

SOUTH CHINA SEA NEWS No.102
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ACTS OF CLAIMANTS

23 January 2022: PLA upgrades its military facilities in South China Sea: Report

People Liberation Army has established and upgraded its outposts in the geographically significant in the South China Sea, according to a report.

<https://www.aninews.in/news/world/asia/pla-upgrades-its-military-facilities-in-south-china-sea-report20220123195131/https://www.aninews.in/news/world/asia/pla-upgrades-its-military-facilities-in-south-china-sea-report20220123195131/>

23 January 2022: Philippine presidential hopefuls wade into South China Sea dispute

Four presidential aspirants in the Philippines had varying strategies to resolve disputes in the South China Sea including through building alliances with other nations and boosting military presence in the region, according to interviews with GMA News. The candidates – Vice-President Leni Robredo, Senators Panfilo Lacson and Manny Pacquiao, and Manila Mayor Isko Moreno – took part in the interviews but Senator Ferdinand Marcos Jr, who led last month's presidential preference survey, declined to join.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/diplomacy/article/3164428/philippine-presidential-hopefuls-wade-south-china-sea-dispute>

20 January 2022: China says it warned away U.S. warship in South China Sea, U.S. denies

Chinese forces followed and warned away a U.S. warship which entered waters near the Paracel Islands in the South China Sea, the country's military said on Thursday, but the U.S. Navy denied the ship had been warned off.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/china/china-says-warned-away-us-warship-south-china-sea-2022-01-20/>

18 January 2022: Malaysian FM Sees Shift in China's Justification of its Sweeping South China Sea Claims

China appears to be shifting from the so-called "nine-dash line" toward a new legal theory to support its expansive claims in the South China Sea, although analysts say its alternative is also problematic under international law. In comments to reporters last week, Malaysian Foreign Minister Saifuddin Abdullah said Beijing now "speaks less of the 'nine-dash line' and more often of the 'Four Sha'." He said the shift has been witnessed by member countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and "is even more serious" than the old claim.

<https://www.benarnews.org/english/news/malaysian/malaysia-sees-shift-in-chinas-justification-of-south-china-sea-claims-01182022141916.html>

17 January 2022: Xinhua Commentary: U.S. rhetoric on South China Sea misrepresents int'l law, disregards facts

The U.S. Department of State on Wednesday released a so-called study, saying China's claims in the South China Sea are "unlawful," a statement that completely misrepresents international law and runs counter to the historical facts of the South China Sea issue.

<http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/20220117/d184eb5cab3a46b998421f52991543aa/c.html>

17 January 2022: China to join hands with PH to 'properly handle' South China Sea issue; vows no bullying –foreign minister

China will join hands with the Philippines to “properly handle” the dispute over the South China Sea, State Councilor and Foreign Minister of China Wang Yi said on Monday, Jan. 17, stressing that his country “will not use its strength to bully smaller countries.”

<https://mb.com.ph/2022/01/17/china-to-join-hands-with-ph-to-properly-handle-south-china-sea-issue-vows-no-bullying-foreign-minister/>

15 January 2022: India Sells Antiship Missiles to the Philippines as Concern Over China Grows

India has reached an agreement to supply the Philippines with the BrahMos antiship cruise-missile system, officials from both sides said, in a deal that could help counterbalance recent Chinese assertiveness over disputes in the region.

<https://www.wsj.com/articles/india-sells-anti-ship-missiles-to-the-philippines-as-concern-over-china-grows-11642254147>

15 January 2022: Việt Nam opposes South China Sea claims inconsistent with international law: spokesperson

Việt Nam always opposes and does not accept all claims in the South China Sea that are inconsistent with international law, including the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (1982 UNCLOS), spokesperson of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Lê Thị Thu Hằng said late Friday.

https://www.einnews.com/pr_news/560694672/vi-t-nam-opposes-south-china-sea-claims-inconsistent-with-international-law-spokesperson

9 January 2022: 'Wrongful act': Beijing fines 7-Eleven for calling Taiwan an 'independent country'

Beijing has imposed a fine of over \$7,000 and also issued a warning to Japanese-owned 7-Eleven after it listed the island of Taiwan as a country and displayed maps and borders that China claimed are false. According to South China Morning Post, the government fined the company for “errors” including “wrongful act of assigning Taiwan province as an independent country.” The government further highlighted that the company did not mark borders correctly for islands in the South China Sea.

