

**SOUTH CHINA SEA NEWS No.99**  
**October 2021**

**ACTS OF CLAIMANTS**

**26 October 2021: GT launches online petition to demand truth on US nuke sub collision in South China Sea**

More than three weeks have passed since the USS Connecticut, a Seawolf-class nuclear-powered submarine of the US Navy, collided with an “unknown object” in the South China Sea, the US military still has not released basic information on the accident that is of concern to China and many other countries in the region. To find out the truth, the Global Times launched on Tuesday an online petition, demanding the US military to reveal information on the collision.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202110/1237318.shtml>

**23 October 2021: China’s largest, most advanced civilian patrol boat could be used to support South China Sea claims**

China’s largest civilian patrol boat entered service on Saturday, with the state broadcaster CCTV reporting that it would be used to deliver strategic resources and help protect the country’s maritime claims. The Haixun 09, or “sea patrol”, was commissioned under the Maritime Safety Administration (MSA) of the southern province of Guangdong province, which oversees the South China Sea. With a 10,700-tonne displacement, it is also the most advanced ship in the civilian fleet and is equipped with water cannons, an aerial tracking system, medical rescue capabilities and a helicopter landing deck, according to CCTV.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/military/article/3153455/chinas-largest-most-advanced-civilian-patrol-boat-could-be-used>

**23 October 2021: Chinese ships linger in West Philippine Sea despite diplomatic protests — US think tank**

“When international outcry or patrols by other claimants convince them to leave a disputed feature, they disperse to nearby reefs for a time. But their overall numbers in the Spratlys remain consistent,” the Asia Maritime Transparency Initiative (AMTI) of the Center for Strategic and International Studies said in its latest report released Saturday.

<https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1505526/chinese-ships-linger-in-west-philippine-sea-despite-diplomatic-protests-us-think-tank#ixzz7ABlg614D>

**23 October 2021: China ignores PH protests, vows to keep patrols in SCS**

Despite more than 200 diplomatic protests filed by the Philippines accusing China of repeatedly harassing its patrol vessels, particularly in the West Philippine Sea, Beijing defended its actions and vowed to continue its law enforcement activities in the disputed South China Sea, describing them as “legitimate and justified.” Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Wang Wenbin stressed that China’s activities would continue despite Manila’s repeated protests against harassment by China while conducting maritime patrols in Philippine territorial waters. “China’s position on the South China Sea issue is consistent and clear-cut. It is legitimate and reasonable for China’s maritime law enforcement authorities to conduct law enforcement activities in waters under China’s jurisdiction in accordance with domestic laws and international laws, including the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea,” Wang said in a press conference in Beijing on Oct.21.

<https://manilastandard.net/news/national/368079/china-ignores-ph-protests-vows-to-keep-patrols-in-scs.html>

### **20 October 2021: PLA to conduct live-fire drills in South China Sea, Yellow Sea**

According to three notices released by the maritime safety administrations in China's Hainan and Liaoning provinces on October 19, the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) will carry out live-fire drills in several sea areas of China in recent days. Ships are banned from entering during respective time limits.

[http://english.chinamil.com.cn/view/2021-10/20/content\\_10101014.htm](http://english.chinamil.com.cn/view/2021-10/20/content_10101014.htm)

### **20 October 2021: Malaysia expects more Chinese boats in South China Sea as Petronas drills for oil**

Malaysian Foreign Minister Saifuddin Abdullah on Wednesday said he expected more Chinese vessels to enter the country's waters "for as long as" the state-owned Petronas oil and gas company develops a gas field in Malaysia's exclusive economic zone in the South China Sea. He also said Malaysia's current relationship with China was "very difficult to quantify but is much better now", despite what happened in the South China Sea.

