

The Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) yesterday urged the government to push for more arms from the US in the wake of press reports that the Navy may have detected a Chinese submarine in the waters off Kaohsiung last week.

DPP spokesman Tsai Chi-chang (蔡啟芳) said the government should not let national defense slacken in the wake of the alleged submarine intrusion and other aggressive Chinese military action.

The government cannot conceal such incidents to maintain its conciliatory approach with Beijing and if it did so, the military would become confused about who was the enemy, putting people's lives in danger, Tsai said.

Tsai also called on the government to push for the 66 F-16C/D fighter jets and the diesel submarines that were omitted from last week's arms deal announcement, saying the two items were crucial for defending the country.

Tsai's comments came as a naval official said yesterday that the mystery object detected was not a submarine.

Captain Lee Tung-fang (李鴻芳), captain of the Knox-class frigate Feng Yang and head of the Navy's 168 Fleet, said yesterday that as his fleet exercised on Wednesday off Zuoying (左營) military port, something was detected underwater during an anti-submarine drill.

The Navy ruled out the possibility of it being a whale or a dolphin and continued to track it, but the object did not increase its depth to avoid detection, Lee said.

Instead, it maintained its speed at a steady two nautical miles per hour (3.7kph) and it was therefore ruled out that it was a submarine, Lee said.

He said the object was discovered on the edge of China's territorial waters. This, coupled with the complexity of the hydrology and the contour of the continental shelf, makes detecting a submarine more difficult.

News of the alleged Chinese incursion comes in the wake of the US approving a US\$6.4 billion sale of Patriot missiles, Black Hawk helicopters, mine-hunting ships and other equipment to Taiwan.

Meanwhile, the US' assistant secretary of defense for the Asia-Pacific region said yesterday in Tokyo that the US intends to meet its obligation to ensure Taiwan's self-defense capabilities.

"The United States is also obligated to ensure Taiwan's self-defense capability and the United States fully intends to meet every one of our obligations there and we will continue to do so into the future," Wallace Gregson said.

## Taiwan must push for jets, subs: DPP

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In related news, China's state media accused Washington of "arrogance" and "double standards" in going ahead with the arms sales, saying Beijing's threat to penalize US companies over the deal was very real.

China responded furiously to the sale, saying it would suspend military and security contacts with Washington and impose sanctions on US firms involved in the deal.

The state-run English-language China Daily and the Global Times accused US President Barack Obama of being insincere when he said during a visit in November that he did not seek to "contain" China.

"China's response, no matter how vehement, is justified," the China Daily said, adding that the US move "exposes the US' usage of double standards and hypocrisy on major issues related to China's core interests."

"Washington's arrogance also reflects the stark reality of how a nation's interests could be trampled upon by another," it said.

The Chinese edition of the Global Times suggested the government publicize the names of US firms involved in the sales so that they "pay a price for hurting China."

It also posted a petition on its Chinese-language Web site against the arms sale that was signed by more than 55,000 China Web users as of early yesterday.

Many of those who signed also left sharp and sometimes obscene words for Washington and the Taiwanese government.

"Firmly support the Chinese government's sanctions, firmly punish companies selling arms to Taiwan, firmly punish [President] Ma Ying-jeou's [馬英九] government and let the Taiwanese people know the danger of buying weapons," one entry said.

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