<https://www.wionews.com/world/wrongful-act-beijing-fines-7-eleven-for-calling-taiwan-an-independent-country-443367>

3 January 2022: South China Sea conflict: Taiwan president warns China against 'military adventurism'

Tensions remain between the US and China over Taiwan, as the island nation looks to assert its independence and autonomy. In remarks celebrating the new year, Taiwanese President Tsai Ing-wen warned Beijing against attempting any “military adventurism.”

<https://www.econotimes.com/South-China-Sea-conflict-Taiwan-president-warns-China-against-military-adventurism-1624335>

31 December 2022: Scientists warn of fisheries collapse in East and South China Sea

China’s growing need for aquafeed has been a driver of overfishing in the East China Sea and the South China Sea, according to a new scientific report. Rising ocean temperatures as a result of global warming will be particularly ruinous to fishing stocks in the South China Sea, according to the report, “Sink or Swim: The Future of Fisheries in the East And South China Sea,” which was compiled by fisheries scientists and economists from the University.

<https://www.seafoodsource.com/news/environment-sustainability/scientists-warn-of-fisheries-collapse-in-east-and-south-china-sea>

OTHER STATES AND SOUTH CHINA SEA

29 January 2022: China and US in race to salvage 'flying computer' fighter jet

The US army is racing to retrieve its sunken F-35C fighter jet that crashed in the disputed waters of the South China Sea during a "landing mishap" earlier this week. Experts say the US will face a major setback in the race between the world's two superpowers if China finds the jet first.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/asia/china/us-china-fighter-jet-south-china-sea-b2002626.html>

24 January 2022: US F-35 jet crashes on aircraft in South China Sea, seven injured

A U.S. military fighter jet crashed while conducting routine flight operations in the South China Sea on Monday, resulting in seven sailors being injured and some needing to be transported for medical treatment on land.

<https://thehill.com/policy/defense/navy/591146-us-f-35-jet-crashes-on-aircraft-in-south-china-sea-seven-injured>

24 January 2022: Two US carriers enter South China Sea, to 'counter malign influence'

Two US aircraft carrier groups have entered the disputed South China Sea for training, the Department of Defense said on Monday (Jan 24) in what a senior commander said was to reassure allies and demonstrate resolve to "counter malign influence".

<https://www.channelnewsasia.com/world/two-us-carriers-enter-south-china-sea-counter-malign-influence-2456096>

22 January 2022: Dredgers spotted off Cambodian base where China is funding work - U.S. think tank

Dredgers have been spotted off Cambodia's Ream naval base, where China is funding construction work and deeper port facilities would be necessary for the docking of larger military ships, a U.S. think tank said on Friday. The United States, which has sought to push back against Beijing's extensive territorial claims and military expansion in the South China Sea, reiterated its "serious concerns" about China's construction and military presence at Ream. "These developments threaten U.S. and partner interests, regional security, and Cambodia's sovereignty," a spokesperson for the State Department said.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/china/dredgers-spotted-off-cambodian-base-where-china-is-funding-work-us-think-tank-2022-01-21/>

20 January 2022: US Navy warship challenges Chinese territorial claims in the South China Sea

A United States Navy guided missile destroyer challenged Chinese claims of sovereignty in and around islands in the South China Sea on Thursday, with a Navy statement saying such claims violate international law and "pose a serious threat to the freedom of the seas." The USS Benfold sailed around the Paracel Islands, known as the Xisha Islands in China, in what the Navy calls a freedom of navigation operation (FONOP), Lt. Mark Langford, spokesperson for the US 7th Fleet, said in the statement.

