

SOUTH CHINA SEA NEWS No.105
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ACTS OF CLAIMANTS

30 May 2022: China ships forcing PH to drop Ayungin

Chinese coast guard and militia vessels harassed Philippine ships in back-to-back incidents in Ayungin (Second Thomas) Shoal in the West Philippine Sea in April, according to a US think tank. The two incidents in the Philippine-occupied atoll, which took place several hours apart, were tracked by the Washington-based Asia Maritime Transparency Initiative (AMTI) of the Center for Strategic and International Studies, a think tank that closely follows developments in the South China Sea using satellite images and transponder system.

<https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1604059/china-ships-forcing-ph-to-drop-ayungin#ixzz7UpVkJSLhu>

28 May 2022: Chinese drills tense up South China Sea anew

CHINA will hold naval exercises in the South China Sea on Saturday, its maritime authority said, after a week of recrimination from Western powers over its military ambitions across the Pacific region. The exercises, set to take place in the sea less than 25 kilometers (15.5 miles) off the coast of south China's Hainan province, come as the United States leads warnings over China's growing military and economic presence in an area spanning from the South China Sea to the Pacific Islands.

<https://www.manilatimes.net/2022/05/28/news/national/chinese-drills-tense-up-south-china-sea-anew/1845211>

27 May 2022: Philippines starts using Subic Bay facing South China Sea as naval base

The Philippines has begun using Subic Bay facing the South China Sea as a naval base, the country's navy said this week in a move aimed at countering China's increasing assertiveness in the contested waters. One of the Philippine Navy's 2 guided-missile frigates was deployed at the new base on Tuesday, about 30 years after the US Navy withdrew from the strategic area about 80 kilometers west of the capital Manila.

<https://news.abs-cbn.com/news/05/27/22/ph-starts-using-subic-bay-facing-s-china-sea-as-naval-base>

26 May 2022: China shouldn't emulate Russia in South China Sea: Malaysia PM

China should not take any cues from Russia's invasion of Ukraine to attempt further advances in the disputed South China Sea, Malaysian Prime Minister Ismail Sabri Yaakob stressed in an exclusive interview. "We hope China doesn't take advantage of what is happening between Russia and Ukraine," Ismail Sabri told Nikkei in his first interview with international media since he became prime minister last August. "Not only China but all other major powers should not take advantage in the South China Sea."

<https://asia.nikkei.com/Politics/International-relations/China-shouldn-t-emulate-Russia-in-South-China-Sea-Malaysia-PM>

26 May 2022: Marcos says Philippines to uphold South China Sea ruling

President-elect Ferdinand Marcos Jr. said Thursday he would uphold an international ruling against Beijing over the disputed territories on the South China Sea, insisting he would not let China trample on Manila's maritime rights. "We have a very important ruling in our favor and we will use it to continue to assert our territorial rights. It is not a claim. It is already our territorial right," Marcos said in an interview with selected local media.

<https://globalnation.inquirer.net/204189/marcos-says-philippines-to-uphold-south-china-sea-ruling#ixzz7US8OTRbj>

20 May 2022: As Biden visits Asia, China launches South China Sea drills

China is holding military exercises in the disputed South China Sea coinciding with U.S. President Joe Biden's visits to South Korea and Japan that are largely focused on countering the perceived threat from Beijing.

https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/as-biden-visits-asia-china-launches-south-china-sea-drills/2022/05/20/a7779280-d80c-11ec-be17-286164974c54_story.html

20 May 2022: Philippines establishes outposts in disputed South China Sea

The Philippines has established three coastguard outposts on three islands in the disputed South China Sea to monitor ship movements and promote safety, coastguard officials said Friday, amid increasing maritime tensions with China. The move reinforced the presence of Filipino troops on the islands in the hotly contested Spratly archipelago and will likely be frowned upon by Beijing, which has claimed the disputed waterway virtually in its entirety.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/asia/southeast-asia/article/3178506/eyes-china-philippines-establishes-outposts-disputed-sea>

16 May 2022: Global Times investigates: Nine out of 10 Chinese see friendly China-ASEAN ties

While China-related topic was expected to dominate the US-ASEAN summit, a recent survey showed that nearly 80 percent of Chinese respondents said about 90 percent considered the China-ASEAN ties as friendly and over 75 percent hold a positive attitude toward their future. The survey was jointly conducted by the Global Times Research Center and Centre for Chinese Foreign Strategy Studies, Renmin University of China between March 15 and April 15 in 31 Chinese provinces, regions and municipalities among people aged 18 to 69. It collected 2,012 valid questionnaires from the general public and 1,150 from college students.

