

IN THE

WEEK 18, 2022

THE EPOCH TIMES

CHINA INSIDER

MARVEL STUDIOS

DOCTOR STRANGE

IN THE

MARVEL

DOCTOR

IN

CHINA'S CENSORS STRIKE AGAIN

FRAME WITH EPOCH TIMES
NEWSPAPER BOX MAY
BE REASON FOR CHINA'S
BLOCKING OF 'DOCTOR
STRANGE' SEQUEL

See Page 4

PANDEMIC RESPONSE

China's Lockdowns of Tens of Millions Inflict More Pain on Global Supply Chains



Chinese leader Xi Jinping in Beijing on April 8, 2022.

KEVIN FRAYER/GETTY IMAGES

DOROTHY LI

Seeing China's financial hub Shanghai, home to 25 million people, come to a standstill amid more than four weeks of lockdowns has made those residing in Beijing nervous. The capital city has detected growing COVID-19 outbreaks and has rushed to conduct mass testing in a bid to contain the virus.

Almost all 22 million inhabitants in Beijing completed three rounds of testing as of April 30. The results may determine whether they'll be destined to experience the same fate as those in Shanghai, where fenced-in people have been banging pans on their balconies at night to protest the month-long lockdown.

Shoppers in Beijing have rushed to stock up on food, just in case. Officials have closed schools—without specifying a re-opening date—and more venues. Workers have set up blue metal barriers around residential blocks where infections have been recorded. A sign placed outside such a residential complex reads, "Entry only. No exit."

The scenes in Beijing are reminiscent of other Chinese cities battling the fast-moving Omicron variant. As the Chinese regime appears determined to contain the outbreak under its heavy-handed "zero-COVID" policy, lockdowns and mass testing—and the well-documented suffering they cause—are likely to remain commonplace.

As of April 28, at least 26 cities across the country are currently in partial or full lockdown, covering roughly 78 million people, according to calculations by The Epoch Times based on notices by local authorities. These cities range from northern Baotou, a major supplier of rare earths, to eastern Yiwu, an export center that produces everything from Christmas trees to presidential campaign merchandise.

Residential units during a lockdown in the Jing'an district of Shanghai on April 29, 2022.

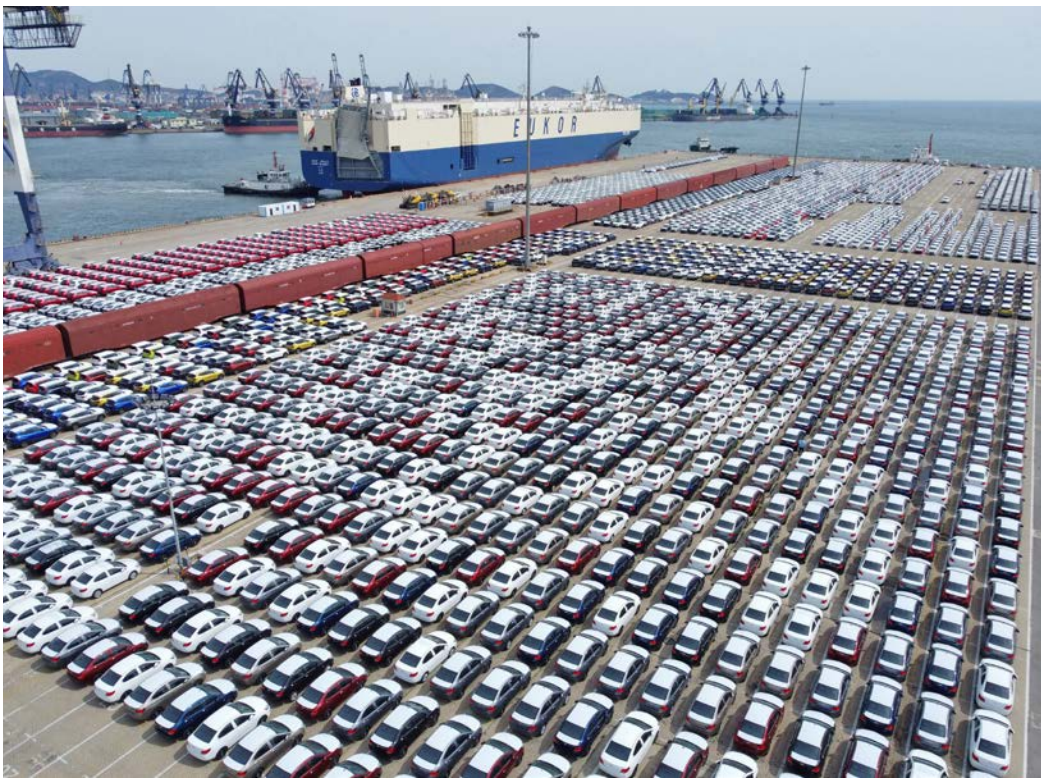
[China's] COVID lockdown brings more uncertainty to foreign investors and damage to their confidence.

Yen Huai-Shing, deputy director, Taiwan Chung Hua Institution for Economic Research

(Bottom left) Cars for export at Yantai port, Shandong Province, China, on April 13, 2022.

(Bottom right) A woman looks at items that have arrived with a guard in protective clothing, in a locked down community in Beijing on April 28, 2022.

