



Security Environment Surrounding Japan

Japan Ministry of Defense



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01

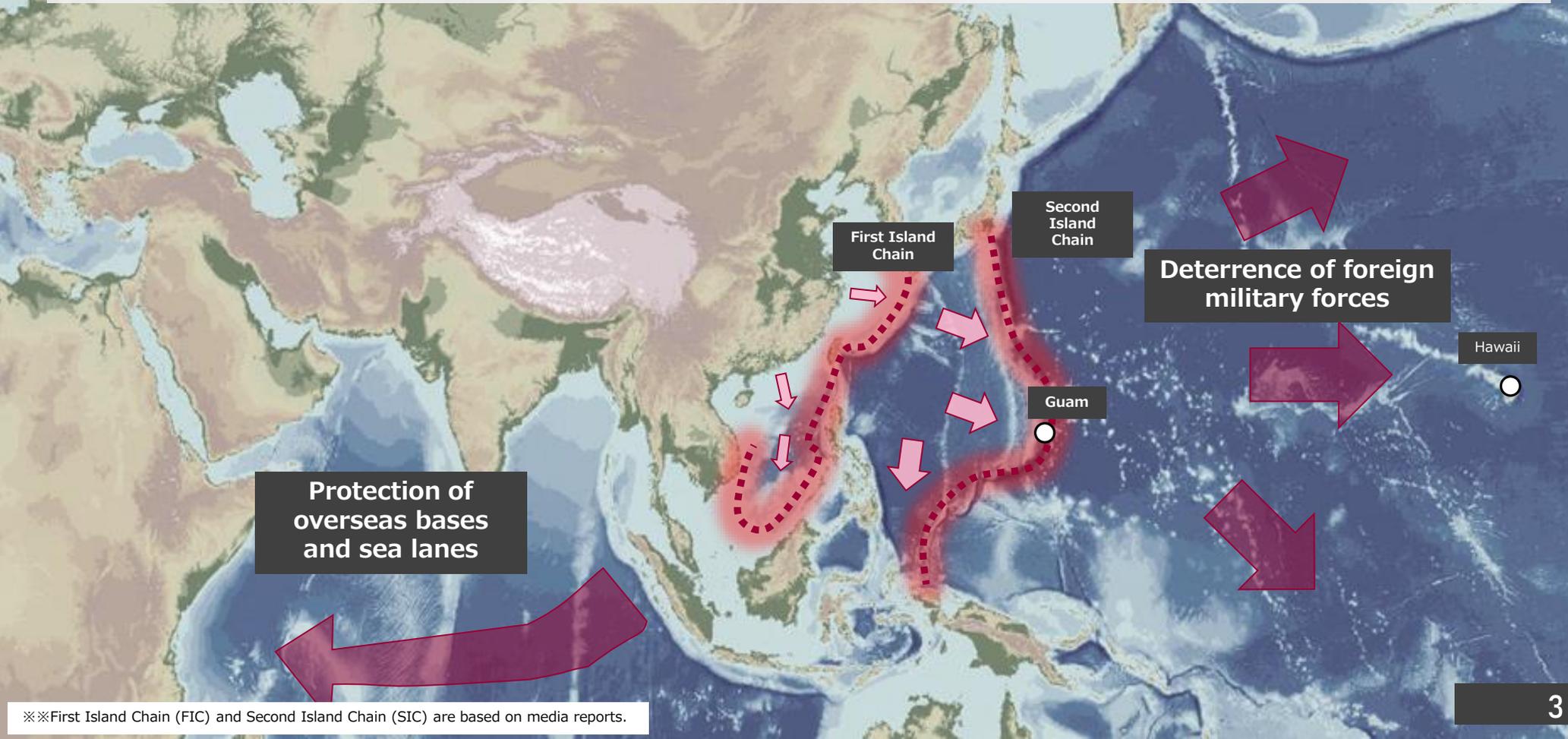
Security Environment Surrounding Japan (China)

China's Strategic and Operational Concepts

To achieve the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation, China aims to build its military into a world-class armed force.

At present, momentous changes of a like not seen in a century are accelerating across the world. A new round of scientific and technological revolution and industrial transformation is well under way, and a significant shift is taking place in the international balance of power, presenting China with new strategic opportunities in pursuing development.

