

TOP NEWS

Most powerful cargo drone takes wing

Domestically produced 7-ton unmanned transport aircraft makes maiden flight

By ZHAO LEI
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The world's most powerful cargo drone, built by China North Industries Group Corp, conducted its first flight on Tuesday in Zhengzhou, the capital of Henan province.

A prototype of the Norinco Luca, also known as the Changying-8, took off at 9:30 am from Zhengzhou Shangjie Airport and remained airborne for about 30 minutes before landing at the same site. According to Norinco UAS, the drone's developer and a Beijing-based subsidiary

of China North Industries Group Corp, engineers checked the model's flight control, avionics, electronic and power systems and achieved the desired results.

In a news release, it said that the entire flight had been controlled by the aircraft's intelligent systems and monitored by human controllers.

The Norinco Luca is 17 meters long with a wingspan of 25 meters, and has a takeoff weight of 7 metric tons.

The drone boasts a maximum payload capacity of 3.5 tons, equivalent to the total weight of 50

adults. It can carry over 1,700 cotton coats or 700 disaster-relief tents in a single trip, delivering supplies over long distances. It has a maximum range of more than 3,000 kilometers, which is roughly equivalent to a nonstop direct flight from Beijing to Urumqi, the capital of the Xinjiang Uygur autonomous region.

It can take off and land on runways shorter than 500 meters and can use poorly conditioned airports, such as those on plateaus and islands.

The aircraft is equipped with an 18-cubic-meter cargo bay that can be accessed from both the front and rear. According to its designers, the turnaround time can be as little as 15 minutes,

greatly improving logistics turnover efficiency.

To ensure absolute operational safety, the Norinco Luca is fitted with two domestically built turbo-prop engines and incorporates multiple safety redundancies for key systems, including the flight control, navigation and power supply systems. The aircraft also features smart health monitoring and fault self-diagnosis functions.

Geng Jianzhong, the drone's chief designer, said that thanks to its modular design, high power supply, large payload capacity and standardized equipment interfaces, ground personnel can rapidly replace mission payloads on the drone, enabling it to be flexibly adapted for diverse scenarios such

as cargo delivery, emergency communications, weather modification, border patrol and electronic reconnaissance.

Following the maiden flight, Geng said that his company will prioritize the drone's airworthiness certification, delivery and commercial operation, while continuing to develop safe, efficient and intelligent low-altitude transportation solutions.

"Based on this model, we plan to develop larger, smarter and more advanced drones in the future. We also plan to design unmanned helicopters with vertical takeoff and landing capabilities to provide integrated solutions for different scenarios and diverse transportation needs," he noted.

Political Lens

Top legislator meets with high-level Austrian delegation

Zhao Leji, chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, China's top legislature, met with a high-level delegation of the Austria-China Friendship Association, led by Austrian Federal Council President Markus Stotter, in Beijing on Tuesday.

During the meeting, Zhao expressed China's willingness to work with Austria to implement the important consensus reached by the two heads of state, take into account each other's core interests and major concerns, and create new highlights of cooperation in areas such as green transformation and the digital economy.

Stotter said that Austria is willing to expand cooperation in economy and trade, cultural and people-to-people exchanges, legislation and other fields, and enhance the friendship between the two peoples.

Senior CPC official attends meeting on capital planning, construction

Cai Qi, a member of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China Central Committee, attended a meeting on the planning and construction of the Chinese capital in Beijing on Tuesday.

The meeting emphasized the need to follow the strategic positioning of Beijing as the Chinese capital, orderly relieve Beijing of functions that are nonessential to its role as the nation's capital, support the development of the Xiong'an New Area, and advance the coordinated development of the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region.

The meeting called for efforts to strengthen the city's resilience, effectively prevent and mitigate various security risks, and maintain the security and stability of the capital.

CHINA DAILY

Beijing questions Japan's defense officers' training

By ZHANG YUNBI
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The officer training provided by Japan's Self-Defense Forces deserves scrutiny and serious reflection, after a knife-wielding officer recently broke into the Chinese embassy in Japan, a Chinese Foreign Ministry spokeswoman said in Beijing on Tuesday.

