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Compiled by CIL Ocean Law and Policy Team

ACTS OF CLAIMANT

29 September: China rejects illegal Philippine 'maritime chart' covering Nansha islands and reefs

China firmly rejects a new Philippine "maritime chart" covering islands and reefs in China's Nansha Qundao, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Guo Jiakun said on Tuesday, calling Manila's move illegal, null and void and harms China's sovereignty.

At a regular press briefing on Tuesday, the spokesperson was asked to comment on reports that the Philippine National Maritime Council on September 25 unveiled an updated "maritime chart," which includes islands and reefs in China's Nansha Qundao such as Zhongye Dao and Mahuan Dao.

Zhongye Dao and Mahuan Dao are part of China's Nansha Qundao and Chinese territory. China has indisputable sovereignty over Nansha Qundao and its adjacent waters, Guo said, noting that the scope of Philippine territory is defined by several international treaties. China's Nanhai Zhudao, including Nansha Qundao, lie beyond that scope.

https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202609/1371557.shtml

29 September: Philippine coastguard battles funding cuts amid bigger South China Sea role

The Philippines is preparing to give its coastguard more responsibilities in the contested South China Sea even as the agency faces a more basic problem: whether it has enough ships, aircraft and personnel to carry them out.

The proposed overhaul comes as the coastguard is being stretched by increasingly demanding operations around Philippine-claimed waters, while funding constraints threaten to limit its ability to keep its existing assets at sea.

That tension is evident in the 2027 budget. The coastguard has sought funding for more vessels, unmanned systems, stations and personnel, while key allocations for patrols, intelligence and ship maintenance face cuts.

https://www.scmp.com/week-asia/politics/article/3369216/philippine-coastguard-battles-funding-cuts-amid-bigger-south-china-sea-role

29 September: Chinese deep-ocean drilling ship brings home 'precious' South China Sea samples

The ocean drilling ship Mengxiang has returned from its first expedition in the South China Sea, where it set a national depth record and obtained basalt core samples that could help to unravel the region's tectonic history.

The 30-day expedition organised by the China Geological Survey tested the operational capabilities of the world's most powerful deep-ocean drilling ship, according to a report published on Monday by the official ministry newspaper Science and Technology Daily.

During the voyage operated by the Guangzhou Marine Geological Survey, the ship conducted drilling and sampling at two sites and obtained "a large number of precious core samples and data", it said.

https://www.scmp.com/news/china/science/article/3369137/chinese-deep-ocean-drilling-ship-brings-home-precious-south-china-sea-samples?pgtype=search

28 September: China Conducts Military Exercise in South China Sea After Confrontation at Disputed Shoal

China's military conducted a joint training exercise around the disputed Scarborough Shoal in the South China Sea, it announced yesterday, two days after the Philippines accused Beijing of obstructing a resupply mission in another part of the contested waterway.

The People's Liberation Army Southern Theater Command said in a statement on WeChat that the combined air and naval drill was a necessary response to actions by "certain countries" that it said had undermined regional peace and stability, Reuters reported.

The exercise "aims to test and enhance combat capabilities in safeguarding China's territorial sovereignty and maritime rights and interests," the Southern Theater Command said.

The China Coast Guard announced separately that the exercises focused on "maritime rights-protection, law enforcement, and management and control" in the waters around Scarborough Shoal.

https://thediplomat.com/2026/09/china-conducts-military-exercise-in-south-china-sea-after-confrontation-at-disputed-shoal/

28 September: China deploys advanced WZ-7 drone for first time near Scarborough Shoal

Beijing deployed its advanced WZ-7 high-altitude reconnaissance drone in the South China Sea for the first time during drills near the disputed Scarborough Shoal at the weekend.

The People's Liberation Army's Southern Theatre Command announced on Sunday that it had conducted joint air and naval exercises in the waters and airspace around the shoal earlier in the day.

The People's Liberation Army Southern Theater Command, in a statement on WeChat, described the operation as a necessary response to actions by "certain countries" it said had undermined regional peace and stability.

The People's Liberation Army Southern Theater Command said the training "aims to test and enhance combat capabilities in safeguarding China's territorial sovereignty and maritime rights and interests".

A separate statement on WeChat from China Coast Guard spokesperson Jiang Lue said the coast guard had conducted drills focused on operations including boarding and inspection, intrusion interdiction and forced towing on Sunday.

The Philippine embassy in Beijing did not immediately respond to a request for comment about the Chinese military training.

https://www.scmp.com/news/china/military/article/3369080/china-deploys-advanced-wz-7-drone-first-time-near-scarborough-shoal?pgtype=search

25 September: Philippines accuses China of obstructing resupply mission in South China Sea

The Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) accused China on Friday of obstructing a resupply mission to troops on board a grounded World War Two-era warship in the South China Sea, saying dangerous manoeuvres by Chinese vessels "put Filipino personnel at risk" and prevented the mission from being completed.