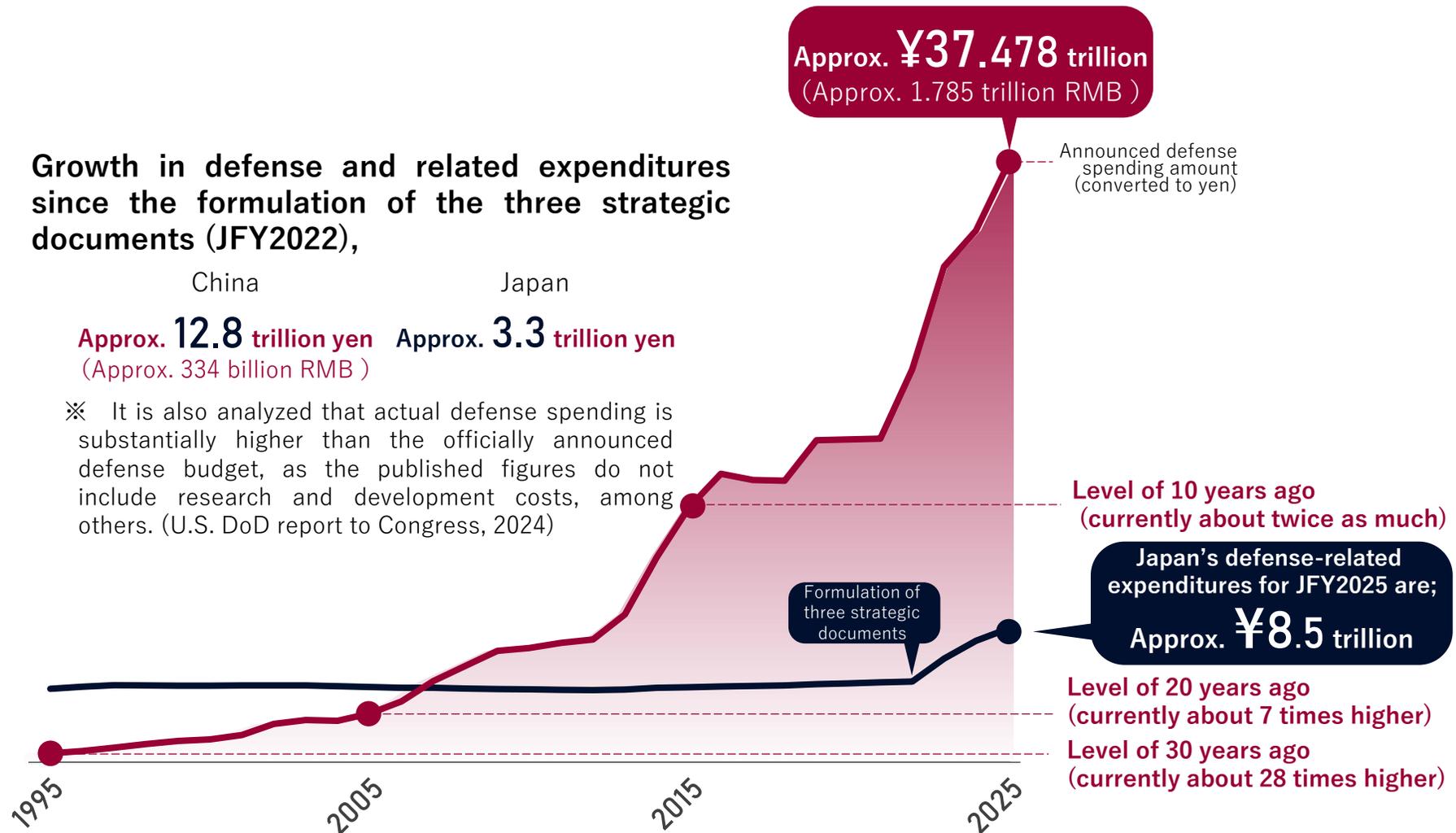
(Report to the 20th National Congress of CCP, Oct 2022)



Increase in China's Defense Spending

Behind the rapid strengthening of military power lies a significant increase in defense spending.

Growth in defense and related expenditures since the formulation of the three strategic documents (JFY2022),



(Note) "China's Defense Spending" refers to the amount of the "national defense budget" within the "central general public budget expenditure" (called "central fiscal expenditure" before 2014). "Growth rate" refers to the rate compared to the initial budget of the previous fiscal year. For FY2016 and FY2018-FY2025, only the national defense budget within the "central principal-level expenditure," which is part of the "central general public budget expenditure," was published; therefore, those figures are used as "national defense expenditure."

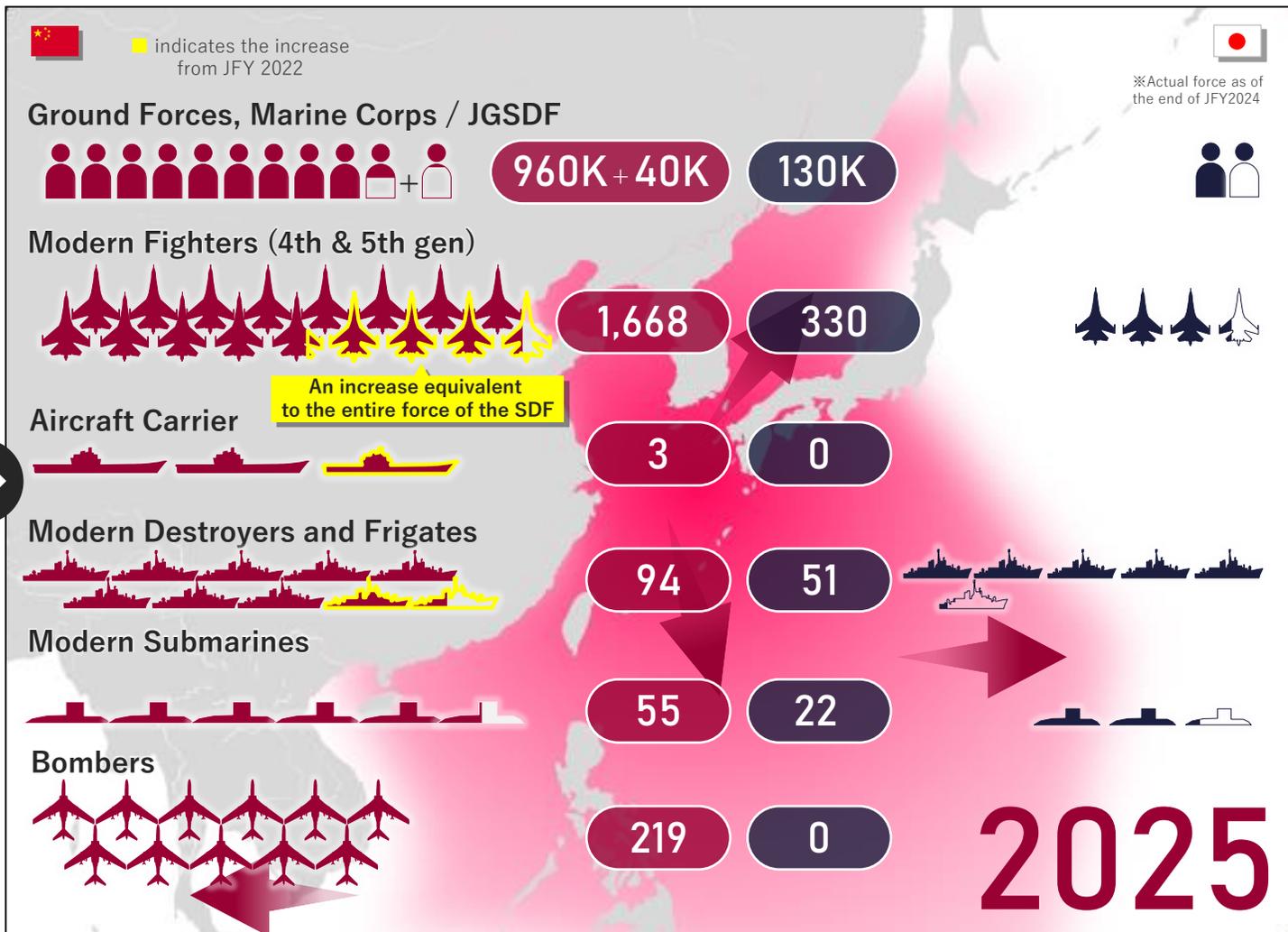
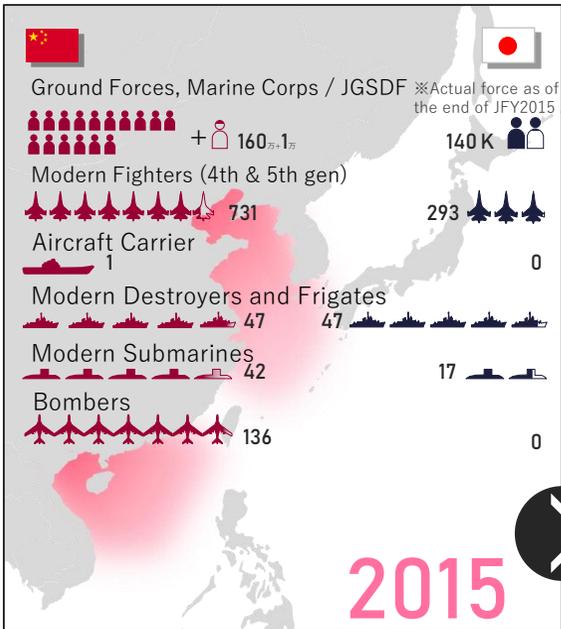
※1 Japan's defense-related expenditure (budget: approx. ¥8,474.8 billion) excludes costs related to SACO, costs related to U.S. force realignment that pertain to local burden reduction, and similar expenses.

