

This could be the year... China invades Taiwan

12 January 2024

 theday.co.uk/this-could-be-the-year-china-invades-taiwan-4



War Games: A US simulation of a Chinese invasion of Taiwan advised "decisive action" to arm the island.

Could it trigger World War Three? The people of Taiwan are going to the polls. Many fear the threat of a Chinese invasion if the election does not go the way Beijing wants.

What's happening?

2024 will be the year the world goes to the polls. More than 60 countries, home to half the world's people, will vote in presidential or other elections this year.

But the most important election of this year may take place in a tiny, self-ruling island of 23 million around 100 miles from the coast of south-east **China**. That island is Taiwan.

Find out more

Taiwan's elections are set to take place on Saturday to choose a new **president** and **parliament**. But many see the elections as Taiwan's vote on its relationship with its neighbour, China.

Taiwan has its own **constitution**, army and free elections. But Beijing sees the island as a breakaway region which will one day be part of China again.

The race will be tight. The most-likely winner, Lai Ching-te, has said he supports formal **independence**. His is running against Hou Yu-ih, who supports closer ties with China.

The majority of Taiwanese people support neither **reunification** with the People's Republic of China (PRC) nor independence. Most people simply want the relationship between the two

countries to stay the same.

US president Joe Biden has promised to protect Taiwan from China — but what he means by that is unclear.

Many believe that China will order an **invasion** of Taiwan if the elections do not go to plan. But it may be too worried about how the **USA** would react.

Could it trigger World War Three?

Some people say

“War is only a cowardly escape from the problems of peace.”

Thomas Mann (1875 – 1955), German novelist and social critic

What do you think?

Some say

Yes! If the USA gets drawn into a war with China, it will affect the whole world. World War Three then becomes possible.

Others think

No! China will not risk invading Taiwan and getting a response from the USA. It already has a lot of power over Taiwan's politics.

Six steps to discovery

1. Connect

How do you feel about this story? -

Do you think that there will be another war this year?

2. Wonder

What questions do you have? - For example: How would Taiwan defend itself against China?

3. Investigate

What are the facts? - Pick out one thing we know for certain and one thing we cannot say for sure from this story.

4. Construct

What is your point of view? - Imagine that you are a journalist visiting Taiwan to find out about the election results. Who would you like to talk to there? What questions would you like to ask?

5. Express

What do others believe? - In small groups, discuss the following statement: War is a part of life that cannot be changed.

6. Reflect

What might happen next? - Imagine that you have a Taiwanese pen pal who is voting on Saturday. Write them a letter with any questions that you might have.

Glossary

China - A country in East Asia, home to 1.4 billion people.

President - In some countries, the leader is called the president.

parliament - An assembly of representatives, usually of an entire nation, that makes laws.

Constitution - A document that sets out the fundamental rules according to which a country is governed, which are usually difficult to change.

Independence - Being able to make your own decisions and free from others' control.

Reunification - When two countries that have been split apart become one nation again.

Invasion - When armed forces enter and try to take control of another country.

USA - The United States of America is a country in North America. It has a population of 329 million.