華陽海洋研究中心
Huayang Center for Maritime Cooperation and Ocean Governance

Huayang Biweekly Brief

The South China Sea and China

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OCTOBER 16

China Clarifies Position on Relations with the Philippines.

Following Philippine criticism of remarks made by Chinese Ambassador Jing Quan at the second Diliman Dialogues on October 15, the Chinese Embassy said his comments had been selectively quoted and overinterpreted. At a press conference on October 16, Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning reiterated China's clear position on improving bilateral ties and expressed hope that the Philippine side would understand it fully and accurately.

Four PLAN LPD Ships Carry Out Live-fire Drills in the South China Sea.

Four Type 071 Landing Platform Dock (LPD) ships of the Southern Theater Command (STC) *Kunlunshan*, *Changbaishan*, *Qilianshan*, and *Wuzhishan*, recently formed a formation and headed to a certain area in the South China Sea for multi-subject live-fire combat training drills, including simulated air defense, target practice, and replenishment drills, according to the People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN).

The Type 071 LPD ship is a large amphibious transport dock independently developed by China, with a full-load displacement approaching 20,000 tonnes. It serves as a core principal platform in PLAN's amphibious combat system, playing an important role in potential island-reef landing, transportation and defense missions in locations such as the South China Sea and the Taiwan Strait.

OCTOBER 18

TAO Says CCG Patrols Near Dongsha Qundao Are Lawful.

CCG vessels 3301 and 3303 sailed around Dongsha Dao on the day. Taiwan's "Coast Guard Administration" said it dispatched vessels to monitor them and issued warnings requesting their departure.

Responding on October 21, Zhang Han, spokesperson for the Taiwan Affairs Office (TAO) of the State Council, said that China has indisputable sovereignty over Nanhai Zhudao, including

Key Takeaways

- China reiterated its position on improving relations with the Philippines, emphasizing dialogue, management of differences and cooperation.
- The PLA conducted maritime training and combat readiness patrols, while the CCG continued law-enforcement patrols and training in the South China Sea.
- Marine innovation and cooperation featured at the China Marine Economy Expo in Shenzhen and a symposium in Guangxi, highlighting marine technology applications and opportunities for cooperation with ASEAN.





Top photo: Ambassador Jing Quan delivers a keynote speech at the second Diliman Dialogues on October 15. Photo credit: Embassy of the People's Republic of China in the Republic of the Philippines.

Bottom photo: Ambassador Jing Quan meets Philippine Foreign Secretary Lazaro on October 19, stating mutual respect and mutually beneficial cooperation must be a two-way street. Photo credit: PNA.

Dongsha Qundao, and their adjacent waters. She said the CCG patrols were conducted in accordance with the law to maintain orderly navigation and maritime operations and protect the legitimate rights and interests, safety of life and property of people on both sides of the Taiwan Strait.

OCTOBER 19

Ambassador Jing Quan Meets Philippine Foreign Secretary Lazaro to Discuss Bilateral Relations.

Chinese Ambassador to the Philippines Jing Quan met Philippine Foreign Secretary Theresa Lazaro and made representations over what he described as misinterpretations of his remarks and disparaging statements about China by Philippine officials and politicians. Jing said his core message was to handle bilateral relations issue by issue, strengthen dialogue, manage differences, deepen cooperation, and avoid a vicious cycle of retaliation. He called for a full and accurate understanding of China's position and urged the Philippines to respect its core interests and concerns to prevent further deterioration in bilateral relations.

OCTOBER 20

PLA STC Tracks U.S. Warship Near Xianbin Jiao.

The U.S. littoral combat ship USS *Charleston* entered waters adjacent to Xianbin Jiao in China's Nansha Qundao without approval from the Chinese government in the early hours of the day. The PLA STC Navy dispatched forces to track and monitor the U.S. vessel in accordance with laws and regulations.
Senior Captain Yin Gang, spokesperson for the PLA STC Navy, stated that China has indisputable sovereignty over Nansha Qundao and its adjacent waters. He said that the U.S. action infringed upon China's sovereign rights and interests and undermined maritime security and regional stability, and urged the U.S. side to cease such activities.