<https://www.scmp.com/week-asia/politics/article/3153052/malaysia-expects-more-chinese-boats-south-china-sea-petronas>

### **20 October 2021: China Keeps Up Pressure on Indonesia and Malaysia With Survey Ship Intrusion**

In a bid to boost its maritime interest in the Indo-Pacific, China has been sending survey ships into the Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZ) of its neighbors. This is besides the display of military might, which sees PLA warships and fighter jets constantly breaching the territory of other nations.

<https://www.ibtimes.com/china-keeps-pressure-indonesia-malaysia-survey-ship-intrusion-3320552>

### **20 October 2021: DFA protests radio challenges, 'provocative acts' of Chinese ships in West PH Sea**

The Philippines has filed a fresh diplomatic protest against China over the radio challenges and other "provocative acts" of Beijing's vessels in the country's waters, the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) said Wednesday. In a social media post, the DFA said it protested the "unlawful issuance of over 200 radio challenges, sounding of sirens, and blowing of horns by Chinese government vessels" against Philippine authorities conducting routine patrols in the West Philippine Sea. "These provocative acts threaten the peace, good order, and security of the South China Sea and run contrary to China's obligations under international law," the DFA wrote on Twitter.

<https://cnnphilippines.com/news/2021/10/20/DFA-protest-China-radio-challenges-siren-horn.html>

### **19 October 2021: Indonesia takes cautious stance as China survey ship lingers**

A month and a half after a large Chinese survey vessel entered the Natuna Sea, Indonesia seems to still be pursuing a quiet, cautious approach at sea, despite public pressure.

<https://www.rfa.org/english/news/china/indonesia-southchinasea-10192021150801.html>

### **19 October 2021: PLA Naval Air Force's live-fire drill in South China Sea in 60 seconds**

The Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) Naval Air Force in the Southern Theater Command recently organized teams of fighter bomber aircraft to conduct live-fire drills in South China Sea. The precision strike drill aims to test the ability of pilots to carry out missions under complex weather conditions.

<https://news.cgtn.com/news/2021-10-19/PLA-Naval-Air-Force-s-live-fire-drill-in-South-China-Sea-in-60-seconds-14u9dked0dy/index.html>

**19 October 2021: China demands US explain USS Connecticut's collision with 'unknown object,' questions intentions behind cover-up**

China is seriously concerned about the USS Connecticut's collision with an "unknown object" in international waters in the South China Sea, and said the US is obligated to explain the incident in detail, China's Ministry of National Defense said on Tuesday. "For a long time, under the slogan of 'freedom of navigation and overflight,' the US has frequently dispatched advanced weapons platforms such as aircraft carriers, strategic bombers, and nuclear submarines in the South China Sea to show off its force and stir up trouble, seriously threatening regional national security and increasing regional tensions," said Tan Kefei, spokesperson of China's Ministry of National Defense in a statement.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202110/1236732.shtml>

**19 October 2021: China calls missile launch 'routine test' of new technology**

China said Monday its launch of a new spacecraft was merely a test to see whether the vehicle could be reused. The launch involved a spacecraft rather than a missile and was of "great significance for reducing the use-cost of spacecraft and could provide a convenient and affordable way to make a round trip for mankind's peaceful use of space," Foreign Ministry spokesperson Zhao Lijian said. China's space program is run by its military and is closely tied to its agenda of building hypersonic missiles and other technologies that could alter the balance of power with the United States. "China will work together with other countries in the world for the peaceful use of space and the benefit of mankind," Zhao said.

<https://abcnews.go.com/Technology/wireStory/china-calls-missile-launch-routine-test-technology-80638773>

**18 October 2021: Chinese survey vessel leaves Malaysian waters 2 weeks after protest**

Chinese survey vessel Da Yang Hao has left Malaysia's waters, two weeks after the Malaysian Foreign Ministry summoned the Chinese ambassador to protest. Ship tracking data on Monday showed the 4,600-ton vessel is now on its way northward, more than 200 nautical miles west of the Philippines. "It's hard to have any certainty as to China's decision-making," said Sharihman Lockman, a senior analyst at Malaysia's Institute of Strategic and International Studies (ISIS).