<https://www.prnewswire.com/in/news-releases/global-times-investigates-nine-out-of-10-chinese-see-friendly-china-asean-ties-812549473.html>

16 May 2022: PHL vows to 'take back' lost territories in South China sea

The Philippines has vowed to "take back" lost territories in the South China Sea as it affirms the ruling from the Permanent Court of Arbitration that China's maritime claims over the disputed islands have no legal basis. Foreign Affairs Secretary Teodoro L. Locsin Jr. made this assertion during his omnibus intervention at the working lunch with eight leaders of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and US President Joe Biden in Washington, DC.

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2022/05/16/phl-vows-to-take-back-lost-territories-in-south-china-sea/>

14 May 2022: Vietnamese, Indonesian defence chiefs discuss South China Sea, maritime information sharing

Vietnamese Minister of National Defence General Phan Văn Giang met his Indonesian counterpart Prabowo Subianto on Friday in Hà Nội and suggested the two countries strengthen the sharing of maritime information.

https://www.einnews.com/pr_news/572404270/vietnamese-indonesian-defence-chiefs-discuss-south-china-sea-maritime-information-sharing

14 May 2022: China lodges protest over Japan-EU joint statement

China's Foreign Ministry says it has voiced discontent with a joint statement by Japan and the European Union that expressed concerns over the situation in the East and South China seas, with China apparently in mind. The statement was issued on Thursday after talks between Japanese Prime Minister Kishida Fumio and European Council President Charles Michel.
https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/20220513_38/

12 May 2022: 'Deep Sea Warrior' completes sea trial mission in South China Sea

The Chinese research vessel Exploration 2 carrying the deep-sea manned submersible "Deep Sea Warrior" returned home Wednesday after completing a trial mission of a deep-sea in-situ laboratory in the South China Sea.

<https://news.cgtn.com/news/2022-05-12/-Deep-Sea-Warrior-completes-sea-trial-mission-in-South-China-Sea-19Y0SzvHhKI/index.html>

10 May 2022: Imagery shows China still building on Subi Reef in South China Sea

Recent satellite imagery shows that China is continuing to actively develop its facilities on the disputed Subi Reef in the South China Sea, two months after a top U.S. commander said Beijing had "fully militarized" it.

<https://www.rfa.org/english/news/china/subi-reef-building-05102022104439.html>

10 May 2022: Military training exercises to be conducted in South China Sea

According to a notice released by China's Qinglan Maritime Safety Administration on May 6, military training exercises will be conducted in waters of the South China Sea every day from 1:00 am to 3:00 am, from May 10 to 13, 2022, Beijing time.

http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/view/2022-05/10/content_10153827.htm

9 May 2022: China steps up drills around Taiwan, Japan scrambles jets due to airspace intrusion

The Chinese military conducted live-fire drills around Taiwan over the weekend, its official website said Monday, while Japan reported scrambling fighter jets because of a suspected intrusion of its airspace over the East China Sea.

