

Yellow Sea: U.S. Aegis Destroyers, S. Korean Subs In New Drills

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South Korea and the United States are planning a second round of combined military drills including Aegis destroyers and several Korean submarines from Sunday to Sept. 9 in the Yellow Sea, a South Korean military source said yesterday.

"South Korea and the U.S. had actually agreed on implementing the second joint exercise this Sunday," the military official said.

The official said the U.S. will send two Aegis-equipped ships and there will be other Korean warships involved, such as a 1,200-ton submarine, corvettes and destroyers.

"The exercise will focus on detecting and blocking attacks by North Korean submarines," said the official.

The drill is expected to be small in scale, since there will be no other aircraft carriers or nuclear-powered submarines dispatched by the U.S.

The U.S.S. George Washington, a nuclear-powered aircraft carrier, participated in the first joint exercise held July 25-28 in the East Sea only, which was moved from the Yellow Sea after a harsh response from China, which said the drills would cause unnecessary tension on the Korean Peninsula.

The drill will be the fifth military deterrence drill since the Korean warship Cheonan's sinking on March 24, which was allegedly caused by a torpedo attack by the North.

According to the source, Chinese fleets are planning to hold ammunition drills in China's southeast sea near Qingdao today to Saturday, a few days before the Seoul-Washington joint exercise.

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