※2 Yen conversion is calculated using the disbursing officer's rate for each fiscal year. Year-on-year figures are based on China's published values.

Expansion and Intensification of Military Power and Activities

Rapid and extensive strengthening of military power centered on naval, air, nuclear, and missile forces.
Rapid expansion and intensification of activities in maritime and air domains, along with unilateral escalation of actions.

Comparison of Japan-China capabilities and China's operational range, 2015→2025 (Conceptual Image)



Topic 1 Aircraft carrier operations east of Ioto Is. (June 2025)

Topic 2 Intensification of activities including large-scale military exercises around Taiwan (since 2022)

Topic 3 Frequent operations of UAVs on the Pacific side (since 2021)

(Reference) U.S. military strength (2025) 【※including Indo-Pacific and other regions】

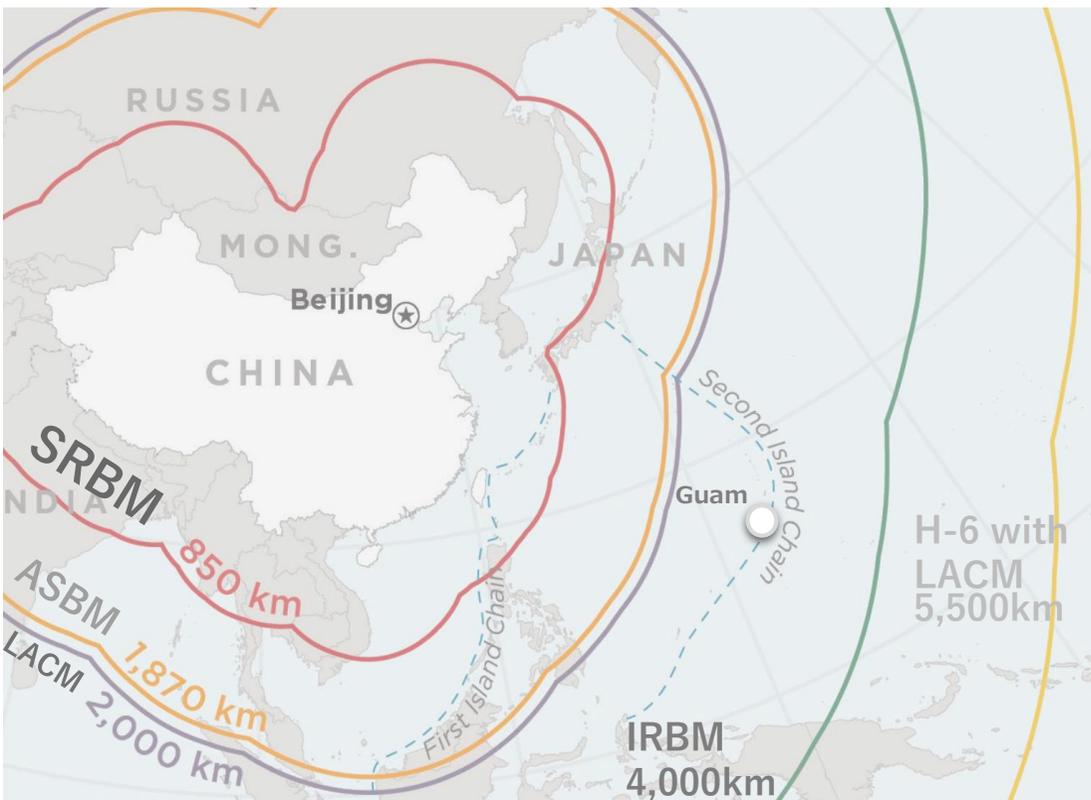
Army 450K Marine 170K Modern Fighters 2,204 Aircraft Carrier 11 Cruisers, Destroyers etc. 111 Submarines 66 Bombers 120



(Note) Sources include official publications by the U.S. Department of Defense, The Military Balance (2025), and SIPRI Yearbook 2024, among others.

