



## China, Japan Set Up Military Hotline

**For Prelims:** Senkaku island, Diaoyu island, East China Sea

**For Mains:** Impact of Territorial Disputes in Geopolitics

### Why in News?

Recently, China and Japan set up military hotlines (a direct phone line set up for a specific purpose) to manage maritime, air incidents over disputed islands (Senkaku Island).

- China and Japan **have a long-festering dispute over uninhabited** [East China Sea](#) islands controlled by Japan but claimed by China.

### Why was the Hotline Established?

- This move was made to strengthen their capability of managing and controlling incidents arising due to their aggressive patrolling of the disputed waters.
- The **hotline will enrich** the **communication channels** between the defence departments of China and Japan, strengthen the capabilities of the two sides to manage and control maritime and air crises, and help maintain regional peace and stability.
- This move will further **maintain regional peace and stability.**

### What is the Senkaku Island Dispute?

- **About:**
  - The Senkaku Island dispute concerns a territorial dispute over a group of uninhabited islands known as:
    - **Senkaku** Islands **in Japan,**
    - **Diaoyu** Islands **in China,** and
    - **Tiaoyutai** Islands **in Taiwan.**
  - Both Japan and China claim ownership of these islands.
- **Location:**
  - Eight uninhabited islands **lie in the East China Sea.** They have a **total area** of **about 7 sq km** and lie northeast of Taiwan.



#### ▪ **Strategic Importance:**

- Islands are close to strategically **important shipping lanes**, offer **rich fishing grounds** and are thought to contain **oil deposits**.

#### ▪ **Japan's Claim:**

- After World War II, Japan renounced claims to a number of territories and islands including Taiwan in the 1951 **Treaty of San Francisco**.
- But under the treaty, the Nansei Shoto islands came under USA trusteeship and were then returned to Japan in 1971.
- Japan says that Senkaku islands are part of the Nansei Shoto islands and hence they also belong to Japan.
- Besides, **China raised no objections to the San Francisco deal**.
- **Only since 1970s**, when the issue of oil resources in the area emerged, **Chinese and Taiwanese authorities** began pressing their **claims**.

#### ▪ **China's Claim:**

- These Islands have been part of its territory since ancient times, serving as important fishing grounds administered by the province of Taiwan.
- When Taiwan was returned in the **Treaty of San Francisco**, China said the islands as part of it - should also have been returned.

#### ▪ **Taiwan Claims:**

- Taiwan claims the islands **but has forged agreements** with Japan to avoid any conflict as Japan maintains close defence ties with Taipei.
- Despite the ongoing dispute, Japan maintains close defence ties with Taiwan.

### **Other Recent Island Disputes:**

- Kuril Island: Located in North Pacific Ocean.
  - Dispute is between Russia and Japan
- The Chagos archipelago: Located in North Indian Ocean.
  - Dispute is between Britain and Mauritius.

## **Prelims**

**Q. Which one of the following statements best reflects the issue with Senkaku Islands, sometimes mentioned in the news?**

- (a)** It is generally believed that they are artificial islands made by a country around South China Sea.
- (b)** China and Japan engage in maritime disputes over these islands in East China Sea.
- (c)** A permanent American military base has been set up there to help Taiwan to increase its defence capabilities.
- (d)** Though International Court of Justice declared them as no man's land, some South-East Asian countries claim them.

**Ans: (b)**

**Explanation:**

- Senkaku island is not an artificial island but a natural occurring island. It is a group of Eight uninhabited islands. Hence, statement 1 is not correct.
- The Senkaku Island dispute concerns a territorial dispute over a group of uninhabited islands known between China and Japan. Both Japan and China claim ownership of these islands. Senkaku island lies in the East China Sea. Hence, statement 2 is correct.
- The US did not establish the permanent military bases over the senkaku island but joint military exercises have been conducted between the US and Japan Military forces. Hence, statement 3 is not correct.
- International court of justice has not given any verdict like No man's land regarding Senkaku Island. Hence statement 4 is not correct.

**Source: IE**

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