

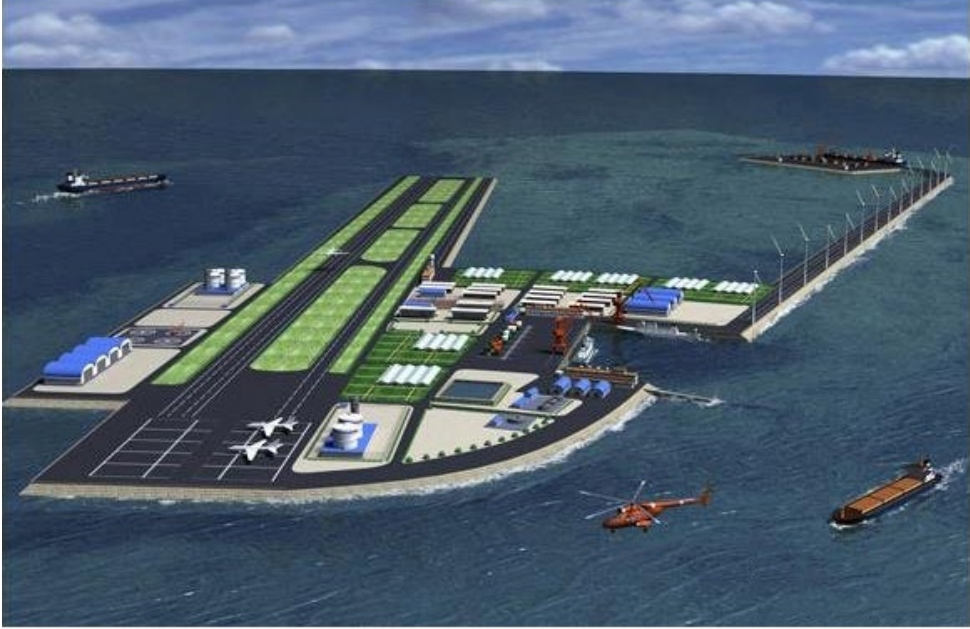
SANDCASTLES IN THE SOUTH CHINA SEA

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ACCORDING TO WESTERN media reports and official sources in the Philippines and Vietnam, China is building artificial islands on reefs and protruding rocks in the South China Sea to bolster its territorial claims. In response to questions at a Foreign Ministry press briefing on 6 June 2014, spokesman Hong Lei 洪磊 said, 'Anything China does on any of the islands or atolls is within its sovereign rights'.



Controversially, China has been building artificial islands in the South China Sea to increase its territorial claims
Source: Philippines Foreign Ministry



This is an artist's impression of a new airport and runway on an island in the South China Sea
Source: dqt.com.cn

The Chinese have also accelerated the construction of new buildings on already inhabited islands in the area. Other media reports claim that the Chinese government is paying fishermen subsidies to live on previously uninhabited islands and installing GPS devices with emergency communication systems in fishing boats that ply disputed waters.



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