek a special budget to dissuade them from doing so.

**Aug. 24, 2022:** Jiji reports [meeting](#) between Taiwan President Tsai Ing-wen and a supra-partisan group of Diet members who favor stronger Taipei-Tokyo relations. Delegation head Keiji Furuya terms Chinese intimidation of Taiwan "absolutely unacceptable."

**Aug. 24, 2022:** After a nearly two and a half year ban, China will [allow](#) foreign nationals, including Japanese, to apply for visas to study in the PRC.

**Aug. 25, 2022:** *Asahi* [reports](#) that more Japanese companies, concerned with COVID-induced supply chain disruptions, higher wages in China, and issues of quality control, are moving facilities back to Japan or, in some cases, to Vietnam.

**Aug. 25, 2022:** PM Kishida, [speaking](#) at the triennial Tokyo International Conference on African Development, pledges \$30 billion in investments in human resources, mainly in the agricultural and health sectors

**Aug. 26, 2022:** Mindful of China's growing influence over Sri Lanka, Japan, its second-largest creditor, seeks to [organize](#) a conference to resolve Sri Lanka's debt crisis.

**Aug. 26, 2022:** *Global Times* [criticizes](#) Japan for its failure to acknowledge forced labor abuses during World War II.

**Aug. 26, 2022:** According to *Nikkei*, Sino-Japanese financial [cooperation](#) may have hit its high water mark 10 years ago, with a proposed agreement on cross-ownership of each other's bonds having fallen into abeyance.

**Aug. 28, 2022:** Chinese ambassador to Tokyo Kong Xuanyou [urges](#) prudence on Japan's part, warning that bilateral relations are at a new crossroads and face a fresh round of conflicts.

**Aug. 30, 2022:** *Global Times* [mourns](#) the death of business management expert Kazuo Inamori for his contributions to development of bilateral trade and Sino-Japanese friendship.

**Aug. 31, 2022:** *Bloomberg* [reports](#) that Japan will develop and mass produce a cruise missile and a high-velocity ballistic missile as it seeks the ability to strike more distant targets.

