



# U.K. Warship Enters South China Sea, Beijing Warns

- By Ankit Agrawal

# UK warship ignores Beijing warnings and enters the South China Sea

WION Web Team

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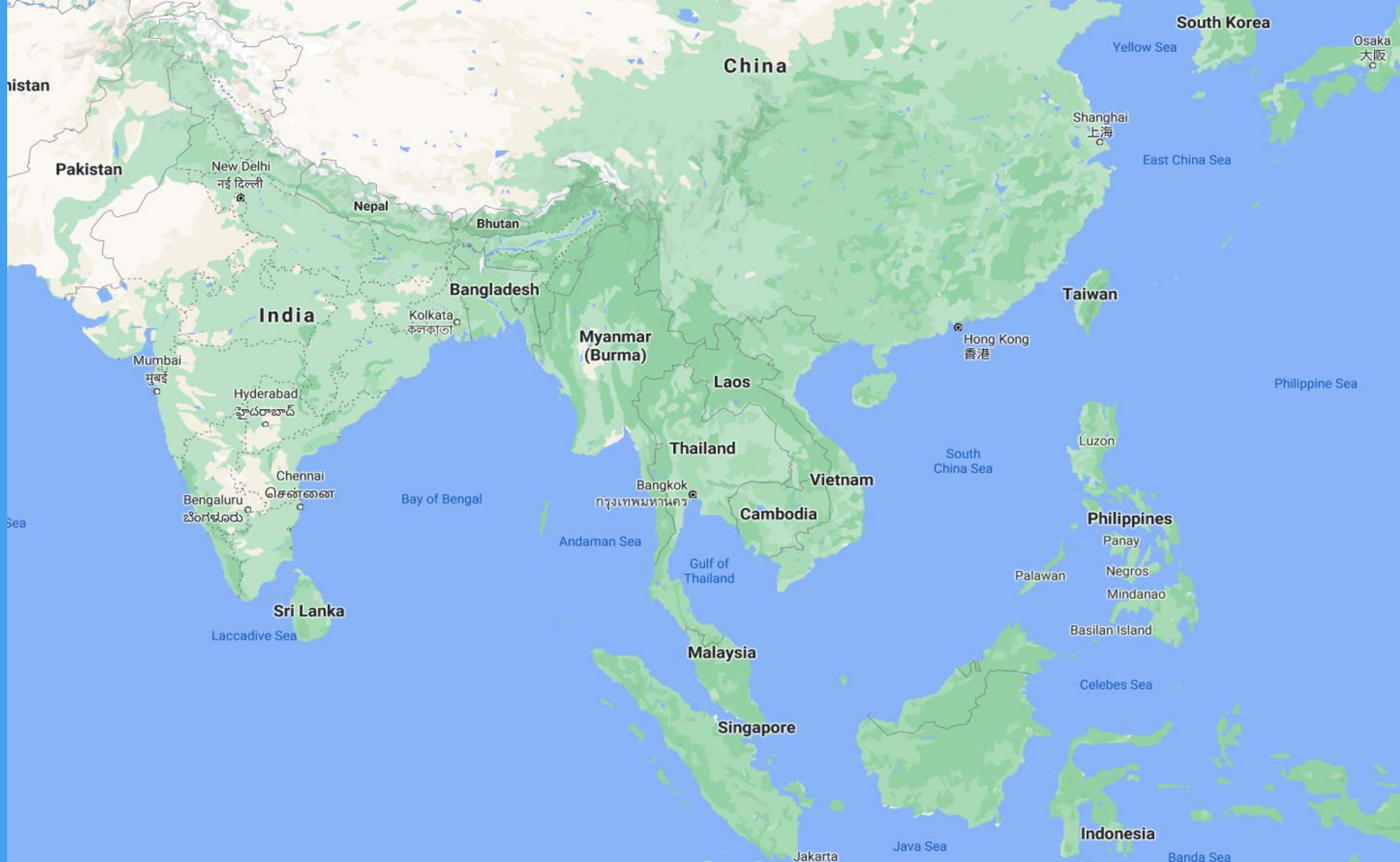




# WHAT HAS HAPPENED?

HMS Queen Elizabeth, a British aircraft carrier, and its Carrier Strike Group have entered the South China Sea, a territory predominantly claimed by China, reports the UK Defence Journal.

China claims practically the whole 1.3 million-square-mile South China Sea as its sovereign territory, and it has **blamed foreign warships for escalating tensions** in the region.





## BUT WHY DEPLOYING SHIPS IN SCS?

Freedom of navigation operations (or FONOPs) are routinely conducted by the United States, the United Kingdom, and Australia to counter what Washington refers to as "attempts by coastal states to unjustly limit access to the seas."

Both the US and the UK have previously enraged China by conducting FONOPs in the South China Sea to assert freedom of navigation rights.

## SHIPS SENT BY BRITAIN?

The HMS Queen Elizabeth is escorted by six Royal Navy ships,  
a Royal Navy submarine,

A US Navy destroyer, and a Dutch frigate, and is carrying eight F-35B  
Lightning II fast jets,

Four Wildcat maritime attack helicopters, seven Merlin Mk2  
anti-submarine and airborne early warning helicopters, and  
three Merlin Mk4 commando helicopters on deck.



# IMPORTANCE OF SOUTH CHINA SEA

The South China Sea is a **strategic waterway surrounded by six nations**, such as China, Taiwan, the Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia and Brunei.

**Two groups of islands** here are at the centre of a **fierce territorial dispute**.

The **first is the Paracel** Archipelago, contested by **China, Taiwan and Vietnam**.



