

Media Roundup Issue 87 (01/09/18 – 07/09/18)

1. Australia's largest maritime exercise underway with China participating for first time

01/09/18

Emily Smith

ABC News

The Australian naval fleet commander has called on his counterparts — including those from China — to respect "freedom of navigation" and promote "free and open international order", during a speech at the nation's largest maritime exercise.

Exercise Kakadu launched in Darwin last night, and will see the navies from 27 countries train off the Top End coast. China has sent a warship and will participate for the first time.

During the Fleet Commanders Conference on Saturday, Rear Admiral Jonathan Mead spoke of the importance of respecting "freedom of navigation" — a right that allows vessels of one country to navigate waters passing near another country.

But he made no specific mention of China's claims to the South China Sea, which have caused tension.

Read more: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-09-01/exercise-kakadu-hosts-china-south-china-sea-navy-maritime/10190856>

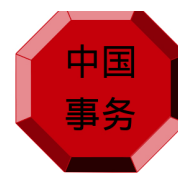
2. In China's autonomous Xinjiang region, Muslims are imprisoned in shocking internment camps

02/09/18

News.com.au

INTERNMENT camps, rehabilitation, ethnic cleansing, torture and suffering.

No, this isn't a description of the Nazi regimen in the 1940s. It's China right now.



Each week China Matters collates news items about the Australia-China relationship

As we speak, over a million Muslims in China's northwest region of Xinjiang are allegedly being held in prison-like camps disguised as "re-education facilities", according to human rights organisations, US officials and survivors.

There are also reports of Muslim inmates forced to eat pork and drink alcohol, which are forbidden in their religion.

An official Chinese Communist Party recording compared Islam to an "infectious disease".

Read more: <https://www.news.com.au/lifestyle/real-life/news-life/in-chinas-autonomous-xinjiang-region-muslims-are-imprisoned-in-shocking-internment-camps/news-story/b160a053ecaa8947d20b0c16b536c7c4>

3. China officially bans ABC website, claims internet is 'fully open'

03/09/18

Matthew Carney and Bill Birtles

ABC News

China's cyber security regulator has confirmed it has censored the ABC's website for breaching the country's internet rules and regulations, but has declined to say how.

The ABC's website and apps are usually accessible to Chinese web users and are not subject to the "Great Firewall" of censorship, but access was abruptly stopped on August 22.

After repeated requests for clarification, an official from the Office of the Central Cyberspace Affairs Commission dictated a statement to the ABC:

"China's internet is fully open. We welcome internet enterprises from all over the world to provide good information to the netizens of China."

"However, state cyber sovereignty rights shall be maintained towards some overseas websites violating China's laws and regulations, spreading rumours, pornographic information, gambling, violent terrorism and some other illegal harmful information which will endanger state security and damage national pride."



Read more: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-09-03/china-officially-bans-abc-website/10193158>

4. Donald Trump's former strategist Steve Bannon predicts working-class revolt in Australia as China rises

03/09/18

Sarah Ferguson and Jeanavive McGregor

ABC News

Donald Trump's former chief strategist Steve Bannon has criticised Australia's approach to an aggressive China, labelling it weak and saving his most blunt assessment for former prime minister Malcolm Turnbull.

"People are going to be held accountable in the next 10 or 20 years about 'what did you know about China?', 'how did you accommodate it?'" he said.

"They absolutely have to be confronted now. Turnbull has been way too much of an appeaser."

In an exclusive interview with Four Corners, Mr Bannon identified Australia as the "canary in the mineshaft" — a warning of the consequences of not standing up to China.

"Australia can show you when good and decent people kind of play by the rules and the next thing they look around and many of the economic resources and economic assets of a country are owned by another country," he said.

Read more: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-09-03/steve-bannon-says-china-is-at-economic-war-with-west/10174604>

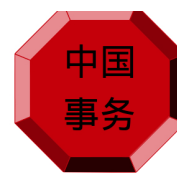
5. China has transformed its military to 'fight and win wars', Pentagon warns

03/09/18

Sandeep Gopalan

ABC News

Are we entering the critical phase in the Great Power competition between America and China?



The answer seems to be affirmative, based on a new Pentagon report released recently.

The report — submitted to Congress by the Department of Defence and titled [Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China](#) — provides new insights into China's military restructuring and more aggressive posture in the Indo-Pacific region.

Given its importance, all countries in the region ought to take notice. Predictably, some of the coverage in the American media has been breathless — seemingly surprised at the idea that America's great rival is training for a military conflict with it.

Read more: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-09-02/pentagon-report-on-chinas-military-contains-warnings-australia/10148162>

6. Scott Morrison says ABC ban China's decision

03/09/18

Remy Varga

The Australian

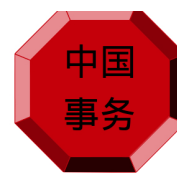
Prime Minister Scott Morrison isn't concerned by China's decision to ban the ABC's website, saying it's a matter of national sovereignty.

China's cyber security regulator has confirmed to the national broadcaster that its websites and apps have been blocked for almost two weeks but refused to explain how the news organisation had breached its rules.

