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1954-1955

The First Taiwan Strait Crisis: Beijing launches artillery attacks on some Taiwan-controlled outlying islands off China's southeastern coast. Taipei loses its control of some islands and moves remaining forces and residents to Taiwan.

1958

The Second Taiwan Strait Crisis: Beijing launches months-long artillery attacks on the Taiwan-controlled outlying islands of Kinmen and Matsu, both close to mainland China. Taipei fights back with some US-supplied weapons.

1971

Taiwan loses UN seat held since 1946 as the Republic of China, to the People's Republic of China.

1979

The United States endorses the "One China Policy" and switches diplomatic recognition from Taipei to Beijing.

1979

The United States enacts the Taiwan Relations Act, which makes clear that the US decision to establish diplomatic ties with Beijing rests upon the expectation that the future of Taiwan will be determined by peaceful means.

1982

US President Ronald Reagan adopts Six Assurances to Taiwan, including a pledge not to alter the Taiwan Relations Act.

1996

Third Taiwan Strait Crisis: Taiwan holds its first direct presidential vote. In reaction, Beijing launches missiles into waters near Taiwan; Washington dispatches aircraft carriers to the region.

2000

Chen Shui-bian is elected Taiwan president, marking the first time in power for the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), which supports Taiwanese sovereignty and formal independence.

2005

Beijing adopts an anti-secession bill in March that makes secession by Taiwan illegal.

2016

US President-elect Donald Trump breaks decades of US diplomatic precedent by speaking directly, by telephone, with President Tsai Ing-wen.

2017

Trump administration approves \$1.4 billion worth of arms sales to Taiwan, prompting anger from Beijing.

2018

Trump signs legislation that encourages the United States to send senior officials to Taiwan to meet Taiwanese counterparts and vice versa, again infuriating China.

2018

The US State Department approves the sale to Taiwan of spare parts for F-16 fighter jets and other military aircraft worth up to \$330 million, drawing a warning from China that it jeopardises cooperation between Beijing and Washington.

2022

US President Joe Biden and Chinese President Xi Jinping hold a two-hour call.

August 2

US House Speaker Nancy Pelosi lands in Taiwan in an unannounced visit despite China warnings. (Reuters)

PELOSI'S CONTROVERSIAL VISIT

Taiwan, not US, may pay the price

AGENCIES

When US House Speaker Nancy Pelosi touched down in Taiwan on Tuesday night, China was ready with its response.

In quick succession, a slew of government and political bodies fired off statements condemning the visit and warning of its "severe impact" on US-China relations, while China's military said it would immediately launch "air and sea exercises" and released a plan for 6-day drills surrounding the island.

Pelosi's visit -- the first by a top-ranked US lawmaker in 25 years and part of a larger Asia tour -- was seen by Beijing as a "major political provocation" and a challenge to China's sovereignty. China's ruling Communist Party claims the self-governed democracy of Taiwan as its own.

Pelosi's defiance of China's warnings not to visit the island may have aggravated troubled US-China relations, but analysts say the party likely to end up feeling the brunt of Beijing's pressure is not the United States, but Taiwan.

However, Beijing's response so far has been more restrained than some of the possibilities floated by nationalist voices in China in recent days.

An official map indicating the location of some of these planned drills -- initially set to run Thursday to Sunday -- suggest they are closer to the island than previous exercises -- and even encroach on Taiwan's territorial waters. Analysts say that indicates they are an escalation from previous threats leveraged by Beijing against Taiwan.

The map shows the drills will encircle the island more completely than previous exercises -- including the military exercise areas and missile splashdown zones during a major crisis in the Taiwan Strait in the mid-1990s.

With these drills, China has "gone a lot farther

than they ever have before," according to Carl Schuster, a former US Navy captain and former director of operations at the US Pacific Command's Joint Intelligence Center.

"The geopolitical signal being sent is that China can close Taiwan's air and sea access whenever it wants," he said.

Taiwan's Defense Ministry in a press briefing yesterday called the plan tantamount to a



"maritime and aerial blockade" that would "threaten international waterway, challenge the international order, undermine cross-strait status quo and endanger regional security."

Analysts spoken to by Reuters say it remains unclear if China will fire cruise or ballistic missiles directly over the island, or attempt a blockade for the first time.

Song Zhongping, a Hong Kong-based military commentator, said it appeared the People's Liberation Army wanted to practise blockading

the island if it had to in a later war.

"The goal of these exercises, to put it bluntly, is to prepare for the military fight with Taiwan."

But how significant the exercises would ultimately be would depend on what happens in the coming days, according to political scientist Chong Ja Ian of the National University of Singapore, who said much was at stake for China's image at home and abroad.

