

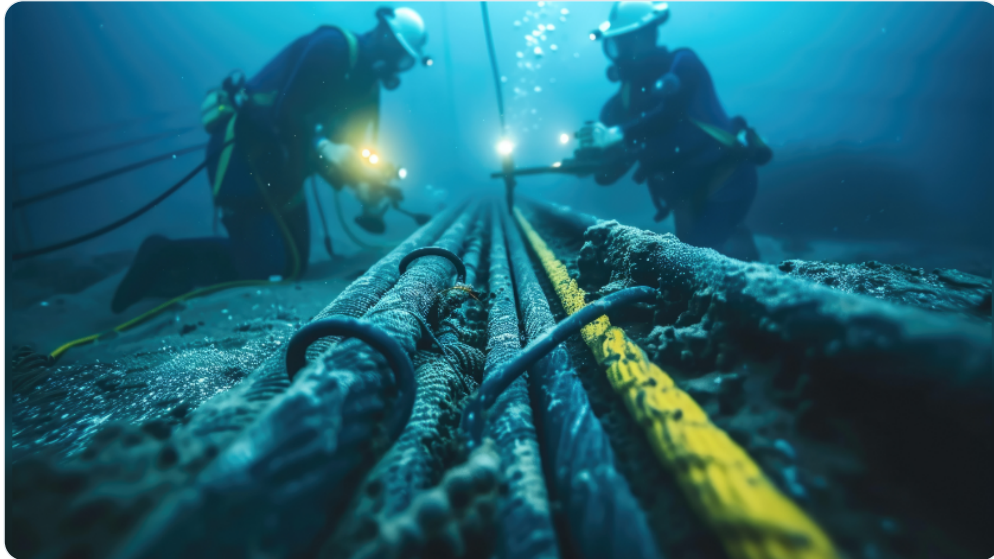


Pekka Kallioniemi @P_Kallioniemi

Jan 22, 2025 · 19 tweets · [P_Kallioniemi/status/1882060581328572886](https://twitter.com/P_Kallioniemi/status/1882060581328572886)

In today's Vatnik Soup, I'll discuss the Kremlin's toolbox at sea. Recently, we have seen several sabotage operations allegedly conducted by Russia & its allies, especially in the Baltic Sea region. Since 2023, there have been several underwater cables cut by ships' anchors.

1/18



Since Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, the Baltic Sea has become a hotspot for NATO-Russia rivalry. This rivalry ramped up in Sep 2022, when the Nord Stream gas pipelines were sabotaged by an unknown perpetrator (some blame a "pro-Ukraine group", others, the Russians).

2/18



NORD STREAM

Gas pipelines damaged

Mysterious leaks in two undersea pipelines linking Russia with Germany have triggered concerns of possible sabotage and raised fears of a climate catastrophe.



War in Ukraine Kursk Incursion Cease-Fire Efforts U.S. Election Russian Airstrikes

EXCLUSIVE

Ukrainian military officer coordinated Nord Stream pipeline attack

Roman Chervinsky, a colonel in Ukraine's special operations forces, was integral to the brazen sabotage operation, say people familiar with planning

November 11, 2023

10 min Share Bookmark Print



Col. Roman Chervinsky appears in a glass room during a hearing in the Shevchenko District Court in Kyiv on Oct. 10. (Oleg Bohachuk for The Washington Post)

By [Shane Harris](#) and [Isabelle Khurshudyan](#)

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NEWS > DEFENSE

Reports: More Russian Navy ships detected close to Nord Stream blast site

Media investigation likely to reignite suspicions that Russia was behind the incident.

