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ACTS OF CLAIMANTS

27 January 2021: Philippines Protests China Law on Coast Guard's Weapon Use

The Philippines has filed a diplomatic protest against China's law giving its coast guard more freedom to fire on foreign vessels, the Southeast Asian nation's foreign affairs minister said. "While enacting law is a sovereign prerogative, this one — given the area involved or for that matter the open South China Sea — is a verbal threat of war to any country that defies the law," Foreign Affairs Secretary Teodoro Locsin said on his Twitter on Wednesday.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-01-27/philippines-protests-china-law-on-coast-guard-s-weapon-use>

27 January 2021: China to conduct military drills in South China Sea amid tensions with U.S.

China said on Tuesday it will conduct military exercises in the South China Sea this week, just days after Beijing bristled at a U.S. aircraft carrier group's entry into the disputed waters. A notice issued by the country's Maritime Safety Administration prohibited entry into a portion of waters in the Gulf of Tonkin to the west of the Leizhou peninsula in southwestern China from Jan. 27 to Jan. 30, but it did not offer details on when the drills would take place or at what scale. A U.S. carrier group led by the USS Theodore Roosevelt entered the South China Sea on Saturday to promote "freedom of the seas," the U.S. military said, days after Joe Biden began his term as president.

<https://www.thechronicleherald.ca/news/world/china-to-conduct-military-drills-in-south-china-sea-amid-tensions-with-us-544935/>

25 January 2021: Chinese Foreign Ministry: U.S. South China Sea Movements Do 'No Good' for Region

The Chinese foreign ministry on Monday denounced the recent movement of a U.S. aircraft carrier to the South China Sea after Beijing sent military aircraft close to Taiwan. "It does no good to regional peace and stability for the United States to frequently send military vessels and aircraft to the South China Sea to show off muscles," said Zhao Lijian, a spokesman for China's foreign ministry, according to a transcript of a Monday press conference. Zhao said Beijing maintains its view that Taiwan is "an inalienable part of the Chinese territory." "[R]efrain from sending any wrong signals to the 'Taiwan independence' forces so as to avoid damaging China-U.S. relations and peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait," Zhao said.

<https://news.usni.org/2021/01/25/chinese-foreign-ministry-u-s-south-china-sea-movements-do-no-good-for-region>

24 January 2021: China gives coastguard power to fire on foreign vessels

In a move that is expected to escalate tensions between China and its neighbours, Beijing has passed a law that gives power to its coastguard to fire on foreign vessels and demolish structures built in disputed waters, South China Morning Post reported.

<https://www.bignewsnetwork.com/news/267625697/china-gives-coastguard-power-to-fire-on-foreign-vessels>

21 January 2021: China Reclaims Land, Fortifies Coast of South China Sea Island Base to Prevent Erosion

China has reclaimed more land on Woody Island, its main outpost in the northern part of the South China Sea, and is fortifying the island's coast against erosion, according to new satellite imagery and Chinese government documents seen by Radio Free Asia. This effort points to China's commitment to securing its island bases against the extreme environmental conditions of the South China Sea, where its sweeping territorial and maritime claims are disputed by its neighbors.

<https://www.rfa.org/english/news/china/southchinasea-woody-01212021155023.html>

18 January 2021: South China Sea: focus on oil and gas, not maritime dispute, Beijing urges Philippines

China and the Philippines should not be distracted by their disputes in the South China Sea and should instead focus on advancing cooperation on oil and gas exploration in the region, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi said when wrapping up his week-long tour of Southeast Asia. Wang's trip, which also included stops in Myanmar, Indonesia and Brunei, came with Beijing seeking to consolidate its ties with the region before the new US administration takes office this week.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/diplomacy/article/3118173/south-china-sea-focus-oil-and-gas-not-maritime-dispute-beijing>

18 January 2021: China's first deep-water oil platform ready to set off for South China Sea

China's first domestically-built, semi-submersible deep-water oil production unit has been completed after 21 months of construction. The platform is now ready to set off to the country's first deep-water gas field in the South China Sea.

