Japan's Space Surveillance Accusation Unfounded

Clear Voice

By LIANG Yilian & HU Dingkun

On March 15, *The Japan News* published an article online that claimed Chinese remote-sensing satellites pass over Japan roughly once every 10 minutes, "monitoring" Japan's Self-Defense Forces and the U.S. military bases in the country.

At times, the report said, as many as four satellites may pass over the same target almost simultaneously.

The framing is telling. By highlighting figures such as "once every 10 minutes" and "four satellites flying overhead simultaneously," the report portrays Japan as a vulnerable party under constant surveillance and reinforces the so-called "China satellite threat" narrative. To readers unfamiliar with space technology — or those predisposed to view China through the lens of suspicion — such numbers can sound alarming and convincing.

In reality, it is a deliberate exaggeration of China's satellite activities. The passage of Chinese remote-sensing satellites over Japan is largely a natural consequence of orbital mechanics.

China operates a large number of remote-sensing satellites, many of which serve civilian purposes such as disaster prevention and mitigation, land and resource surveys, water conservancy and meteorological monitoring.

According to the report itself, the satellites in question primarily operate within the latitude band between 35 degrees north and 35 degrees south. Vast areas of southern China and the southeastern coastline — as well as parts of southern Japan — fall within this band and share similar latitudes.

China launches seven satellites, including Pakistan's PRSC-EO2, from Yellow Sea waters on February 12, 2026. (PHOTO: XINHUA)

Given the geographical proximity of China and Japan and the relatively low orbital inclinations of many observation satellites, it is inevitable that satellites designed to monitor China and the nearby seas will periodically pass over Japanese territory. Presenting such routine orbital movements as evidence of targeted surveillance is both inaccurate and technically unsound.

Ironically, while expressing concern about Chinese satellites flying overhead "every 10 minutes," Japan itself is building a satellite constellation capable of observing the entire world at roughly the same frequency.

The Institute for Q-shu Pioneers of Space, Inc. plans to establish a constellation of 36 synthetic aperture radar satellites by 2027, which would enable observations of any location on Earth approximately every 10 minutes.

According to reports by outlets such as *Intelligence Online*, the project is already supplying reconnaissance imagery to Japan's Ministry of Defense and has reportedly provided intelligence support to Ukraine, becoming involved in the Russia-Ukraine conflict.

In recent years, Japan is increasingly promoting the militarization of space, often citing perceived threats from neighboring countries as justification for expanding its capabilities in the space domain.

In June 2020, Japan announced plans to strengthen its space defense capacity by improving missile detection and tracking capabilities and launching multiple satellites to rapidly assess missile activities in surrounding regions.

In July 2025, Japan released its first set of guidelines aimed at strengthening its outer-space defense posture, citing the need to counter potential "killer satellite" threats and proposing the introduction of so-called "bodyguard satellites" to protect its space assets.

Against this backdrop, Japan's latest claims about Chinese remote-sensing satellites may also serve a broader purpose: creating political momentum for further militarization of space.

The global media has reported that Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi wants to join the U.S.' "Golden Dome" program. The initiative reportedly involves deploying weapons in outer space for missions such as missile interception.

As the world's second-largest space power by satellite count, China has consistently advocated the peaceful use of outer space and promoted international cooperation in the development of space technologies.

If Japan has a clear conscience, there is no need to be alarmed by a Chinese remote-sensing satellite operating normally in orbit. But if Tokyo is determined to push forward a new form of militarism in space, it will inevitably invite greater scrutiny from the international community.

AI for Good: Ethical Imperatives

Comment

By GONG Qian & SUN Yue

As AI technology becomes widely adopted in the commercial sector, efficiency gains and industrial upgrading have brought a new type of abuse termed "AI data poisoning." Some businesses now use technical tools to flood generative AI systems with promotional content, in an attempt to influence its responses. Even counterfeit products could be recommended in the responses by fabricating false promotional content.

The underlying logic of algorithmic recommendations relies on data authenticity. Yet at present, content review and data verification mechanisms in some AI large language models remain inadequate, creating opportunities for profit seeking through disinformation. Not only does this disrupt market order and mislead consumers, but it also erodes public trust in the digital ecosystem.