"There was no collision, and no one was injured, but the dangerous manoeuvres of the China Coast Guard created a serious risk of collision," said Jay Tarriela, a PCG spokesperson on South China Sea issues.

The PCG said the China Coast Guard and the People's Liberation Army Navy "obstructed a legitimate humanitarian and sustainment operation" to Second Thomas Shoal on Thursday.

It said China's actions were inconsistent with international law and a 2016 arbitral ruling that invalidated Beijing's sweeping claims in the South China Sea.
The Philippines called on China to stop interfering with its lawful resupply missions.
The PCG said it would continue its lawful operations in the South China Sea and exercise Manila's sovereign rights and jurisdiction in the waterway.
China Coast Guard spokesperson Jiang Lue said the Philippines had ignored Beijing's warnings when it sent the resupply vessel to the grounded warship, prompting "on-site monitoring" and verbal warnings by China.
https://www.reuters.com/world/china/philippines-accuses-china-obstructing-resupply-mission-south-china-sea-2026-09-25/

18 September: Exclusive footage shows Philippine vessel repeatedly cutting across CCG vessel's bow before collision
Exclusive footage obtained by the Global Times on Friday shows a Philippine vessel twice cutting diagonally across the bow of the China Coast Guard (CCG) vessel *Sanzhou'ao* within 10 minutes, with the second maneuver causing a collision. A Chinese maritime expert said the maneuvers are deliberate interference with the Chinese vessel's navigation.
The two clips show a vessel bearing the markings "DA-BFAR MMOV 3015" crossing in front of the Chinese vessel from its right side at 11:04 am and again at 11:13 am on Friday.
The Philippine vessel showed no visible attempt to avoid a collision during either maneuver.
After completing the first crossing and reaching the Chinese vessel's left side, it appeared to begin turning back toward the right.
During the second crossing, the Philippine vessel accelerated as it approached the *Sanzhou'ao*. Instead of adjusting its course to avoid contact, it continued accelerating and struck the Chinese vessel.
https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202609/1370832.shtml

18 September: Philippines says Chinese ship 'rammed' government vessel in South China Sea
The Philippines said a China Coast Guard ship "rammed" one of its fisheries department boats on the morning of Sept 18 in contested waters in the South China Sea.
China's coast guard subsequently blamed the actions of the Philippine vessel, which it said "bears full responsibility for the incident".
It took place near a shoal in the contested Spratly Islands chain, a fish-rich flashpoint that has been the site of violent confrontations with China Coast Guard vessels in recent years.
Beijing claims most of the South China Sea despite an international ruling that its assertion has no legal basis.
The Chinese vessel "rammed BRP Datu Magat Salamat... as it carried out its maritime patrol to deliver fuel subsidy to our fishermen", Philippine Coast Guard spokesman Jay Tarriela said.
"At 11.04am, CCG-21585 cut across the stern of the BFAR (fisheries bureau) vessel at a distance of only about 10m."
Nine minutes later, the "Chinese vessel repeated the manoeuvre and this time made contact, striking the BFAR vessel", a statement shared with reporters said.
https://www.straitstimes.com/asia/se-asia/china-vessel-rams-and-damages-philippine-fishing-boat-coast-guard-says

11 September: South China Sea: Manila says flares fired at aircraft near Subi, Mischief reefs
The Chinese military appeared to fire flares near a Philippine aircraft operating close to the

Subi and Mischief reefs, according to the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG), as tensions continue to spread to other South China Sea hotspots.
The coastguard released video clips on Thursday of footage that it said had been filmed from the aircraft on Monday.
PCG spokesman Jay Tarriela said on social media that the unarmed plane was on a maritime domain awareness flight over part of the Spratly Islands when Chinese forces fired multiple flares at it.
https://www.scmp.com/news/china/military/article/3367146/south-china-sea-manila-says-flares-fired-aircraft-near-subi-mischief-reefs?pgtype=search

9 September: Beijing tells Manila to 'stop lying' after minister exposes South China Sea note
China has accused Philippine officials of "grandstanding and lying" after Manila's defence secretary publicly read aloud a Chinese diplomat's note on the South China Sea that the Philippine minister described as "coercion, bullying and aggression".
"We urge certain people in the Philippines to stop this grandstanding and lying, and to protect China-Philippine relations and the peace and stability in the South China Sea," Chinese foreign ministry spokeswoman Mao Ning said.
Mao was responding to a question regarding the remarks of Gilberto Teodoro Jnr who – while speaking at a Seoul Defence Dialogue session on Tuesday – received a note reiterating China's position on the South China Sea arbitration.
https://www.scmp.com/news/china/diplomacy/article/3366935/beijing-tells-manila-stop-lying-after-minister-exposes-south-china-sea-note?pgtype=search