Strengthening of China's Missile Capabilities

China is focusing on modernizing, diversifying, and expanding its nuclear and missile capabilities. Since 2020, China has begun operating MRBMs capable of carrying hypersonic glide vehicles (HGVs), which are more difficult to intercept. Japan is within the range of China's ballistic missiles.



| | 2020 | 2022 | 2024 |
|--|------|------|-------|
| ICBM Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles (5,500km or more) | 100 | 300 | 400 |
| IRBM Intermediate-Range Ballistic Missiles (3,000-5,500km) | 200+ | 250+ | 500 |
| MRBM Medium-Range Ballistic Missiles (1,000-3,000km) | 150+ | 500+ | 1,300 |
| SRBM Short-Range Ballistic Missiles (300-1,000km) | 600+ | 600+ | 900 |
| Nuclear Warheads | 200+ | 400+ | 600 |

It is noted that China's stock of operational nuclear warheads will exceed 1,000 by 2030 (*1). The U.S. possesses approximately 3,700 warheads as of May 2023 (*2).

*1 The annual report "Military and Security developments involving the People's Republic of China" U.S. DoD (2024)
*2 SIPRI Yearbook 2024

Missile range based on the annual report "Military and Security developments involving the People's Republic of China" U.S. DoD (2024)

China's Activities in the East China Sea

China continues persistent and active operations, repeatedly attempting unilateral changes to the status quo by force. China's intensified military activities could have a serious impact on Japan's security.

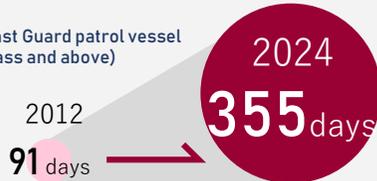
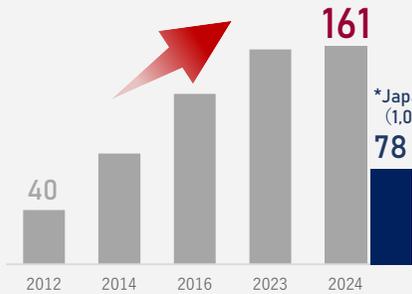
※Image diagram

Point 1 Attempts to Change the Status Quo around the Senkaku Islands

✓ Increase in China Coast Guard vessels of 1,000-ton class or more

✓ Annual number of China Coast Guard vessel entries into contiguous zones

✓ Annual number of China Coast Guard vessel intrusions into territorial waters



✓ Naval vessels operating routinely around the Senkaku Islands.

Point 2 Territorial Airspace Intrusions and Navigation within Territorial Waters

In Aug 2024, an intelligence-gathering aircraft violated territorial airspace near the Danjo Islands.

Since Apr 2022, a naval survey vessel has navigated within territorial waters around Yakushima 9 times.

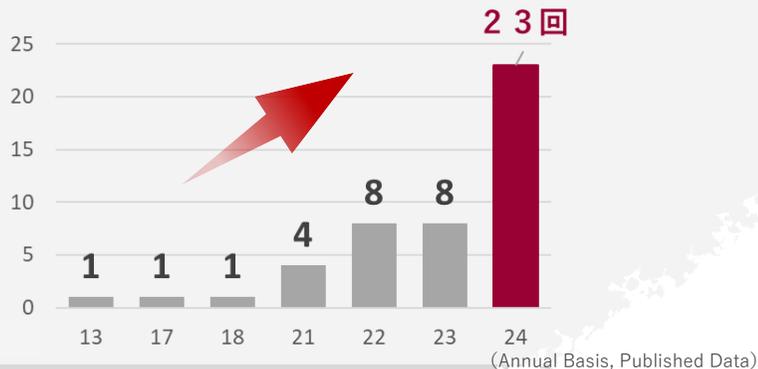
In May 2025, a helicopter taking off from a China Coast Guard vessel violated territorial airspace in waters near the Senkaku Islands.

In Sept 2024, the aircraft carrier Liaoning navigated through waters adjacent to territorial seas between Yonagunijima Island and Iriomotejima Island.

Chinese military UAVs

Point 3 Intensification UAV Operations

✓ Number of UAV operations



China's Activities in the South China Sea

Even in the South China Sea, China continues and intensifies unilateral changes to the status quo by force and attempts to do so. This is a matter of serious concern for Japan, which imports much of its resources and energy via maritime transport.

Territorial claims are asserted by China, Taiwan, and Vietnam. In 1974, China established full control over the entire area.

Paracel Islands

✓ Deployment of military assets such as bombers

Recently, it has been pointed out that H-6 bombers landed on Woody Island in May 2025.

Spratly Islands

China, Taiwan, Vietnam, and the Philippines claim sovereignty over 7 features such as reefs and islands.

✓ Rapid and large-scale land reclamation has been carried out on the 7 features.

Fiery Cross Reef



Center for Strategic International Studies (CSIS) AMTI
<<https://amti.csis.org/fiery-cross-reef/#jp-carousel-24054>>

CSIS AMTI <<https://amti.csis.org/fiery-cross-reef/#jp-carousel-27963>>

Sea Lines of Communication
(for illustration purposes)

✓ Dangerous actions toward coastal States, including the Philippines.

Obstructive activities have been seen since around 2022 and have increased since 2023

Obstructive activities such as ramming and use of water cannons resulted in causing damage to Filipino vessels and injuries to Filipino on board