STR/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES



Those not experiencing lockdowns still face restrictions. The tech hub Hangzhou city is testing its residents every 48 hours. About 12.2 million students and workers must provide proof of negative results if they want to take public transportation and enter schools or offices. Similar measures will be effective in Beijing after May 5, with officials at an April 30 briefing calling it "normalized nucleic acid tests."

Foreigners Flee

The Chinese regime's relentless zero-COVID fight has forced foreigners to rethink their lives in the international financial hub of Shanghai. The month-long closure of the city, home to numerous multinational firms, has left even white-collar professionals struggling with food shortage issues.

While many are allowed to walk around in their neighborhood now, concerns about being taken in to quarantine remain. The city's 25 million people will continue to take more tests until May 7, local officials said at a May 1 press conference. A positive result means separation from families and living in crowded quarantine facilities, with 24-hour lights and no hot water.

"Until the lockdown, I really couldn't feel the authoritarian government, because you're more or less free to do what you want," said Jennifer Li, a foreigner who's making plans for her family to leave the city that has been their home for 11 years.

The regime's handling of COVID-19 "made us realize how human lives and human mental health is not important to this government," she said.

The European Chamber of Commerce recently warned that the "number of foreigners in China have halved since the pandemic began and could halve again this summer."

Economic Toll

The strict restrictions are also crushing economic activity. The gauge of manufacturing activity contracted at a steeper pace in April, reaching the lowest point since February 2020, when lockdowns halted industrial production and disrupted supply chains for the first time.

The official manufacturing Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) fell to 47.4 in April from 49.5 in March, offering a first glimpse into the economic pain inflicted by lockdown measures.

Analysts from several investment banks have further cut their forecasts for the country's economic growth rate as the lockdown in Shanghai has dragged on. The lowest is from Nomura, with a prediction of 3.9 percent, down from 4.3 percent previously, well below the official target of a 5.5 percent increase.

In a worst-case scenario, "China can expect a decrease in GDP [gross domestic product] by 53 percent if all cities are forced into lockdown," Yanzhong Huang, a senior fellow of global health at the Council on Foreign Relations, told an April 26 virtual panel.

China's yuan currency fell by more than 4 percent in April, its biggest monthly drop in 28 years, while its stock markets have been the second-worst performers this year, after sanctions-hit Russia.

The slowdown is likely to weigh on global recovery as the lockdown will hurt companies' sales in China and ripple through the supply chain, said professor Yen Huai-Shing, deputy director of the Taiwan Chung Hua Institution for Economic Research.

Supply Chain Woes

Carmakers and phones are experiencing shortages of components sourced in China. The United States imports close to 18 percent of all products from China and 33 percent of electronics, according

to official data.

U.S. giants, including Apple and Microsoft, have said that China's lockdowns have intensified global supply chain disruption and raised uncertainty about their business outlook.

A main source of the supply chain troubles has been severe delays in transportation: frequent COVID-19 testing has disrupted the work of truckers and port workers.

"Once the lockdown is lifted and economic activity once again springs to life, a pileup of products from accumulated orders will surge into the United States," Sara Hsu, a clinical associate professor of supply chain management at the University of Tennessee at Knoxville wrote in The Diplomat.

This means that the backlogs that Los Angeles and Long Beach ports experienced last year will happen again, she noted.

Yen doesn't see the supply chain disruptions ending soon.

"[China's] COVID lockdown brings more uncertainty to foreign investors and damage to their confidence," she told The Epoch Times.

Yen suggested that multinational companies should consider relocating their supply chain elsewhere. Some firms in the semiconductor hub of Taiwan have already started diversifying supply chains since 2018 during the U.S.-China trade war, she said.

Unwavering in Zero-COVID

As zero-COVID batters the country's economy, Chinese leader Xi Jinping announced on April 29 an infrastructure push to boost demand, a method Beijing used during the global financial crisis in 2008 and 2009 that created a mountain of debt. However, he didn't provide key details, such as the amount of spending or the specific time frame.

Still, Xi, who's seeking an unprecedented third five-year term in office this autumn, showed no signs of changing course at the April 29 meeting of the 25-member Politburo, the center of power within the Chinese Communist Party, which is also led by Xi.

The leadership called for the country to "persist with dynamic zero," referring to zero-COVID, according to the meeting summary released by the state-run Xinhua news agency.

"For now, China is not getting out of the corner the president [Xi Jinping] has maneuvered the country into," Joerg Wuttke, president of the EU Chamber of Commerce in China, told Swiss media outlet Market NZZ.

"They are prisoners of their own narrative. It's rather tragic: China was the first to get into the pandemic, and it's the last to get out. And in the meantime, they've been telling the whole world that they're the best."

Luo Ya and Reuters contributed to this report.

HECTOR RETAMAL/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

KEVIN FRAYER/GETTY IMAGES



A medical staff member treating a COVID-19 patient at a hospital in Wuhan, Hubei Province, China, on Feb. 22, 2020.

EXCLUSIVE

China Stonewalled US Offers of COVID-19 Assistance During Early Days of Pandemic, Emails Show

EVA FU & ZACHARY STIEBER

Three days after Beijing officially acknowledged a cluster of an unknown pneumonia disease on the last day of 2019, then-head of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Dr. Robert Redfield invited his Chinese counterpart, George Gao, for a call.

"I've been trying to reach you and will try again in a few hours," he wrote, according to emails sent on Jan. 3, 2020, and obtained by Insight.