<https://www.rfa.org/english/news/china/china-drills-taiwan-05092022104108.html>

9 May 2022: Engagement with China 'to continue' in post-Duterte era despite US factor

As millions of Philippine voters lined up at polling stations on Monday, the country will either have Vice President Leni Robredo or former senator and congressman Ferdinand Marcos Jr. as their new leader. Observers said that in the post-Duterte era, China-Philippine relations may face some twists and turns amid US interference especially over the South China Sea issue. But any leader with political wisdom would take a mutually beneficial approach in dealing with relations with China.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202205/1265202.shtml>

6 May 2022: Vietnamese fisheries association slams China's fishing ban in South China Sea

The Việt Nam Fisheries Society (VINAFIS) has voiced its objection to China's unilateral fishing ban in the South China Sea (known as the East Sea in Việt Nam), saying the annual ban increases the risk of confrontation between Vietnamese fishing boats and the Chinese coast guard. It is also hindering normal activities of Vietnamese vessels and fishermen in Việt Nam's sovereign waters, VINAFIS said in an official protest recently sent to the Government Office, relevant ministries and agencies.

https://www.einnews.com/pr_news/571369402/vietnamese-fisheries-association-slams-china-s-fishing-ban-in-south-china-sea

4 May 2022: South China Sea issue will weigh on next Philippine president

Just two days before the Philippines and China held a virtual summit between President Rodrigo Duterte and President Xi Jinping on April 8, Manila ordered a domestic oil and gas company to suspend its exploration work in a disputed part of the South China Sea. "We were asked to stop all activities because the president will be talking to Xi Jinping," said Manuel Pangilinan, chairman of PXP Energy, the parent company of the service contract holder on the resource-rich Reed Bank.

<https://asia.nikkei.com/Politics/Philippine-elections/South-China-Sea-issue-will-weigh-on-next-Philippine-president>

4 May 2022: China Has a Warning for Taiwan: Upgrading Runway On Disputed Island Akin To 'Playing With Fire'

China has reportedly warned Taiwan against its plan to develop an airstrip on a disputed South China Sea island, saying it was "playing with fire." This comes as local Taiwanese media reported that the island was planning to extend the runway on the contested Taiping Island. The alleged plan is to extend the existing 1,150-meter-long airstrip by 350 meters so that it will be able to accommodate F-16 jet fighters and P-3C anti-submarine aircraft, reported Radio Free Asia, quoting United Daily News. The plan is said to have the consent of the U.S. forces.

<https://www.ibtimes.com/china-has-warning-taiwan-upgrading-runway-disputed-island-akin-playing-fire-3493751>

4 May 2022: China aircraft carrier on combat training in Western Pacific

China's Liaoning aircraft carrier group has embarked on a "realistic combat" training mission in the Western Pacific, the Chinese navy said Tuesday. In a posting on its social media site, the navy said the mission is routine, adheres to all international laws and practices and is "not directed at any third parties." However, the mission underscores the growing role of China's naval forces as Beijing seeks to supplant the U.S. as the preeminent military power in Asia.

<https://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/china-aircraft-carrier-combat-training-western-pacific-84464861>

1 May 2022: China kicks off annual summer fishing ban in South China Sea

China Coast Guard (CCG) has announced that a three-and-half-month fishing moratorium began on Sunday in the South China Sea waters north to 12 degrees north latitude. The annual summer fishing ban is expected to end on Aug. 16. For the next three days, the CCG's South China Sea branch and local authorities will patrol major fishing grounds and ports to ensure that the ban will be well observed.

http://www.china.org.cn/china/2022-05/01/content_78197184.htm

ASEAN AND SOUTH CHINA SEA

19 May 2022: Vietnam stresses the importance of maritime and aviation security in South China Sea at ADSOM+

Maritime and aviation security and safety in the South China Sea is extremely important for countries in the region and the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN), said Vietnamese Deputy Defence Minister Sen Lieut Gen Hoang Xuan Chien.

<https://www.thestar.com.my/aseanplus/aseanplus-news/2022/05/19/vietnam-stresses-the-importance-of-maritime-and-aviation-security-in-south-china-sea-at-adsom>

16 May 2022: China, ASEAN to hold South China Sea code of conduct talks this month
China and countries from the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) will conduct face-to-face consultations on a Code of Conduct (COC) in the disputed South China Sea later this month in Cambodia, the Chinese Foreign Ministry has said.

