

Nuclear, Missile & Space Digest

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A Fortnightly Newsletter from the MP-IDSA

August 15, 2024

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A. India

Indian astronauts to start training for ISS mission

Space News, August 3, 2024

Two Indian astronauts will soon start training at NASA's Johnson Space Center, with one of them flying to the International Space Station on an upcoming private astronaut mission.

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) announced Aug. 2 that two of the four members of its astronaut corps, Shubhanshu Shukla and Prasanth Balakrishnan Nair, will go to the United States in the first week of August to begin training for the mission to the ISS.

ISRO said that Shukla had been assigned to the Axiom Space Ax-4 mission to the station, while Nair will train as his backup. Both of the astronauts, called Gaganyatris by ISRO, had completed ISRO's own training program for spaceflight that included time at the Star City training center in Russia.

The ISRO announcement is one of the first to confirm that an Indian astronaut would go to the ISS on Ax-4. In a July 24 written response to questions from the Lok Sabha, the lower house of India's parliament, Jitendra Singh, the Indian government minister whose portfolio includes space, also said that Indian astronauts would soon start training for Ax-4.

<https://spacenews.com/indian-astronauts-to-start-training-for-iss-mission/>

Air Force approves production of 200 Astra missiles

India Today, August 5, 2024

The Indian Air Force (IAF) has given clearance to the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and the Bharat Dynamics Limited (BDL) to produce 200 Astra air-to-air missiles for its Su-30 and LCA Tejas fighter aircraft.

The clearance was given to the DRDO and public sector firm BDL, during a recent visit by Indian Air Force Deputy Chief Air Marshal Ashutosh Dixit to Hyderabad.

While DRDO is the development agency for the project, BDL is the production agency for it, senior defence officials told India Today TV.

The programme was cleared by the Defence Acquisition Council for the IAF and Indian Navy, under which 248 missiles were expected to be produced for both services in 2022-23.

These series of air-to-air missiles are part of the Astra program, which aims to enhance the aerial combat capabilities of the Indian Armed Forces. The Astra Mark 1 missile, a predecessor to the Mark 2, has already been successfully inducted into both the IAF and the Navy.

<https://www.indiatoday.in/india/story/indian-air-force-navy-drdo-bdl-astra-missile-tejas-2576878-2024-08-05>

Russia commences fuel production for Kudankulam Units 3 and 4

WION, August 9, 2024

The Russian nuclear power agency Rosatom has commenced the production of nuclear fuel that will power India's Kudankulam Nuclear Power Plant (KKNPP) Units 3 and 4, which are under construction in the southern Indian state of Tamil Nadu.

"TVEL Fuel Company of Rosatom has started implementation of nuclear fuel supply contract. This contract embraces the entire lifetime of the power units from the starting loading of the reactor cores," Rosatom said.

Typically, modern-day nuclear power plants have a lifetime of 40-60 years. Kudankulam comprises a total of six VVER-1000 type power units, each of which is capable of generating 1000 megawatts of power.

For nearly 10 years, Units 1 and 2 of the Kudankulam Nuclear Power Plant have been operational. Thus far, during the operational period of Units 1 and 2 of KKNPP, Russian and Indian specialists have accomplished a large amount of work to improve their efficiency by

introducing advanced nuclear fuel and extended fuel cycles.

Since 2022, Kudankulam NPP has been supplied with nuclear fuel of improved design 'TVS-2M'. The new fuel ensures more reliable and cost-efficient operation of reactors due to its rigid skeleton, new-generation anti-debris filter and higher uranium mass.

The introduction of TVS-2M also enabled the increase of the continuous operation period of the reactor from 12 months to 18 months.

<https://www.wionews.com/india-news/russia-commences-fuel-production-for-kudankulam-units-3-4-748764>

Three held in Bihar with 'radioactive substance'

The Hindu, August 10, 2024

The Bihar Police have arrested three persons from Gopalganj district and recovered 50 grams of a "radioactive substance" worth crores from their possession, officials said.

The Gopalganj Police have also intimated officials of the Department of Atomic Energy (DAE), they said on Friday, August 9, 2024.

"Acting on a tip-off, police nabbed all the three from Balthari area under the jurisdiction of Kuchaikot Police Station on Thursday (August 8, 2024). During interrogation, 50 gm of the expensive radioactive substance 'Californium' and four mobile phones were recovered.

