

Chinese military threat on the rise: foreign minister

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A Republic of China Air Force F-16 (top) shadows a Chinese People's Liberation Army Air Force H-6 bomber over the Bashi Channel on Feb. 10.

Photo courtesy of the Ministry of Defense via CNA

China is stepping up its military preparedness to overtake Taiwan, Minister of Foreign Affairs Joseph Wu (吳國添) said yesterday, following a spike of Chinese drills near the nation.

Taiwan has said that China has stepped up threatening military activities near the nation in the past few months, while Beijing has not renounced the use of force to unify the nations.

“Looking [at] the long-term trend, China appears to be gradually stepping up its military preparedness, especially in air or on the waters near Taiwan,” Wu told reporters.

“What China is doing now is continuing to ramp up preparedness to solve the Taiwan issue,” he said. “The threat is on the rise.”

Beijing routinely says that such exercises are not unusual and are designed to show its determination to defend its sovereignty.

The Ministry of Defense last month reported eight incidents in which Chinese military planes entered Taiwan's air defence identification zone and Taiwanese jets gave radio warnings to usher the intruders out of their airspace.

Wu said that such intrusions “happened almost every day” last month and were “much more frequent” than what the government had disclosed to the public.

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China has also made several “simulated” military attacks on Taiwan, he said.

“These behaviors worry us,” Wu said, adding that Taiwan is deepening its security ties with allies, including the US which has no official diplomatic ties with the nation, but is its strongest international backer and main arms supplier.

Attacking Taiwan could be good way for the Chinese government to divert domestic pressure, Wu said, adding that China is struggling with a fast-slowng economy amid the COVID-19 pandemic and a wave of floods.

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