This would be the first of a series of efforts from the United States to engage with China and offer assistance over the next few weeks.

"Unfortunately, that assistance wasn't accepted by the Chinese government," Redfield said. "I think it could have made a big difference."

Redfield said he had "extensive discussions" with Gao in the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic and that a team of 20 people was ready to fly across the world.

Gao personally refused the offers, citing a lack of authorization, according to one report.

A review of the files obtained by Insight via a Freedom of Information Act request and the public statements offers another glimpse into how China stonewalled the United States during the early days of the pandemic. All the while, the communist regime was suppressing information about the outbreak domestically when any health data would have been crucial to formulate a more effective COVID-19 containment strategy and minimize the disease's global spread.

The day after the call, Redfield wrote to Gao again, reiterating the U.S. offer of assistance.

"China has tremendous capacity in infectious diseases and outbreak investigation," he wrote in an email on Jan. 4, 2020, with the subject line "Offer of Assistance."

"In the spirit of cooperation, I would like to offer CDC technical experts in laboratory and epidemiology of respiratory infectious diseases to assist you and China CDC in identification of this unknown and possibility novel pathogen."

Two days later, Redfield followed up on the email, attaching a letter containing the official letterhead of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the CDC's parent department, to extend a formal invitation.

"We look forward to continuing our close collaborations and stand ready to provide additional support," he wrote.

None of the written correspondence appeared to receive a response. The request that obtained the emails had a date range of Dec. 1, 2019, to Feb. 1, 2020. Redfield and Gao didn't respond by press time to requests for comment.

Then-U.S. Health Secretary Alex Azar would later reveal that the Trump administration had been urging Chinese authorities to let U.S. experts into the country, to no avail. It wasn't until Jan. 29, 2020, that their repeated offers received an official acknowledgment, he said.

"More cooperation and transparency are the most important steps you can take toward a more effective response," Azar said during a briefing with reporters on Jan. 28, 2020, a day after he raised the subject again in a talk with China's minister of health.

More than a week later, nothing had changed.

"At this point, it's really a decision for the Chinese," Azar said at a press conference in Washington on Feb. 7, 2020, seven days after the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the outbreak a global health emergency. "We are ready, willing, and able. We are here to support the Chinese government, to help China with their response."

Ultimately, the United States and allies, during the early stages of the pandemic, made nearly 100 requests to ask for assistance or offer help, all of which were retained by Chinese authorities, according to David Asher, a former lead COVID-19 investigator at the U.S. State Department.

Chinese officials at the same time had been aggressively suppressing information inside China. While Redfield spoke with Gao in one of the calls, local police in Wuhan summoned Chinese doctor Li Wenliang, one of a string of Chinese medical professionals who tried to sound the alarm about the danger of a new pneumonia-like virus, and accused him of "rumor-mongering."

After contracting COVID-19, Li died on Feb. 7, the same day Azar reiterated Washington's readiness to provide on-the-ground help.

The U.S. CDC had no access to direct data from China. More COVID-19 cases began emerging in the United States. No U.S. experts were invited on to the WHO team that arrived in China on Feb. 10, 2020.

A WHO probe into the virus's origins eventually occurred a year later, under mounting international pressure and the close supervision of Chinese researchers. Two U.S. scientists were on board, including Clifford Lane, deputy director at the U.S. National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases. It was the first time that government-affiliated U.S. scientists were allowed into China since the COVID-19 pandemic.

By that time, all viral traces had long been destroyed in Huanan Seafood Market in Wuhan, the site linked to the cases officials first identified. The WHO panel was similarly denied access to raw data on early cases.

100

Nearly 100 requests to ask for assistance or offer help, all of which were rejected by Chinese authorities, according to David Asher, a former lead COVID-19 investigator at the U.S. State Department.



Then-Health and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar speaks during a press conference on the coordinated public health response to COVID-19 in Washington, on Jan. 28, 2020.

SAMUEL CORUM/GETTY IMAGES

Dr. Robert Redfield said that a U.S. team of 20 people was ready to fly to assist China during the early days of COVID-19 pandemic, but the latter refused.

‘Doctor Strange 2’ Faces Censorship in China After Epoch Times Newspaper Box Appears in Clip: Hollywood Executive

FRANK FANG & DAVID ZHANG

China's ruling communist regime likely isn't going to allow Marvel's new movie, "Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness," to open in China's theaters, after an Epoch Times newspaper box made a brief appearance in a clip from the movie, according to a long-time Hollywood executive and film producer.

Chris Fenton, author of "Feeding the Dragon: Inside the Trillion Dollar Dilemma Facing Hollywood, the NBA, and American Business," said it was already "a bit of a long shot" for the new "Doctor Strange" movie to be released in China after several Marvel movies didn't get into the Chinese market.

"This recent development of The Epoch Times being seen as one of the major stars in the movie, is definitely throwing a wrench in any sort of shot that they did have of getting into that market," Fenton said in a recent interview with EpochTV's "China Insider" program.

The yellow newspaper box, bearing the Chinese characters for the Chinese-language edition of The Epoch Times, appears for a few seconds in a clip from the movie. It sits in the background during a battle between Doctor Strange and a one-eyed monster named Gargantos on the streets of New York.