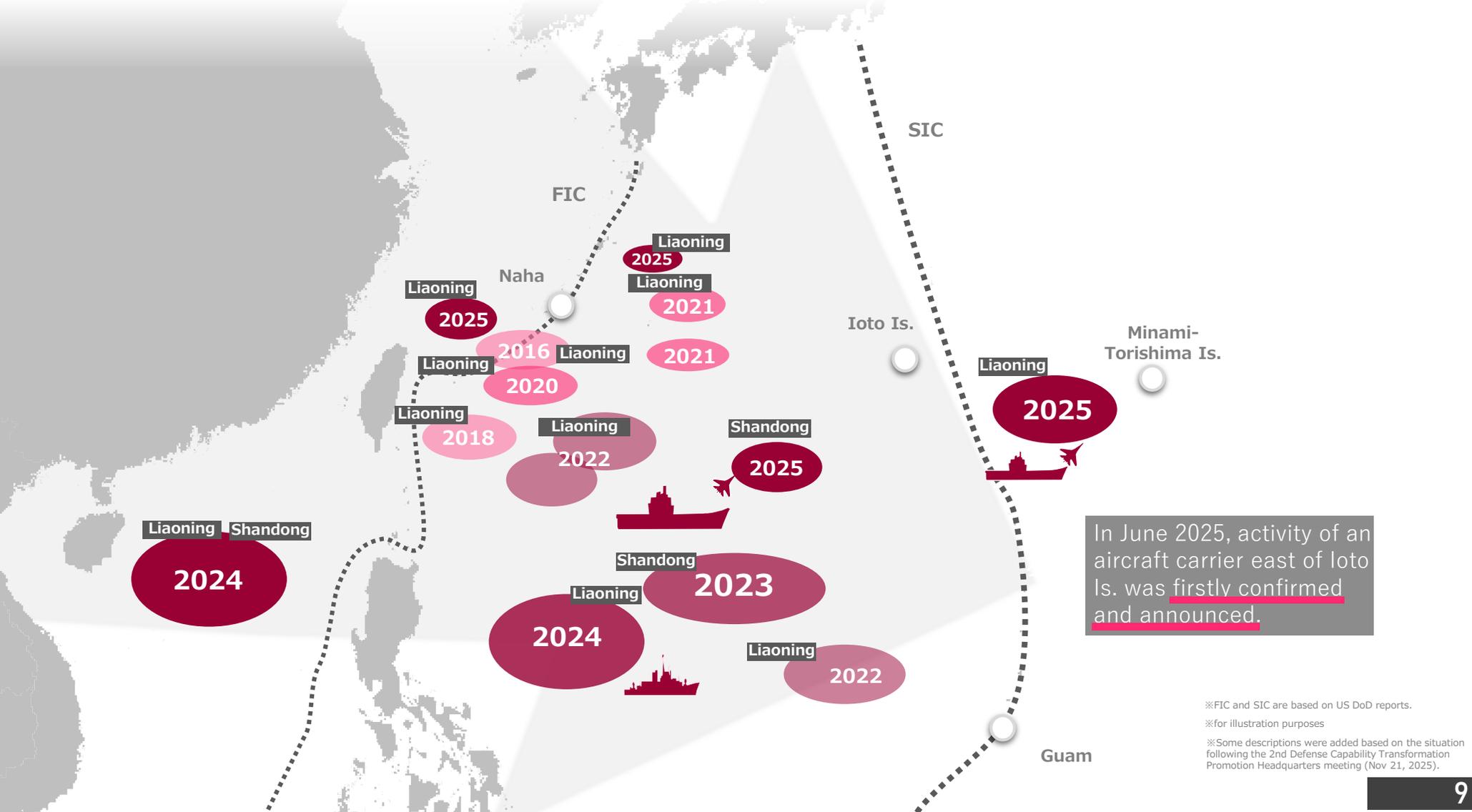


A Chinese Coast Guard vessel colliding with a Philippine Coast Guard vessel near Sabina Shoal (Aug 2024).

The Chinese military's aircraft carriers advance into the Pacific.

China has crossed the so-called "First Island Chain" and is intensifying activities throughout the area surrounding Japan, extending to the "Second Island Chain."

The Chinese military is steadily improving its operational capabilities in the Pacific.



In June 2025, activity of an aircraft carrier east of Ioto Is. was firstly confirmed and announced.

※FIC and SIC are based on US DoD reports.

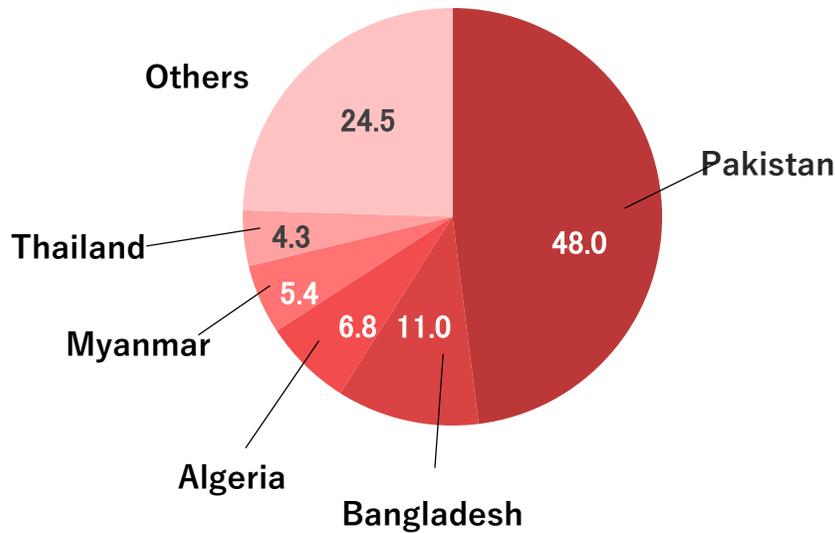
※for illustration purposes

※Some descriptions were added based on the situation following the 2nd Defense Capability Transformation Promotion Headquarters meeting (Nov 21, 2025).

China's Arms Exports

China is expanding its exports of missiles, tanks, aircraft including UAVs, and naval vessels. It has been pointed out that arms exports are linked to strengthening strategic relations with friendly nations, increasing its influence in the international community, and securing resources.

**Major Arms Export Destinations
(2015-2024)**
(by Export Value %)



**Top 10 Countries by Total Arms Exports
(2015 – 2024)**

| | | \$1M |
|----|--------------|---------------|
| 1 | U.S. | 111,317 |
| 2 | Russia | 41,857 |
| 3 | France | 26,155 |
| 4 | China | 17,247 |
| 5 | Germany | 16,185 |
| 6 | UK | 10,328 |
| 7 | Italy | 9,813 |
| 8 | Israel | 8,986 |
| 9 | Spain | 7,568 |
| 10 | ROK | 6,049 |

(Source: SIPRI Arms Transfers Database)



02

Security Environment Surrounding Japan (North Korea)

North Korea's Ballistic Missile Development Trends

Even after the formulation of the current three strategic documents, NK continues to push forward with nuclear and missile development. New ballistic missiles have also emerged. Development and testing are steadily carried out in line with its own priority agenda, improving related technologies and capabilities.

