

China's Navy warships pay first visit to Timor-Leste



A Chinese Navy task force arrives in Dili, capital of Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste, to pay a five-day official visit to the country, Jan 16, 2016 [Photo by Zeng Tao/Xinhua]

DILI, Timor-Leste - A Chinese Navy task force on Saturday arrived in Dili, capital of Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste, to pay a five-day official visit to the country.

The task force 152, which comprises a destroyer, a frigate and a supply ship, has been Chinese Navy's first one to pay an official visit to Timor-Leste since it became a sovereign state in 2002.

The three Chinese warships were anchored to Dili port at about 10 o'clock local time in the morning. Timor-Leste's Defense and Security Minister Cirilo Jose Cristovao, China's ambassador to Timor-Leste Liu Hongyang and more than 500 representatives from local Chinese companies and overseas students gave a warm welcoming ceremony to the task force.

Minister Christovao said at the welcoming ceremony that the first official visit by Chinese Navy's task force will definitely further promote the development of the bilateral relationship and defense cooperation, and be of significant importance to world peace and regional stability.

Wang Jianxun, commodore of the task force 152, said that the visit will improve the bilateral friendship, especially the cooperation between navies of the two countries.

After the welcoming ceremony, Timor-Leste government officials and military personnel as well as Chinese nationals attended the ceremony there got on board and visited the Chinese navy destroyer Jinan and frigate Yiyang.

During the visit, officers and soldiers of the task force will hold a deck reception and the two sides' military personnel will visit each other's warship. The task force will also hold an anti-piracy seminar and sports games with Timor-Leste's counterparts.

Commodore Wang Jianxun will pay a visit to the Ministry of Defense and Security of Timor-Leste to meet its minister and commander of Timor-Leste's Defense Force. While the task force's political commissar Ye Jianlin will visit a local school.

Timor-Leste became the first new sovereign state of the 21st century in May 2002. Its capital Dili is the political and economic center and also a major port of the country.

The task force 152 is en route its global voyage started in August 2015 when it finished an escort mission in the Gulf of Aden. Timor-Leste is the 13th stop of its global goodwill visits after a 10-day cruise from Australia's Brisbane.



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Source: http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/world/2016-01/16/content_23116470.htm