The Epoch Times is known for its uncensored coverage of current affairs in China, including political infighting within the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), the regime's human rights violations against ethnic minorities and religious groups, and Beijing's propaganda and influence operations abroad. It was founded by Falun Gong practitioners who were facing persecution in China for their faith that teaches people to live according to the principles of truthfulness, compassion, and tolerance. The Chinese-language edition is the largest-circulating newspaper among overseas Chinese communities.

Like many Western media outlets and social media platforms, the English- and Chinese-language websites of The Epoch Times are banned in China.

The chance of the new movie being shown in China is "probably now non-existent," Fenton said, but people will not know why since "China never [lets] you know for sure why they're banning any particular movie." He said Beijing has a habit of being ambiguous, and not just in banning movies.

"The Chinese government never fully tells you why they're penalizing a company. In fact, a lot of it is speculation. And quite frankly, that speculation creates a wider net of self-censorship because you're never sure exactly what they're mad at," he said.



(L-R) Benedict Cumberbatch, Elizabeth Olsen, and Sam Raimi attend the "Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness" photo call at the Ritz Carlton in Berlin on April 21, 2022.

The problem with China is that we've been censoring ourselves with the content we make for the globe, in order to get access to that one market.

Chris Fenton, author, "Feeding the Dragon: Inside the Trillion Dollar Dilemma Facing Hollywood, the NBA, and American Business"

Marvel
The bigger question is whether Marvel Studios was intentional in including the newspaper box in the scene. To that, Fenton said he could only speculate, but it was unlikely Marvel didn't know it was there.

He said his firsthand experience with the "Iron Man 3" movie taught him that the script supervisors and people working on the movie's post-production "know exactly what props are used."

"So the idea that the 200 to 300 people on set that day, and the 200 to 300 people in post-production over the course of post-production, didn't notice The Epoch Times vending stand in there, it seems very far-fetched," Fenton said.

The movie is currently scheduled to premiere in the United States on May 6. However, it remains to be seen whether the movie still has the newspaper box in the battle scene. There's a chance Marvel

could remove it, considering that China's hawkish state-run media Global Times has openly criticized Marvel in an opinion article.

The article by the regime's mouthpiece, published on May 1, went to great lengths to slander The Epoch Times before accusing the new "Doctor Strange" movie of "shaming U.S. and Hollywood" for having included the newspaper box.

Fenton said he doubts Marvel will remove the newspaper box now.

"So in the case of China actually being provoked in a way where Marvel feels like they have to remove something for the rest of the world to see, I think they'll say no to that," Fenton said.

"And whether China actually asks them to do that, or whether they just assume that ask is there and they don't do that, I don't know. But I'd like to believe Marvel [won't] remove it for the world to see." Disney, Marvel's parent company,

didn't respond to a request for comment by press time.

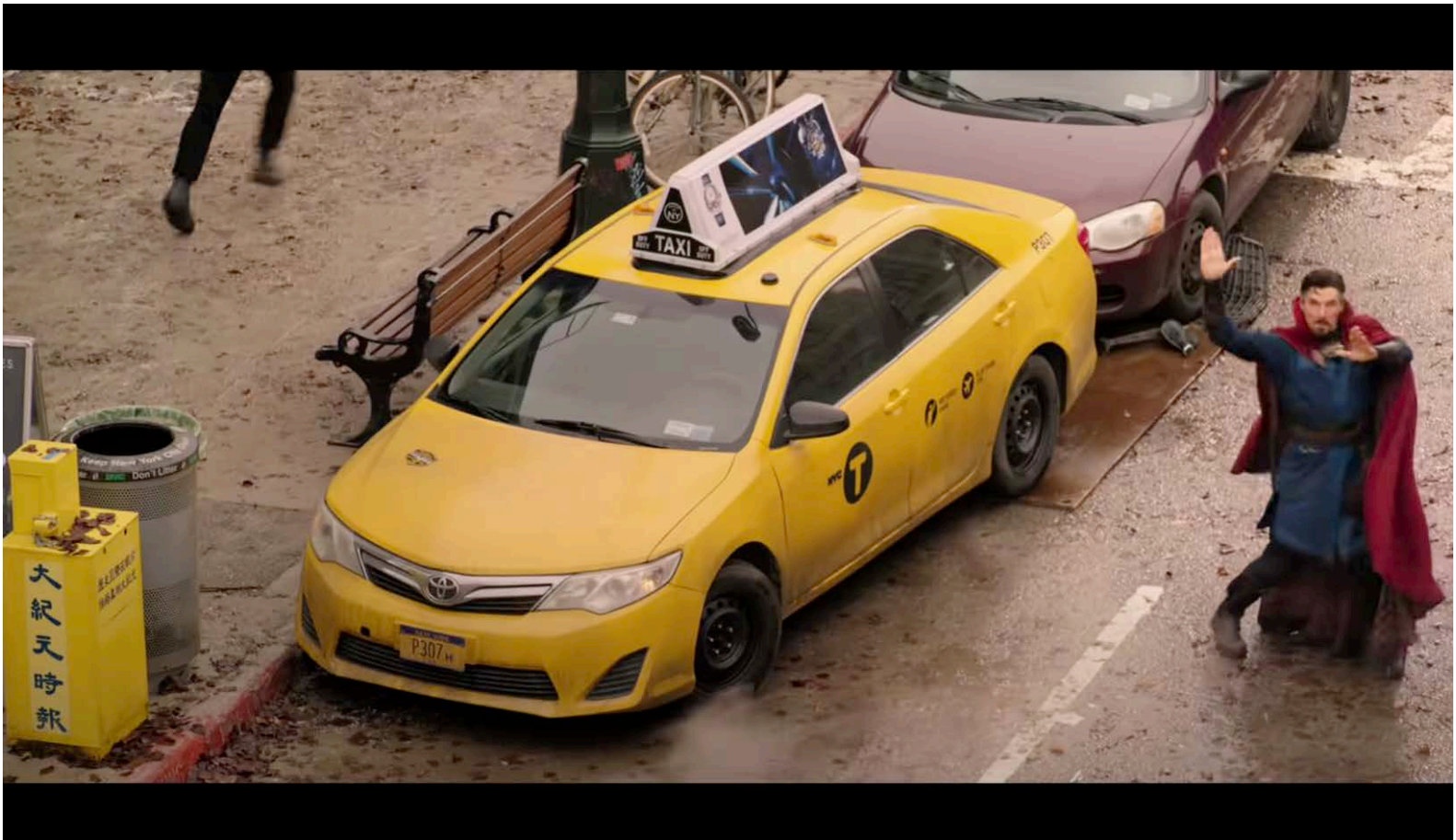
Censorship
Fenton said it's a problem when Hollywood studios engage in self-censorship.

