

# Japan elevates Taiwan security ties in move likely to rile China

TOKYO, Sept 12 (Reuters) - Japan has appointed a serving government official to act as its de facto defence attache in Taiwan, four sources said, elevating security ties in a move likely to anger China, which claims the strategic, democratic island as its own.

Japan does not have any formal diplomatic representation in Taiwan, and instead handles bilateral relations through the Japan-Taiwan Exchange Association in Taipei, which is chiefly staffed by reassigned foreign and trade ministry officials. The defence attache role, however, has until now been held by a retired Japan Self Defence Force officer to avoid antagonising China.

He has been joined by an official dispatched by the defence ministry to enhance information gathering and communicate with Taiwan's military, said the sources, who asked not to be identified because of the sensitivity of the issue

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## **Source:**

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