<https://www.rfa.org/english/news/china/malaysia-southchinasea-10182021170545.html>

**18 October 2021: China stuns US with launch of hypersonic 'space nuke'**

China has unveiled a game-changing new "space nuke" that can evade missile defence systems and strike anywhere on the globe. Without confirming the report, Beijing's Global Times mouthpiece said on Sunday that the news had delivered a fresh blow to the United States' "strategic superiority", warning that its "military build-up" will continue around Taiwan and the South China Sea, and that it is "inevitable" China will take the "upper hand" in any conflict.

<https://www.news.com.au/technology/innovation/military/china-stuns-us-with-launch-of-hypersonic-space-nuke/news-story/081fcf93f62225dc9578f45a453abd1b>

**17 October 2021: DFA hails Palawan reso protesting Chinese fishing ban in SCS**

The Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) has hailed a resolution passed by the provincial government of Palawan protesting the recent fishing ban unilaterally imposed by the Chinese government in the South China Sea. "The DFA commends the efforts of the Sangguniang Panlalawigan of Palawan in fighting for the rights of fisherfolk in their affected community

through the adoption of Provincial Resolution No. 15968, expressing its strong protest against China's unilateral declaration and imposition of a fishing ban in the South China Sea and supporting the diplomatic protest filed by the DFA," it said in a statement Saturday.

<https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1156899>

### **15 October 2021: The Philippines and US eye return to full military drills in 2022**

The US and the Philippines are planning to return to full-scale military drills in 2022 after two years and will invite Australia and the U.K. as observers, in another sign of the Biden administration's push to deepen ties in the Indo-Pacific and counter China's assertiveness

<https://www.thestar.com.my/aseanplus/aseanplus-news/2021/10/15/the-philippines-and-us-eye-return-to-full-military-drills-in-2022>

### **15 October 2021: China on war footing as it beefs up three air bases near Taiwan amid WW3 fears, satellite images suggest**

New satellite images have revealed China is upgrading its military bases along its southeastern coast, nearest to Taiwan, suggesting Beijing might be stepping up its plans to invade the island.

<https://www.thesun.co.uk/news/16433859/china-upgrades-three-air-bases-taiwan-fears-war/>

### **8 October 2021: China demands answers on US nuclear submarine accident in South China Sea**

China has demanded further explanation from the United States over a collision involving a US Navy nuclear submarine in the South China Sea last week, slamming the lack of information as "irresponsible" and expressing serious concerns about any "nuclear leak". "The United States should clarify more details of the occurrence, including the specific location, the intention of its navigation, what kind of object the sub had struck, whether it caused a nuclear leak that would contaminate marine environment," Chinese foreign ministry spokesman Zhao Lijian said on Friday.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/diplomacy/article/3151724/china-demands-answers-us-nuclear-submarine-accident-south>

### **6 October 2021: New Zealand warship sailing disputed South China Sea as Taiwan warns 'we will fight to end' if China attacks**

The Defence Force on Wednesday morning said the Royal New Zealand Navy Frigate Te Kaha is joining the United Kingdom's Carrier Strike Group (CSG) - which includes the massive HMS Queen Elizabeth - and other military partners to transit through the South China Sea.

<https://www.newshub.co.nz/home/zealand/2021/10/new-zealand-warship-sailing-disputed-south-china-sea-as-taiwan-warns-we-will-fight-to-end-if-china-attacks.html>

### **5 October 2021: China Warships Shadow U.S. and Allied Naval Groups in South China Sea**

China appears to have deployed military vessels to shadow American and British aircraft carrier formations in the South China Sea ahead of an intensive six-nation exercise, analysis of satellite imagery revealed on Tuesday. An image shared by Ho Chi Minh-based maritime observer Duan Dang showed elements of the U.S. Navy's Carl Vinson Carrier Strike Group and the Royal Navy's Queen Elizabeth Carrier Strike Group off the west coast of the Philippines on October 5.