The Office of the Central Cyberspace Affairs Commission said content that could "endanger state security and damage national pride" was in violation of its rules, in a statement provided to the ABC.

Mr Morrison said the Australian government's responsibility only extended to what happened within the nation. "Well, I mean, the ABC is funded to broadcast in Australia so we're in control of that," Mr Morrison told 3AW radio.

"China's a sovereign country. They make decisions about what happens there. We make decisions about what happens here."



Read more (Paywall): <https://www.theaustralian.com.au/business/media/abc-says-china-has-blocked-its-website-for-breaching-internet-rules/news-story/178a0dfd720723519a1adde2bb379671>

7. Australia and New Zealand chip away at China's Pacific influence

03/09/18

Fumi Matsumoto

Nikkei Asian Review

SYDNEY -- As China attempts to increase its influence over Pacific countries by increasing development assistance, Australia, the traditional supporter of the small island nations, is growing wary.

During a Pacific Islands Forum meeting that kicked off Monday on Nauru, a tiny island in the Central Pacific, Australia and New Zealand are expected to sign a joint statement on security with PIF countries. Australia and New Zealand also aim to solidify their influence over the region by dispatching high commissioners and by taking other measures.

Speaking to reporters during a visit to Jakarta, Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison said his country has a "special responsibility in the region" and compared Australia's relationship with the countries to that of family members.

Read more: <https://asia.nikkei.com/Politics/International-Relations/Australia-and-New-Zealand-chip-away-at-China-s-Pacific-influence>

8. Climate change, not China, top issue for Payne at Pacific forum

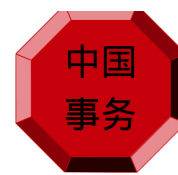
03/09/18

Angus Grigg

Australian Financial Review

Newly installed Foreign Minister Marise Payne will seek to reassert Australia's leadership role in the Pacific at a regional forum this week, as Canberra's authority has gradually been diminished by political instability and a lack of action on climate change.

Ahead of the Pacific Islands Forum in Nauru, Ms Payne insisted the Pacific was "our region" and trumpeted Australia's role as its largest aid donor.



"The largest development assistance in the region is overwhelmingly coming from Australia, in fact it will hit the largest contribution ever during 2018-19 at \$1.3 billion," she said in an interview before the forum on Tuesday.

Ms Payne is keen to stress Australia's "Pacific step-up", which has seen the refocusing of the aid budget to the small island states in response to China's increasing interest in the region.

Read more (Paywall): <https://www.afr.com/news/policy/foreign-affairs/climate-change-not-china-top-issue-for-payne-at-pacific-forum-20180901-h14tsw>

9. China's pacific challenge: a chain of credit colonies

04/09/18

Alan Dupont

The Australian

That China might build a port with military capabilities on Papua New Guinea's Manus Island may be the Morrison government's first serious foreign policy test and should be raised by Foreign Minister Marise Payne at this week's -Pacific Islands Forum in Nauru.

Manus Island commands the northern approaches to Australia. It would be a high-value acquisition for the Chinese military, greatly extending its reach into the southwest Pacific from bases in the South China Sea as well as providing enhanced opportunities for electronic spying.

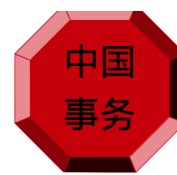
The core concern is that China is attempting to decouple PNG and other Pacific island countries from their traditionally close relationships with Australia by funding expensive infrastructure projects that will be difficult, or impossible, to pay back.

Read more (Paywall): <https://www.theaustralian.com.au/opinion/chinas-pacific-challenge-a-chain-of-credit-colonies/news-story/05f078fb9f185c279bf6f6577123018a>

10. Bowen beats the Prime Minister into Beijing

04/09/18

Primrose Riordan



The Australian

Labor's Treasury spokesman Chris Bowen is visiting China this week, meaning he will visit Beijing before the foreign minister or Prime Minister this year. Government MP Julian Leeser will also head to Beijing with Mr Bowen.

"The trip is sponsored by the public policy initiative "China Matters" and I will be accompanied by the founding director and Chief Executive Officer of China Matters, Linda Jakobson."

Read more (Paywall): <https://www.theaustralian.com.au/national-affairs/foreign-affairs/bowen-beats-the-prime-minister-into-beijing/news-story/276a0db78a6487c8764075ddc3bbc0bc>

11. As Australia looks north, China's presence in the Antarctic continues to grow

07/09/18

Gavin Fernando

News.com.au

A COLD war is slowly unfolding on Australia's doorstep.

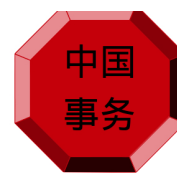
Yes, literally — we're talking about a battle building over the future of the icy Antarctic.

As Australia scans for potential conflicts to our north, a separate threat is looming in the region just south of Tasmania.

So why aren't we tackling it head-on?

For a long time, China has been eyeing the Australian Antarctic Territory — a large portion of the Antarctic that by Canberra's definition belongs to us. In 1951, Australia and a bunch of other countries signed a document called the Antarctic Treaty System. The Treaty recognised the sovereignty claims of Australia.