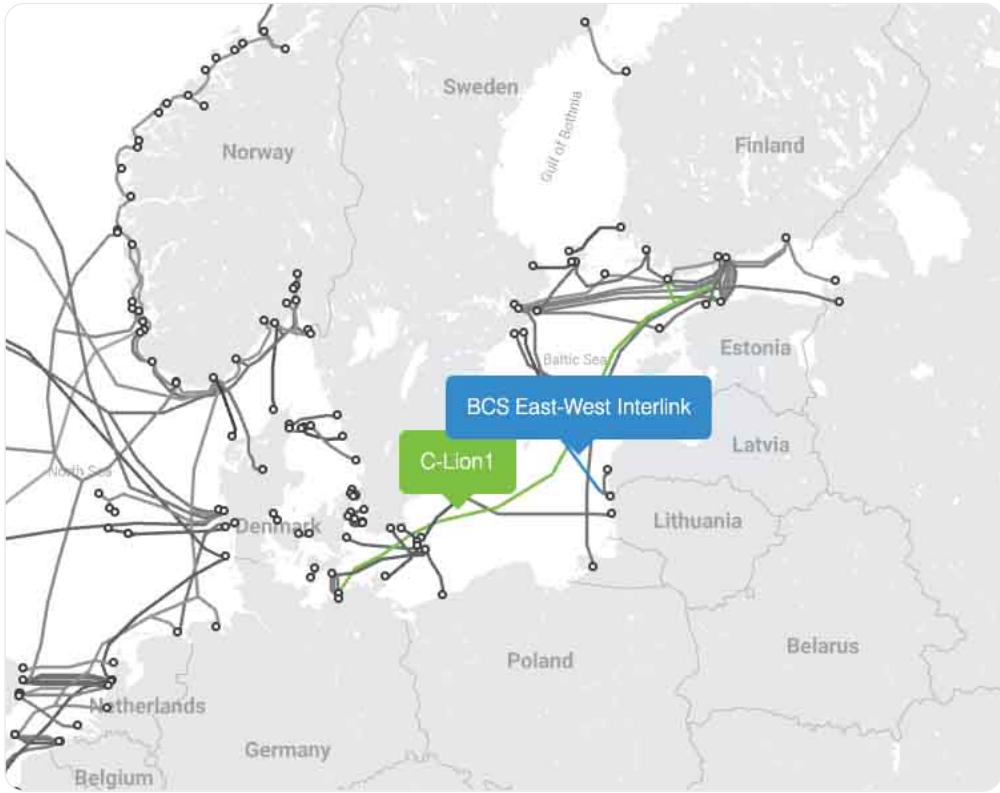
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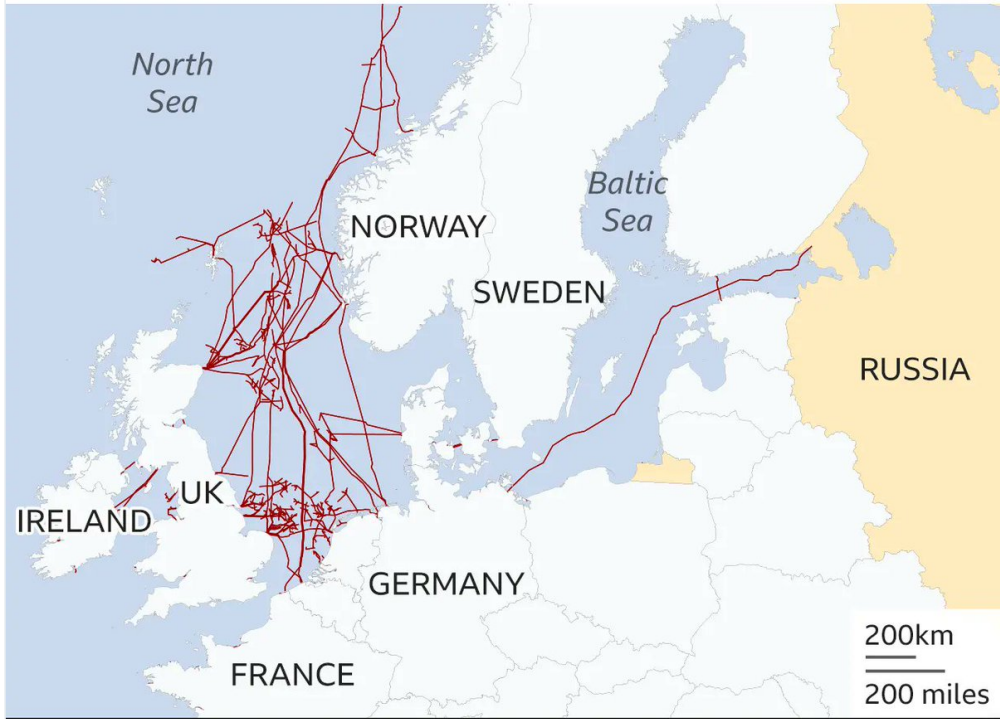
Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said it was "normal" for Russian vessels to sail in the Baltic | Natalia Kolesnikova/AFP via Getty Images

MAY 3, 2023 1:24 PM CET
BY CHARLIE COOPER

These sabotage operations in the Baltic Sea now target critical infrastructure like Internet and energy cables, links that are vital for European communication and trade. Russia and its allies allegedly use these acts to test NATO's resilience and response.