OCTOBER 21

CCG Monitors Philippine Resupply Mission at Ren'ai Jiao.

With approval from the Chinese side, the Philippines delivered living necessities to its ship illegally "grounded" at China's Ren'ai Jiao. The CCG inquired and verified the Philippine vessel conducting the delivery, and monitored throughout. CCG spokesperson Jiang Lue said the CCG would continue to conduct law-enforcement and rights-protection operations in China's Nansha Qundao and its adjacent waters, including Ren'ai Jiao, in accordance with the law.

OCTOBER 22

2026 China Marine Economy Expo Held in Shenzhen.

The 2026 China Marine Economy Expo opened in Shenzhen under the theme "Digital and Smart Ocean: Co-creating a Sustainable Future." The Expo focused on core marine sectors and cutting-edge fields, featuring eight exhibition zones, as well as three specialized exhibition zones dedicated to international participation, industrial clusters, and accelerated technological innovation. As the inaugural Guest Province of Honor, Hainan showcased progress in support bases for South China Sea resource exploration, and maritime search and rescue facilities. Sanya Oceanographic Laboratory also presented its Magic Needle large AI model for the South China Sea.

PLAN Aircraft Carrier Formation Transits the Basilan Strait.

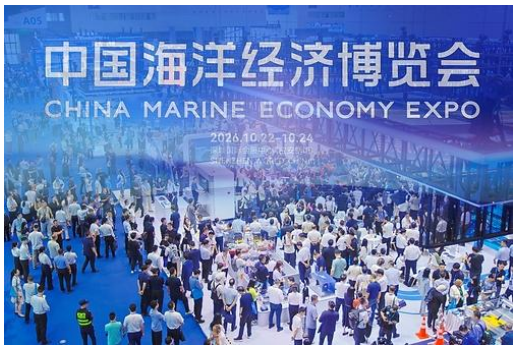
PLAN aircraft carrier Liaoning, together with two Type 055 destroyers, *Anshan* and *Wuxi*, and one Type 052D destroyer, *Huainan*, transited the Basilan Strait as a formation. The Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) dispatched the vessel Sarangani to follow at a distance, an action the Philippine side hyped as so-called "tracking" and "monitoring" of the Chinese Navy.

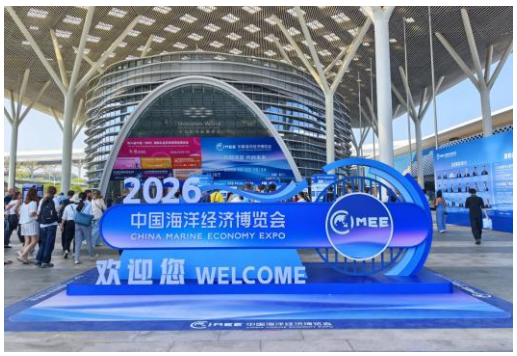
On October 29, Senior Colonel Zhang Xiaogang, spokesperson for China's Ministry of National Defense, responded to the incident, stating that Chinese vessels conducted training in relevant waters. He said that the training did not target any specific country or target, and was consistent with international law and practice.

OCTOBER 26

Guangxi Advances Marine Science and Technology Cooperation in the Beibu Gulf.

The "Digital-Intelligent Deep Blue · Green Empowerment Marine Economy Innovation Cooperation Symposium" was held in Nanning, Guangxi, focusing on marine technological innovation and marine economic development. Eight cooperation agreements were signed, covering marine technology application, ecological security, and marine biomedicine. Two reports were released earlier at The 2026 China Marine Economy Forum held in Nanning: The Blue Book on *Guangxi's Sea-Oriented Economic Development (2026)*, the first comprehensive report on Guangxi's sea-oriented economy, and *China Marine Sustainable Development Report (2025)*. Participants highlighted the Beibu Gulf's potential for deep-sea research and cooperation with ASEAN.