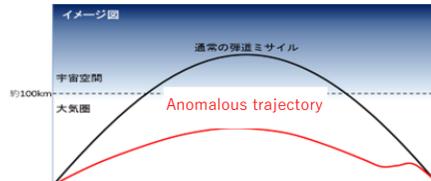
01 Operational Use of Short-Range Ballistic Missiles

Through actual combat use against Ukraine, NK has verified the capabilities of its short-range ballistic missiles and aims for further capability enhancement.



02 Development of Hypersonic Weapons to Break Through Missile Defense

North Korea has launched a new “hypersonic missile,” seeking to penetrate missile defense networks and continues to pursue development and capability improvements.



03 Development of Long-Range Missiles for Deterrence Against the U.S.

Multiple solid-fuel ICBM-class missiles have appeared. Although test launches to verify reentry technology have not been conducted, their range covers the entire U.S. mainland.



- NK's ability to break through missile defense is improving, making Japan's ballistic missile defense increasingly difficult.
- If North Korea unilaterally perceives that it has secured sufficient deterrence against the U.S., there is a risk that its provocative actions in the region will further increase and become more serious.

Current Status of North Korea's Nuclear Development

NK has achieved miniaturization and weaponization of nuclear warheads, making them mountable on ballistic missiles that can reach Japan. In addition, it is expanding the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons development.

01 Miniaturization and Weaponization of Nuclear Weapons

NK has already achieved miniaturization and weaponization through six past nuclear tests.

03 Expansion of Fissile Material Production



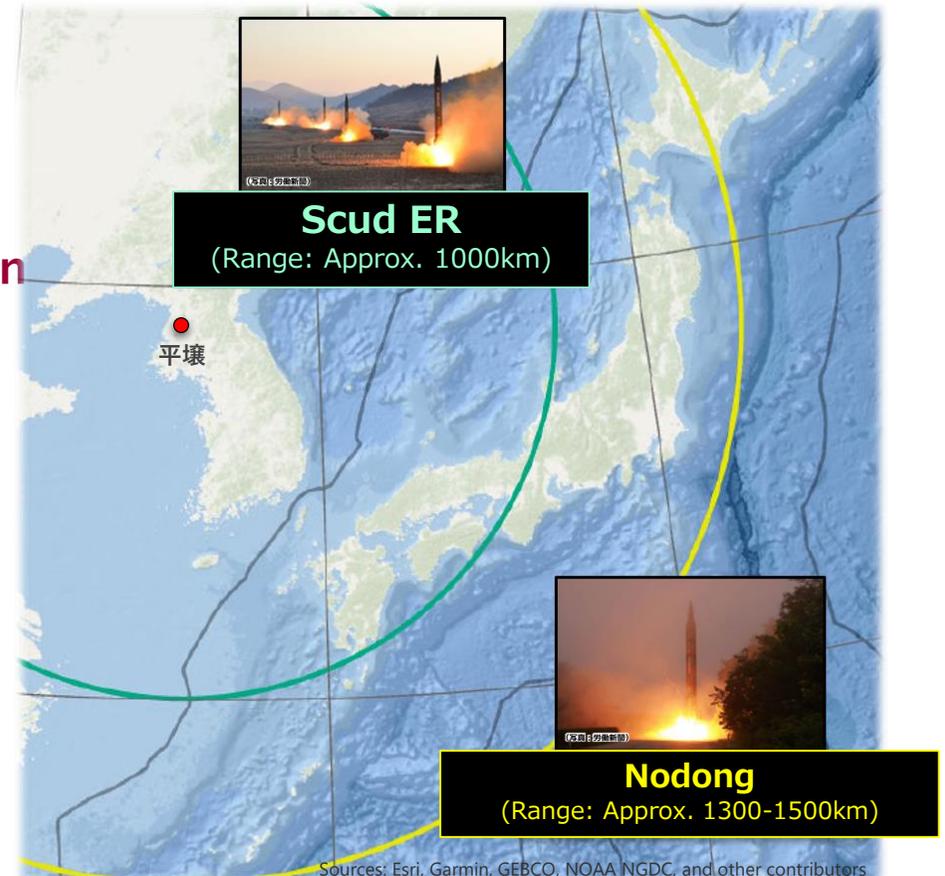
【Uranium Enrichment Facility Disclosed by NK】

North Korea continues to produce weapons-grade uranium and is estimated to possess about 50 nuclear warheads.

North Korean leader Kim Jong-un has instructed further increases in the production of enriched uranium for nuclear weapons development.

02 Japan Within Range of Nuclear Attack

NK can use Nodong and Scud-ER missiles as delivery systems for nuclear weapons against Japan.



※ Note: For convenience, the image shows the approximate range of ballistic missiles centered on Pyongyang.

Progress in Russia–North Korea Military Cooperation [1/2]

Amid the ongoing invasion of Ukraine, North Korea is rapidly advancing military cooperation with Russia. In addition to supplying weapons and ammunition, including ballistic missiles, North Korea has dispatched soldiers to Russia.

Supply of Weapons and Ammunition



- ✓ Ukraine claims that **about half** of the ammunition used by Russia is manufactured in North Korea.
- ✓ At least **100** ballistic missiles were supplied during 2024.

Dispatch of Soldiers



- ✓ In late 2024, more than **11,000** soldiers were sent to Russia.
- ✓ From January to March 2025, an additional **3,000** soldiers were dispatched.

※Source: MSMT First Report, etc.

North Korean-Russian Treaty on Comprehensive Strategic Partnership

※Signed in Jun 2024, entered into force in Dec 2024.

Article 4

“If either of the Parties is put in a state of war by an armed invasion by an individual state or multiple states, the other Party shall provide military and other assistance with all means in its possession without delay in accordance with Article 51 of the UN Charter and the laws of both countries.”

Progress in Russia–North Korea Military Cooperation [2/2]

Risk of NK’s Military Power Being Elevated in the Medium to Long Term Through Russia–NK Military Cooperation

01

Further Performance Improvement of Ballistic Missiles

NK’s short-range ballistic missiles have been supplied to Russia and actually used in attacks against Ukraine. There are concerns that combat use will lead to further performance improvements of NK-made missiles.

