

War game gives Taipei just three days: 'Next'

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The latest computerized scenario carried out by the military showed that in a war with China, Taipei would be occupied by enemy forces in just three days, a magazine report said yesterday.

Last month's simulation, attended by President Ma Ying-jeou (馬英九), came amid warnings that China was expected to increase the number of its missiles aimed at Taiwan by several hundred to more than 1,900 by the end of this year. These include ballistic missiles, cruise missiles and other weaponry deployed throughout China.

Under the scenario, which assumed war at next year's force levels, the People's Liberation Army (PLA) launched intensive air raids on Taiwan before sending in ground troops from the sea and air, the Chinese-language *Next Magazine* reported.

The drill found that Chinese troops could march into Taipei on the third day of hostilities, seizing control of top military command facilities and the Presidential Office, *Next* said, quoting unnamed sources.

The results were a severe blow to Ma's goal of building "solid defense and efficient deterrence" with a small but elite army, the magazine said.

During his presidential campaign, Ma vowed to build a stronger military as a deterrent against aggression by Beijing. Under Ma's plan, Taipei has worked to achieve an all-volunteer force, but this will come at great cost to the defense budget, which is set at US\$9.3 billion this year, a 6.9 percent drop from last year's US\$9.6 billion and US\$10.5 billion in 2008.

The military must also cope with a number of aging defense systems that are due for refurbishing or replacement, including its F-16A/B fighter aircraft.

The Ministry of National Defense dismissed *Next's* report.

The conclusion to this year's scenario would be a dramatic departure from the computer simulation segment of the Han Kuang exercises held in June last year, in which, after seeing the air force and navy annihilated by PLA forces, reorganized army forces managed to mop up the eight divisions of Chinese soldiers that landed in the southern, central and northern parts of the country.

Last year's scenario also did not factor in the possibility of decapitation attacks by the PLA, which had figured, albeit controversially, in previous years' exercises.

Since Ma took office, the live-fire exercises accompanying the computer simulations have been canceled or downsized, which many have seen as a concession to rapprochement efforts. The military has also been instructed to prepare for humanitarian assistance and

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natural disasters over the possibility of a Chinese invasion.

In recent years, defense analysts have raised the specter of a shift in the balance of power in the Taiwan Strait, fears that stem from the US' reluctance to sell Taipei advanced weaponry and years of double-digit growth in the declared PLA annual military budget. Recent reports conclude that the balance has now shifted in Beijing's favor.

Under US-Taiwan security pacts, Taiwan's military would be expected to hold off a Chinese invasion for 10 days to two weeks before US forces could intervene.

Source: [Taipei Times - 2010/08/05](#)