<https://www.newsweek.com/china-warships-shadow-us-allied-naval-groups-south-china-sea-1635670>

### **5 October 2021: Malaysia summons Chinese envoy to protest South China Sea incursion**

Malaysia late Monday (Oct 4) summoned Beijing's envoy to the South-east Asian country in protest after Chinese vessels entered its maritime economic zone in the disputed South China Sea. Kuala Lumpur summoned Chinese ambassador Ouyang Yujing "to convey Malaysia's position and protest against the presence and activities of Chinese vessels, including a survey vessel, in Malaysia's Exclusive Economic Zone", the foreign ministry said in a statement.

<https://www.straitstimes.com/asia/se-asia/malaysia-summons-chinese-envoy-to-protest-south-china-sea-incursion>

### **3 October 2021: China sends 77 warplanes into Taiwan defense zone over two days, Taipei says**

Taiwan has reported a record number of incursions by Chinese warplanes into its air defense identification zone (ADIZ) for the second day in a row, Taiwan's Ministry of National Defense said on Saturday night. The self-governing island said a total of 39 Chinese military aircraft entered the ADIZ on Saturday, one more than the 38 planes it spotted on Friday. The 38 and 39 planes respectively are the highest number of incursions Taiwan has reported in a day since it began publicly reporting such activities last year. The incursions on Saturday came in two batches -- 20 planes during daytime hours and 19 planes at night, the ministry said in two statements. They were made by 26 J-16 fighter jets, 10 Su-30 fighter jets, two Y-8 anti-submarine warning aircraft and one KJ-500 airborne early warning and control plane, the Defense Ministry said. In response to the incursions, the Taiwanese air force scrambled aircraft, issued radio warnings, and deployed air defense missiles systems, the ministry added.

<https://www.wtva.com/content/national/575447502.html?ref=502>

### **2 October 2021: Protest 'bullying' by China, Kitingan tells govt**

A Sabah MP wants the Malaysian government to send a strong diplomatic protest to Beijing and the United Nations over China's military activities in the South China Sea. Parti Solidariti Tanah Airku (STAR) president Jeffrey Kitingan said Malaysia must never bow down to actions that can be termed as bullying by any foreign superpower, including China. "Malaysia must summon the ambassador of China on this matter immediately. This is a serious encroachment into our territory.

<https://www.freemalaysiatoday.com/category/nation/2021/10/02/protest-bullying-by-china-kitingan-tells-govt/>

## **ASEAN AND THE SOUTH CHINA SEA**

### **29 October 2021: Modi, ASEAN leaders call for peaceful, stable South China Sea**

In what is being seen as a clear message to Beijing, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday co-chaired the 18th India-ASEAN Summit with leaders of nine of the 10 Asean nations, with the leaders "affirming the importance of maintaining and promoting peace, stability, safety and security in the South China Sea, and ensuring freedom of navigation and overflight".

<https://www.deccanchronicle.com/nation/current-affairs/291021/modi-asean-leaders-call-for-peaceful-stable-south-china-sea.html>

### **28 October 2021: Freedom of navigation, flight in South China Sea in interests of all: China**

Ensuring freedom of navigation and overflights in the South China Sea is in the interests of all nations, and countries should resolve their differences via international cooperation, China's Premier Li Keqiang said on Wednesday. "The South China Sea is our common home. To uphold peace and stability in the South China Sea and uphold freedom of navigation and

overflight serves everyone's interests," he told an online East Asia Summit, stressing the importance of the ASEAN bloc's centrality in the region.

<https://www.thejakartapost.com/world/2021/10/28/freedom-of-navigation-flight-in-south-china-sea-in-interests-of-all-china-.html>.