Undersea gas pipelines in northern Europe



Source: European Commission



The Kremlin's hybrid operations are smart in a way that they almost never cross the red lines for an actual NATO intervention. Cutting a few cables "by accident" hardly calls for an invoking of the famous Article 5, which is why they (allegedly) keep doing these operations.

4/18

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Online Analysis / Online Analysis / Russia's hybrid war in Europe enters a dangerous new phase

ONLINE ANALYSIS | 21st 2025 ٢١



Charlie Edwards
Senior Adviser for Strategy and National Security
ABOUT CHARLIE EDWARDS ▶

Russia's hybrid war in Europe enters a dangerous new phase

Beyond expanding counter-intelligence efforts, it is unclear how Europe will respond to the Kremlin's activities.



Russia is intensifying its hybrid war in Europe, mounting more frequent operations with a constantly shifting front line. But despite Western governments' increasingly vocal concerns over Russian activity, they have limited coordinated means to defend against it.

Sabotaging underwater cables is mainly a strategic tool. It undermines regional unity and escalates tensions, sometimes even between NATO allies. Examples abound, including anchor damage to pipelines like Balticconnector, severed in October 2023 by a Hong Kong-flagged ship.

5/18

Finland investigates suspected sabotage of Baltic-connector gas pipeline

10 October 2023

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Kathryn Armstrong & Vishala Sri-Pathma
BBC News



The Baltic-connector gas pipeline opened in 2020 and is used by both Finland and Estonia

Finland says damage to an underwater natural gas pipeline with Estonia on Sunday may have been deliberate and was probably caused by "external activity".

Investigations into the Balticconnector suggest deliberate anchor dragging. While China called it an "accident," suspicions remain. But truthfully, no one will probably be held accountable. In November 2024, a Chinese vessel allegedly severed the C-Lion 1 cable...

Finland says gas pipeline damage probably caused by dragging anchor

24 October 2023

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Ali Abbas Ahmadi
BBC News



A Finnish Border Guard's photo of an anchor that may have damaged the pipeline

Finnish police have said that the rupture of a gas pipeline under the Baltic Sea was probably caused by an anchor dragging along the seabed.



...near Denmark and Sweden. In December 2024, another incident targeted Estlink 2, a power line between Finland and Estonia. The Eagle S vessel, linked to Russia's shadow fleet, allegedly dragged its anchor to cut the line. Finland quickly seized the ship and its cargo.


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Sabotage suspected after Baltic Sea telecoms cable C-Lion1 suddenly stops working

Germany cites Russia's war against Ukraine and the threat of "hybrid warfare" - as Finnish authorities say it could take two weeks to fix the outage.

🕒 Monday 18 November 2024 22:00, UK



The outage under the Baltic Sea was reported by telecoms company Cinia. File pic: iStock

We assume damage to Baltic Sea cables was sabotage, German minister says

Boris Pistorius says 'no one believes' two undersea fibre-optic communications cables were cut accidentally

Miranda Bryant *Nordic correspondent*

Tue 19 Nov 2024 17:10 CET

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Boris Pistorius speaking in Brussels on Tuesday. Photograph: Anadolu/Getty Images

Germany has said it has to assume that damage to two undersea fibre-optic communication cables in the Baltic Sea since Sunday was an act of sabotage.

Two cables - one between Finland and Germany, the other between Sweden and Lithuania - were severed on Sunday and Monday, raising suspicions of a malicious attack, though authorities initially declined to speculate.

"No one believes that the cables were accidentally damaged. I also don't want to believe that the ships' anchors caused the damage by accident," the German defence minister, Boris Pistorius, said in Brussels on Tuesday. "We have to assume, without certain information, that the damage is caused by sabotage."

● News
■ Exclusive

Finland Suspects a Ship From the Russian Shadow Fleet of a New Cable Damage in the Baltic Sea. IStories Found Its Captain

The tanker was near the Estlink 2 power cable when it failed

Доступно на русском

DATE
26 DEC 2024

AUTHOR
EGOR FEOKTISTOV



PHOTO: EAGLE S OIL TANKER / HANNES VAN RIJN / MARINETRAFFIC



THE EAGLE S, IN AN UNDATED PHOTO. IMAGE: POLIISI

Alexander Martin

December 30th, 2024

News

Nation-state

Technology



Finland seizes suspected Russian spy ship and questions crew following cable breaks

Poliisi, Finland's police service, has transferred a cargo ship suspected of breaking several submarine cables in the Baltic Sea to an anchorage point near the port of Porvoo, east of Helsinki, for further investigation.