Faced with these industry loopholes and ethical risks, enterprises are pressed to take proactive steps to build dual defense in technology and ethics. Information review and data verification should be integrated throughout the R&D process, with technical measures used to trace data sources and ensure the authenticity and compliance of AI training data. Meanwhile, automated interception should be launched for mass-generated and suspicious promotional copy. The enhancement of AI identification capabilities through simulating disinformation attack scenarios, improving detection of false content, and enabling AI to gradually "distinguish right from wrong" is also necessary.

However, the implementation of such proactive measures remains limited, and a unified industry-wide technical and ethical protection system has yet to be established. Only when more enterprises embed ethical requirements into the entire lifecycle of AI design, research and application, and make compliance checks and content screening mandatory standards for AI product development, can the loopholes of technology abuse be closed at source, ensuring that technological innovation stays within ethical boundaries.

The healthy development of the industry requires both corporate self-discipline and strict regulatory constraints. China has already introduced relevant regulations to govern AI applications. The Interim Measures for the Management of Generative AI Services mandate that AI service providers fulfill their primary responsibility for information content management and guarantee the authenticity and accuracy of training and retrieval data. In addition, the Basic Security Requirements for Generative AI Services detail data authenticity and algorithmic fairness, establishing constraints such as training data traceability and content labeling.

For these institutional norms to be effective, enforcement and stringent supervision are key. This will align hard institutional constraints with soft industry self-regulation, forming a combined force that draws clear, non-negotiable boundaries for the AI industry without stifling the vitality and progress of technological innovation.

Technological progress can never be separated from ethical guidance. With enterprises prioritizing their bottom lines, regulators taking targeted measures, and social consensus development, the abuse of technology can be curbed at an early stage. AI will then advance in a regulated manner and become a reliable tool that helps to enhance human well-being and drive social progress.

2026 ZGC Forum Focuses on Global Innovation

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International cooperation takes center stage

The Action Plan for International Cooperation in Open Science released at the forum shows China's commitment to open international collaboration in science and technology. The plan outlines mechanisms for the global sharing of 10 major scientific research infrastructures, aiming to foster cross-border collaborative innovation.

Beijing, a hub for national strategic scientific endeavors, is positioning itself as a global center for scientific innovation, transforming large-scale research facilities from domestic use to international openness. Several critical national scientific instruments are now included in the action plan, contributing to the capital's efforts to advance global scientific cooperation.

Maximizing the value of technology

The true value of scientific achievements lies in their application. In his address, Benoît Dubuis, president of the Swiss Academy of Engineering Sciences, emphasized the timeliness of the forum's theme, noting that technology's real impact comes from its translation into practical solutions.

He said Chinese companies and their international counterparts, along with investors, are engaging in global collaboration, while researchers are advancing technology and product development through platforms such as systems integration labs.

Jia Yiwei, deputy general manager of the Zhongguancun Development Group, said this year, the forum is working with eight partners and over 60 member institutions to build an ecosystem for technological exchange and cooperation.

The forum has brought together global companies and high-growth technology firms — including AstraZeneca, Kunlun Tech, Sugon, and Moonshot AI — through dedicated corporate sessions and networking events, fostering a diverse and collaborative environment for technological exchange.

Dimitar Tomov, an official from the Bulgarian Embassy, said the forum reflects China's leading role in the global intelligent technology revolution and hoped for sustained long-term collaboration between Bulgaria and China in science and technology to jointly drive industrial transformation.

"The forum provides an important bridge for cooperation among international science parks," said Salvatore Majorana, director of the Italian Kilometro Rosso science park. Majorana sees significant potential for collaboration between China and Europe in scientific innovation and industrial application.

Looking ahead: the future of innovation

This year's forum also features 60 parallel forums to delve into cutting-edge topics such as 6G technology, brain-machine interfaces, and advancements in cell and gene therapies. These discussions will explore the intersection of technological innovation and industrial application, laying the groundwork for the future of science and technology.

The 2026 edition is jointly organized by several Chinese government agencies, including the Ministry of Science and Technology, the National Development and Reform Commission, and the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology.

Since its founding in 2007, it has evolved into a major international event, fostering collaboration and innovation in science and technology on a global scale.