<https://www.rfa.org/english/news/china/asean-southchinasea-05162022091755.html>

15 May 2022: South China Sea Issue: ASEAN-US leaders urge full implementation of DOC and early conclusion of COC

The ASEAN and US Leaders have called for the full implementation of the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC) and the early conclusion of the Code of Conduct in the South China Sea (COC).

<https://www.khmertimeskh.com/501075603/south-china-sea-issue-asean-us-leaders-urge-full-implementation-of-doc-and-early-conclusion-of-coc/>

14 May 2022: ASEAN tackles South China Sea, Ukraine, climate change during summit with US

Maintaining full freedom of navigation for everyone in the South China Sea is crucial not just for claimant states but also for the international community at large, given the volume of global trade that flows through the waters, Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong said on Friday.

<https://www.straitstimes.com/world/united-states/asean-tackles-south-china-sea-ukraine-during-summit-with-us>

13 May 2022: China warns US not to provoke confrontation as it pushes to boost ties with Southeast Asia

China called on the United States to meet the needs of ASEAN countries by promoting peace and cooperation rather than engaging in bloc confrontations following Washington's announcement it would expand ties with the region.

https://www.scmp.com/news/china/diplomacy/article/3177693/china-warns-us-not-provoke-confrontation-it-pushes-boost-ties?utm_source=rss_feed

13 May 2022: Biden Names Envoy to SE Asia Bloc, Stressing US Attention

President Joe Biden on Friday announced he's nominating one of his top national security aides as ambassador to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, aiming to underscore his administration's commitment to the Pacific region.

<https://www.nbcchicago.com/news/national-international/biden-names-envoy-to-se-asia-bloc-stressing-us-commitment-to-the-region/2832506/>

13 May 2022: Biden hails 'new era' in Southeast Asian ties at key summit

The United States is committed to being engaged in Southeast Asia, President Joe Biden has said, welcoming a summit with leaders of the 10-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in Washington, DC, as a "new era" in relations.

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/5/13/us-expresses-commitment-to-southeast-asian-allies-in-first-summit>

13 May 2022: ASEAN-U.S. Special Summit 2022, Joint Vision Statement

We recognise the benefits of having the South China Sea as a sea of peace, stability, and prosperity. We emphasise the importance of practical measures that could reduce tensions and the risk of accidents, misunderstandings, and miscalculation. We stressed the importance of undertaking confidence building and preventive measures to enhance, among others, trust and confidence amongst parties. We further reaffirmed the need to pursue peaceful resolution of

disputes in accordance with universally recognized principles of international law, including the 1982 UNCLOS.

We underscored the importance of the full and effective implementation of the 2002 Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC) in its entirety. We emphasized the need to maintain and promote an environment conducive to the Code of Conduct in the South China Sea (COC) negotiations. We welcome further progress towards the early conclusion of an effective and substantive COC consistent with international law, including the 1982 UNCLOS.

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2022/05/13/asean-u-s-special-summit-2022-joint-vision-statement/#:~:text=We%20are%20committed%20to%20continuing,and%20through%20the%20vital%20economic>

12 May 2022: Biden hosts Southeast Asian leaders at the White House today. Here's what to expect

The Southeast Asian bloc would like to see an economic framework with some concessions and a clearer strategy toward regional security, especially involving the South China Sea," says an analyst.

<https://www.cnbc.com/2022/05/12/biden-will-host-asean-summit-at-the-white-house-.html>

OTHER STATES AND SOUTH CHINA SEA

30 May 2022: South China Sea: Quad grouping unveils maritime surveillance plan to track illegal fishing, incursions

With China's growing influence over the Indo-Pacific region, the countries that make up the Quad grouping are establishing a surveillance plan that is believed to counter China. The plan would allow countries in the region to track down illegal fishing and incursions by Chinese vessels. The Quad grouping of nations - made up of the US, Australia, India, and Japan - announced Tuesday last week the surveillance plan for the Indo-Pacific, also known as the Indo-Pacific Partnership for Maritime Domain Awareness or IPMDA.