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been handed over to prosecutors by the Japanese police recently.

In response, Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Mao Ning said that the incident reveals "the deep-rooted influence and grave hazards of Japan's right-wing ideology and distorted views of history".

On March 24, Murata broke into the Chinese embassy in Tokyo and threatened to kill Chinese diplomats in "the name of god".

Mao noted that the officer's parents said he showed no radical tendencies when growing up and receiving education in his hometown, and that they had no idea at all why he had acted in this way in the incident at the embassy.

"But at the SDF, he received nine months of training for reserve officers. So the question is, during

those nine months, what kind of views was he indoctrinated by the SDF and what kind of training did he receive? These questions deserve more attention, probe and deep pondering," Mao said.

According to media reports, the National Defense Academy of Japan has an annual "tradition" of paying group visits to the Yasukuni Shrine in Tokyo, which enshrines 14 Class-A war criminals.

Umio Otsuka, a retired senior officer of Japan's Maritime Self-Defense Force, was appointed chief priest of the Yasukuni Shrine in 2024.

"This marks the first time a retired SDF admiral has assumed the highest position at the Yasukuni Shrine," Mao said.

"The SDF has, over the years, invited radical far-rightist personnel who harbor hatred toward China to participate in teaching, and their textbooks are filled with content distorting and whitewashing Japan's history of aggression during World War II," she added.

The spokeswoman said, "The international community needs to stay on high alert against the rightward turn of the SDF and the trend of remilitarization in Japan."

"China once again urges Japan to thoroughly investigate the incident and take effective measures to address the root causes and prevent such incidents from happening again," she added.

Forging friendship



HE PENGLEI / CHINA NEWS SERVICE

China, US shaping 'complementary competition' in AI

By CHENG YU
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China and the United States are shaping a "complementary competition" across the global artificial intelligence value chain, an industry report said on Tuesday, underscoring that the rivalry between the world's two largest economic powers is increasingly defined by structural interdependence.

According to the Global AI Enterprise Technology Innovation Index Report 2026, released by the Bayuegua Institute of Science and Technology Innovation, a Beijing-based tech think tank, China is home to 51 of the world's top 100 AI companies, while the US has 37. This combined 88 percent share reinforces a dual-core structure, in which Europe plays a secondary role and other regions fill the gaps, it said.

The report delved into the unique yet interconnected positions that China and the US occupy in the AI industrial chain.

China has a numerical advantage in foundational layers, large models and application deployment, with Chinese companies demonstrating strong commercialization capabilities, it said. Of the top 40 companies on the AI application list, 21 are from China, reflecting the nation's focus on expanding real-world application scenarios.

By contrast, the US has a clear lead in the framework layer, dominating open-source ecosystems and core development tools, and retaining control over high-end chips in the foundational layer.

According to the report, this differentiated structure defines a "complementary competition" — a system in which China excels at rap-

id deployment and industrial integration, while the US provides the underlying architecture and key enabling technologies.

More than half of the leading AI companies are located in just four cities — San Francisco in the US and Beijing, Shanghai and Shenzhen, Guangdong province, in China. This highlights the industry's reliance on dense ecosystems of talent, capital and infrastructure.

Beijing hosts 26 of China's top AI enterprises, accounting for more than half of the national total, while San Francisco dominates the US AI landscape with 24 companies.

According to the 2026 Government Work Report, China will "advance and expand the 'AI Plus' initiative" and, for the first time, it will "create new forms of smart economy".

Cheng Shi, chief economist at ICBC International Holdings, noted

that AI is being elevated within the national development strategy, evolving from a technological initiative into a major force that is reshaping economic structures.

"This indicates that AI is moving beyond isolated applications toward a deeper restructuring of industrial ecosystems in China," he said.

In an earlier interview, Bai Chong-En, dean of the School of Economics and Management at Tsinghua University, said that it is important for China to find strong application scenarios for AI in order to advance the technology and keep pace with the US.

"For China, creating a new form of intelligent economy is ultimately about closely integrating AI tools with industrial and broader societal development, enabling their deployment in a wider range of scenarios to generate greater value," Bai said.

