



Huayang Biweekly Brief

The South China Sea and China

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OCTOBER 1

CCG Maintains Law Enforcement Patrols around Huangyan Dao.

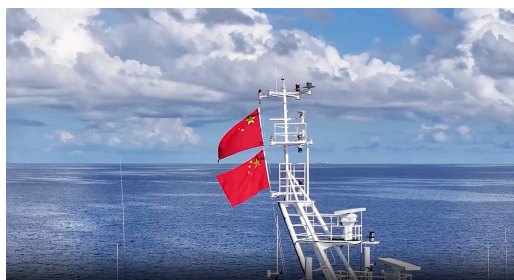
While people across China celebrated the National Day holiday, China Coast Guard (CCG) officers remained on duty in waters around Huangyan Dao. Aboard the CCG vessel *Wanshan*, officers held a flag-raising ceremony before continuing their regular law enforcement patrols in the area. For the officers stationed there, patrols continued as part of their daily mission to safeguard China's territorial sovereignty and maritime rights and interests. Their work also extended beyond routine patrols. Law enforcement boats from the *Wanshan* formation had recently entered the lagoon of Huangyan Dao, the core area of the Huangyan Dao National Nature Reserve, to conduct patrols and observe coral growth and the recovery of fishery resources.

Taiwan Uses Water Cannons against Mainland Fishing Vessels near Dongsha Qundao.

Two Chinese mainland fishing vessels, *Yuehuidongyu 75066* and *Jinsha*, were conducting fishing operations in waters near Dongsha Dao. Taiwan authorities' Coast Guard Administration said its *Yunlin* approached two vessels about 27 nautical miles east of Dongsha Dao and ordered them to leave waters designated by the Taiwan authorities as "restricted waters." *Yuehuidongyu 75066* subsequently departed, while *Jinsha* remained at anchor. *Yunlin* then used water cannons against *Jinsha*, shortly afterward, *Jinsha* lost propulsion and was towed by *Yunlin*. Responding on October 14, Chen Binhua, spokesperson of the Taiwan Affairs Office of the State Council, said China has indisputable sovereignty over Nanhai Zhudao, including Dongsha Qundao, and their adjacent waters, and that mainland vessels' operations in the relevant waters are lawful and justified. The Taiwan authorities used dangerous methods against mainland vessels and should bear responsibility for all consequences arising from their actions.

Key Takeaways

- China maintains law enforcement patrols and ecological monitoring at and around Huangyan Dao, while responding to Philippine air activities in the area.
- Chinese authorities respond to Philippine activities near Zhongye Dao, Tiexian Jiao and Ren'ai Jiao, as well as Philippine allegations regarding Chinese scientific research near Banlu Jiao.
- Regional discussions on the South China Sea focus on maritime order and crisis management at the Hanoi conference, while Philippine and Singapore leaders express optimism over COC negotiations at the Forbes Global CEO Conference in Singapore.



The China Coast Guard officers maintain law enforcement patrols around Huangyan Dao during the National Day holiday. A flag-raising ceremony was held aboard the CCG vessel Wanshan as officers remained deployed in the area. Photo credit: Global Times

OCTOBER 3

PLA Southern Theater Command Warns Off Philippine Aircraft over Huangyan Dao.

According to the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) Southern Theater Command, a Philippine Air Force Cessna 208 turboprop aircraft illegally entered the airspace over Huangyan Dao without approval from the Chinese government. The Command dispatched naval and air forces to track and monitor the aircraft and issued warnings to expel it in accordance with laws and regulations. In a statement on October 5, Senior Captain Zhai Shichen, spokesperson for the Southern Theater Command, said the Philippine side's move could easily lead to unintended maritime and air incidents, and urged the Philippines to stop rights violations and provocative acts.

OCTOBER 4

Chinese Maritime Forces Respond to Philippine Operation near Zhongye Dao and Tiexian Jiao.

An inter-agency Philippine maritime law-enforcement team comprising personnel from the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG), Philippine Navy and Philippine National Police Maritime Group (PNP MG) conducted an operation near Tiexian Jiao, to investigate a foreign fishing vessel suspected of blast fishing, according to the PCG. The Philippine side accused Chinese military and coast guard vessels of obstructing the operation. Responding on October 6, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Guo Jiakun said Philippine aircraft and vessels had entered waters and airspace under China's jurisdiction without permission and disrupted normal Chinese law enforcement operations. The measures taken by the Chinese military and coast guard were legitimate and justified.

OCTOBER 7

The 18th South China Sea International Conference Held in Hanoi.

The 18th International Conference on the South China Sea was held in Hanoi under the theme "Contestation, Connectivity and Cooperation: The South China Sea and the Regional Maritime Order." Organized by the Diplomatic Academy of Vietnam, the conference brought together policymakers, diplomats, experts and scholars from more than 30 countries and territories to discuss maritime security, legal issues, crisis management and regional cooperation. Chinese scholars from universities and think tanks also shared views on the South China Sea strategic landscape, maritime security and cooperation, the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), the Agreement on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine

Biological Diversity of Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ Agreement) and deep-sea governance.

OCTOBER 8

Philippine and Singaporean Leaders Express Optimism over COC Negotiations.

Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. said at the 24th Forbes Global CEO Conference in Singapore that ASEAN and China were making “good progress” in negotiations on the *Code of Conduct in the South China Sea* (COC). Marcos said the COC was important for maintaining freedom of navigation and preventing maritime incidents from escalating. Singapore Prime Minister Lawrence Wong also noted that negotiations between China and ASEAN were ongoing, adding that the COC could perhaps be concluded during the Philippines’ ASEAN chairmanship. If not, Singapore would continue to facilitate the negotiations when it took over the chairmanship.

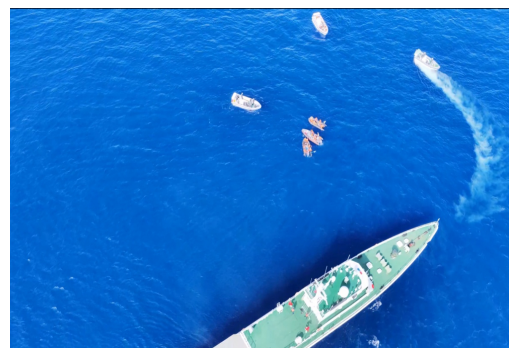
China Facilitates Medical Evacuation amid Tensions near Ren’ai Jiao.

The PCG vessel *BRP Cabra* (MRRV-4409) entered waters adjacent to Ren’ai Jiao in China’s Nansha Qundao without China’s permission to evacuate an injured person from the illegally grounded warship *BRP Sierra Madre*. As the vessel approached, the CCG took measures in accordance with laws and regulations to manage the situation. The PCG alleged that CCG vessel 5306 used a water cannon and conducted blocking maneuvers as *BRP Cabra* approached, prompting the Philippine vessel to pull back while maintaining communication with the Chinese side. Following further communication, China allowed the evacuation to proceed by small boat on humanitarian grounds and provided necessary facilitation, while the PCG accused Chinese vessels of delaying the evacuation for nearly ten hours. China rejected the allegation on October 9, stating that its measures were legitimate and reasonable and that the Philippine side had distorted the facts while failing to acknowledge China’s facilitation of the transfer.

OCTOBER 11

Chinese Embassy Rejects Philippine Claims over Research Vessel near Banlu Jiao.

The PCG claimed that the Chinese deep-sea research vessel *Tan Suo Yi Hao* was conducting scientific research activities near Banlu Jiao without authorization and announced that it had deployed an aircraft and vessels to challenge and disrupt the vessel’s operations. According to the PCG, an Islander aircraft located the *Tan Suo Yi Hao* about five nautical miles west-northwest of Banlu Jiao during a maritime domain awareness flight. In response, the Chinese Embassy in the Philippines



CCG vessels supervise the transfer of an injured Philippine serviceman from the illegally grounded *BRP Sierra Madre* near Ren’ai Jiao. Following communication between the two sides, China allowed the transfer by small boat and provided necessary assistance on humanitarian grounds. Photo credit: Global Times.



Tan Suo Yi Hao is a deep-sea scientific research vessel operated by the Institute of Deep-sea Science and Engineering, Chinese Academy of Sciences. It serves as a support mothership for China's 4,500-meter and full-ocean-depth manned submersibles, and can undertake manned deep-diving expeditions, comprehensive deep-sea scientific surveys, and sea trials of engineering equipment. Converted from the offshore engineering vessel Haiyang Shiyou 299, it forms part of China's deep-sea research infrastructure. Photo credit: IDSSE, CAS.

rejected the accusations, saying Chinese research vessels had conducted regular scientific research activities in the South China Sea for many years, and that *Tan Suo Yi Hao* was carrying out normal scientific research in waters under China's jurisdiction. It added that Chinese naval and coast guard vessels were conducting routine patrols and law enforcement operations, and that these activities were consistent with Chinese domestic law and relevant international law.

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About Huayang Center

The Huayang Center for Maritime Cooperation and Ocean Governance (Huayang Center) is a comprehensive maritime policy research institution dedicated to promoting the peaceful use and sustainable development of the oceans. It engages in interdisciplinary and cross-sectoral research on maritime issues. Huayang Center is chaired by Wu Shicun, Founding President of the National Institute for South China Sea Studies (NISCSS) and Chairman of the Academic Committee of NISCSS. Headquartered in Sanya, Huayang Center also operates an office in Jiangdong New District in Haikou, with a liaison office in Beijing, and a branch-Huayang Center for Yellow Sea Studies-in Yancheng City, Jiangsu Province.

The Huayang Center is committed to the mission of advancing global ocean governance and sustainable development, contributing to China's goal of becoming a maritime power, and supporting Hainan's "ocean-oriented development" strategy. Focusing on the implementation of national maritime strategies, marine conservation and sustainable use, the maintenance of peace and stability in the South China Sea, and the promotion of international maritime cooperation and public diplomacy, Huayang Center is committed to the long-term goal of building a world-class think tank. It undertakes interdisciplinary research, policy advisory, professional training, international exchanges, and provides consulting services to maritime-related institutions and enterprises.

The Huayang Center's research team brings together leading experts and scholars from both China and abroad in the fields of international relations, international law, regional security, marine science, environmental protection, marine biology, and energy & resources. Led by Chairman and Chief Expert Dr. Wu Shicun, the Huayang Center's research team is distinguished by its youthfulness, international outlook, multidisciplinary expertise, and cross-sectoral approach.

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