02

Strengthening of Ballistic Missile Production System

It has been pointed out that the production system for ballistic missiles may have been reinforced to meet Russia’s demand. After the invasion of Ukraine, there is a risk that this enhanced production capacity will be redirected to NK’s military buildup.

03

Capability Enhancement in Tactics Through Experience of “New Ways of Warfare”

Through combat with Ukrainian forces, NK has experienced aspects of “new ways of warfare,” including the use of unmanned assets. There is a risk that this experience will spread throughout the NK military.

04

Progress in Equipment and Technology Cooperation With Russia

In exchange for supporting Russia, NK is in a position to acquire Russian equipment and technology. There is also a possibility that Russia’s nuclear and missile-related technology will be transferred to NK.



If such technology were transferred, there is a significant risk that North Korea’s development of “hypersonic weapons” and “reentry technology” would advance substantially.

Strengthening of North Korea's Conventional Forces

Most of NK's conventional weapons have become outdated. On the other hand, in recent years, NK has steadily advanced its "Five-Year Plan,"* developing and improving a wide range of conventional weapons, signaling moves to strengthen its conventional forces.



"In the future, the 9th Party Congress will present a parallel policy of nuclear forces and conventional forces in the field of national defense construction." (Korean Central News Agency, September 13, 2025)

Ground Forces



Naval Forces



Air Power and Air Defense Capabilities



Unmanned Assets



*"Five-Year Plan" : At the 8th Congress of the Workers' Party of Korea (January 2021), Chairman Kim Jong-un announced a policy for the development and acquisition of various weapons over the next five years. The plan is expected to reach its deadline at the end of 2025.

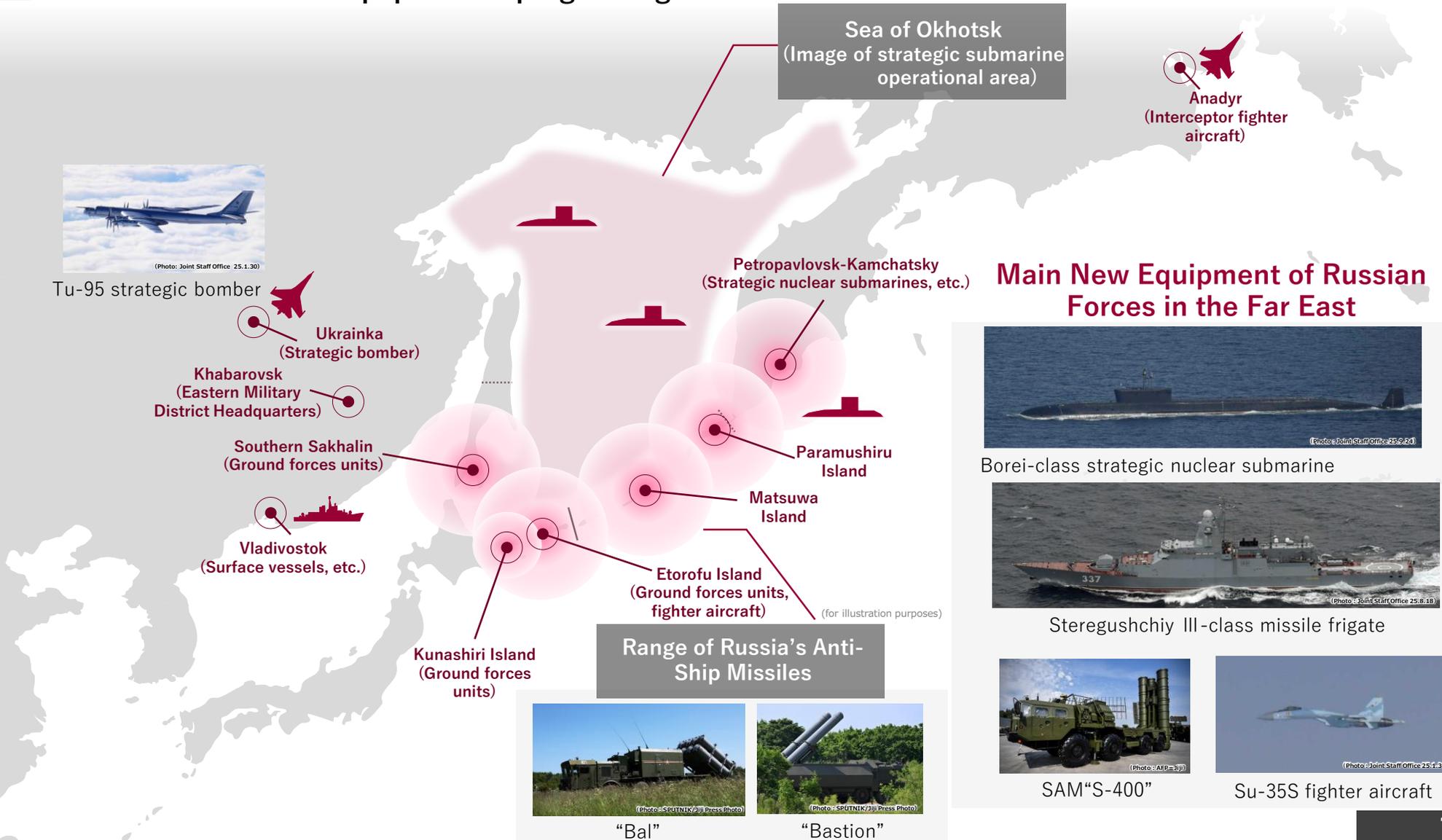


03

Security Environment Surrounding Japan (Russia)

Russia's Military Build-Up in the Far East and the Northern Territories

Even while continuing its invasion of Ukraine, Russia is maintaining its military build-up in the Far East, including the Northern Territories. A substantial force, including nuclear capabilities, is present, and modernization to new equipment is progressing.



Continuation of Russia's Active Military Activities

Russia continues active military operations around Japan. In addition to continued missile exercises involving strategic nuclear forces, drone activity in Europe has intensified, forcing European countries to strengthen their air defense posture.

