

Tsai lauds military after joint exercise

Written by Taipei Times

Saturday, 14 April 2018 06:26 -



President Tsai Ing-wen, center, observes a joint military exercise from the destroyer Keelung in waters off Yilan County's Suao yesterday.

Photo: CNA, Courtesy of the Military News Agency

President Tsai Ing-wen (蔡英文) yesterday praised a military drill she observed in waters off eastern Taiwan and denied she was trying to upstage Chinese President Xi Jinping (习近平) as China prepares to hold military exercises in the Taiwan Strait.

"The military has done a great job in the joint exercise, in which it has fully demonstrated its capabilities to conduct asymmetric warfare and gain naval supremacy [in the Taiwan Strait]. It was impressive," Tsai said after the drill.

Tsai boarded the Kidd-class destroyer *Keelung* at Chungcheng Base (中成基地) in Yilan County's Suao (蘇澳) and sailed to watch the offshore combat readiness exercise involving the three branches of the military.

It was her first time on a warship since taking office in May 2016.

When asked whether the timing of her appearance was intended to outshine Xi, Tsai said: "There is no need to 'overreact' to the event."

"It was just a routine military readiness exercise, marking the start of a series of drills, as the military never rests during the year," she said.

Tsai lauds military after joint exercise

Written by Taipei Times

Saturday, 14 April 2018 06:26 -

The Chinese People's Liberation Army is to hold a live-fire military exercise in the Taiwan Strait on Wednesday, when Tsai is to be away from Taiwan on a visit to Swaziland, one of the nation's two diplomatic allies in Africa.

She leaves on Tuesday and returns on Saturday next week.

"I have confidence in our military," Tsai said. "My plan to visit Swaziland will not be affected."

During yesterday's drill, held to test the nation's combat readiness and rapid response capabilities, the military simulated a response to invading forces attempting to seize Taiwan's major sea ports through air and naval attacks.

The navy dispatched 20 vessels in coordination with eight air force F-16s and 2,500 army troops in a joint sea-and-air exercise to repel the simulated attacks.

Xi on Thursday spoke about the importance of Chinese naval power while attending a massive fleet review in the South China Sea.

China on Thursday also announced the live-fire military exercise it plans to hold in the Taiwan Strait on Wednesday.

In response to Beijing's announcement, the US Department of State on Thursday reiterated Washington's opposition to unilateral actions by any party aimed at altering the cross-strait "status quo," including any use of force or other forms of coercion.

The Mainland Affairs Council has said China's drills would not go down well with the Taiwanese public and urged China to engage in rational communication to ensure peace across the Taiwan Strait.

Tsai lauds military after joint exercise

Written by Taipei Times

Saturday, 14 April 2018 06:26 -

Additional reporting by Reuters and AP

Source: [Taipei Times - 2018/04/14](#)