"The problem with China is that we've been censoring ourselves with the content we make for the globe, in order to get access to that one market," he said. "So when we're doing that, we're essentially placating China to take their narrative not just inside of their borders, but to spread it around the world."

He pointed to the 2012 remake of the 1984 cult classic "Red Dawn" and the "Top Gun" sequel as examples.

The producers of "Red Dawn" decided to depict villains invading the United States as North Korean rather than Chinese for fear of losing the Chinese market.

A 2019 trailer of "Top Gun: Maverick," a movie scheduled to be released in the



(Above and Right) A still from the movie "Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness" of a scene featuring a newspaper box of the Chinese-language Epoch Times.



So what I'd like to see Hollywood do is simply protect freedom of speech and freedom of creative expression.

Chris Fenton, author, "Feeding the Dragon: Inside the Trillion Dollar Dilemma Facing Hollywood, the NBA, and American Business"



United States on May 27, shows that Taiwan's flag was removed from the patch on the leather jacket worn by Tom Cruise's character, naval aviator Pete "Maverick" Mitchell. China considers Taiwan as a part of its territory and rejects any hint that might suggest the island's de facto independence.

One of China's censorship demands recently surfaced. Digital outlet Puck News, in a report published on May 1 citing multiple unnamed sources, said China regulators asked Sony Pictures to make some changes to "Spider-Man: No Way Home," a Marvel film distributed by Sony.

First, the regulators asked that the Statue of Liberty be removed at the film's ending. After Sony refused, the regulators requested that the statue be minimized, such as dimming the lighting on the sculpture. According to Puck News, Sony also turned down the second request.

"Spider-Man: No Way Home" was released in the United States in December 2021, but it hasn't been released in China.

"So what I'd like to see Hollywood do is simply protect freedom of speech and freedom of creative expression," Fenton said.

"We should be making movies that cater to audiences around the world. But we should be doing it protecting the rights of the filmmakers themselves to be able to tell the stories completely unfettered by any sort of censorship, or by any sort of influence of propaganda objectives by China."

ANALYSIS

China Deploys New Missiles Against the US Navy

RICK FISHER



U.S. Navy ships that help deter Chinese Communist Party (CCP) aggression.

While the disclosures were timed to coincide with the 73rd anniversary of the PLA Navy (PLAN), the timing also served to counter the implications of the April 14 sinking of the Russian cruiser Moskva for the Russian-technology-dependent Chinese navy.

These disclosures also had the main elements of a CCP propaganda department orchestration: vague images derived from obscure videos; and an echo chamber of propaganda organs, this time by the South China Morning Post and the Global Times.

The more important missile disclosure was that of a new anti-ship ballistic missile (ASBM) that could be capable of hypersonic speed, but is small enough to be fired from the vertical launch systems

(VLS) of PLAN cruisers, destroyers, and frigates.

For the PLA, ASBMs are a key weapon to deter a U.S. military response to a Chinese attack against Japan or Taiwan. They are accurate enough to target large U.S. Navy ships like aircraft carriers and fast enough to stress U.S. ship defenses.

Already deployed PLA ASBMs—like the DF-16B, DF-21D, and DF-26B—are much larger, not designed for ship launching, and are controlled by another service, the PLA Rocket Force.

But as the PLAN has 3,300-plus vertical launchers, it could potentially overwhelm U.S. Navy ships or those of any other democracy around the world that lacks the means to defend against ASBMs.

Some Chinese internet observers called this missile the YJ-21, or "Strike Eagle-21," and it was shown being fired vertically from a new PLAN 13,000-ton Type 055 cruiser. It features a unitary diameter first stage and a finned second stage that may or may not have a rocket motor.

In an April 20 article, Minnie Chan, a military issue reporter for the South China

Morning Post with a long record of assisting PLA propaganda themes, cited Chinese analysts reporting that this new ASBM has a range of 600 miles to 930 miles.

On April 21, the Global Times reported the new missiles were "merely speculative" and an example of "hype by foreign media."

