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PRC Continues Undermining the Status Quo of Taiwan Strait with Increasing Variety of Coercion Tactics

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The PRC has attempted to undermine the peace and stability of the Taiwan Strait with economic coercion and gray-zone tactics, such as harassment by ships of the Chinese Coast Guard (CCG) and suspicious motorboat transgressions.

China announced on the evening of the 18th that it would reimpose tariffs on certain Taiwan's agricultural products. Immediately after, the Taiwan Affairs Office of China expressed strong support, claiming that Taiwan's independence would only harm Taiwan. This action openly reveals the CCP's intention to use economic coercion to achieve its political objectives. In fact, the CCP has a long history of using economic and trade measures as coercion tools. Besides using the "1992 Consensus" as a political precondition for resuming the import of Taiwan's agricultural and fishery products to China, they often employ a "ban first, lift later" tactic, treating the hard work of Taiwan's farmers and fishers as tools for political division and economic coercion. These actions, aimed at achieving political goals through economic coercion, do nothing to benefit cross-strait relations and merely serve to divert attention from China's sluggish economy.

Moreover, after the capsizing incident on February 14, in which a Chinese motorboat with no ship name, no ship certificate, and no port registry unilaterally erased around Kinmen and capsized, the CCG unilaterally declined the "medium line" that existed for decades and undermined the status quo. Since then, the CCG and other governmental agencies have frequently sent ships to enter Taiwan's restricted waters and conduct drills, joining exercises with the PLA Navy to impose pressure on Taiwan.

Additionally, Chinese clandestine travelers have long harassed Taiwan's waters, attempting to test Taiwan's coastal defense. On June 9 this year, a retired Chinese Navy captain piloted a small boat near Taiwan's northern coast in Tamsui and was arrested after colliding with other civilian vessels. On the 14th of this month, another Chinese man drifted into Taiwanese waters for several days while rowing a small boat carrying many military supplies and materials. He was eventually rescued through Taiwan's public lifeline. There have also been previous incidents where a Chinese man used a military-standard rubber dinghy to land at the Taichung Port dock. Although these individuals claim to be fleeing debts in China or seeking freedom, Taiwan cannot rule out the possibility that these are deliberate Chinese gray-zone tactics.

As Wellington Koo, Taiwan's Minister of National Defense, suggested, the growing scale of China's military activities makes it more difficult to distinguish between peacetime and wartime. The PLA and the CCG can promptly move from training and gray-zone activities to a major exercise and from an exercise to actual conflict. This dynamic undermines the status quo and decreases Taiwan's time to react. As a result, in addition to more realistic exercises by Taiwan's military, Taiwan's Coast Guard Administration and relevant units under the Ministry of the Interior will conduct joint drills near key beaches to strengthen inter-agency coordination and response and enhance patrols and defense.

Reference:

[Financial Time: China's growing military activity makes a shift to war harder to spot, warns Taiwan >>>](#)

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