The Eagle S, which had departed from the Russian port of Ust-Luga on Christmas Day, is suspected of dragging its anchor for several miles resulting in the complete severing of multiple cables, including the Estlink 2 power cable and four telecommunications cables.

Shortly following the breaks, the Finnish authorities dispatched armed units to board the ship by helicopter. The crew did not resist, and the Eagle S was seized by the country's National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) on suspicion of aggravated criminal mischief.

“Shadow fleet” refers to a fleet of ships with intricate ownership and management structures, employing a variety of deceptive or even illegal techniques to conceal the origins of their cargo. Russia is estimated to have up to 1400 of these vessels used to avoid sanctions.

WORLD NEWS

Shadow fleet of tankers keeps Russia's oil money flowing despite Western sanctions



The Cook Islands-registered oil tanker Eagle S is anchored near the Kilpilähti port in Porvoo on the Gulf of Finland, Dec. 30, 2024. (Jussi Nukari/Lehtikuva via AP, File)

BY DAVID MCHUGH

Updated 2:12 PM GMT+2, January 14, 2025

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These acts may aim to provoke an energy crisis in NATO's Baltic allies. Tensions spiked after the Baltic nations decided to leave the Soviet-era power grid known as BRELL, cutting energy ties with Russia and Belarus.



LSM+

REplay Latvian Television Latvian Radio

Latvian Public Media

Monday, January 20 Name day: Alģirds, C

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IMPORTANT >> Border airBaltic Straume/Flow Barricades Rail Baltica War in Ukraine Coalition Presiden

Baltic States ready to leave Russian electricity grid

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Zane Bitere/LETA

January 6, 14:43 | Economy | Authors: LSM+ English (Latvian Public Broadcasting)

In February, the Baltic energy systems, operated by Augstsprieguma tīkls (AST) of Latvia, Litgrid of Lithuania and Elering of Estonia will be disconnected from the Russian energy system, known as the BRELL network, and will join the continental European energy system, LSM.lv reports.

How do we know that these operations were most probably planned in the Kremlin? The Kremlin war hawk Nikolai Patrushev had issued a “warning” over “the US and the UK intending to sabotage underwater Internet cables and planning to destabilize the maritime energy trade”...

Russia Issues Ominous Warning About Undersea Internet Cables

Published Nov 12, 2024 at 6:05 AM EST | Updated Nov 12, 2024 at 8:30 AM EST



Russia Issues Ominous Warning About Undersea Internet Cables

By **Brendan Cole**
Senior News Reporter

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An ally of [Vladimir Putin](#) has accused the U.S. and the U.K. of intending to sabotage underwater internet cables and planning to destabilize the maritime energy trade.

In reporting the comments by Nikolai Patrushev, the Telegram channel Crimean Wind posted, "it would be funny, but such statements often sound like a cover for their own intentions."

Trending



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26 comments

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Suspected Arson
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...just before the incident with Yi Peng 3. Again, the old "Peskov Rule" applies - when Russia blames others for doing something, they're probably doing it themselves.

Addressing these threats is extremely challenging.

25 AUG 2023, 13:53

Spokesman dismisses lies about Kremlin's involvement in crash of Prigozhin's plane

Dmitry Peskov points out that "the West is selling the speculations from a certain angle," although covering the issue should be based solely on facts

MOSCOW, August 25. /TASS/. Claims that the Kremlin might have been allegedly involved in the crash of the plane of Yevgeny Prigozhin, the founder of the PMC Wagner, are absolute lies, Russian Presidential Spokesman Dmitry Peskov has told the media.

"Now, naturally, there are many speculations over this plane crash and the tragic death of the passengers, including Yevgeny Prigozhin. Of course, the West is selling these speculations from a certain angle. All of them are absolute lies. Here, of course, in covering this issue it is necessary to be based solely on facts," he said in response to a request for a comment on such statements.

As Peskov noted, the available facts were few for now. More are to be established in the course of investigative actions.

"Yesterday, speaking on this subject, the president [Russian President Vladimir Putin] said that he was waiting exactly for the results of the investigation, which will be completed in the foreseeable future, and you and I will learn the details," Peskov said.

