



The Wall Street Journal

# China's Heavyweight Coast Guard Ships Bring Muscle to Sea Disputes

Story by Austin Ramzy • 1h • [5 min read](#)



**H**ONG KONG—As China faced off with its Pacific neighbors this year, two ships provided an intimidating presence: The world's longest coast guard patrol ships. One hundred and twenty-three feet longer than their American equivalents, they have become floating symbols and enforcers of Beijing's territorial ambitions.

One of the pair, the Haijing 5901, came to be known this year in the Philippine media as the "monster" after it showed up during and after clashes near tiny shoals claimed by both countries in the South China Sea.

Its sister ship, the Haijing 2901, played a starring role in Chinese military drills around Taiwan last month that Beijing cast as a warning to Taiwan's new president over his rejection of China's claims to the self-ruled island. It was an unusual deployment for a military branch that in other countries typically focuses on law enforcement and rescue.

PHILIPPINE COAST GUARD PHOTO COURTESY OF THE CHINESE COAST GUARD

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