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ACTS OF CLAIMANT

29 September: Will growing Philippines-Vietnam naval ties reshape South China Sea diplomacy?

A pledge between the [Philippines](#) and Vietnam to deepen naval cooperation could serve as a “model for maritime collaboration” amid mounting tensions in the [South China Sea](#), according to observers.

Philippine Navy chief Vice-Admiral Jose Maria Ambrosio Ezpeleta and his Vietnamese counterpart Tran Thanh Nghiem met last week in Manila, where they reaffirmed their commitment to conducting joint activities, humanitarian coordination and regional maritime security.

“We are maritime neighbours with quite a short distance from each other. As we say in [Vietnam](#), the more we meet, the better we understand each other,” Nghiem said, adding that both countries “share common interests, as well as difficulties, which we must address together for peace and stability”.

<https://www.scmp.com/week-asia/politics/article/3327174/will-growing-philippines-vietnam-naval-ties-reshape-south-china-sea-diplomacy>

24 September: China Moves Two Super-Sized ‘XXL’ Uncrewed Submarines To South China Sea



<https://www.navalnews.com/naval-news/2025/09/china-moves-two-super-sized-xxl-uncrewed-submarines-to-south-china-sea/>

17 September: Manila to hold its ground at Scarborough Shoal even as Beijing cranks up pressure

The Philippines will keep up support for the country's fishermen near the Scarborough Shoal, said an official on Sept 17, despite China's increased efforts to assert control after designating the disputed atoll a national nature reserve.

"We will not stop patrolling Bajo de Masinloc," said Philippine Coast Guard spokesman Commodore Jay Tarriela, using the Philippines' name for the shoal at a press conference in Manila. "Our operations will go on to ensure the safety and livelihood of Filipino fishermen." China is in no position to use environmental protection in its claims over the shoal, he added, citing Beijing's artificial island-building activities in the South China Sea over the years. "We have seen how China destroyed the seabed of all those reclaimed islands that they have in the entire South China Sea," he said. "It's a hard sell for China to convince the international community that they are environmentalists nowadays."

<https://www.straitstimes.com/asia/se-asia/manila-to-hold-its-ground-at-scarborough-shoal-even-as-beijing-turns-up-pressure>

17 September: Chinese and Philippine ships collide near disputed shoal in South China Sea

China's coast guard accused a Philippine ship of deliberately ramming one of its vessels on Tuesday near the disputed Scarborough Shoal in the [South China Sea](#). The Philippines denied it, saying China's forces used powerful water cannons that damaged its ship and injured a crew member.

A Chinese coast guard statement said more than 10 Philippine government ships coming from various directions entered the waters around the shoal, which is called Huangyan island in Chinese. It said it deployed water cannons against the vessels.

The encounter came six days after [China announced](#) it was designating part of Scarborough Shoal as a national nature reserve. The Philippine government, which calls the shoal Bajo de Masinloc, filed a diplomatic protest.

<https://apnews.com/article/philippines-south-china-sea-scarborough-shoal-collision-fc31a170189e4747b8314fb605ca7d0c>

14 September: Chinese military holds 'routine' South China Sea patrol

The Chinese military has carried out a "routine patrol" in the disputed [South China Sea](#), the second such operation in less than two weeks, while cautioning [the Philippines](#) against stirring up tensions.

Conducted over Friday and Saturday, the latest patrol came just days after Beijing [announced plans to establish a national nature reserve](#) at the contested Scarborough Shoal, which it calls Huangyan Island and Manila calls Panatag Shoal.

"We sternly warn the Philippine side to immediately stop provocations and escalating tensions in the South China Sea and bringing in external forces for backing. Such efforts are doomed to fail," Senior Colonel Tian Junli, a spokesman for the [People's Liberation Army's](#) Southern Theatre Command, said in a statement on Sunday.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/military/article/3325481/china-holds-routine-patrol-south-china-sea-it-warns-philippines-tensions>

12 September: China's aircraft carrier Fujian heads for South China Sea for scientific research tests, training missions

China's third aircraft carrier, the Fujian, recently passed through the Taiwan Strait to carry out scientific research tests and training missions in the South China Sea, a Chinese military spokesperson said on Friday.

The cross-sea tests and training for the Fujian is a regular arrangement in the aircraft carrier's construction process, and it is not aimed at any specific target, said Senior Captain Leng Guowei, a spokesperson for the Chinese navy.