An Embraer business jet flying from Moscow to St. Petersburg crashed in the Tver Region on Wednesday evening. According to preliminary findings, there were 10 people on board. No one survived. The passenger list, as the Federal Agency for Air Transport said, included businessman Yevgeny Prigozhin. Criminal proceedings have been initiated over a violation of safety and air transport operation rules.

Also, Russia has been for a while trying to minimize the effect of cutting these communication cables: for quite some time, they've been testing out their own "sovereign Internet" closed from the outside world:



Natalia Krapiva
@natynettle · [Follow](#)



!! Last night, Russia tested disconnecting itself from the global internet.

On June 5, around 2-4am Moscow time, 🇷🇺 authorities tested the Sovereign Internet system which led to disruptions of various websites & government infrastructure services 1/



rbc.ru

В России проверили устойчивость Рунета на случай его отключения ...
Власти России и операторы в очередной раз проверили работоспособность российских сайтов в условиях отключения стран...

11:08 AM · Jul 6, 2023



1.5K



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Russia 'successfully tests' its unplugged internet

24 December 2019

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Jane Wakefield
Technology reporter



The net independence plan is seen as a way for Russia's government to get more control over online life

Russia has successfully tested a country-wide alternative to the global internet, its government has announced.

Underwater cables are hard to monitor, and attributing sabotage is even harder. Detection requires tech like drones & sensors, but evidence often remains scarce. Besides, these vessels often sail under flags like the Cook Islands, with the crew coming from countries...



WORLD

NATO launches Baltic sentry mission to protect undersea cables

'We have agreed today to launch initiative to employ, deploy new technologies to this effort, including small fleet of naval drones to provide enhanced surveillance, deterrence,' says NATO chief

Necva Tastan Sevinc | 14.01.2025 - Update : 15.01.2025



World

Morning Briefing, Jan. 21, 2025

Trump withdraws US from World Health Organization

Panama rejects Trump's suggestion that US to take back Canal

Eagle S owners could abandon tanker, lawyer says

The crude oil tanker is being held by Finnish police, who are investigating its role in damage to an undersea cable on Christmas Day

15 Jan 2025 | NEWS

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Herman Ljungberg, who represents owners Caravella LLC FZ, said Finnish authorities had 'no jurisdiction whatsoever' to board the tanker

FREE TO READ



EAGLE S IS STILL DETAINED BY BOTH TRAFICOM AS PORT STATE CONTROL AND THE FINNISH POLICE, WHICH HAS ALSO IMPOSED TRAVEL BANS ON NINE OF THE SHIP'S CREW.

Source: Traficom

...like India and Georgia, so who's to blame? Also, repairing these damaged cables is slow and costly, involving specialized ships and equipment. These operations are easy to conduct but hard to detect, meaning we'll likely see more in the future.

The National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) says eight members of the Eagle S tanker's crew are now suspects and have been banned from leaving the ship.

The vessel is currently detained near Porvoo in an investigation that could take months, after it was suspected to have been responsible for damage to crucial subsea cables in the Gulf of Finland.

The number subject to a travel ban could change as the investigation progresses, according to the NBI.

The crew includes Georgian and Indian citizens, but the NBI would not comment on the nationality of those suspected of crimes.

Energy

Baltic gas pipeline ruptured by Chinese ship back in service after €40m repair job

The gas pipeline between Inkoo, Finland and Paldiski, Estonia, was severed last October. The likely culprit was a Chinese ship bound for St. Petersburg, which dragged its anchor along the seabed.



The gas pipeline links Inkoo, Finland to Paldiski in Estonia. The pipe broke in the early hours of 8 October, 2023. Image: Samuli Huttunen / Yle, Mapcreator, OpenStreetMap

YLE NEWS

22.4.2024 14:55 · Updated 22.4.2024 14:58

In Jan 2025, @washingtonpost published a strange article claiming that all these cable disruptions were actually “accidents” and not Russian sabotage.

I think it’s incredible that we barely saw any before 2023, and now it’s happening almost on a monthly basis!

by EXCLUSIVE

Accidents, not Russian sabotage, behind undersea cable damage, officials say

An emerging consensus among U.S. and European security services holds that accidents were the cause of damage to Baltic seabed energy and communications lines.

