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## China thwarting satellites used to spy

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China has been handling threats from foreign intelligence agencies who use satellites to conduct espionage in their attempts to steal the country's secrets, according to the Ministry of State Security.

The ministry said in an article published on its WeChat account on Wednesday that some foreign spy organizations continue to use high-resolution satellites to carry out remote-sensing reconnaissance on China. They also keep trying to infiltrate China's space companies by tempting and intimidating Chinese scientists and engineers to obtain the latest developments in their research.

Some Western countries have been hyping up the arms race in orbit and the contest for "space hegemony", making all-out efforts to hinder China's capability and jeopardize its space operations, it noted.

Space has become a new domain for economic growth, military conflicts and national security work. Protecting space-based systems and orbital operations from threats and infringement is an important part of national security work because space-based assets are significant to a nation's security and development, the ministry said.

In recent years, state security bodies worked with relevant departments to handle cases in which foreign spies tried to steal secrets in China's space sector, effectively suppressing foreign intelligence agencies' espionage attempts, the ministry said.

State security departments will continue to use concrete measures to safeguard China's rights, security and interests in space, it added.

Information previously published by the ministry shows that the space sector is a focal point for Western intelligence agencies that spy on China. Their agents target scientists, designers and technicians working for State-owned contractors and have turned a handful of employees into traitors, including a senior missile designer who was exposed in 2007.

The latest spy case involving China's space industry that has been made public was disclosed in April 2023.

Zhao Xuejun, a researcher at a State-owned institute, was approached by foreign spies while he was studying overseas and then was recruited. After returning to China, he continued to work for the foreign intelligence organization and delivered a large number of classified documents.

He was arrested in June 2019 and was sentenced in August 2022 to seven years in prison.

An industry observer who declined to be named said that foreign spies are keen to obtain information about China's space capability and programs because analyzing such information can help to establish a comprehensive, in-depth picture about China's strategic prowess and its scientific, technological and engineering capacities.