"Beijing (does not) want to escalate things in a way it cannot control. At the same time, it cannot send a signal that looks too weak," said Chong, noting the latter would have domestic ramifications for Chinese leader Xi Jinping and potentially affect Beijing's ability "to make other regional states toe its line."

"What that sweet spot looks like (for Beijing) no one really knows," he said.

The planned military exercises, meant to "squeeze Taiwan," would likely be followed up with

continued actions in the Taiwan Strait, according to Yun Sun, director of the China Program at the Stimson Center in Washington, .

"The Pelosi visit actually will lead to a new escalation of the Chinese military coercion of Taiwan in the foreseeable future. That punishment is the key of the Chinese response at this point, because it cannot punish the US," she said.

Taiwan is also set to bear an economic penalty for its actions, with China's Taiwan Affairs Office yesterday announcing a suspension on the import of certain citrus fruits and seafood products from the island. Chinese Customs in a separate statement pegged the suspensions to hygiene concerns, but it is not the first time China has banned Taiwanese products amid escalating tensions.

China's Ministry of Commerce also announced it would immediately suspend its export of natural sand to Taiwan, a key component for the production of semiconductor chips -- a move Taiwan's Bureau of Mines said would have "limited" effect.

And in the face of China's plans for military drills, Taiwan's Maritime and Port Bureau also issued three notices yesterday, asking vessels to use alternative routes for seven ports around the island.

Taiwan also started negotiating with neighboring Japan and the Philippines to find alternative aviation routes to avoid Chinese assets.

Now, Pelosi has departed the island, leaving a defiant Taiwan under even more pressure as China vents its fury.

When asked during a regular news briefing in Beijing whether the export suspension was meant to punish Taiwan over Pelosi's visit, China's Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs Hua Chunying refused to comment on specific trade actions but said "one thing is certain here."

"The US and Taiwan separatist forces must take the responsibility and pay the price for the mistakes they made," she said.

West Bengal CM revamps cabinet

NDTV ONLINE

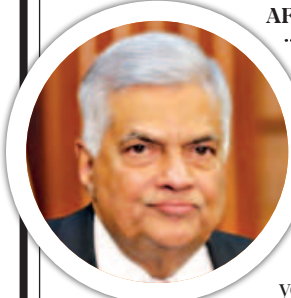
West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee's cabinet expansion -- billed as the biggest since the party came to power in 2011 -- included five new faces. Sources said the expansion will be followed by a reshuffle of ministries.

The biggest name among the newcomers is Babul Supriyo -- a former Union minister of the BJP who joined the Trinamool Congress last year, shortly after the party won a third consecutive term in power.

Along with Babul Supriyo, Snehashish Chakraborty, Partha Bhowmik, Udayan Guha and Pradip Majumder will be allotted seats in the cabinet. Four junior ministers will be Birbaha Hansda, Biplab Roy Chowdhury, Tajmul Hossain and Satyajit Burman.

Sri Lanka faces 'great danger' President warns as economic crisis drags on

AFP, Colombo



Sri Lanka faces a "great danger" with fuel shortages sparked by its unprecedented economic crisis set to continue at least till the year's end, President Ranil Wickremesinghe warned yesterday. The 73-year-old, who was propelled to power last

month after his predecessor Gotabaya Rajapaksa was forced to flee the country and resign after months of protests, said the financial meltdown had turned into a serious political crisis. "Today we are facing an unprecedented situation that our country had never faced in recent history," he said while opening a new session of parliament. "We are in great danger." Wickremesinghe said the only way to escape the crisis was "if we all face this challenge together as one people," and asked all parties in parliament to join his initiative for a "unity government".

Asean urges de-escalation of tensions over Taiwan

Warns Myanmar against more executions; Russia backs junta's efforts to 'stabilise' the crisis-racked country

AGENCIES

Foreign ministers of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) yesterday expressed concern over rising tensions concerning Taiwan, an official from chair country Cambodia said.

Asean hopes all sides will try their best to de-escalate tensions on Taiwan and avoid actions that contribute to an escalation, Kung Phoak, Secretary of State of Cambodia's foreign ministry, told a news conference.

Malaysia and Thailand echoed the calls for calm, with Malaysian Foreign Minister Saifuddin Abdullah urging all sides to tread "very carefully".

Thai foreign ministry spokesman Tanee Sangrat said the kingdom called for "utmost

restraint" and warned against "any actions that would aggravate tensions".

Attention will now turn to Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi and his American counterpart Antony Blinken who will join Asean and other ministers for regional security talks today and tomorrow.

Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen, opening the meeting as chair of Asean, condemned Myanmar for executing four prisoners last month in defiance of widespread international pleas for clemency.