Yesterday at 6:00 a.m. EST

8 min   



The article was also heavily criticized by the master OSINT account @auonsson. I would strongly suggest everyone interested in the topic reading their analysis here:



auonsson
@auonsson · Follow

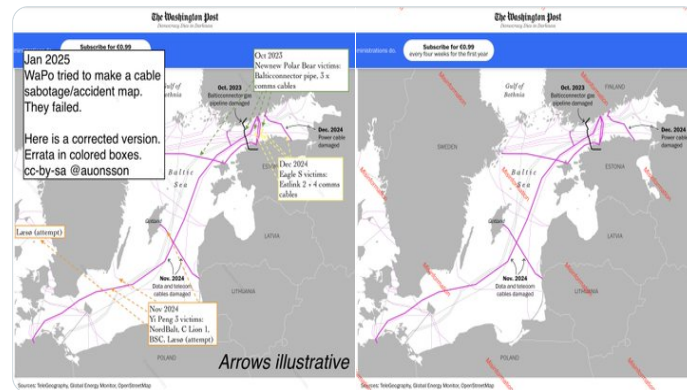


Washington Post has again managed to find anon sources saying Russia is not doing bad things in the Baltic Sea.

They got the infographic quite wrong, so I fixed it.

They also have a named source, within mil intel, completely contradicting their headline.

Nice one WaPo!



9:53 PM · Jan 19, 2025

3.3K Reply Copy link

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Underwater cables have been mysteriously damaged also in Taiwan. The Taiwanese Coast Guard are suspecting that Shunxin39 – a Chinese-linked cargo vessel – could be responsible for cutting the cables.

January 07, 2025 5:31 AM
By William Yang

Chinese vessel suspected of damaging undersea cable near Taiwan

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This picture taken by Taiwan's coast guard on Jan. 3, 2025 shows the "Shunxing 39" cargo ship at sea. Taiwanese authorities are investigating the ship suspected of damaging a subsea telecoms cable northeast of the island. (Photo by Handout / TAIWAN COAST GUARD / AFP)

World / China

A cut undersea internet cable is making Taiwan worried about 'gray zone' tactics from Beijing

Analysis by Wayne Chang and Simone McCarthy, CNN
6 minute read · Updated 12:48 AM EST, Fri January 10, 2025

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The Cameroon-flagged Shunxin39 cargo ship sailing in waters near Taiwan. Taiwan Coast Guard/AP/ Getty Images

Taiwanese investigators (and later @newsweek) discovered that a Chinese university recently patented a system for cutting underwater cables efficiently. With such tools

available, the sabotaging of underwater cables is likely to remain a persistent threat

18/18

The screenshot shows a Newsweek article page. At the top, the Newsweek logo is on the left, and navigation links for 'China', 'Patents', 'Ships', 'Russia', 'Baltic Sea', 'Taiwan', and 'Norway' are on the right. The main headline is 'Exclusive—Chinese Patents Reveal Aim to Cut Undersea Cables'. Below the headline, it says 'Published Jan 10, 2025 at 5:08 AM EST' and 'Updated Jan 10, 2025 at 5:27 PM EST'. The article features a video player with a play button and a '01:07' duration. The author is 'By Didi Kirsten Tatlow, Senior Reporter, International Affairs / Investigations'. To the right, there is a 'Trending' section with three items: '01 Full List of Joe Biden's Last Minute Pardons: Marcus Garvey (18 comments)', '02 Putin Ally Warns Nuclear War With NATO Began Under Joe Biden (78 comments)', and '03 Golden Retriever Hanging Out With Lamb 'So Well'—Until It Wasn't (2 comments)'. At the bottom left of the article area, there is a small icon and the number '11'.

You can now pre-order the 2nd edition of my book! This updated version, featuring pre-order extras, will be released at the end of February 2025.

Pre-order your copy here:

The book cover has a light beige background. At the top, the title 'THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO RUSSIAN DISINFORMATION' is written in bold, dark blue, uppercase letters. Below the title is a stylized orange illustration of a bowl of soup with two vertical lines for eyes and a smiling mouth. Below the illustration, the text 'Vatnik Soup — Kleart' is written in bold. Underneath that, a short paragraph reads: 'Do your friends believe Ukraine is full of neo-Nazis and secret biolabs? Do you feel overwhelmed by propaganda and lies every time you go online? Does your mom think Tucker Carlson sounds reasonable?...'. At the bottom, the URL 'https://www.kleart.eu/webshop/p/vatnik-soup' is provided.

...