The **second is the Spratly** Islands, disputed between **China and all other five nations.**

These islands are **strategic because they are surrounded by waters teeming** with **marine life and are rich in oil** and gas resources.

**One-third of the world's shipping traffic** also passes through the South China Sea.

**Beijing claims sovereignty** over **nearly the entire sea.**

## STRATEGY USED BY CHINA

China has been **carrying out incursions, sinking foreign ships, establishing new districts, giving Chinese names to islands,**

**Building new artificial islands and using fishing vessels as maritime militias** in the South China Sea.



# RULING ON SOUTH CHINA SEA

But a 2016 ruling by the International Court of Justice in the Hague rejected China's claim and allowed the U.S., U.K. and Australia to conduct routine freedom of navigation operations (FONOPs) in parts of the South China Sea.

Following that 2016 ruling, the British warship ignored Beijing's warnings and entered the South China Sea to carry out a FONOP exercise.

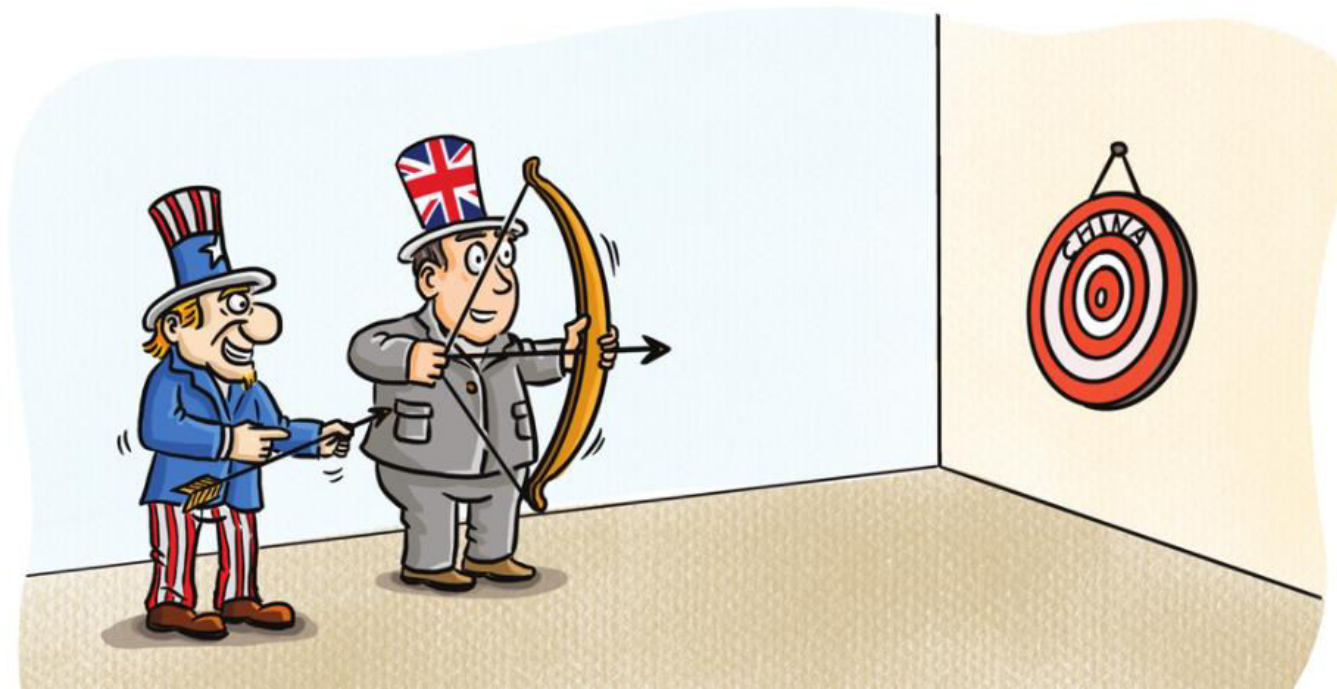
Last week, China criticized NBC's Olympics coverage for showing an "incomplete map" of its territories by not including **Taiwan** or the **South China Sea** as being under its ownership.

OPINION / OBSERVER

# UK still lives in colonial days by sending navy to South China Sea

By Lin Lan

Published: Jul 26, 2021 09:52 PM



The **Royal Navy**, which emerged from the Age of Discovery, has gradually declined. Now, the **UK intends to use its navy to revive its old dream of an empire**, but its overall strength cannot support such global ambitions.

If the **UK wants to provoke the Chinese** People's Liberation Army in the South China Sea, it **will inevitably lead to strong countermeasures from China**.



CHINA / MILITARY

# UK warships' S.China Sea tour 'threatens China politically more than militarily'

By Liu Xuanzun

Published: Jul 21, 2021 11:55 PM



**Q. Which among the following country is not involved in the South China Sea Dispute?**

A) Indonesia

B) Malaysia

C) Cambodia

D) Brunei



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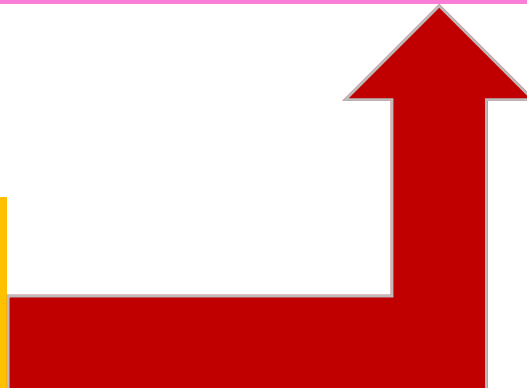
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