Increased Drone Activity in Europe

September 2025: Unidentified drones spotted near airports in Norway and Denmark, causing temporary airport closures.

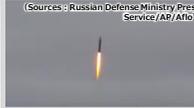
October 2022, October 2023, October 2024, October 2025: Missile exercises conducted by strategic nuclear forces.

Continued Active Military Operations Around Japan



Sep 2024: Russian military aircraft violated Japanese airspace north of Hokkaido three times in one day.
※For the first time, JASDF aircraft issued a warning using flares against a Russian IL-38 patrol aircraft.

Continued Missile Exercises by Strategic Nuclear Forces



ICBM "Yars" SLBM "Sineva" Tu-95 strategic bomber

Sep 2025: 19 Russian drones violated Polish airspace.

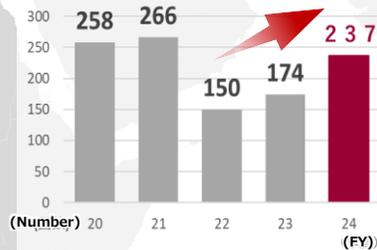
Sep 2025: Russian drones violated Romanian airspace.

November 2025: Unidentified drones spotted near airports in Belgium, causing temporary airport closures.

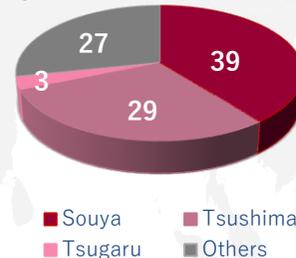


Drone found in Poland

✓ Trends in the number of scrambles against Russian aircraft.



✓ Number of Russian Navy vessels passing through straits (as published for FY2024).)



Annual China-Russia Joint Navigation and Joint Flights

※The illustrations show joint navigation in 2021 and 2023, and joint flights in November 2024.

Continued Reciprocal Participation in Military Exercises Hosted by Both Countries

※The illustrations show examples from Sep 2024: "Okayan 2024" and "Northern United-2024".

China-Russia Navies Conduct Joint Exercise "Maritime Cooperation" Almost Every Year

※The illustrations show an example from 2025.

※Activity areas shown are conceptual images.

China–Russia Military Cooperation

Through various exercises, joint flights of bombers, and joint navigation of naval vessels, both countries are strengthening their strategic coordination.

“Thanks to the joint efforts of both sides, we have entered a new era and reached the highest level in history.”

China–Russia Joint Statement, May 2025

Naval Joint Exercise “Maritime Cooperation”

Since 2012, the Chinese and Russian navies have conducted the joint exercise “Maritime Cooperation” almost annually, expanding and deepening the scope of the drills year by year.

※Recent examples include exercises in the South China Sea in 2024 and in the Sea of Japan in 2025. (Illustration shows the 2025 example.)

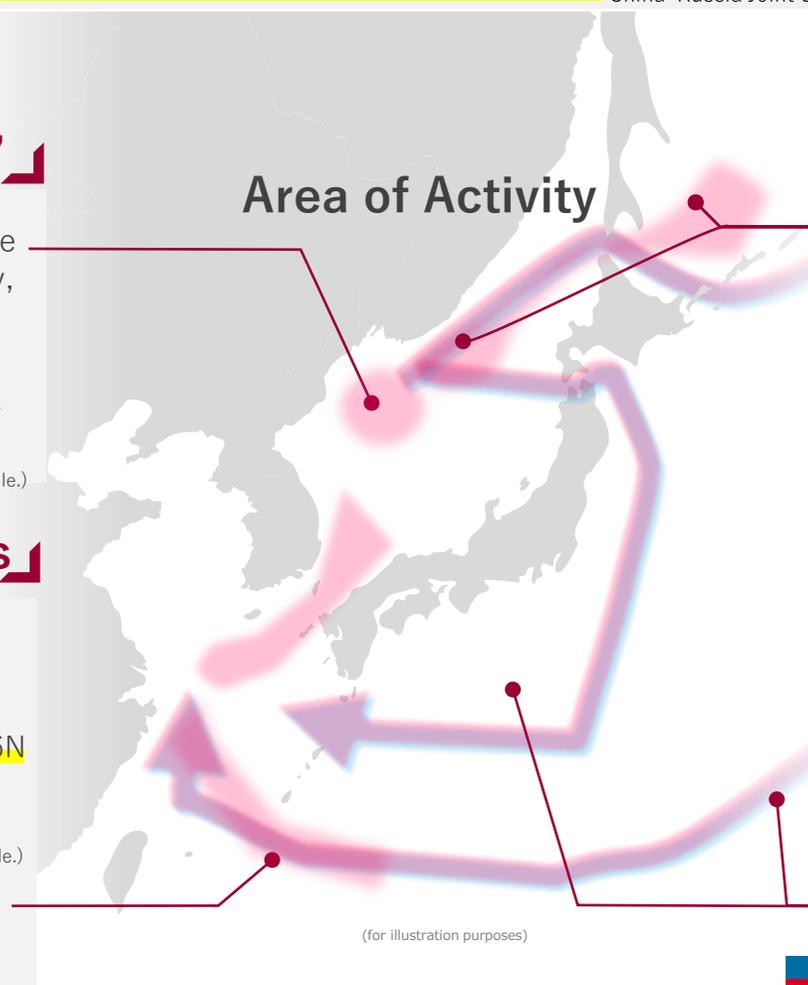
Joint Flights of Bombers

Since 2019, joint bomber flights have been conducted once or twice annually.

In November 2024, for the first time, participation was confirmed of **China’s H-6N** bomber, reportedly capable of carrying air-launched ballistic missiles with nuclear capability. (Illustration shows the Nov 2024 example.)



Photo shows joint flight in Nov 2024.



(for illustration purposes)

Mutual Participation in Military Exercises

Since 2018, both countries have continued **reciprocal participation in military exercises** hosted by each side. (Illustration shows the September 2024 example of “Northern United-2024.”)

Joint Navigation of Naval Vessels

Since 2021, joint navigation has been conducted annually, with expanded areas of activity. (Illustrations show examples from 2021 and 2023.)



Photo shows joint navigation in Oct 2021.