<https://www.econotimes.com/South-China-Sea-Quad-grouping-unveils-maritime-surveillance-plan-to-track-illegal-fishing-incursions-1634442>

30 May 2022: UK envoy says maritime law, UNCLOS necessary vs. China's militarism in South China Sea

British Ambassador to the Philippines Laure Beaufils on Monday said the United Kingdom would continue to adhere to the international maritime law when it comes to dealing with territorial issues in the South China Sea. Facing reporters after her courtesy call on President-elect Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr., Beaufils was asked on how the UK could help the Marcos administration temper China's militarism in the South China Sea, and on ensuring freedom of navigation in the region.

<https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/topstories/nation/833293/uk-envoy-says-maritime-law-unclos-necessary-vs-china-s-militarism-in-south-china-sea/story/>

30 May 2022: US vows to uphold Philippine maritime rights

While emphasizing the need to approach relations with China with more "realism," the United States has vowed to help its allies, including the Philippines, in upholding maritime rights. In his speech on the Biden administration's approach to China on Thursday, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken said the US would continue to oppose Beijing's aggressive and unlawful activities in the South and East China Seas.

<https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2022/05/30/2184681/us-vows-uphold-philippine-maritime-rights>

27 May 2022: Keep the South China Sea free, Biden tells Navy graduates

US President Joe Biden said on Friday (May 27) that Russian President Vladimir Putin's attempt to divide Europe by invading Ukraine had backfired and told Naval Academy graduates their job will be ensuring maritime freedom in the South China Sea. Biden told 1,200 graduating cadets in Annapolis, Maryland, that they are entering military service at a time of many global challenges and they will be charged with helping "preserve stability in an uncertain world."

<https://www.channelnewsasia.com/world/keep-south-china-sea-free-biden-tells-navy-graduates-2712576>

24 May 2022: Investigation: USS Connecticut South China Sea Grounding Result of Lax Oversight, Poor Planning

More than two years of lax oversight from leadership on one of the U.S. Navy's most powerful submarines ultimately led to the grounding of the attack boat on an uncharted, underwater seamount in the South China Sea, according to an investigation into the Oct. 2 incident. USS Connecticut (SSN-22) was five months into a surge deployment at the request of U.S. Indo-Pacific Command to the Western Pacific when the nuclear attack boat grounded on the seamount while the submarine was traveling at a high speed in waters that were poorly charted, according to the Oct. 29, 2021 command investigation overseen by the director of U.S. Pacific Fleet's Maritime Headquarters Rear Adm. Christopher Cavanaugh. The investigation was released on Monday.

<https://news.usni.org/2022/05/24/investigation-uss-connecticut-south-china-sea-grounding-result-of-lax-oversight-poor-planning>

18 May 2022: EU to step up Indo-Pacific defence presence over China fears and Ukraine example

The European Union has resolved to step up its defence strategy in the Indo-Pacific region in light of fears about China's growing presence and concerns for the international order sparked by Russia's invasion of Ukraine. "Our motto is always to cooperate whenever possible, but to defend whenever necessary as well," said Gabriele Visentin, the EU's special envoy to the Indo-Pacific. "It's not directed against a country or another – it's a way of enhancing our capacity and our credibility in terms of defending our interests."

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/may/18/eu-to-step-up-indo-pacific-defence-presence-over-china-fears-and-ukraine-example>

15 May 2022: G7 countries raise concern over unilateral actions by Beijing in East and South China Seas

The Group of Seven nations G7 on Saturday reiterated the importance of maintaining a free and open Indo-Pacific and raised concern over unilateral actions by Beijing in the East and South China Seas.

<https://www.devdiscourse.com/article/international/2038501-g7-countries-raise-concern-over-unilateral-actions-by-beijing-in-east-and-south-china-seas?fr=operanews>

13 May 2022: Indonesia looks to form special economic zone in South China Sea

Indonesia may turn its Natuna Islands in the South China Sea into a special economic zone (SEZ) to reinforce maritime security and entice investment in the local fishing and tourism industries, according to sources who spoke to Nikkei Asia.

<https://asia.nikkei.com/Politics/Indonesia-looks-to-form-special-economic-zone-in-South-China-Sea>