Hun Sen said the bloc was "disappointed and disturbed" by the executions and warned that further use of capital punishment would mean a "rethink" of the five-point peace plan agreed to last year with Myanmar.

The plan calls for an immediate

end to violence and dialogue between the junta and coup opponents, reports AFP.

Meanwhile, Russia backs the Myanmar junta's efforts to "stabilise" the crisis-racked country and hold elections next year, its foreign minister said in talks with top generals yesterday, according to Russian state media.

"We are in solidarity with the efforts [by the junta] aimed at stabilising the situation in the country," Sergei Lavrov said during talks in Myanmar's capital Naypyidaw, according to the TASS news agency.

On Monday junta chief Min Aung Hlaing -- who travelled to Moscow last month -- said polls could only take place when the conflict-racked country was "stable and peaceful".

Dhaka too may feel the heat

FROM PAGE 1

ALI RIAZ

"Tension in the East and Southeast regions has tacit influence on South Asia. Besides, Bangladesh is a part of a larger Indo-Pacific region. The country is already in the midst of the geopolitical tug-of-war."

Prof Riaz said there are two reasons for the US ramping up the rhetoric and actions on Taiwan issue: recent assertive posturing of China in South China Sea, and the fear of a repeat of Ukraine-like situation in Asia.

He said the situation in Taiwan Straits is an extension of what is happening in South

China Sea. South China Sea has been an area of contestation between these two countries for a long time, but increasingly China seems to be gaining an upper hand, especially due to technological advances and its willingness to confront the US, said Prof Riaz, also a non-resident senior fellow of Washington-based think-tank Atlantic Council.

He said the US administration is trying to send a strong message that it will continue to pursue its strategic interests in the region. "The US is trying to reclaim its influence through the Indo-Pacific

Strategy (IPS) while China is not only trying to prevent but expand its control. The region has become the site of competing vision of international order. Taiwan is the most obvious case of such competition."

Prof Riaz said the recent tension will further militarise the region and escalate tension.

"A conflict between China and US is not imminent, but escalation will continue. A further polarisation is a likely outcome of the growing tension. But such consequence does not augur well for China or the US," he added.

"Also, the US took their commitment towards Taiwan to newer heights. In a way, the US broke the One China policy."

Analysing the event, he said China is pragmatic and has very good communications with the international system as a whole, and moreover, the US and China are highly interdependent.

"Considering all this, we can safely assume that the current conflict will not escalate further. This time around, China did two new things -- they deployed a cyber-attack, and also promised to deliver a financial punishment to Taiwan."

from trade and supply-chain related issues. The issue at hand will further increase the complexities. Both China and Taiwan hold some sensitive supplies. Taiwan is the world's number one chip maker. Any delay here will have a global effect; from cars to computers to almost everything else. We have to stay vigilant and keep track on these issues."

Muniruzzaman said the visit is significant, because the strategic competition between the US and China has recently reached new heights, and yet the US managed to give China the message that they can determine all the terms.

FROM PAGE 1

MUNSHI FAIZ AHMAD

The Ukraine Russia war has already left millions of people across the globe, especially the poor, in trouble. Inflation is high and food supplies are short," he said in a telephone interview with The Daily Star yesterday.

He said China perceives that the visit by US House Speaker Nancy Pelosi has symbolic value and is akin to recognising Taiwan -- something that angered China, which has already been a rival of the US.

The US, like most other

countries of the world, has maintained diplomatic relations with China, not with Taiwan. On the other hand, the US also works for democracy in Taiwan and supports Taiwan in its defence from any military attacks, he said.

Meanwhile, Pelosi visited Taiwan though the Pentagon discouraged it. So, why Pelosi visited the country is not clear yet, said Munshi Faiz, former chairman of the Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies.

"Though China threatened of military actions, it has not done it in

practice. It knows that will be very very problematic in the long run," said the international relations analyst.

He thinks that the US would also not do anything that leads to a war.

"We want peace. The people all across the world want peace, not war. Bangladesh should promote the diplomacy of peace and economy," Munshi Faiz said.

The international community should encourage the ways of how China and the US can work together over Taiwan, instead of going into war, he added.

To Day is 45th Death Anniversary



To day is 45th Death Anniversary of Dr : Nawab Ali. M.B (Calcutta); MRCP (Edin.) FRCP (Edin) Former Professor of Medicine and former Principal, Dhaka Medical College. Dr. Nawab Ali Memorial Welfare Trust will hold Memorial Meeting and dua on 27 August-2022, in Dhaka. Trustees home and Abroad are requested to Contact- 01729093558



ঢাকা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়

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