But there has been a prior Chinese warning of this missile. In his famous 2017 university briefing on future Chinese naval programs, leaked on the Chinese internet, Adm. Zhao Dengping was the first to disclose publicly that the PLAN was working on an ASBM that could be fired from the vertical launchers of warships.

In early 2018, a source at an Asian military exhibit told this analyst that the PLA had started to test this new ASBM, and the most recent disclosures indicate this missile may now be in service.

Another April 20 disclosure came in the form of a brief video that provided a clearer, but not high-definition, image of the PLA's new air-launched ballistic missile (ALBM), which arms the Xian Aircraft Corporation H-6N refuelable medium bomber of the PLA Air Force (PLAAF).

While first seen in 2017 and featured prominently in a 2018 major PLA military parade, it was not shown armed with its novel ALBM. The Chinese propaganda department only allowed one other vague image of this missile to appear.

But the latest image seems to confirm Chinese source reports from early 2017 of a new H-6 version that would be armed with a large ALBM.

This missile appears to be an air-launched version of the China Aerospace Science and Industry Corporation three-stage DF-21D, a 1,050-mile range anti-ship ballistic missile. When launched from altitude, the ALBM version likely has a range exceeding 1,200 miles.

Unrefueled, the H-6N could launch ALBM strikes against the increasingly important U.S. military bases at Guam.

But with multiple aerial refuelings from the PLAAF's new Y-20U tankers, the H-6N could approach Hawaii close enough to launch ALBM strikes against the U.S. Navy base at Pearl Harbor.

It is also likely that the current or future versions of the PLA's ALBM will be able to



A man walks among supersonic cruise missiles at the 13th China International Aviation and Aerospace Exhibition in Zhuhai in southern China's Guangdong Province on Sept. 28, 2021.

target U.S. military satellites in low Earth orbit, which are crucial to distributed U.S. military operations in the Pacific.

The PLA's new ALBM and ship-launched ASBM are now part of an array of at least 20 weapons that target large U.S. Navy ships. Ship-launched ASBMs can further increase the PLA's ability to

overwhelm U.S. Navy ships with long-range missile strikes.

In addition, the ALBM, like other large PLA theater-range missiles, can be armed with a nuclear warhead, while the small ASBM could be armed with small tactical nuclear warheads that would also arm shorter-range PLA ballistic and



The YJ-21 ship-launched anti-ship ballistic missile in a still from real-time camera footage released by Chinese media.

cruise missiles.

Starting under the Trump administration, one American response was to get out of the 1987 Intermediate Nuclear Forces Treaty that prevented U.S. deployment of missiles with a range greater than 300 miles, and start developing new theater-range missiles.

According to reports, the U.S. Army may purchase more than 3,900 of its 300- to 500-mile range Precision Strike Missile; a new 930- to 1,200-mile Typhon medium-range ballistic missile; and a 1,860- to 3,100-mile-range Long Range Hypersonic Weapon.

Since the Typhon is based on the U.S. Navy's Raytheon SM-6 anti-aircraft and missile intercepting missile, it is possible that this missile could also be developed in a new U.S. vertical launched ASBM.

In Asia, U.S. Navy warships can deploy over 4,200 vertical launch systems. While a larger number than that of China, the PLAN could catch up quickly; from 2021 to early 2022, it deployed over 1,200 new VLS on new warships.

A new U.S. ASBM could pose a powerful deterrent to the CCP using its warships to attack Japan or invade Taiwan. At the same time, multi-role surface-to-air missiles could allow for a more robust defense against the large variety of PLA missiles that target large U.S. Navy warships.

Views expressed in this article are the opinions of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of The Epoch Times.

Rick Fisher is a senior fellow at the International Assessment and Strategy Center.

ANALYSIS

Attack on Senior US Official’s Brother May Have China Link

Uyghur-American hospitalized in Virginia with alleged punches and kicks to the head

ANDERS CORR



Nury Turkel, one of the world’s most prominent Uyghurs, is under pressure from Beijing. The Washington-based American lawyer was instrumental in legislative and executive actions by the U.S. government to support Uyghur human rights in China.

In the context of rising transnational repression by Beijing, including violent attacks linked to the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), Turkel’s brother was hospitalized in Fairfax, Virginia, with severe wounds, allegedly by an attacker who had previously called Turkel a “traitor” for his views on China.

Turkel co-founded the Uyghur Human Rights Project (UHRP) in 2003. Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) appointed Turkel to the Commission on International Religious Freedom in 2020, where he currently serves as vice-chair. He has bipartisan support in Congress, including from Sen. Marco Rubio (R-Fla.), who publicly recognized Turkel for his facilitation of the Uyghur Human Rights Policy Act of 2020.

That year, Turkel said before Congress that “Even testifying at this hearing may cost the lives of my parents, but you know, it’s the right thing to do.”

On April 2, Turkel’s father died in Urumqi, the capital of China’s Xinjiang region, known among independence-minded Uyghurs as East Turkestan. Turkel’s father was almost 83. Turkel ascribes the death to old age, and health conditions worsened due to harassment, intimidation, and social isolation he endured in recent years.

But news of the death came just as Turkel landed in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, for official U.S. government meetings with senior officials and civil society who work on religious freedom and human rights. Tashkent is also in Central Asia, just 950 miles from Urumqi.

