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MILITARY WEAPONS CHINA GUAM MISSILES

China's New Ballistic Missile Puts Guam in the Crosshairs

The DF-26 "Guam Killer" will be officially revealed at a major Chinese military parade on Thursday.



By Eric Tegler

73


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China's new intermediate range ballistic missile (IRBM) inadvertently broke cover last weekend during rehearsals for a military parade commemorating the 70th anniversary of Japan's surrender in China in WWII, coming up on Wednesday. The menacing looks of the Dong Feng (or "east wind") DF-26 IRBM are matched by its nuclear delivery capability and 3,000-4,000-km range (1,800 to 2,500 miles), enough to strike U.S. bases on Guam. The combination has led defense media to nickname it the "Guam Killer."

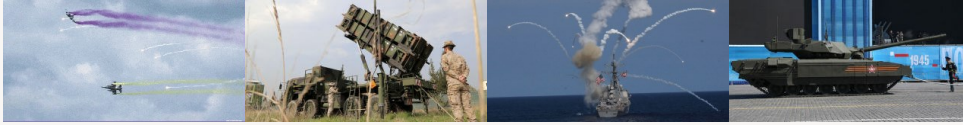
IHS Jane's Defence Weekly published photos of the DF-26 on Sunday, noting its appearance atop a new 12 by 12-foot transporter-erector-launcher (TEL). The DF-26 is produced by the China Aerospace Science and Technology Corporation (CASC). Not surprisingly, it was covered to conceal details, but *Jane's* speculates that the missile probably has three stages with a lengthy



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nose cone that could incorporate terminal guidance systems. Terminal guidance capability suggests that the IRBM could in future be equipped with an anti-ship ballistic missile warhead similar to the DF-21D. That would make it a threat to U.S. carrier battle groups. In fact, the DF-26 is a derivative of the DF-21, known as the "carrier killer."

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The Pentagon has been aware of the DF-26 since at least 2007, and its 2015 annual report to Congress briefly mentions the missile. Thus the U.S. has had plenty of time to work out countermeasures and tactics to deal with the weapon. However, we're also talking about a moving target here. A piece in the *Washington Free Beacon* [asserts](#) that "the fuel and mobility allow the [DF-26] to be hidden in underground facilities and fired on short notice, making it very difficult to counter in a conflict."

THE CHINESE WILL HAVE TRAINED FALCONS IN THE AIR ABOVE THE PARADE TO SCARE OFF

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China has had a two-decade advantage in the development of theater missiles like DF-26 owing to the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty signed by U.S. President Ronald Reagan and Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev in 1987. The treaty stipulated that U.S. and Soviet Union could not have nuclear and conventional ground-launched ballistic and cruise missiles with intermediate ranges, defined as between 500-5,500 km. As a recent United States Naval Institute News article [noted](#), "by 2010 China possessed more than 500 missiles that neither the United States nor Russia was allowed to produce."



HQ surface-to-air missiles take part in a rehearsal for the upcoming military parade to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the victory in the War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression in Beijing, China, 23 August 2015.

The DF-26 is not the only impressive missile hardware which will debut at China's September 3 commemorative parade. According to *Jane's*, China's DF-15B short-range ballistic missile, DF-16 medium-range ballistic missile (MRBM), and DF-21C MRBM will be shown off as well. In addition, the warhead section of the DF-5B intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM), the DF-31A ICBM, and the DF-10 land attack cruise missile will be shown publicly the first time. *The Diplomat* says the parade will include approximately 500 pieces of military equipment, "many of which have never been publicly displayed before," and 12,000 soldiers. Another 1,000 foreign troops from 17 countries will march. Heads-of-state and representatives from an additional 19 countries are expected to attend as well.

The presence of all these new weapons demonstrates how important this parade is to China, and Beijing is undertaking extraordinary preparations to make sure things go right. These include shutting down subway lines during the parade, enforcing a no-fly zone, and banning drones in the area. According to *The Diplomat*, the Chinese will have trained falcons in the air above the parade to scare off other birds, and the Chinese air force has even trained macaque monkeys to destroy bird nests near designated flight paths.

And there during the parade, perched on its massive TEL transporter, the "Guam Killer" should draw some serious attention—and provide yet another signal that China sees the western Pacific as its exclusive sphere of influence.



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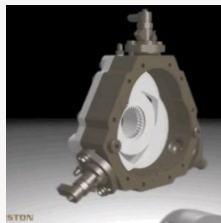
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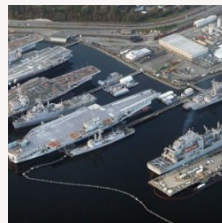
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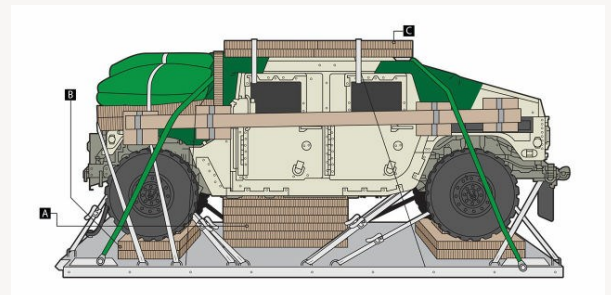
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