The PRC’s Wolf Warrior diplomacy in the East China Sea and
Strategic Environment in the Western Pacific

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Yonakuni (1000 tonnage)
Introduction

- The PRC’s long-term objective is to divide the Pacific Ocean between the U.S. and the PRC.
- The PRC enforces the Anti Access / Area Denial (A2/AD) Strategy to the U.S. and Japan.
- However, the PRC needs for control over the Senkaku Islands and Taiwan, because they are big obstacles for the PRC’s access route to the Pacific Ocean.
- The China Coast Guard was established in 2013 under newly elected Xi Jinping as the President and put it under the command of the Central Military Committee in June 2020.
- The PRC also enacted the CCG law in 2021 which permits CCG ships all necessary means including use of weapon against foreign ships in the waters under the PRC’s jurisdiction.
- This rises tension in the East China Sea. And the PRC’s wolf warrior diplomacy influences significantly over security environment in the East Asia and strategic environment in the western Pacific.

The PLA movement concentrates to control over the Senkaku Islands and the strait of Miyako.
New legislation of the China Coast Guard (CCG) Law

• The PRC legislated the CCG law in January 2021 and carried out it in force in February the same year.
• Article 21 of the CCG law, which provides for coercive measures against foreign warships and government ships, authorizes the CCG to take the necessary warning and control measures to expel them that violate domestic laws of the PRC in the waters under the PRC’s jurisdiction.
• In situations related to sovereignty and maritime rights of the PRC, a CCG ship can use all necessary means including use of weapon (art.22).
Provisions of the Japan Coast Guard (JCG) Law

- If a foreign ship is conducting navigation which is not innocent passage in the territorial sea of Japan, and there are reasonable grounds to believe that there are no other means to stop such navigation, the JCG ships may use weapons within the extent judged reasonably necessary (Art. 20-2).
- However, this provision is not applicable to foreign warships and ships owned or operated by foreign governments (art. 20-2-1).
- Nothing in this law shall be construed as permitting the JCG or its people to be organized, trained or perform military functions as armed force (art. 25).

As for arguments on use of weapon in Japan

- There is an argument on use of weapon in Japan that when a CCG ship seize a Japanese fishing boat, and if the lives or bodies of its crew members are in danger, and when there are no other means to save them, then, the JCG ships could conduct "harm shooting" in accordance with Article 20-1 of the JCG Law.
- When there is a law enforcement mission that exceeds the JCG's capability, the Maritime Self-Defense Force assumes the duty of maritime policing operations under the order of the Minister of Defense.
Confrontation between law enforcement ships in the East China Sea

- When a CCG ship engages in law enforcement activities in the territorial waters around the Senkaku Islands, the JCG ships consider it as violation of Japan’s laws and order.
- There is a possibility of mass water discharge and/or ramming against JCG ships by CCG ships, such as a CCG ship did it against a Vietnamese Coast Guard ship in the South China Sea.
- The JCG faces tough missions to tackle the PRC’s wolf warrior diplomacy in hybrid strategy which deploys CCG ships on the front and PLA Navy vessels at the rear.

Gray Zone Situation

- when the PRC attacks Japan, the U.S. Force is obliged to support Japan in accordance with article 5 of the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty. The U.S. will also support Taiwan when it is attacked by the PRC.
- The PRC will not want to fight against the U.S., so CCG ships will carefully avoid use of force in peace time. It is so called gray zone situation in Japan.
- If Japanese ships are excluded by the CCG ships from the territorial waters around the Senkaku Islands, then, it is possible that the international community recognizes the Islands are territories of the PRC.
- The small chart indicates number of CCG ship (yellow) and JCG ship (blue).

The PRC’s Maritime Expansion in the territorial waters of Taiwan

- There are usually many Chinese illegal fishing boats backed by around four or five CCG ships deployed in the area surrounding the Scarborough Shoal in the South China.
- Recently, Chinese large beach sand dredgers and mother ships appeared in the territorial sea of Matsu Islands and the Penghu in Taiwan and engaged illegal mass exploitation of beach sand.
- Total number of them are 71 dredgers in 2018, 600 dredgers in 2019 and 3969 dredgers in 2020.
- The Taiwan Coast Guard ships are anguishing in control and tackle over these illegal ships.
Recent activities of the International community to tackle the PRC’s Maritime Expansion

- The Japan Self-Defense Force is cooperating with its ally and partners in protecting freedom of navigation at sea and air and strengthening the deterrent in the region by conducting patrols and exercises.
  - Japan Ground Self-Defense Force exercises rapid deployment, defense and recapture of remote islands with military of the U.S., France, Australia and so on in 2021.
  - Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force conducted maritime drill with the U.S. and the British carrier strike groups, together with vessels from Canada, Netherland and New Zealand in October 2021.
- Japan, the U.S., Australia and India established the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (QUAD) for Maritime Cooperation in the Free and Open Indo-Pacific Area, and regular meeting started in September 2021.
Conclusion

- As I explained in my short presentation, the PRC has been pursuing the control of the Senkaku Islands, Taiwan and waters around them with its wolf warrior diplomacy in hybrid strategy.
- I believe that Japan and Taiwan should avoid escalation from stand-off between law enforcement ships of three countries, Japan, China and Taiwan, to armed conflict in the East China Sea.
- One fatal flaw of the Japan-China Maritime and Air Communication Mechanism (MACM) is the fact that it only covers encounters between military vessels.
- We should consider and find the best way to tackle and overcome the PRC’s maritime expansion and its psychological warfare carefully without escalation to a hot warfare.
- Once the PRC succeeded to control over the Senkaku Islands and/or Taiwan, strategic environment in the Western Pacific will be changed significantly and the U.S. has to withdraw from the East Asia region.

Thank you very much for your attention!

https://www.cas.go.jp/jp/ryodo/senkaku/gallery/index.html#&gid=1&pid=1