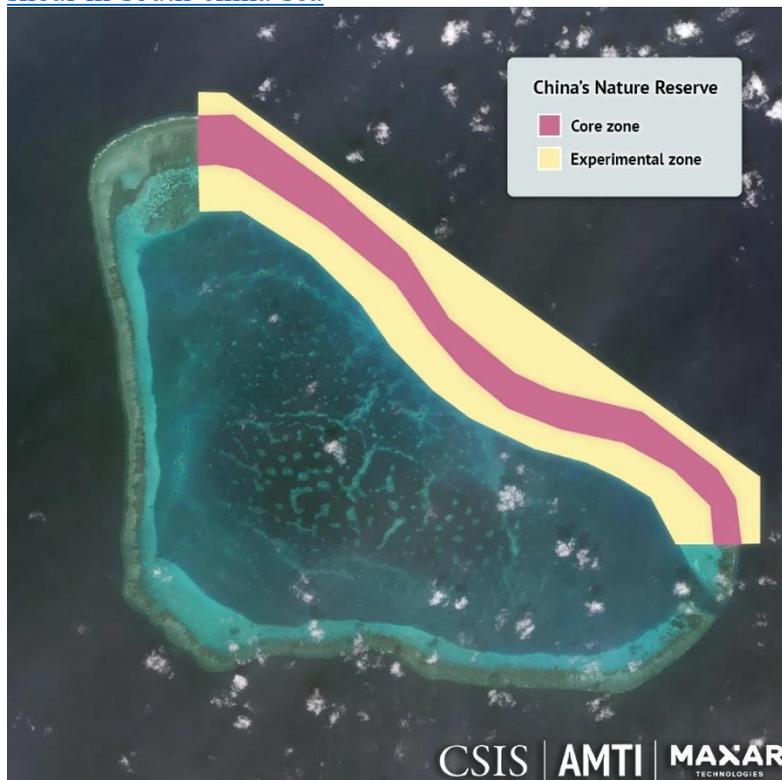
<https://global.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202509/12/WS68c355c1a3108622abca04fe.html>

10 September: China to establish nature reserve in disputed Scarborough Shoal in South China Sea

China has approved the creation of a national nature reserve at the disputed Scarborough Shoal in the South China Sea, the government said on Sept 10, as Beijing moves to reinforce its territorial claims and maritime rights in the contested region.

The designation of the nature reserve is “an important guarantee for maintaining the diversity, stability, and sustainability of the atoll’s natural ecosystem”, China’s State Council said.

<https://www.straitstimes.com/asia/china-to-establish-nature-reserve-in-disputed-scarborough-shoal-in-south-china-sea>



<https://amti.csis.org/chinas-nature-reserve-at-scarborough-more-than-a-decade-too-late/>

Follows-up: 11 September: Philippines protests China's plan for nature reserve in disputed shoal

The Philippines on Thursday (Sep 11) condemned China's plan to establish a nature reserve in a South China Sea shoal, calling it a "clear pretext for occupation", as Beijing moves to reinforce sweeping territorial claims across the waterway.

China has approved the creation of a national nature reserve at the disputed Scarborough Shoal. The designation was an "important guarantee" to preserve the atoll's ecosystem, China's State Council said.

China's plan was "patently illegal" and less about environmental protection and more about justifying control over the disputed shoal, Philippine National Security Adviser Eduardo Ano said.

<https://www.channelnewsasia.com/asia/philippines-protests-chinas-plan-nature-reserve-in-disputed-shoal-5343596>

Follows-up: 11 September: Taiwan reaffirms sovereignty amid PRC plans for South China Sea nature reserve

The Taiwan government on Thursday [reiterated its sovereignty claim](#) over the South China Sea, after China on Tuesday approved a proposal to create a national nature reserve on a shoal in the disputed area.

The PRC has no right to "illegally and unilaterally" appropriate the so-called reserve area, MOFA said. "The Chinese government's unilateral move highlights its hegemonic mentality," MOFA said. This could lead to regional disputes and prove "detrimental to peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific," it added.

<https://focustaiwan.tw/politics/202509110023>

5 September: Philippine Forces Deliver Supplies and Personnel to Disputed South China Sea Shoal Despite Tensions

Filipino forces transported food, fuel and new personnel to a Philippine territorial outpost in a fiercely disputed shoal in the South China Sea, two Philippine officials said. Friday's delivery was carried out despite [tensions that flared recently](#) at the atoll after China staged water cannon drills and deployed additional coast guard and suspected militia vessels nearby.

Two Philippine security officials told The Associated Press that a new Armed Forces of the Philippines delivery of supplies and navy and marine personnel to the Second Thomas Shoal was successfully "completed without any untoward incident" Friday. The officials did not elaborate and spoke on condition of anonymity because of the issue's sensitivity.

One of the officials said the delivery to the strategically significant submerged reef was postponed for a few weeks to ensure its security and success.

<https://www.military.com/daily-news/2025/09/05/philippine-forces-deliver-supplies-and-personnel-disputed-south-china-sea-shoal-despite-tensions.html>

4 September: Taiwan accuses China of breaching international law over drilling

Taiwan's government has accused China of breaching international law by drilling for oil and gas inside Taiwan's exclusive economic zone (EEZ) and immediately demanded it halt the activity.

The statement from the office of Taiwan's president, Lai Ching-te, came after [revelations first reported by the Guardian](#) that several Chinese oil rigs and associated vessels had been detected inside Taiwan's EEZ, near [the disputed Pratas Islands](#), which are under Taiwanese control.

On Wednesday, Taiwan's presidential office spokesperson, Karen Kuo, called for [China](#) to "clearly explain" its actions and "immediately cease illegal deployment and exploitation activities in the economic waters of countries in the region, including Taiwan".