Turkel felt guilty, he told me on the phone, for not attending the funeral and visiting his widowed mother in Xinjiang, despite being so close.

Traditionally, Uyghur children carry and lower the casket of their parents into the grave and throw dirt on the departed while saying prayers. That is impossible for Turkel, who Beijing sanctioned in December and permanently banned from entering China. Were he to return, he would risk detention in the concentration camps, forced labor, torture, or worse.

Attacks on the Turkel-Kadeer Family in Virginia

Twelve days after the death of Turkel’s father, a man named Bilal Ibrahimturkistani allegedly assaulted Turkel’s brother, Mamutjan Turkel, in the mosque parking lot of a funeral service in Fairfax, Virginia.

This raises questions about whether there could be a link to Beijing. Pro-CCP thugs in places like New York, London, and Hong Kong have attacked dissidents and human rights advocates while trying to keep blame from reaching Beijing.

The alleged perpetrator is Uyghur, but that does not automatically absolve him from links to the People’s Republic of China (PRC). According to reports cited by the Congressional Research Service, “PRC diplomats use informants in Uighur communities in Germany, Sweden, the United States, and elsewhere.”

According to one of my sources in the Washington area, “China has infiltrated the East Turkistani/Uyghur diaspora at all levels and this needs to be addressed.”

The victim, Mamutjan, is married to the daughter of Rebiya Kadeer, a Uyghur businesswoman who in 2006 was elected president of the U.S. government-supported World Uyghur Congress (WUC) and Uyghur American Association (UAA), and nominated for a Nobel Peace Prize. In apparent response, Beijing allegedly had her sons beaten in Urumqi, and made her the target of what appears to have been a China-linked vehicular assassination attempt in Fairfax, Virginia, that year.

Fairfax has a thriving Uyghur community. The alleged perpetrator of the latest attack in Fairfax, Ibrahimturkistani, has been a member of a Uyghur organization in the Washington area, according to the group’s website. It calls itself the East Turkistan Government in Exile (ETGIE) and purports on its website to be the “Sole Lawful Representative of the People of East Turkistan.”

There are multiple competing ETGE groups. This one is led by Anwar Yusuf Turani, who established the first such group in 2004. The group later expelled Turani for visiting China and on suspicion of working for the regime, according to a source. Another person linked to the group allegedly previously worked for China’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Turani did not recognize the expulsion, according to the expelling group, and continued to claim leadership of what became a separate ETGIE.

Turani’s group allegedly supports violent means and a strict and public independence message that serves as a litmus test and divides Uyghurs between establishment and radical factions.

The allegations above could not be independently confirmed, and Turani did not immediately reply to requests for comment. An involved member of his extended family, also questioned about Ibrahimturkistani, referred me to the latter’s lawyer and refused to comment on any of the allegations.

Two sources told me that Ibrahimturkistani is highly critical of China, but not intelligent, and one said he is easily manipulated by others. Ibrahimturkistani’s social media shows him training with a punching bag, holding large knives in what looks like a martial arts stance, and showing off a large ring of the type that he allegedly wore while attacking Mamutjan.

Members of Turani’s group have been publicly critical of U.S. government-supported Uyghur groups or their leaders, according to sources. The WUC, UAA, and UHRP, for example, do not explicitly promote the independence of East Turkestan. Competing ETGIE groups use this against them when appealing to the Uyghur diaspora.

Rebiya Kadeer led the three U.S.-supported groups mentioned above from 2006 to 2017. She and those who followed support independence privately, but focus their public work with governments and human rights organizations around the world on the less controversial human rights issues.

It is their long relations with U.S. and European governments, and their ability to get legislation that supports Uyghurs in China, that particularly threatens Beijing. For that reason, the CCP has targeted Kadeer, Turkel, and other establishment Uyghur leaders for years, possibly including the alleged assassination attempt against Kadeer in 2006 and cyberbullying and threats against Turkel.

Frank Wolf, former representative for Virginia’s 10th congressional district (including parts of Fairfax County) from 1981 to 2015, raised concerns about “a collision between a car connected to the PRC government and Uyghur leader Rebiya Kadeer’s car,” according to the Congressional Research Service in a 2010 report.

“It is unclear if the perpetrator was ever apprehended,” Kadeer’s daughter and Mamutjan’s wife, Akida Rouzi, wrote in an email.

“We tried inquiring about the case by contacting the police department several times that year and during our last conversation with them, we were told the federal investigators had taken over the case, and the police department could not provide further information. Frank Wolf released several statements and publications after, citing China’s involvement.”

Attack on Mamutjan Turkel

On April 14, Ibrahimturkistani allegedly punched and kicked Mamutjan’s head, as well as strangled him, in a parking lot in Fairfax, Virginia. Mamutjan’s injuries, including a broken bone near his eye, required stitches and the surgical implantation of a metal plate, according to Turkel.

Mamutjan described in an email to me, sent by his wife, how Ibrahimturkistani allegedly started the fight with aggressive words and stares while the victim attempted to park his car. Mamutjan tried to avoid the conflict by proceeding “to turn around and walk away. That is when I felt the first blow to my face just around my eye,” Mamutjan recounted.

Ibrahimturkistani allegedly had at least one large ring on his fingers, which “caused fractures in my skull and several facial lacerations,” according to Mamutjan. “That first punch, which took me off guard, caused severe bleeding, dizziness, loss of sight from the right eye, and loss of strength in my body.”