<https://news.cgtn.com/news/2021-01-18/China-s-first-deep-water-oil-platform-to-set-off-for-South-China-Sea-X94O62mMCs/index.html>

17 January 2021: Chinese military plane enters Taiwan's ADIZ for 7th straight day

A Chinese military aircraft entered Taiwan's air defense identification zone (ADIZ) on Sunday, the seventh consecutive day there has been such an incursion, according to Taiwan's Ministry of National Defense (MND). The aircraft, an electronic warfare version of China's Y-8 transport plane, entered the airspace southwest of Taiwan between Taiwan and the Dongsha (Pratas) Islands in the South China Sea, according to a chart provided by the MND.

<https://focustaiwan.tw/cross-strait/202101170012>

14 January 2021: China, Indonesia reach five-point consensus: Chinese FM

Visiting Chinese State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi said on Wednesday that China and Indonesia reached a five-point consensus during his visit to the country.

<http://www.ecns.cn/news/politics/2021-01-14/detail-ihafqmaz1835997.shtml>

13 January 2021: Chinese Navy corvettes Type 056A Jiangdao-class conduct naval exercise in South China Sea

In January 2021, the Chinese Navy has conducted a naval training exercise in the waters of the South China Sea with Jiangdao class Type 056A corvettes including the Bazhong 625, Guangyuan 552, and Hanzhong 520.

<https://www.navyrecognition.com/index.php/news/defence-news/2021/january/9545-chinese-navy-corvettes-type-056a-jiangdao-class-conduct-naval-exercise-in-south-china-sea.html>

4 January 2021: China's largest military cargo plane flew to a base in the South China Sea, but it's not clear why

China flew its biggest warplane, the Y-20 transporter, to Fiery Cross Reef in the disputed South China Sea on December 25, satellite images show. The huge aircraft was seen on the airstrip on the militarised reef in the Spratly Islands but was not observed loading or unloading cargo.

<https://www.businessinsider.com/chinese-y20-military-transport-plane-fiery-reef-south-china-sea-2021-1>

OTHER STATES AND SOUTH CHINA SEA

30 January 2021: U.S. military slams Chinese flights over South China Sea but says they posed no threat

The U.S. military said on Friday that Chinese military flights in the past week in the South China Sea fit a pattern of destabilizing and aggressive behavior by Beijing but posed no threat to a U.S. Navy aircraft carrier strike group in the region.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-china-military/u-s-military-slams-chinese-flights-over-south-china-sea-but-says-they-posed-no-threat-idUSKBN29Y34J>

28 January 2021: US stresses South China Sea support amid China 'pressure'

Secretary of State Antony Blinken has reaffirmed the United States commitment to the support of Southeast Asian nations in a long-running dispute with China over sovereignty in the South China Sea. The new top diplomat for the US made the commitment in a phone call with his Filipino counterpart, Teodoro Locsin, on Wednesday.

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/1/28/us-backs-philippines-against-chinas-maritime-pressure>

24 January 2021: U.S. carrier group enters South China Sea amid Taiwan tensions

A U.S. aircraft carrier group led by the USS Theodore Roosevelt has entered the South China Sea to promote “freedom of the seas”, the U.S. military said on Sunday, at a time when tensions between China and Taiwan have raised concern in Washington.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-southchinesea-usa/us-carrier-group-enters-south-china-sea-amid-taiwan-tensions-idUSKBN29T05J>

21 January 2021: Japan weighs in on South China Sea dispute, adding to pressure on Beijing

Japan has joined a battle of diplomatic notes over the South China Sea dispute, adding to pressure on Beijing over its expansive claims in the strategically important waterway.

In a note verbale – a type of diplomatic communication – sent on Tuesday, Japan’s permanent mission to the United Nations said China’s “drawing of territorial sea

baselines ... on relevant islands and reefs in the South China Sea” failed to satisfy conditions set out in the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/diplomacy/article/3118717/japan-weighs-south-china-sea-dispute-adding-pressure-beijing>

20 January 2021: China announces sanctions on nearly 30 ex-Trump administration officials

China imposed sanctions on nearly 30 former Trump administration officials moments after they left office on Wednesday. In a statement released just minutes after President Joe Biden was inaugurated, Beijing slapped travel bans and business restrictions on Trump’s secretary of state, Mike Pompeo, national security adviser Robert O’Brien and U.N. ambassador, Kelly Craft.

<https://ktla.com/news/nationworld/china-announces-sanctions-on-nearly-30-ex-trump-administration-officials/>

14 January 2021: U.S. imposes new sanctions on Beijing over South China Sea violations

The Trump administration on Thursday imposed new sanctions on Chinese officials over Beijing’s increasing assertiveness in the South China Sea. The penalties are yet another Trump administration move that may make President-elect Joe Biden’s diplomacy with China more difficult when he takes office next week.

