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Japan to install missiles near Taiwan: Are China tensions set to spike?

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What Is Japan Planning?

Government of Japan plans to place surface-to-air missiles on Yonaguni Island.

Yonaguni is the westernmost Japanese island, about 110 km east of Taiwan.

The missiles are meant to defend against aircraft and possible military threats in the region.

Why This Move Matters

The region around Taiwan and Japan is already tense because of growing military activity by China.

Taiwan's status is disputed: China claims Taiwan as its territory, but Taiwan operates independently.

Deploying missiles near Taiwan could make Japan's air defence stronger but may also increase tensions with China.

What Japan Says

Japan says it is strengthening its defence because of threats from China's growing military power.

The move is part of a broader plan to protect Japan's southwestern islands.

Japan has already placed similar systems on other islands like Miyako and Ishigaki.

The exact deployment on Yonaguni is expected to happen by around 2030–2031.

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How China Reacted

Officials in China view the plan as provocative and say it could worsen regional tensions.

Beijing has also taken other actions like imposing export restrictions on some Japanese companies, which Tokyo protested.

The wider regional disagreement reflects competition over influence in the East China Sea and around Taiwan.

What Experts Say

Analysts believe that placing missiles closer to Taiwan could make the region more volatile.

Some fear it could draw Japan closer into any future conflict involving Taiwan, China, and other powers.

Others say Japan needs to strengthen its defences given China's military build-up.