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Taiwan Report Says Chinese Forces Could ‘Paralyze’ its Defenses

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A Taiwanese government report has warned that China’s military could “**paralyze**” the island’s armed forces.

The yearly report was prepared by Taiwan’s defense ministry for parliament. Reuters news agency reported the findings Wednesday, saying it had examined a copy of the report.

The latest document identifies more serious threats to Taiwan from China’s military than last year’s report.

China’s government has been increasing its military activities around the island, which it considers a rebel territory. China has said it plans to one day reclaim the territory and would use force if necessary.

The report said China’s armed forces are currently able to fully **monitor** Taiwanese military deployments. It said China can launch, what it called, “soft and hard electronic attacks.” Such attacks could include blocking communications across a series of islands that run from southern Japan, through Taiwan and south to the Philippines.

The report added that China “can combine with its internet army” to launch wired and wireless attacks against the internet. Such attacks “would **initially** paralyze our air defenses, command of the sea and counter-attack system abilities,” the report said. This presents “a huge threat” to Taiwan, the document states.

With the ability to launch missile attacks to hit anywhere on the island, China is also equipped to “paralyze” Taiwanese military command centers and naval and air force operations, the report said.

China has also been improving its **reconnaissance** abilities using a system called Beidou, the defense ministry said. This is China's version of the American-owned GPS **navigation** system. This gives China the ability to easily monitor movements around Taiwan. China could support the system with its own spy planes, **drones** and intelligence gathering ships, it added.

China's Defense Ministry did not immediately answer a Reuters request for comment.

Taiwan's report did, like last year, note that China still lacks the transport abilities and organizational support to launch a large invasion. But the defense ministry said the Chinese military is working to build up those abilities.

Chinese spies in Taiwan could also launch a "**decapitation** strike" to destroy political and economic systems, the report added.

The ministry said China is deploying mid- and long-range missiles and carrying out more exercises involving its aircraft carriers. By doing so, mainland China is trying to position itself to delay "foreign military intervention" in an attack on Taiwan, it added.

Taiwanese President Tsai Ing-wen has placed urgency on strengthening the island's defenses. The government has sought to build up its own defense industry and buy more equipment from the United States. The U.S. is the island's most important arms supplier and international supporter.

I'm Bryan Lynn.

Reuters reported this story. Bryan Lynn adapted the report for VOA Learning English. Mario Ritter, Jr. was the editor.

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Words in This Story

paralyze - *v.* make something stop working

monitor - *v.* to watch something carefully and record the results

initial - *adj.* happening first, or at the beginning

reconnaissance - *n.* the process of getting information about a place or an area for military use

navigation - *n.* to find the direction to travel by using maps or other equipment

drone - *n.* a small, pilotless aircraft

decapitation - *n.* an attempt to undermine an operation