2 September: South China Sea island build-up heightens Vietnam's security concerns
Vietnam faces heightened security in the South China Sea amid reports of construction works in the Paracels archipelago – which Beijing calls Xisha Islands – with analysts saying that the latest developments could alter the strategic balance in the contested waters.
Hanoi voiced its strong objection after reports citing satellite imagery said new Chinese infrastructure had appeared on Yagong Island, called Ba Ba Island by Vietnam.
"Vietnam resolutely opposes this, has made serious representations and affirmed its position on the matter, and demands an immediate end to such activities and that they not be repeated," Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Pham Thu Hang said on Friday.
https://www.scmp.com/week-asia/politics/article/3366080/south-china-sea-island-build-heightens-vietnams-security-concerns?pgtype=search

OTHER STATES AND THE SOUTH CHINA SEA

28 September: Second Thomas Shoal stand-off sparks sharp exchange between US, China embassies
The Chinese and US embassies in the Philippines have exchanged sharp accusations following Washington's defence of its treaty ally after a stand-off in the South China Sea last week.
In a statement issued on Sunday, the US embassy in Manila backed the Philippines and said Beijing's "dangerous blocking and irresponsible manoeuvres" had threatened a collision and prevented a lawful resupply mission to Second Thomas Shoal, one of the flashpoints in the South China Sea disputes.
The statement called on Beijing to "cease the use of escalatory tactics" and hailed Manila's "professionalism and restraint".

https://www.scmp.com/news/china/diplomacy/article/3369033/second-thomas-shoal-stand-sparks-sharp-exchange-between-us-china-embassies

24 September: Taiwan upgrades maritime patrol capacity for vulnerable South China Sea outpost

Taiwan has upgraded its maritime patrol capacity around the Pratas Islands in the disputed South China Sea, including regularly sending larger ships there, the government said, responding to an increase in Chinese activities.

China claims democratically governed Taiwan as its own territory, a position the government in Taipei rejects. China has pressured Taiwan by increasing its military presence around the island over the past five years.

Lying roughly between southern Taiwan and Hong Kong, the Taiwan-controlled Pratas Islands are seen by security experts as vulnerable to Chinese attack due to their distance — more than 400 km (250 miles) — from Taiwan.

In a statement late on Wednesday, Taiwan's Coast Guard said its overall patrol and enforcement capacity in Pratas waters has been "comprehensively upgraded".

With the completion of a wharf project in July, a newly-built 100-tonne-class patrol boat has been formally stationed at Pratas, "significantly enhancing nearshore patrol capabilities and immediate mobile response capacity", it added.

https://www.reuters.com/world/china/taiwan-upgrades-maritime-patrol-capacity-vulnerable-south-china-sea-outpost-2026-09-24/

14 September: US Backs New Pacific Cable as China Rivalry Reshapes Networks

The US Trade and Development Agency on Monday announced funding for a feasibility study on a new trans-Pacific submarine cable linking the US with Thailand and as many as five other Southeast Asian nations, as Washington seeks to expand secure digital infrastructure in the region.

The proposed cable that could extend up to 11,500 miles long would connect Thailand with the US via Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Vietnam, “while avoiding the South China Sea and other routes that carry security risks,” the agency said in a statement. The project would be built to US engineering standards and is intended to replace Thailand’s aging subsea connection to the US.

The Thailand-U.S. Submarine Cable System, or THUS, will “strengthen the resilience and diversity of our international networks, support the growth of Thailand’s data center, cloud, and AI sectors, and expand affordable connectivity,” said Colonel Sanpachai Huvanandana, President of the Thai state-owned National Telecom Public Company Ltd.

The US, facing competition from China, has made a concerted effort in recent years to expand its role in building subsea cables, which carry nearly all international internet traffic. The Indo-Pacific is an increasingly important arena for such networks as countries build out digital infrastructure, while Beijing’s sweeping claims in strategic waterways including the South China Sea have complicated efforts to lay new cables.

Nearly two dozen international cables are expected to be built across the Pacific between 2022 and 2030, according to the International Institute for Strategic Studies. While the USTDA didn’t offer an expected price for the project, other estimates show the aggregate cost of new undersea cable construction is expected to reach over $14 billion between 2025 and 2027.

https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2026-09-15/us-backs-new-pacific-cable-as-china-rivalry-reshapes-networks

1 September: UK-Philippines troop deal to boost Nato’s South China Sea reach

A proposed troop access deal between the Philippines and Britain marks the latest step in Manila's drive to draw more European and like-minded powers into its efforts to safeguard the free flow of trade through the South China Sea and neighbouring waterways.

The visiting forces agreement would allow troops from both countries to train and operate temporarily on each other's soil, a move analysts said could deepen the Philippines' ties with Nato members and reduce its reliance on the US security umbrella.

Philippine and British defence officials met in Manila on Thursday last week for the first round of formal negotiations on the pact.

https://www.scmp.com/week-asia/politics/article/3365984/uk-philippines-troop-deal-boost-natos-south-china-sea-reach?pgtype=search