Australia claimed six million square kilometres of the icy continent — around 42 per cent of its total land.



However, this is not internationally recognised. A number of other countries — most notably including China — weren't signatories to this treaty, and they don't recognise Australia's claims.

Read more: <https://www.news.com.au/technology/innovation/military/as-australia-looks-north-chinas-presence-in-the-antarctic-continues-to-grow/news-story/d93aa030c6846e5bfe98f6fdc12f93c9>

12. Time to reset policy in dealing with China's human rights abuses

07/09/18

Dirk van der Kley

The Australian

For 20 years Australia has dealt with Chinese human rights concerns behind closed doors. The thinking goes that private entreaties are more effective than publicly confronting Chinese leaders. Australian legislators also fear Chinese economic sanctions should they raise human rights publicly. This policy is past its use-by date.

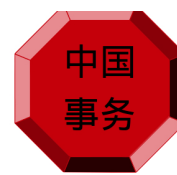
Chinese human rights abuses have now become so egregious that Australian politicians should speak up. There is an element of self-interest for Australia. As rights worsen in China, the Communist Party of China has been tightening the noose on dissidents and vulnerable groups abroad, including in Australia.

The worst abuses, among many, are happening in western China's Xinjiang region. Beijing is executing a brutal program of apartheid against Muslims in the region. Since last year, the CPC has imprisoned perhaps as many as a million predominantly Muslim Uighurs and Kazakhs in concentration camps. There is no trial or release date. Very few leave. Numerous people have died in the camps. The state is also constructing large-scale crematoriums, denying traditional burials to those who die.

Read more (Paywall): <https://www.theaustralian.com.au/opinion/time-to-reset-policy-in-dealing-with-chinas-human-rights-abuses/news-story/e4fed29ad973f3201bbd5e9d48563315>

13. Australia beats China to funding Fiji base

07/09/18



Primrose Riordan
The Australian

Australia successfully blocked China from funding a major regional military base in Fiji, a move that reveals intensifying concern in Canberra over strategic competition in the South Pacific region.

In a move to outbid China to secure the rights as the sole foreign donor of the Fiji Military Forces' Black Rock Camp in Nadi, the Coalition government has contributed a "significant" figure for the facility to be transformed into a regional training hub for South Pacific militaries.

Beijing's rival bid, confirmed by the Fijian Defence Force, came amid Australian government fears of China gaining a military presence in the region, notably in Vanuatu, although that country's government denies this was on the cards.

Read more (Paywall): <https://www.theaustralian.com.au/national-affairs/defence/australia-beats-china-to-funding-fiji-base/news-story/60d05ca8eb2bec629080c2c844255bbd>

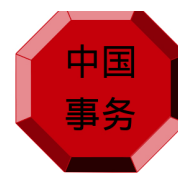
14. Chinese investment in Australian homes down, but Victoria still No. 1 state

07/09/18
Samantha Landy
News.com.au

CHINESE spending on Australian property fell by \$8.8 billion last year, as new taxes, restrictions and capital controls curbed investment from our most prolific foreign buyers.

But international property website Juwai.com expects "moderate increases" this year in Chinese demand for homes in Victoria — which remains their No. 1 target down under.

Juwai.com found buyers from China still splashed more than \$19.4 billion on Aussie residential real estate in 2017, and \$4.5 billion on commercial. The nation was second only to the US for popularity among househunters from mainland China on the site last year, with buyers sinking more money into Victoria than any other Aussie state.



Read more: <https://www.news.com.au/national/victoria/chinese-investment-in-australian-homes-down-but-victoria-still-no-1-state/news-story/3e1f7ce2990d7b0112144f4cf4bdad6c>

15. Chinese Australians Or Australian Chinese

07/09/18

Jocelyn Chey (China Matters Associate)

John Menadue – Pearls and Irritations

The Chinese Australian community has been hijacked in the current public debate about the extent of Chinese influence in Australia. Far-right elements are fanning anti-Asian feelings and there is an upsurge in racism in major cities. Government leaders now more than ever should affirm the many contributions of the Chinese Australian community. It is an asset in our relationship with the People's Republic of China.

ABC Radio National all last week focussed on China and China-Australia relations, including a sell-out public forum on 30 September entitled Australia-China a complicated friendship. A podcast is available at http://mpegmedia.abc.net.au/rn/podcast/2018/09/bia_20180903.mp3

Forum speakers included Lowy Institute Fellow Richard McGregor, whose study of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) is widely admired, Chinese community leader Jason Yat-Sen Li, Clive Hamilton, author of the 2017 best seller *The Silent Invasion*, and myself. Hamilton claims that the CCP through its United Front Department targets the Chinese Australian community in its aim of subverting the Australian political system. The Forum discussion was valuable but failed to cover the whole spectrum of the bilateral relationship, including political, economic, cultural, scientific, strategic and people-to-people ties, concentrating overmuch instead on the role of Chinese Australians.

Read more: <https://johnmenadue.com/jocelyn-chey-chinese-australians-or-australian-chinese/#more-21007>