<https://edition.cnn.com/2022/01/20/asia/us-navy-destroyer-china-paracel-islands-intl-hnk-ml/index.html>

14 January 2022: Carrier USS Carl Vinson, Essex Amphibious Ready Group Drill in the South China Sea

The Carl Vinson Carrier Strike Group and Essex Amphibious Ready Group with the embarked 11th Marine Expeditionary Unit are now drilling in the South China Sea. Images released by the U.S Navy show carrier USS Carl Vinson (CVN-70), landing helicopter dock USS Essex (LHD-2), amphibious dock landing ship USS Pearl Harbor (LSD-52), cruiser USS Lake Champlain (CG-57), destroyer USS Michael Murphy (DDG-112), dry cargo ship USNS Alan Shephard (T-AKE-3) and replenishment ship USNS John Ericsson (T-AO-194) sailing in the South China Sea on Thursday.

<https://news.usni.org/2022/01/14/carrier-uss-carl-vinson-essex-amphibious-ready-group-drill-in-the-south-china-sea>

12 January 2022: Study on the People's Republic of China's South China Sea Maritime Claims

Today, the Department of State released a Limits in the Seas study on the PRC's maritime claims in the South China Sea. The Department's Limits in the Seas studies are a longstanding legal and technical series that examine national maritime claims and boundaries and assess their consistency with international law. This most recent study, the 150th in the Limits in the Seas series, concludes that the PRC asserts unlawful maritime claims in most of the South China Sea, including an unlawful historic rights claim.

<https://www.state.gov/study-on-the-peoples-republic-of-chinas-south-china-sea-maritime-claims/>

12 January 2022: South China Sea: Japanese warships sailed near Chinese-controlled reefs in Spratly Islands 'to pressure' Beijing

Japanese warships have sailed through waters close to Chinese-controlled islands and reefs in the South China Sea on at least two occasions in the last 10 months, entering the contiguous zone around the disputed Spratly Islands, Japanese media have reported.

<https://www.scmp.com/week-asia/politics/article/3163096/south-china-sea-japanese-warships-sailed-near-chinese-controlled>

11 January 2022: 'Will stand with partners': US says China's behaviour can be 'destabilising' for region, world

The US on Tuesday said Beijing's attempt to intimidate its neighbours can be "destabilising" for the region and the world. US Press Secretary Jen Psaki said, "We've been pretty clear how we view Beijing's behaviour in the region and around the world. We believe it can be destabilising. And we're concerned by the People's Republic of China's attempt to intimidate its neighbours." Asked about China's aggressive behaviour on its border with India and if the topic came during the US-China talks or Washington sending any message to Beijing on this, Psaki, during her daily news conference on Monday, said "We'll continue to stand with our partners on that." "The US continues to closely monitor the situation. We support dialogue and peaceful resolution of the border disputes," she said.

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/nation/2022/jan/11/will-stand-with-partners-us-says-chinas-behaviour-can-be-destabilising-for-region-world-2405568.html>

30 December 2021: Chinese, US militaries resume maritime safety talks after last year's no-show

The Chinese and American militaries resumed maritime safety talks earlier this month, during which China urged the US to stop sending ships and aircraft to the South China Sea, a Chinese military spokesman said on Thursday. Representatives from the People's Liberation Army's (PLA's) navy and air force had a three-day virtual meeting with counterparts from the US Indo-Pacific Command, US Pacific Fleet and US Pacific Air Forces related to the Military Maritime

Consultative Agreement (MMCA) on December 15 to 17, defence ministry spokesman Senior Colonel Tan Kefei said. The MMCA is designed to strengthen military maritime safety and reduce risks between the American and Chinese forces, including in the South China Sea.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/diplomacy/article/3161614/chinese-us-militaries-resume-maritime-safety-talks-after-last>