

Beijing accuses Japan of 'hyping' South China Sea issue at G7 summit

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Beijing: China has said that it was strongly dissatisfied with a statement by G7 members, in which they expressed concern over the South China Sea.

Leaders of the G7 countries -- Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Britain and the US -- and representatives from the European Union, convened in Japan's Ise-Shima for the summit, which ran Thursday through Friday.

"As the G7 host, Japan is hyping up the South China Sea issue and fanning the flame of tensions," Foreign Ministry spokesperson Hua Chunying said, adding that such action was not beneficial to stability in the South China Sea and does not accord with the G7's position as a platform for managing the developed economies.

"China is strongly dissatisfied with what Japan and the G7 have done," Hua said, urging G7 members to avoid irresponsible remarks and do more that is beneficial to regional peace and stability.

Hua called on G7 members to be objective and fair and abide by their promise of not taking sides on territorial disputes.

"As the world is faced with a complicated economic situation, the G7, as a platform to discuss world economy, should focus on economic and development issues of global concern," Hua said.

As the holder of the G20 presidency this year, China hopes G7 members will join the agenda of G20, which is more representative platform, and play a more constructive role in global economic governance, Hua said.

What China has done in the South China Sea falls entirely within China's sovereignty, and is completely legal, reasonable and blameless, Hua said.

China firmly maintains the freedom of navigation and overflight in the South China Sea, but the navigational freedom of commercial vessels is not the same as the wilful trespassing of naval warships, Hua said.

She said China opposed the smear campaign by some countries in the name of "navigation freedom."

In fact, regarding China's efforts to settle the South China Sea disputes through negotiation and consultation, more and more countries and organisations have shown their understanding and support, Hua said.

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