Nevertheless, Mamutjan then tried to push and punch back, he wrote to me. But the effort was apparently ineffectual. “After what felt like minutes of being repeatedly punched in the face and the head, I found myself face down on the ground. As I was trying to push myself

up, he kicked my head into the cement ... I might have lost consciousness at this point ... I don’t remember much. When I regained consciousness, I found him on top and strangling me while I was on the ground. I struggled to get his hands off me, but I managed to do so at some point. Then I remember finally being able to land a few punches on his face. He then fell to the ground and got up very quickly.”

Mamutjan finally made it back to his car, where he found a metal bar, he said in the email. That apparently deterred Ibrahimturkistani from continuing the alleged assault.

Mamutjan wrote that he then saw Ibrahimturkistani “take his phone out to record me, and I heard him brag ‘I have just beaten Nury Turkel’s brother’ or something similar to that. He then went inside the mosque, and I sat outside and called 911.”

In the mosque, Ibrahimturkistani promptly and loudly announced the fight to those in attendance at the funeral, including several Uyghur leaders, according to Nury Turkel, who was in the room where the funeral took place.

At least one member of the Turani family was also at the funeral, according to a source.

Ibrahimturkistani then faced Turkel directly and told him to go take care of his brother, according to Turkel. In the process, he hurled insults at the U.S. official.

Turkel found it strange that the man, who had just entered the room, knew exactly where he was sitting.

When the police arrived, they sent Mamutjan and Ibrahimturkistani to the hospital, where the latter was shackled to his bed. He was then arrested and a felony warrant issued. He was released on April 25 with a bail of \$25,000, but with supervised and restricted movements, according to a source. The court order included “malicious bodily injury”



Mamutjan Turkel in the hospital after an alleged assault by Bilal Ibrahimturkistani in Fairfax, Va. The alleged assault, for which Ibrahimturkistani was charged with a felony of malicious bodily injury, occurred on April 14, 2022. Mamutjan is the brother of U.S. Commissioner Nury Turkel, a Uyghur lawyer and member of the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom.



Nury Turkel and his brother, Mamutjan Turkel, in Turkey in 2014.

as the alleged offense.

Ibrahimturkistani’s lawyer did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

US Government Should Investigate and Protect

Turkel interpreted the attack on his brother as political and aimed at himself and his extended family of Uyghur leaders.

“I refuse to live with the fear even given the cyberbullying and hatred being promoted by a group of people, including this individual,” Turkel told me. “I believe that should concern the American people.”

U.S. government officials should thoroughly investigate the case and reexamine the alleged assassination attempt against Rebiya Kadeer. They are consistent with the CCP’s pattern of violent transnational repression against human rights defenders through front groups that provide Beijing with plausible deniability.

If a senior U.S. government official, Nobel Peace Prize nominee, and their U.S. citizen family members are not safe in the Washington area, then none of us are, and neither is democracy.

Views expressed in this article are the opinions of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of The Epoch Times.

Anders Corr has a bachelor’s/master’s in political science from Yale University (2001) and a doctorate in government from Harvard University (2008). He is a principal at Corr Analytics Inc., publisher of the Journal of Political Risk, and has conducted extensive research in North America, Europe, and Asia. His latest books are “The Concentration of Power: Institutionalization, Hierarchy, and Hegemony” (2021) and “Great Powers, Grand Strategies: the New Game in the South China Sea” (2018).



Demonstrators supporting Tibetans, Uyghurs, and Hongkongers take part in a protest against the Chinese Communist Party as they march along Regent Street toward the Chinese Embassy in London on Oct. 1, 2021.



THE 6TH NTD INTERNATIONAL FIGURE PAINTING COMPETITION

Reviving the pure authenticity, beauty, and goodness in art

June 2023 | New York City

Call for Global Entries / Deadline : 1/15/2023 / US\$25,000+ in Awards

NTD 1-888-477-9228 | Oilpainting@globalcompetitions.org
OILPAINTING.NTDTV.COM





TRUTH *and* TRADITION

COVERING IMPORTANT NEWS OTHER MEDIA IGNORE

LEADING REPORTING ON
THE CHINESE COMMUNIST THREAT
FOR THE PAST 18 YEARS

The Epoch Times not only reports reliably on U.S. politics and the Trump administration, but also publishes authoritative China news, covering topics including:

- Impact on the United States
- Business and economy
- Communist infiltration of our government, businesses, schools, universities, popular culture, and more
- Disinformation surrounding U.S.–China trade relations
- Security and espionage
- Influence on media and Hollywood
- Overseas interference and United Front activity

The Epoch Times has also championed a new method of investigative journalism, steeped in the discipline’s traditions of truth and responsibility. Combining this method with quality design, our journalists expose corruption and subversion in U.S. politics, and other important issues. Our investigative infographics have included:

- Illegal Spying on President Trump
- Hillary Clinton and the Uranium One Deal
- China’s Military Expansion Into Space
- The Secret Propaganda War on Our Minds
- Spygate: The True Story of Collusion
- Clinton Foundation ‘Pay to Play’ Model Under Investigation

Download infographics	FREE newsletter signup	Subscribe to the paper (print/epaper)	More information
ReadEpoch.com/infographics	EpochNewsletter.com	ReadEpoch.com	TheEpochTimes.com/about-us