"A case has been registered against them and they have been arrested. Forensic experts have also been called to examine the Californium," a police statement said.

The "radioactive substance" is used for starting nuclear reactors, optimising coal power plants, treatment of cancer and oil drilling, a senior officer of the district police said.

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/bihar/three-held-in-bihar-with-radioactive-substance/article68508542.ece>

India set to commission its second nuclear-missile submarine

The Economic Times, August 11, 2024

India is preparing to commission its second nuclear-powered submarine, the INS Arighat, which will be equipped with nuclear missiles for strategic deterrence, reported TOI. This comes as the country also seeks final approval for a project to build two additional nuclear-powered attack submarines, which will be armed with conventional weapons. The urgency behind these advancements is partly driven by China's expanding naval presence in the Indian Ocean Region. The INS Arighat, a 6,000-ton submarine built at the Vizag shipyard, is ready for commissioning after thorough trials and upgrades. It will likely be commissioned in the next month or two and will join the INS Arihant, which has been operational since 2018, learned TOI from sources.

"The SSBN (naval parlance for nuclear-propelled submarines with nuclear-tipped ballistic missiles) will be commissioned within a month or two. She will then join her sister INS Arihant, which became fully operational in 2018," a source told TOI.

INS Arighat will be equipped with 750-km range K-15 missiles, similar to those on the INS Arihant, but with the capacity to carry more. The upcoming third SSBN, the INS Aridhaman, will carry 3,500-km range K-4 missiles and is scheduled for commissioning next year. Additionally, the fourth SSBN, part of the Rs 90,000 crore advanced technology vessel (ATV) project, is under construction and will be able to carry even more K-4 missiles. Plans also include building 13,500-tonne SSBNs with advanced 190 MW reactors, according to the TOI report.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/defence/india-set-to-commission-its-second-nuclear-missile-submarine/articleshow/112438432.cms?from=mdr>

Indian Navy approaches government for two nuclear attack submarines

Hindustan Times, August 12, 2024

With 'Project Delta', its plan to augment its submarine fleet, delayed beyond 2027 due to Russia's war with Ukraine, the Indian Navy has approached the government for approval to build two nuclear-powered conventionally armed submarines or SSNs to deter the country's adversaries in the Indo-Pacific.

While the 30-year-old submarine plan approved by the Modi government in 2015 sanctions six SSNs in the Indo-Pacific, the first step is the acceptance of necessity (AoN) for two SSNs. The matter has been raised at the apex level and consultations are on to expedite the process.

As reported by Hindustan Times earlier, India's second nuclear-powered nuclear missile-armed submarine, SSBN (nuclear-powered submarines armed with ballistic missiles) INS Arighat, will be commissioned shortly with the first SSBN, INS Arihant, already patrolling the deep waters of Indo-Pacific. India's third SSBN, INS Aridaman, is also all set to be commissioned early next year as part of the country's formidable nuclear triad.

While the proposed lease of Russian Akula class SSNs (this is what was termed Project Delta) was delayed due to Russian preoccupation with the Ukraine war and technological sanctions that may last at least till 2028, the Indian Navy has taken a decision to build SSNs after building three more Kalveri (Scorpene) class diesel-electric submarines at Mazagon Dockyards in Mumbai.

The principal reason for Indian national security planners opting for SSNs is that a nuclear attack submarine's range is limited by crew endurance, supplies and waste disposal, while conventional attack submarines surface for recharging of batteries every second day. The speed of

SSNs is 20 knots under water but the SSKs or diesel-electric submarines only register four to five knots even with air-independent propulsion.

<https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/indian-navy-approaches-govt-for-two-nuclear-attack-submarines-101723429873331.html>

B. Pakistan

As Israel braces for attack, Pakistan denies supplying missiles to Iran

Firstpost, August 9, 2024

As Israel braces for an attack on multiple fronts, Pakistan has said that it will not supply missiles to Iran.

The Pakistani statement came after a report said that if a war were to break out between Israel and Iran, Pakistan would provide missiles to Iran.

Now, Reuters has reported Pakistan Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Mumtaz Zahra Baloch as saying that there are no plans to provide Iran with missiles as had been reported. On the contrary, she went on to say Pakistan supports efforts to prevent a war in the Middle East.

Iran is widely expected to attack Israel anytime in retaliation to the assassination of Hamas chief Ismail Haniyeh in Tehran last week, which it has blamed on Israel. Iran and Hamas have vowed to avenge the assassination.

