

Taiwan jets intercept Chinese war planes in Taiwan Strait



Photo for illustrative purposes / CNA file photo

Taipei, March 31 (CNA) Taiwan's Air Force scrambled several fighter jets Sunday when two military aircraft from China crossed the median line of the Taiwan Strait, according to the Ministry of National Defense (MND).

The Taiwan Air Force jets intercepted two J-11 fighter planes from the People's Liberation Army of China when they crossed the median line, MND spokesman Chen Chung-chi (陳中奇) said.

The Chinese fighter planes entered Taiwan's southwestern airspace at 11 a.m. and retreated to the west side of the median line after they were issued a radio warning, according to a statement issued by the MND.

According to local media, the incident triggered a 10-minute standoff between Taiwan and China warplanes.

Air Force Officer Wang Chun-hsiung (王春雄) told CNA that Taiwan's military has standard procedures for dealing with such incidents and will dispatch surveillance units if China's military aircraft enter Taiwan's air defense identification zone or cross the median line in the strait.

Taiwan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) said on its Twitter that the Chinese war planes made "intentional, reckless and provocative action" and violated a long-held tacit agreement by crossing the median line.

"We've informed regional partners and condemn China for such behavior," MOFA said.

Presidential Office spokesman Alex Huang (黃alex) condemned that China's act not only lacked international responsibility, but was also a deliberate provocation that undermines regional security and stability.

He described the act of the Chinese warplanes crossing the median line as destruction of the status quo in the strait.

"The Republic of China government strongly condemned such an act," Huang said.

(By Matt Yu, Emerson Lin and William Yen)

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