

Chronology of Events (April 13 – May 15)

April 2010

13

Japanese Defense Minister Toshimi Kitazawa confirms that ten Chinese military vessels (including two submarines and eight destroyers) were spotted on April 10 in international waters between Okinawa Island and Miyako Island in the Okinawa island chain on their way to the atoll of Okinotorishima.

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The Taiwan Affairs Office of China's State Council announces that Taiwanese students who graduate from senior high school with "top credits" in Taiwan's basic competence test for entry into university can study at Chinese universities without taking an entrance exam.

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The Chinese State Council rejects foreign aid after a 7.1-magnitude earthquake hit Yushu in Qinghai Province on April 14.

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Volcanic ash from the eruption of Iceland's Eyjafjallajökull volcano affects European airspace. About 17,300 flights per day are cancelled, causing losses of about US\$200 million

16

Taiwan's Fubon Financial Holding announces cooperation with China's state-owned China Development Bank and the Fujian provincial government to set up a five billion renminbi industrial venture capital fund via its subsidiary Fubon Venture Capital, with Fubon contributing 40 percent and the two other investors each 30 percent of the capital.

16

The Legislative Yuan completes the third reading of a new version of the Statute for Industrial Innovation, deciding on recruitment subsidies for small- and mid-sized enterprises, the establishment of industrial parks for innovative industries and set up a National Development Fund.

19

The Ministry of Economic Affairs and the Department of Health (DOH) rule that beef tongues, bovine diaphragm and bovine testes are not part of the viscera and can therefore be imported under the law. On the following day, however, the DOH holds a news conference to announce the temporary suspension of these imports.

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The monthly opinion poll by the Global Views Monthly on the government's approval ratings shows that in April 26.6 percent of the respondents were satisfied with the Ma government, while 61.4 percent were dissatisfied.

23

Douglas Paal, a former Taipei director of the American Institute in Taiwan (AIT), proposes that U.S. President Barack Obama, Chinese President Hu Jintao and Taiwan President Ma Ying-jeou jointly attend the APEC summit in 2011, arguing that such a meeting would be a "win, win, win situation" for all sides involved.

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President Ma Ying-jeou and Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) Chairwoman Tsai Ing-wen debate the pros and cons of ECFA in a televised debate. Opinion polls on ECFA conducted by various media directly after the debate showed the following pro:contra results: China Times: 47.5%:30.4%; United Daily News 42%:30%; Liberty Times: 28.02%:25.77%; Apple Daily: 52.09%:43.07%; TVBS: 41%:33%.

25

Four people in three cars are buried alive when a mudslide crushes a section of Freeway No. 3 in Qidu near Keelung.

26

Japan is mulling adopting a strategy for exploring the seabed for rare metals, in an area that covers the area east of the median line between China and Japan in the East China Sea to the Okinawa Islands and from the Izu Peninsula to the Ogasawara Islands (Bonin Islands) in the Pacific Ocean.

27

The Legislative Yuan completes the third reading of the Personal Data Protection Act. The Ministry of Justice will also establish a taskforce on the Personal Data Protection Law and the Freedom of Information Act to actively protect privacy and the disclosure and transparency of government information.

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In a questioning session at the Legislative Yuan Air Force Chief-of-Staff Ger Hsi-hsiung said that due to a lack of spare parts only 70 percent of Taiwan's F-16s and just 26 percent of its F-5F aircraft are capable to go on missions, falling short of the standard 75 percent mission availability rate.

30

After the Taipei District Court notified People First Party Chairman James Soong that he could retrieve NT\$240 million that he deposited with the court in connection with the Chungshing Bills financial scandal, President Ma claims that the money belongs to the Chinese Nationalist Party (KMT) and declares that if the party gets the money back, it will donate all of it to charity.

May 2010

1

Some 7,000 workers take to the streets in a Labor Day parade to protest against poverty and worker dispatching, demanding that the government outlaw worker dispatching and halt labor outsourcing.

2

In an exclusive interview with CNN President Ma states that “We will never ask the United States to fight for Taiwan.”

3

The marine survey ship “Haijian 51” from China’s State Oceanic Administration approaches the Japan Coast Guard survey vessel “Shoyo” about 320 kilometers northwest off Amami-Oshima Island inside what Japan claims as its exclusive economic zone.

4

The International Court of Arbitration rules in connection with the Lafayette frigate deal that French company Thales has to repay almost NT\$40 billion to Taiwan that the company had used to pay commissions in violation of the procurement contract.

5

Incumbent Kaohsiung City Mayor Chen Chu wins the DPP primary for the mayoral elections for the new Kaohsiung special municipality with a 59 percent support rate, defeating Kaoshiung County Magistrate Yang Chiu-hsing.

7

Incumbent lawmaker Lai Ching-te wins the DPP primary for the mayoral elections in Tainan special municipality with a 44 percent support rate, defeating four contenders and emerging as the DPP’s mayoral candidate for greater Tainan.

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Ma says in an exclusive interview with the Washington Post that he does not exclude the possibility of meeting with Chinese President Hu Jintao in the future.

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Amid tumultuous clashes in the Legislative Yuan amendments to the Statute Governing the Relations Between the Peoples of the Taiwan Area and the Mainland Area pass their first reading, stipulating the recognition of Chinese academic degrees.

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A Singapore court rules in favor of the Republic of China in the Papua New Guinea diplomatic scandal, granting Taiwan the right to demand the return of US\$29.8 million that had been paid to diplomatic broker Charles Ching for arranging diplomatic ties between Taiwan and Papua New Guinea and to impound Ching’s assets in the city state.

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Foreign Ministry Spokesman James Chang notes that Taiwan enjoys stable relations with the Vatican and that the Vatican's recent approval of several bishops that had been appointed by China's state-controlled Catholic Church are not the first such cases, and that Taiwan can understand the Vatican's approach.

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Conservative Party leader David Cameron takes over as British prime minister and appoints Liberal Democrats leader Nick Clegg as deputy prime minister

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Vice Premier Eric Liluan Chu resigns to run for the KMT in the mayoral election in Xinbei City. Chu is succeeded by Financial Supervisory Commission (FSC) Chairman Sean Chen, while First Financial Holding Chairman Chen Yu-chang will head the FSC.

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In a meeting with a delegation of the National Committee on American Foreign Policy (NCAFP), President Ma states that Taiwan-U.S. relations are "going quite smoothly."

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President Ma notes that he has been in office for two years, but that the two U.S. arms packages have been planned ten years ago. The government has begun to put together a new procurement list and the Ministry of National Defense will research together with the U.S. side pertinent items.

15

The two-day U.S.-China Human Rights Dialogue begins. The U.S. State Department notes that one of the biggest results of the talks is that the two sides agreed to continue to have conversations and also agreed to a next round of the dialogue, to be held in Beijing in 2011.