Racing: Track triumph translates into sales surge

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ZXMOTO's French rider Valentin Debise, who rode the bike to both victories, said: "I felt from day one that this bike had something special. This result is a real team effort."

For ZXMOTO — short for Zhang Xue Motorcycle — it was more than just a race win.

Born in 1987 in a village in Hunan province, Zhang Xue fell in love with motorcycles at a young age. At 16, he took up a job at a repair shop, and by 17, he had opened his own. At 19, he chased a television crew for more than 100 kilometers in the rain just for a chance to appear on screen. The opportunity helped him land a spot on a racing team.

After co-founding Kove Motor in 2017, Zhang struck out in 2024 to build a brand bearing his name. Less than two years later, ZXMOTO stood atop a global podium.

The company reported an output value of 750 million yuan (\$108.7 million) in 2025, while investing nearly 70 million yuan in research and development. It also posted a net loss of about 22.8 million yuan, highlighting the price of chasing cutting-edge technology.

But the bet is starting to pay off. In March, ZXMOTO launched presales for two new models — the 500RR and 820RR — securing 3,917 orders within 12 hours. In the 100 hours after its WSBK victory, total orders climbed to 5,543 units.

Preorders for ZXMOTO are now available on its WeChat mini-program, with prices starting at 29,980 yuan for the ZX500F, 33,680 yuan for the ZX500RR and 43,800 yuan for the ZX820RR.

Investor interest in ZXMOTO is building as well. Earlier this month, the company completed a Series A funding round, raising 90 million yuan and reaching a post-money valuation of about 1.09 billion yuan.

For 2026, ZXMOTO is targeting annual sales of 60,000 units and output value of 1.8 billion yuan, while nearly doubling its R&D budget to 135 million yuan.

Industry analysts said the company's rise reflects a broader shift in China's motorcycle sector.

Zhang Duo of Motorcycle magazine said that Chinese brands are no longer focused on lower-tier markets, but are competing head-to-head in developed markets such as Europe, the United States and Japan.

"Instead of competing on price, they're moving into the high-end space with better performance, more advanced technology and stronger personalization," he said. "That's hugely encouraging for the whole industry."

Zhang, the founder of the company, has set his sights even higher. "Over the next five years, our target is to secure more than 50 percent of the large-displacement market currently held by legacy international players," he said.

Learning: Tools expected to aid, not replace teachers

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The educators highlighted how human-centered principles are shaping the use of AI in classrooms.

In China, for example, an AI-powered classroom analysis system developed by East China Normal University has been put into regular use in more than 500 schools across 15 provincial-level regions. It analyzes recorded classroom sessions and generates diagnostic reports within 15 minutes.

To date, the system has processed over 19,000 classroom videos, and the results have been used to support teaching research, classroom reflection and continuous teacher training.

Zhang Wei, executive director of the International Center for UNESCO ASPnet, said that such tools are designed to enhance teachers' capacity, not to replace them.

In China, technologies such as virtual reality and extended reality are enabling students to develop AI-based solutions for environmental

protection and cultural conservation, Zhang said.

In some countries, AI is also being used to promote gender equality and support the preservation of intangible cultural heritage, he added.

China has placed education at the center of its broader modernization efforts. Ren Youqun, vice-minister of education and chairperson of the Chinese National Commission for UNESCO, said the country will continue to explore new models in science, technology, engineering and mathematics education while advancing digital transformation.

A key platform supporting these efforts is the "Education for Tomorrow" digital education initiative, which provides global resources for teachers in STEM and education for sustainable development. Future plans include integrating AI-powered learning support and enabling real-time international collaboration among educators.

Established in 1953, ASPnet now connects nearly 10,000 schools in



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around 170 countries and regions, engaging hundreds of thousands of teachers and millions of learners. Stefania Giannini, assistant director-general for education at UNESCO, described the network as "a real vehicle" for promoting the organization's core values.

For many participants, the conference reflects those values in action. Yousriya Al Harthi, ASPnet

national coordinator for Oman, said that such gatherings offer a key opportunity for peer learning. "It's a chance to exchange cultures, learn from our colleagues and share best practices," she said, adding that peer learning is one of the most effective methods of learning.

Zheng Jinran contributed to this story.