Voice of the World

GCI a Pathway for Peaceful Co-existence

Edited by QI Liming

March 15 was the third anniversary of the China-proposed Global Civilization Initiative (GCI), marking a pivotal moment in global discourse. Calling for inter-civilizational dialogue and mutual learning, the vision GCI offers is more than an abstract ideal. It serves as a much-needed path forward for a world urgently seeking new models of coexistence.

Across the globe, people have gained a deeper understanding of the significance of this initiative in the context of the century-old changes.

The current conflicts and unrest in the Middle East have deepened Kawa Mahmoud's understanding of the contemporary value of the GCI. As the Head of the Global Civilization Initiative Research Center headquartered in Iraq, he believes the GCI advocates mutual respect and inclusive dialogue, which helps break the narrative framework of "Clash of Civilizations" and builds a bridge for enhancing understanding and trust among different civilizations.

Mahmoud said in an era of escalating turmoil and increasing uncertainty, the GCI offers crucial guidance for steering the world towards a future of peace, stability and inclusive development.

At a time when the international situation is so complex, conflicted and diverse, the Chinese philosophy of harmony brings clarity of thought.

Mars Sariev, a political scientist and expert on Central Asian issues from Kyrgyzstan, understands the essence of the GCI from China's role and actions on the multilateral stage. The "Shanghai Spirit" upheld by the Shanghai Cooperation Organization emphasizes "respect for diversity of civilizations," and China-Central Asia cooperation also attaches importance to "mutual respect, mutual trust, mutual benefit and mutual assistance" among different civilizations, he said. Both of these align strongly with the GCI.

The GCI provides more space for dialogue among countries around the world that have different historical and cultural backgrounds but are facing the same challenges, he said.

In early February, the year 2026 was designated Year of China-Laos Friendship. The two countries share the natural bond of the Lancang-Mekong River and the modern infrastructure bond of the China-Laos Railway.

Kertmee Sackdanouvong, acting director of Center for China Studies at National University of Laos, believes that under the guidance of the GCI, exchanges and mutual learning between the two countries will flow naturally into the daily lives of the two peoples, forming a deeper bond of friendship.

Connected by the love of theater and drama, the UK town of Stratford and Fuzhou city in Jiangxi province, east China, became twin cities in 2016. Steve Ansell, artistic director of stage at the University of Leeds in the UK recalls how he was once astonished when attending drama activities in Fuzhou, and seeing Chinese audience's familiarity with Shakespeare. He said it was "far beyond his expectations," and affirmed that the echo of cross-cultural resonance is key to cultural exchange activities.

Yukteshwar Kumar, former deputy mayor of Bath city in the UK, has been paying close attention to the cultural and people-to-people exchanges between China and the UK in recent years. He said the GCI will effectively promote cultural exchanges, especially enhancing mutual understanding among young people, thereby contributing positive energy to the stable development of bilateral relations.

These ongoing cultural exchanges between China and foreign countries are powerful examples of GCI implementation and how they continue to strengthen bonds and promote harmony and understanding between people.

Hi-Tech

World's First BCI Device Registration Approved

By GONG Qian

The world's first market launch of an invasive BCI (brain-computer interface) medical device has become a reality, after China's National Medical Products Administration recently approved the registration application for an implantable BCI device to restore hand motor function. Developed by Shanghai-based Neuracle Technology, it also signifies a shift from experimental to clinical use.

The product is designed to help patients aged 18 to 60 who suffer from quadriplegia caused by cervical spinal cord injuries and are unable to perform grasping movements.

Two electrodes are implanted without direct contact with brain tissue to ensure implantation safety and signal effectiveness. When connected to an external device such as a pneumatic glove and activated, the coin-sized invasive device can collect and decode the patients' electroencephalogram (EEG) signals in real time, allowing for control of the pneumatic glove through thoughts to perform actions including grasping and picking up objects, and drinking water.

There is also no need for frequent battery replacements for patients as the device is powered wirelessly via a magnetic coil.

Patients are able to operate the device independently at home about one month after surgery.

The device has been used in clinical trials since 2023, with a total of 36 patients enrolled. Data showed that all participants experienced varying degrees of improvement in grasping function, while some patients have exhibited signs of neuroplasticity with additional partial recovery of neurological function.

An implantable brain-computer interface device to restore hand motor function developed by Shanghai-based Neuracle Technology. (COURTESY PHOTO)