### **28 October 2021: Biden vows to stand with Asia on freedom, hits at China on Taiwan**

President Joe Biden told Southeast Asian nations on Wednesday the United States would stand with them in defending freedom of the seas and democracy and called China's actions towards Taiwan "coercive" and a threat to peace and stability. Speaking at a virtual East Asia Summit attended by Chinese Premier Li Keqiang, Biden said Washington would start talks with partners in the Indo-Pacific about developing a regional economic framework, something critics say his regional strategy has lacked.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/summit-with-se-asia-japan-champions-open-seas-australia-defends-aucus-pact-2021-10-27/>

### **2 October 2021: Namhong urges peaceful solution to South China Sea dispute**

Deputy Prime Minister Hor Namhong urged South China Sea claimants to solve the dispute peacefully by following international laws. He hoped that ASEAN and China would reach an agreement on the Code of Conduct (COC) to prevent the dispute escalating. Namhong raised the topic during a meeting with Australian ambassador to Cambodia Pablo Kang on October 1. He said the South China Sea should be the "sea of peace and security", with freedom of navigation and overflight guaranteed. "I hope that ASEAN and China will continue to negotiate to achieve a Code of Conduct in the near future. So far, the negotiation is nearly finished," he said.

<https://www.phnompenhpost.com/national-politics/namhong-urges-peaceful-solution-south-china-sea-dispute>

## **OTHER STATES AND SOUTH CHINA SEA**

### **28 October 2021: US ships and planes conducted 2,000 spying missions aimed at China this year, says military analyst**

United States warships and planes carried out over 2,000 close spying operations aimed at China this year, according to a military analyst. The targets of these missions include Chinese controlled islands and reefs in the South China Sea, as well as the coastal area of the Chinese mainland, according to Cao Yanzhong, a researcher with the People's Liberation Army Academy of Military Science.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/military/article/3153916/us-ships-and-planes-conducted-2000-spying-missions-aimed-china>

### **25 October 2021: JMSDF Izumo-class JS Kaga conducts naval drills with US Navy in South China Sea**

While in the South China Sea, Japan and U.S. Navy units are conducting maritime security operations, to include flight operations, coordinated tactical training between surface and air units, refueling-at-sea evolutions, and maritime strike exercises. Cooperative maritime engagements and U.S. carrier operations in the South China Sea are part of the U.S. Navy's routine presence in the Indo-Pacific. Since arriving in the U.S. 7th Fleet region, CSG 1 units have participated in multiple operations and exercises with JMSDF units, most recently MALABAR 2021 and Maritime Partnership Exercise. JMSDF Rear Adm. IKEUCHI Izuru, Commanding Officer of IPD21 force, Commander of Escort Flotilla 3 said maritime alliances

and partnerships are vital to maritime security and underpin the free flow of commerce and access to resources in the region.

<https://www.navyrecognition.com/index.php/naval-news/naval-news-archive/2021/october/10897-jmsdf-izumo-class-js-kaga-conducts-naval-drills-with-us-navy-in-south-china-sea.html>

### **22 October 2021: Exxon Debates Abandoning Some of Its Biggest Oil and Gas Projects**

Exxon Mobil Corp.'s remade board of directors is debating whether to continue with several major oil and gas projects as the company reconsiders its investment strategy in a fast-changing energy landscape, according to people familiar with the matter. Members of the board -- which includes three directors successfully nominated by an activist investor in May and two other new members -- have expressed concerns about certain projects, including a \$30 billion liquefied natural gas development in Mozambique and another multibillion-dollar gas project in Vietnam, the people said.

<https://www.bangkokpost.com/business/2202131/exxon-debates-abandoning-some-of-its-biggest-oil-and-gas-projects>

### **21 October 2021: US prepares anti-China sanctions, Vietnam reiterates call for compliance with int'l law**

Vietnam has reiterated its appeal that all related parties comply with international law on South China Sea issues as a U.S. committee passes a sanctions bill targeting Chinese aggression. "Vietnam's consistent stance is that countries need to abide by international law, especially the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), to respect littoral nations' sovereignty, sovereign rights and jurisdiction," Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Le Thi Thu Hang said at a press meet Thursday.

