

Beat: Miscellaneous

CHINA IS DETAINING TWO MORE JAPANESE CITIZENS ON ESPIONAGE ALLEGATIONS

BRINGING TO FOUR ON SUSPICION OF SPYING

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USPA NEWS - The recent arrest of a woman and a man is bringing the total held to four Japanese nationals in China on suspicion of spying. A Japanese woman in her 50s has been held in Shanghai since June for her alleged involvement in spying on the country, the Mainichi Shimbun daily said...

The recent arrest of a woman and a man is bringing the total held to four Japanese nationals in China on suspicion of spying. A Japanese woman in her 50s has been held in Shanghai since June for her alleged involvement in spying on the country. Also, another Japanese national in his 60s has been detained in Beijing on similar charges, the Mainichi Shimbun daily said.

Late September, China has confirmed it is holding two Japanese men on espionage charges. One was taken into custody in China's north-east province of Liaoning near the border with North Korea and the other in the eastern province of Zhejiang near a military facility, the Asahi newspaper said.

Hong Lei, a spokesman for the Chinese foreign ministry, said that 'relevant authorities' had arrested the two people 'in accordance with the law for engaging in espionage activities in China'.

The arrests are likely to add to tensions between Tokyo and Beijing. Bilateral ties have improved slightly in the wake of two meetings between the Japanese prime minister, Shinzo Abe, and the Chinese president, Xi Jinping, since last November.

Japan had been making annual cuts to its defence budget for a decade up to 2013. The increases since then reflect its growing anxiety about China's expanding naval reach. The rise is also in line with Japan's more assertive defence policy under the conservative prime minister, Shinzo Abe, as he seeks to check Chinese influence and expand the scope of his country's military.

The Ministry has asked for 5.09 trillion yen (£27bn) for the financial year starting in April 2016, amid concern over Beijing's construction of artificial bases in the South China Sea and its claims to the disputed Senkaku/Diaoyu island chain in the East China Sea. (The Guardian)

In 2010, four Japanese nationals were temporarily detained in China on suspicion of entering a military zone and taking photographs without permission. The detentions came at a time of escalating tensions between Tokyo and Beijing. Last year, China's then-ambassador to Iceland disappeared following reports he had been arrested by state security for passing state secrets for Japan. China has never explained what happened to him. (Reuters)

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