<https://www.pbs.org/newshour/politics/u-s-imposes-new-sanctions-on-beijing-over-south-china-sea-violations>

13 January 2021: US Navy Triton drone flies deep into Taiwan's ADIZ

Multiple aircraft spotters on Wednesday (Jan. 13) detected a U.S. Navy surveillance drone flying just off the coast of southwestern Taiwan, well within the country's air defense identification zone (ADIZ) and possibly over the city of Kaohsiung. At 12:12 a.m. on Wednesday, aircraft spotter CANUK78 reported that a U.S. Navy MQ-4C Triton headed toward the South China Sea. The map included in the tweet showed the aircraft flying through the Bashi Channel off the southeast coast of Taiwan.

<https://www.taiwannews.com.tw/en/news/4100965>

7 January 2021: Dr Wee: US aircraft that spied on Chinese bases did not use transponder code registered to M'sia

The transponder code used by a US aircraft that allegedly impersonated a Malaysian plane when spying on China's military bases last September was not registered to Malaysia, says Datuk Seri Dr Wee Ka Siong. The Transport Minister said that the probe carried out by the Civil Aviation Authority of Malaysia (CAAM) found that the transponder code said to have been used by the US aircraft was in fact not registered with a Malaysian plane.

<https://www.thestar.com.my/news/nation/2021/01/07/dr-wee-us-aircraft-that-spied-on-chinese-bases-did-not-use-transponder-code-registered-to-m039sia>

4 January 2021: South China Sea: India and Japan's joint pact sparks Beijing anger as tensions rise

India and Japan's defence ministers, Rajnath Singh and Nobuo Kishi respectively, issued a warning shot to China that it would "continue exchanging views" on the ongoing situation over the disputed region. Their promise will no doubt concern Beijing, which recently saw the US pass a bill to spend \$18.5bn (£13.5bn) on its Pacific Deterrence Initiative to boost its military presence in the South China Sea. With most neighbouring South China Sea nations opposed to Beijing's claim of sovereignty in the waters, fears of war have been sparked.

<https://www.express.co.uk/news/world/1379390/south-china-sea-news-india-japan-beijing-world-war-3-east-china-sea-conflict-spt>

1 January 2021: China blasts NATO with British aircraft carrier 'heading to South China Sea'

China said it would take necessary measures to safeguard its sovereignty as it warned against the British navy dispatching warships to the disputed South China Sea. The remarks were made in response to expectations that Britain's newest aircraft carrier, HMS Queen Elizabeth, will be deployed to the Pacific region, including the contentious sea, for its first operational mission. "The Chinese side believes that the South China Sea should not become a sea of great power rivalry dominated by weapons and warships," defence ministry spokesman Tan Kefei said when asked about Britain's plans during a monthly press conference in Beijing on Thursday.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/military/article/3116146/china-blasts-nato-british-aircraft-carrier-heading-south-china>

31 December 2021: US in rare double-warship Taiwan Strait transit after China starts sea drills

Two United States destroyers conducted a rare double-ship Taiwan Strait transit on the last day of 2020, as their Chinese counterparts kicked off massive naval exercises in the disputed South China Sea. It was the 13th mission through the sensitive strait in 2020 but the first time in the year that the US had sent double destroyers there, according to Beijing-based think tank the South China Sea Strategic Situation Probing Initiative. Military experts suggested that the transit could be related to ongoing large-scale naval exercises by China's People's Liberation Army (PLA) involving its aircraft carrier Shandong and other warships in the South China Sea.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/military/article/3115955/china-us-tension-american-warships-sail-through-taiwan-strait>

30 December 2021: 2 Japan-Based Destroyers Conduct Second Taiwan Strait Transit This Month

Two Japan-based destroyers conducted a Taiwan Strait transit today, in the second such transit in three weeks and the fourth overall mission during that time to push back against excessive maritime claims in the Pacific. Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyers USS John S. McCain (DDG-56) and USS Curtis Wilbur (DDG-54) conducted a routine Taiwan Strait transit Dec. 31 local time, or Dec. 30 in the continental United States.

<https://news.usni.org/2020/12/30/2-japan-based-destroyers-conduct-second-taiwan-strait-transit-this-month>