<https://e.vnexpress.net/news/news/us-prepares-anti-china-sanctions-vietnam-reiterates-call-for-compliance-with-int-l-law-4375060.html>

### **20 October 2021: Japan, France to Hold 2+2 Security Dialogue Between Defence & Foreign Min by December**

With an eye to bolstering bilateral ties amid the AUKUS pact row, Japan and France have decided to engage in 2+2 Ministerial security talks by the end of 2021, Kyodo News reported quoting the French government as said on Tuesday. As per sources close to the government, the bilateral talks will be held in Japan's capital Tokyo by late November or early December, Kyodo added. The meetings will be attended by French Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian and Defence Minister Florence Parly.

<https://www.republicworld.com/world-news/rest-of-the-world-news/japan-france-to-hold-2-2-security-dialogue-between-defence-and-foreign-min-by-december.html>

### **19 October 2021: Indonesia takes cautious stance as China survey ship lingers**

A month and a half after a large Chinese survey vessel entered the Natuna Sea, Indonesia seems to still be pursuing a quiet, cautious approach at sea, despite public pressure. Since Aug. 31, the Haiyang Dizhi 10 has been operating in the North Natuna Sea near an important oil and gas field, the Tuna Block. It did take a few days break to re-supply in late September, but returned to the location in early October.

<https://www.rfa.org/english/news/china/indonesia-southchinasea-10192021150801.html>

### **17 October 2021: US, Canadian warships sail through Taiwan Strait 'to provoke' China**

The US military has announced that an American warship and a Canadian warship sailed through the Taiwan Strait last week in what China called an attempt “to provoke and stir up trouble” in the strait.

<https://www.presstv.ir/Detail/2021/10/17/668720/US,-Canadian-warships-sail-through-Taiwan-Strait-%E2%80%98to-provoke%E2%80%99-China>

### **17 October 2021: EU conveys concerns to China in phone call**

The president of the European Council said after a phone call with the Chinese president on Friday that the two sides will hold a summit soon. Charles Michel said he conveyed Europe's concerns to Xi Jinping regarding China's cross-strait tensions with Taiwan, as well as its human rights situation. A senior EU official said Michel raised the issue of Chinese military aircraft entering Taiwan's air defense identification zone, and China's contested claims to islands in the South China Sea.

[https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/20211016\\_10/](https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/20211016_10/)

### **15 October 2021: NZ sailor tests positive for COVID-19 amid South East Asia wargames**

A crew member on a New Zealand warship conducting military exercises in the South China Sea has tested positive for COVID-19.

<https://www.newshub.co.nz/home/new-zealand/2021/10/nz-sailor-tests-positive-for-covid-19-amid-south-east-asia-wargames.html>

### **15 October 2021: Port traffic in Southeast Asia is the worst its been in over 6 months - and could create even more chaos for US supply chains**

Two of Asia's largest ports are facing their highest backlog in over six months, according to a report from Bloomberg. Ports in Shenzhen and Hong Kong - key thoroughfares for tech products that connect South China to the rest of the world - had 271 ships at the locations on Friday. The ports had 109 ships waiting off the coast to enter the port, a jump from the 67 ships waiting to dock the day before.

<https://markets.businessinsider.com/news/stocks/asia-port-traffic-highest-levels-since-april-us-supply-chain-2021-10>

### **8 October 2021: US submarine hits underwater object in South China Sea**

A US nuclear powered submarine struck an object underwater in the South China Sea on Saturday, according to two defense officials. A number of sailors on board the USS Connecticut were injured in the accident, the officials said. None of the injuries were life-threatening, according to a statement from US Pacific Fleet. It's unclear what the Seawolf-class submarine may have hit while it was submerged.

<https://edition.cnn.com/2021/10/07/politics/us-submarine-collision-south-china-sea/index.html>