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2025/sep/04/taiwan-china-oil-gas-drilling-exclusive-economic-zone-pratas-islands>

OTHER STATES AND THE SOUTH CHINA SEA

23 September: House panel presses Rubio to secure Philippines funding to counter China threat

The U.S. House committee on China has urged Washington to ensure funding for the Philippines to counter Beijing's "aggressive and destabilising actions" in the [South China Sea](#),

according to a letter to Secretary of State Marco Rubio, which warns cuts could threaten U.S. security interests.

In the letter reviewed by Reuters on Tuesday, the House Select Committee on the Chinese Communist Party sought clarity on funding for the Philippine Coast Guard, noting the State Department had sought a dramatically reduced 2026 budget for International Narcotics Control and Law Enforcement that would "devastate" programmes to help its ally stand up to China.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/china/house-panel-presses-rubio-secure-philippines-funding-counter-china-threat-2025-09-23/>

23 September: Top diplomats from US, South Korea, Japan voice concern on Taiwan Strait

The foreign ministers of South Korea, Japan and the United States expressed concern about increasingly frequent destabilising activities around Taiwan in a joint statement after their meeting.

The three also expressed strong opposition to "unlawful maritime claims" in the South China Sea and attempts to enforce such claims, the statement said.

China's foreign ministry said it strongly deplored and opposed the "irresponsible" remarks made by the three countries, urging them to "cease any form of connivance with separatist activities of Taiwan independence."

<https://www.reuters.com/world/china/top-diplomats-us-south-korea-japan-voice-concern-taiwan-strait-2025-09-23/>

22 September: HMS Prince of Wales resumes core CSG25 duties in Singapore after South China Sea transit

The UK's flagship has returned to core duties after arriving once again in Singapore, having crossed the South China Sea, as part of the Carrier Strike Group 25's eight-month mission. The warship reached the small island city-state after transiting through the South China Sea, though it notably avoided sailing through the Taiwan Strait. However, the Type 23 frigate HMS Richmond (F239), joined by the United States Navy's Arleigh Burke-class guided missile destroyer USS Higgins (DDG-76), did transit the strait earlier in the month.

According to a statement from the People's Liberation Army's (PLA) Eastern Theatre Command, the crossing of the 110-mile strait between Taiwan and the Chinese mainland caused "trouble-making and provocation".

<https://www.forcesnews.com/services/navy/hms-prince-wales-resumes-core-csg25-duties-singapore-after-south-china-sea-transit>

<https://nationalinterest.org/blog/buzz/hms-prince-of-wales-just-passed-through-south-china-sea-ps-092425>

14 September: Philippines, Japan, US Hold Exercises in South China Sea

The Philippines, Japan and the US deployed vessels and aircraft during a joint exercise in the South China Sea, the Philippine military said.

"These continuous engagements underscore the sustained commitment of the three nations to enhancing maritime cooperation, promoting regional security and supporting a rules-based international order in the Indo-Pacific," Xerxes Trinidad, chief public affairs officer of the Philippine armed forces, said in a press statement Sunday.

The drills happened as China plans to establish a national nature reserve at Scarborough Shoal, which is also claimed by the Philippines. The Philippines, Japan and the US have been stepping up joint military exercises in recent months, as they seek a stronger alliance.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2025-09-14/philippines-japan-us-hold-navy-exercises-in-south-china-sea>

11 September: China, U.S. defense chiefs discuss Taiwan, South China Sea in 1st talks

The defense chiefs of China and the United States on Wednesday discussed issues including Taiwan and the South China Sea in their first known talks since President Donald Trump's second term began in January.

The two countries announced that Chinese Defense Minister Dong Jun and his U.S. counterpart Pete Hegseth addressed such issues during a video call. They later said that Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi and U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio also spoke in a separate phone call. Hegseth told Dong that the United States "does not seek conflict with China nor is it pursuing regime change or strangulation" of the Asian country, chief Pentagon spokesman Sean Parnell said.

<https://english.kyodonews.net/articles/-/60799>

5 September: Australian, Canadian, Philippine forces conduct drills in South China Sea

Australia, Canada and the Philippines deployed naval vessels and aircraft for drills against simulated aerial threats off a disputed South China Sea shoal where China's military has used dangerous maneuvers to try to drive away Manila's aircraft and ships.

Sailing from a western Philippine province, the Philippine Navy guided-missile frigate BRP Jose Rizal, the Royal Australian Navy guided-missile destroyer HMAS Brisbane and the Royal Canadian Navy frigate HMCS Ville de Québec conducted drills east of Scarborough Shoal, including the "air defense exercise that honed the participants' capability to counter simulated aerial threats through coordinated defensive maneuvers," the AFP stated.

The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) said the drills in late August 2025 east of Scarborough Shoal drew no reaction from China's Coast Guard, Navy or militia ships, which have patrolled around the uninhabited fishing atoll off the northwestern Philippines for years.

<https://ipdefenseforum.com/2025/09/australian-canadian-philippine-forces-conduct-drills-in-south-china-sea/>