



China Launches 3rd, Most Advanced Aircraft Carrier, Making PLA Navy 'World's Largest Multi-Carrier Force'

Description

CHINA: A major milestone was reached by China's PLA Navy (PLAN) on Friday as it announced the launch of the country's third and most advanced aircraft carrier out of Shanghai's Jiangnan Shipyard.

The "Fujian" is China's first ever domestically designed and built catapult aircraft carrier, which includes a high tech electromagnetic catapult-assisted launch system, bringing its navy to the status of being the **world's largest multi-carrier force** (although still no match for the US Navy... yet).

The PLAN currently has some 355 ships, including submarines, and the U.S. estimates the force will grow to 420 ships by 2025 and 460 ships by 2030. Despite having the world's largest navy numerically, however, the PLAN still has nowhere the near capabilities of the U.S. Navy for now, however, and remains far behind in carriers. –[AP](#)



CCTV/AFP Photo of launch ceremony

The Associated Press [describes](#) of the carrier's launch ceremony, "The Type 003 carrier christened Fujian left its drydock at a shipyard outside Shanghai in the morning and tied up at a nearby pier, state media reports said." And further: "State broadcaster CCTV showed assembled navy personnel standing beneath the massive ship as water jets sprayed over its deck and multi-colored streamers flew and colorful smoke was released."

The new launch system will allow for jets loaded with more munitions to take-off at faster intervals, and as CNN describes based on [state media](#), "In addition to the launch system, the Fujian is equipped with blocking devices, and a full-load displacement of more than 80,000 tons, Xinhua reported, adding that the ship will carry out mooring tests and navigation tests after the launch."

The next step will be for the Fujian to start sea trials, also as **a fourth Chinese carrier is under development** and next in line for a future launch. Already long in operation are China's Soviet-era Liaoning as well as the domestically-built Shandong. The latter's design is based on the Liaoning, which was launched in 1988.

Over a year ago *The South China Morning Post* hinted that the fourth still in development carrier could be nuclear-powered, citing an unnamed official who said designers are studying how **"to use nuclear power for the fourth carrier."**

ICYMI – China launched its third aircraft carrier. pic.twitter.com/MeopnAav7U

— Disclose.tv (@disclosetv) [June 17, 2022](#)

The maritime monitoring site Naval News has the following backgrounder on the Fujian:

...the Type-003 Fujian will further expand and mature the Chinese Navy's capabilities. It is part of a shift to a true blue water navy, operating in the Pacific and, if called upon, globally.

*Part of a slogan written on the ship for the launch, visible in satellite imagery, has been translated as **"to build a strong and modern navy, and provide strong support for the realization of the Chinese dream of a strong military. To realize the party's goal of strengthening the army in the new era, and build the people's army into a world-class army in an all-round way"**. Note that in China, the Navy (known as PLAN for People's Liberation Army Navy) is part of the Army (PLA).*

The Type-003 is comparable in size to the U.S. Navy's Nimitz and Ford classes
. And it's design is similar in many ways. At the same time, it is an evolution of the first two Chinese Navy (PLAN) carriers. These were built on Soviet technology.

The launch comes as China and the US continue disputing the status of the Taiwan Strait, with the Biden administration earlier this week declaring it's part of "international waters" – a designation which Beijing rejects, and following monthly US warship 'freedom of navigation' sail throughs of the strait.

Recently China's foreign ministry has stressed that if Taiwan attempt to declare independence, the PLA military would invade in order to 'protect Chinese sovereignty' over the island.

by Tyler Durden

Category

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