There are fears that the expected attack on Israel and the subsequent Israeli retaliation could lead to an escalatory spiral that could plunge the Middle East into an all-out war. Western and regional powers are working round-the-clock to press both Iran and Israel to not fight in a way that leads to a war.

Following the all-round pressure, it has been reported that Iran is rethinking the scope of its attack and is now only expected to attack military targets in a way

that do not cause widespread casualties and make way for eventual de-escalation.

<https://www.firstpost.com/world/israel-iran-attack-pakistan-missiles-middle-east-crisis-hamas-chief-ismail-haniyeh-assassination-13802892.html>

Pakistan gravely concerned over theft, illicit sale of nuclear materials in India: FO

Pakistan Today, August 13, 2024

Pakistan on Tuesday expressed grave concern at the recurring incidents of theft and illicit sale of nuclear and other radioactive materials in India, especially in the backdrop of recent busting of yet another gang in India found in possession of highly radioactive and toxic Californium, valued at US\$ 100 million.

In a statement on Tuesday, Foreign Office Spokesperson Mumtaz Zahra Baloch highlighted the growing frequency of such incidents. Responding to questions about the recent arrest, Mumtaz noted that similar thefts of Californium had been reported in 2021.

She also mentioned that just last month, five individuals were apprehended in Dehradun with a radioactive device allegedly stolen from the Bhabha Atomic Research Center (BARC) in Mumbai.

She said three incidents of theft of Californium were also reported in 2021. Last month, five individuals with a radioactive device reportedly stolen from Bhabha Atomic Research Center were also found in Dehradun.

Mumtaz Zahra Baloch said these recurring incidents call into question the measures taken by New Delhi for the safety and security of nuclear and other radioactive material.

Islamabad urges thorough investigation into persistent thefts of radioactive substances in the neighbouring country.

"These repeated incidents cast serious doubt on the effectiveness of the measures taken by New Delhi to ensure the safety and security of nuclear and radioactive

materials," Mumtaz remarked. She further suggested that the ongoing occurrences hint at the existence of a black market for sensitive, dual-use materials within India.

<https://www.pakistantoday.com.pk/2024/08/13/pakistan-gravely-concerned-over-theft-illicit-sale-of-nuclear-materials-in-india-fo/>

C. China

China launches second secretive high orbit internet satellite

Space News, August 2, 2024

China launched the second of a new series of geostationary communications satellites Thursday, though its purposes remain unclear.

A Long March 3B rocket lifted off at 9:14 a.m. Eastern Aug. 1 (1314 UTC) from Xichang Satellite Launch Center, southwest China. The China Aerospace Science and Technology Corporation (CASC) declared the launch was a complete success.

CASC's statement revealed the earlier undisclosed payload for the launch to be High orbit internet satellite-02 (Weixing Hulanwan Gaogui-02). It follows the first such satellite, which was launched Feb. 29.

CASC and Chinese media reports, as with the earlier launch, provided few details regarding the satellite and its uses. The satellite was developed by CASC's China Academy of Space Technology (CAST). No images of the satellite, nor an indication of the satellite platform and its potential uses or customers, were provided.

China already operates a series of ChinaSat (Zhongxing) geostationary communications satellites. ChinaSat-26, China's first satellite providing more than 100 gigabits per second (Gbps), was launched in early 2023. Various ChinaSat satellites provide services for civilian and military users.

State media Xinhua reported in November 2023 that a first high orbit internet satellite had been completed. It would be used to

provide coverage for the entirety of China and key areas along the “Belt and Road” initiative.

<https://spacenews.com/china-launches-second-secretive-high-orbit-internet-satellite/>

Nuclear tourism: China opens atomic power plants to tourists

Hindustan Times, August 8, 2024

China is giving people a peek behind the curtain of its atomic energy program, hoping that “nuclear tourism” can help shore up support for a sector key to its clean energy ambitions.

China General Nuclear Power Corp., the country’s largest atomic electricity generator, opened an online booking system to allow tourists to plan visits to nine nuclear power stations across the country. The company also published a booklet of tourist information including hand-drawn guide maps for the facilities, the company said on its Wechat account.