The 2026 China Marine Economy Expo—themed "Digital and Smart Ocean: Co-creating a Sustainable Future"—officially opened in Shenzhen. Spanning an exhibition area of 50,000 square meters, the expo hosted over 350 enterprises and was expected to attract 25,000 professional visits. Photo credit: Top: PR Newswire; Bottom: Securities Daily.





Top Photo: The CCG's Huangyan vessel formation during the law-enforcement patrols in the territorial sea of China's Huangyan Dao and its surrounding areas. Photo credit: MOD, China.

Bottom Photo: The CCG's Dong'an vessel formation conducts law-enforcement drills in waters around Ren'ai Jiao and Xianbin Jiao. Photo credit: CNR.

Editor-in-Chief	Wu Shicun
Editors	Chen Wangwanyu
	Zhang Anqi
	Li Dongte
Reviewers	Xu Xiaodong
	Qin Kai

OCTOBER 29

China Reaffirms Commitment to COC Consultations and Stable Relations with the Philippines.

Responding to Philippine President Marcos Jr.'s concerns about unintended escalation in the South China Sea, Spokesperson of China's Ministry of National Defense Zhang Xiaogang said improving bilateral relations served both countries' common interests and that maritime disputes should not dominate their relationship. He reiterated China's commitment to safeguarding its territorial sovereignty and maritime rights and interests, advancing consultations with ASEAN countries on *the Code of Conduct in the South China Sea* (COC), and maintaining regional peace and stability.

OCTOBER 30

CCG and PLA STC Conduct Patrols Around Huangyan Dao.

The CCG conducted law-enforcement patrols in the territorial sea of China's Huangyan Dao and its surrounding areas. It said that it had intensified patrols since the beginning of October to strengthen management of the area and safeguard China's territorial sovereignty and maritime rights and interests. On the same day, the PLA STC deployed naval and air forces to conduct combat readiness patrols in the territorial sea and airspace of China's Huangyan Dao and surrounding areas. Both the CCG and the command described their respective patrols as necessary responses to what they termed Philippine infringements and provocations.

CCG Conducts Integrated Law Enforcement Training in Waters Around Ren'ai Jiao and Xianbin Jiao.

The CCG's Dong'an vessel formation, including the vessels *Dong'an* and *Nanxun* and the boat *Sanzhou'ao*, recently conducted integrated maritime law enforcement training in waters around Ren'ai Jiao and Xianbin Jiao to improve on-scene law enforcement and control capabilities. The training simulated responses to unauthorized entry by foreign vessels and covered reconnaissance, tracking and monitoring, route control, and small-boat tactical maneuvering. It also included single-vessel drills in electro-optical evidence collection, water cannon use, and drone operation.

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.

The Huayang Center upholds the core values of "talent aggregation, results-oriented and innovation-driven development." Guided by the founding mission of building a "small team, big network-rooted in Hainan, serving the nation, engaging the world," the Huayang Center adheres to the philosophy of "attracting talent through meaningful work, advancing development through research, and overcoming challenges through focused efforts." Since its establishment, the Huayang Center has launched a series of signature initiatives-including the Huayang Exhibition, Huayang Briefing, Huayang Talk, Huayang Report, Huayang Team, and Huayang Culture-that have earned widespread recognition and acclaim from relevant decision-making bodies and peers in the field.

CONTACT US
Address: 2006-2007A, 2nd Floor, Hainan Hongbao Investment Headquarters, No.6 Huanhai Road, Jiangdong New Area, Haikou, Hainan, P.R. China
www.huayangmaritime.com
info@huayangocean.com
Tel: +86-0898-66221086

@Huayang Center for Maritime Cooperation and Ocean Governance

@SCSHuayang