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# China launches first domestically developed amphibious assault ship

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China's first domestically developed and constructed Type 075 amphibious assault ship is launched in Shanghai on Wednesday. Photo by Li Tang/Ministry of National Defense of the People's Republic of China

Sept. 26 (UPI) -- China has launched its first Type 075 landing helicopter dock amphibious assault ship on Wednesday at a shipyard in Shanghai.

This latest [inclusion of the new Type 075](#) adds to China's People's Liberation Army Navy's military presence, which includes 106 naval missile platforms in the Western Pacific.

While the official launch of the vessel does not mean it is operational, experts [suspect the rollout](#) of this Type 075 is part of China's plan to expand its presence in the Asia-Pacific region.

The flat-top vessel stretches about 820 feet long with a roughly 98 feet beam, which can accommodate at least 30 armed helicopters and four helicopter elevators on deck. The ship will also support fast boats for troop deployment and stronger attack capabilities.

In all, the ship will displace more than 30,000 tons.

These types of ships normally serve as small aircraft carriers used during assaults on islands and coastal areas, experts say.

"It highlights China's growing maritime power projection and the expansion of its amphibious warfare ambitions and forces," Carl Schuster, a former United States Navy captain and Hawaii Pacific University instructor, [told CNN](#).

Now, the ship needs to be equipped with crew quarters, navigation, radar and electronic warfare systems before it can conduct sea trials.

According to a U.S. Defense Department report, the Chinese navy already has a fleet of eight smaller Type 071 amphibious transport docks, which can hold four helicopters each.

Shuster said China will likely build two more Type 075 amphibious assault ships.