

No early Taiwan-China economic ties seen

by UPI

TAIPEI, Taiwan -- Taiwanese President-elect Ma Ying-jeou, careful to avoid a controversy in his country, plans to take a gradual approach to improving economic ties with China. Speaking to the Financial Times, Ma said he would not personally engage in dialogue with Chinese leaders, but let his government handle the deregulation of cross-Strait economic relations. The report said Ma's approach could prove a damper to foreign investors who have been expecting a quick resolution of such ties. Ma told the Times he hopes Vice President-elect Vincent Siew can get the talks going to build mutual trust with leaders on the mainland, starting with the weekend meeting in China of the Boao Forum for Asia. "I think this is a very natural opportunity for the two sides to exchange views on a relatively high level on our disagreements," Ma said. Ma himself is not planning a visit to China. "Once I go, you can imagine how many rumors would appear and how I would be discredited," he said. In his election campaign last month, Ma advocated economic reforms and a more pragmatic approach toward China, which claims Taiwan as part of its territory.

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