At a launch event Wednesday at the Ningde nuclear power plant in Fujian province, officials beckoned visitors to come see its four CPR-1000 reactors along with nearby fragrant white tea gardens. Another option offered was heading to Guangxi’s Fangchenggang station, where “majestic” Hualong One reactors sit near famous tourist islands home to the Jing ethnic minority. Officials also claimed the San’ao generator being built near Wenzhou’s coastline has become a popular photo backdrop for social media influencers.

In addition to providing a boost to local tourism, CGN is hoping the initiative can enhance public trust in the nuclear sector by sharing information on topics like radiation and safety controls. Public backing for the sector will be important as China expands its nuclear fleet to help meet its target of zeroing out emissions by 2060. China is currently building 30 reactors, accounting for nearly half of the global construction pipeline.

<https://www.hindustantimes.com/lifestyle/travel/nuclear-tourism-china-opens-atomic-power-plants-to-tourists-101723116633316.html>

China’s new hypersonic glider can power-jump to the other side of the Earth: scientists

South China Morning Post, August 8, 2024

China’s hypersonic weapons are poised for a significant upgrade, according to scientists involved in a project to develop a new type of hypersonic glide vehicle (HGV).

Using a trajectory similar to a skipping stone, the hypersonic glide vehicle can dive into and jump out of the atmosphere repeatedly at speeds exceeding Mach 15, thanks to a new solid-fuel booster capable of multiple ignitions.

A hypersonic glide vehicle is a type of warhead that can manoeuvre and glide at hypersonic speed to control a missile’s trajectory after launch.

By using the skipping stone trajectory, a missile’s kill range can be increased by more than one-third, extending the primary use of the hypersonic gliders from regional conflict to global operation.

This new generation of hypersonic weapons “possesses significant advantages in [military] application, featuring long range, high manoeuvrability and unpredictability”, the team led by Yong Enmi, a researcher with the China Aerodynamics Research and Development Centre, wrote in a peer-reviewed paper published in the Chinese Journal of Astronautics in June.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/science/article/3273658/chinas-new-hypersonic-glider-can-power-jump-other-side-earth-scientists>

D. Russia

Russian army tests armored targets detection robots

TASS, August 1, 2024

Two robotic systems for detecting armored targets have been tested at Russia’s proving grounds are currently being used in experimental way in combat conditions, the Defense Ministry has said.

"At the end of a special ceremony Deputy Defense Minister Andrey Bulyga reviewed an exhibition of promising models of weapons and military equipment, including robotic systems Sobolyatnik and Sova. These systems are capable of detecting moving and stationary armored and lightly armored ground targets and are capable of performing combat tasks at a distance without the involvement of personnel," the Defense Ministry said.

Both products have already been tested at proving grounds.

"At present, their military-technical capabilities are being checked in combat conditions," the ministry stated.

<https://tass.com/defense/1824279>

Warships of Russian, Iranian navies jointly patrol Caspian Sea

TASS, August 2, 2024

Warships of the Russian and Iranian navies have conducted joint patrols in the Caspian Sea, the press service of Russia's Caspian Flotilla said.

"A joint Russian-Iranian naval patrol mission has been completed in the Caspian Sea. The Russian side contributed to the mission its Project 21630 [Buyan-class] small artillery and missile ships, the Volgodonsk and the Astrakhan. The Navy of the Republic of Iran assigned the mission to the Shahid Nazeri patrol ship, the Joshan fast attack craft and the Deylaman frigate," the press service said.

During the joint patrols of the Caspian Sea's central and northern sections, Russian and Iranian sailors tackled challenges related to protection of shipping lanes, marine traffic control and anti-piracy measures. During the three-day mission, they held joint maneuvering, as well as practiced defending and protecting a naval task force on a maritime voyage. Russian and Iranian navy officials took command of the effort in turns. The ships have already performed a farewell ritual and are now headed to their respective home bases.

<https://tass.com/defense/1824365>

Russia's Su-35 fighters patrol neutral waters of Black Sea

TASS, August 2, 2024

Su-35S air superiority fighters of the Russian Aerospace Forces have performed a patrol mission above the neutral waters of the Black Sea to prevent violation of Russia's sovereign airspace by foreign aircraft, the Russian Defense Ministry said.

"Pilots of the Russian Aerospace Forces' Su-35S supermaneuverable fighters with thrust-vectoring engines have performed a routine patrol mission above neutral waters of the Black Sea in the southern battlegroup's zone of responsibility. The goal of the mission was to prevent the violation of Russia's sovereign air boundaries by planes and unmanned aerial vehicles of foreign countries," the ministry said.

