

[Print this story](#)

'US seeks to bridge military relations with China despite 'J-20 stealth fighters' revelations'



2011-01-10 05:30:00

US Secretary of Defense Robert Gates, who is scheduled to reach Beijing on Sunday evening for a three-day visit to China, would seek to put military relations on a smooth surface despite recently released photos of China's J-20 stealth fighter, according to analysts.

The Christian Science Monitor quoted them as saying that Gates is unlikely to raise US concerns about any particular Chinese weapons system during his visit to Beijing. He would instead seek to finally put US-Chinese military relations on an even keel.

Beijing has suspended its contacts with US military officers for two of the past three years to protest US arms sales to Taiwan, which the Chinese regard as a renegade province.

"This kind of long-term tension is really bad for both sides and for mutual trust. The US aircraft carrier group "was designed to scare North Korea" after its forces shelled a South Korean island, "but it also showed that if China violates US or its allies' interests, America can deploy its military power without hesitation. If America cares about its relations with China it should avoid holding drills in such sensitive places," the paper quoted Xu Guangyu, a former People's Liberation Army general, as saying.

"Both sides should dial it back a notch," suggests Carpenter. "China gets annoyed with this rather ostentatious display of American military power in China's backyard," he added.

The US side is particularly anxious to resume the military dialogue, because it is worried that misunderstandings between the two potential rivals could lead to clashes at sea where both navies operate, and also because China's military doctrine is unclear.

Meanwhile, Ted Galen Carpenter, a defense expert at the Cato Institute in Washington, said that the new Chinese fighter would not make any difference to the "balance of power for another 10 years or so, but psychologically and symbolically it's important."

He also added that China gets annoyed with American military power display in China's backyard.

However, before leaving for China, Gates said that the Pentagon is stepping up investments on a range of weapons, jet fighters and technology in response to the Chinese military build-up.

Earlier this week, Chinese military websites and newspapers had published a prototype of a stealth aircraft developed by the country, which the Pentagon had downplayed saying that China is still years away from deploying a stealth aircraft. (ANI)

"© 2009 sify.com India Limited. All Rights Reserved. This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten, or redistributed."