

China's indigenous long-range missile could be inducted in 2018

China's next-generation multi-nuclear warhead intercontinental ballistic missile with a proclaimed ability to hit targets "anywhere in the world" may be inducted into the PLA early next year, a media report said on Monday. The new missile — the Dongfeng-41 — also has a speed of more than Mach 10 and can use decoy devices and chaff to pierce its way through the enemy's missile warning and defence systems.

The missile which underwent another test — the eighth since it was first announced in 2012 — could be in the People Liberation Army's line-up as early as the first half of 2018, state-run *Global Times* said. It must have matured considerably if it is to start serving in the PLA, Xu Guangyu, a senior adviser of the China Arms Control and Disarmament Association said.

Three-stage missile

The Dongfeng-41 is a three-stage solid-fuel missile with a range of at least 12,000 km, meaning it could strike anywhere in the world from a mainland site, Mr. Xu told the *Global Times*, adding that, "it can carry up to 10 nuclear warheads, each of which can target separately".

The *South China Morning Post* reported that China had possibly tested the ICBM in its western desert area in early November, but it did not give the exact location or date of the test.

Song Zhongping, a Phoenix TV commentator and former member of the PLA's Second Artillery Corps (Rocket Force), is of the view that the Dongfeng-41 is very likely already in service, since tests and other checks of missiles can be conducted after deployment as well.

Russian experts feel that the missile deployment is aimed at the U.S. as it could reach most of America and Europe.

A commentary in *Global Times* had earlier said that the deployment of the DF-41 was a "strategic deterrence tool" and Beijing would "ready itself for pressures" imposed by the new U.S. government.

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