Su-35S (Flanker-E+ by NATO classification) is a deeply upgraded super maneuverable multirole fighter jet of generation 4++ designed with fifth-generation technologies. It is distinguished by a new digital avionic complex, a new radar with passive phased antenna array and increased number of simultaneously tracked and attacked targets, plasma-ignition engines of increased capacity and controllable vectoring. The engines correspond to fifth-generation power plants as they develop supersonic speed without a boost. Su-35S is a deep upgrade of Su-27. It has a reinforced glider and no frontal horizontal fins and brake flap. Braking at landing is done by turning rudders to different sides. The maximum takeoff weight is 34.5 tons, the maximum speed is 2,500 km/h. The flight range varies from 1,500 to 4,500 kilometers. The practical ceiling is 20 thousand meters.

The fighter is armed with 30mm GSh-30-1 gun, air-to-air and air-to-surface short, medium and long-range missiles, Kh-31, Kh-35U and Kh-59M antiship missiles, various precision and unguided munitions. The fighter has an integrated IUS-35 information-control system and a radar with a detection range of 100-400 km.

<https://tass.com/defense/1824429>

Arctic group of Northern Fleet begins voyage in Arctic Ocean

TASS, August 5, 2024

A group of the Northern Fleet's ships has set off on a long-distance voyage in the seas of the Arctic Ocean, fleet's the press service has said.

"Today another voyage of the Arctic group of the Northern Fleet in the seas of the Arctic Ocean began. This event is being held for the 13th year running. The voyage is taking place under the flag of Vice-Admiral Oleg Golubev, the deputy commander of the Northern Fleet," the press service said.

The squadron includes the large anti-submarine ship Vice Admiral Kulakov, from which the forces are controlled, large amphibious landing ship Alexander Otrakovsky, rescue tugboat Altai and fuel tanker Sergey Osipov.

<https://tass.com/defense/1825357>

Russia, Indonesia to hold first joint naval drills in November – admiral

TASS, August 7, 2024

The navies of Indonesia and Russia will hold their first joint exercise in Surabaya in the Indonesian province of East Java on November 4-8, Indonesiadevice quoted Vice Admiral Denih Hendrata as saying.

According to the senior naval officer, the joint drills with Russia codenamed "Orruda 2024" will be Indonesia's first since its independence, the news portal reported.

Each navy is expected to send three warships. The drills will include a basic stage to be held in Surabaya followed by a naval stage in the Java Sea.

<https://tass.com/defense/1826207>

Rostec provides tanks with new anti-drone protection for Russian army

TASS, August 8, 2024

The Omsk Transport Engineering Plant (Omsktransmash, part of the UVZ concern of Rostec corporation) has handed over to

Russian troops a batch of T-80BVM tanks with new anti-drone protection.

"Omsktransmash, an affiliate of our concern UVZ has sent a batch of modernized T-80BVM tanks to the army. The vehicles are equipped with special mesh screens and nets that protect the engine and transmission compartment and the aft part of the turret from shaped grenades, guided missiles and FPV drones," Rostec said in a statement on its Telegram channel.

The T-80BVM is the latest version of the T-80 main battle tank manufactured since 1976. Its deliveries to the Russian army began in 2019. It is equipped with a 1,250 hp gas turbine engine (in contrast to many other Russian combat vehicles having diesel power plants) and has a maximum speed of to 70 km/h.

<https://tass.com/defense/1826615>

Russian naval ships wrap up visit to India's Cochin port on Arabian Sea

TASS, August 9, 2024

The Russian Pacific Fleet's naval group has departed from the Indian port of Cochin on the Arabian Sea in its long-distance deployment, the Fleet's press office reported on Friday. "The Pacific Fleet's naval group comprising the Guards Order of Nakhimov missile cruiser Varyag and the frigate Marshall Shaposhnikov has completed its business call program and left the port of Cochin of the Republic of India," the press office said in a statement.

During the anchorage at the Indian port, the Russian naval ships replenished their supplies while the crews took part in cultural and sports events, it specified.

The Russian naval sailors went on a sightseeing tour of the city of Cochin, visited ships of India's Southern Naval Command and also played a friendly volleyball match with Indian servicemen, it said.

<https://tass.com/defense/1827079>

Russian Navy completes drills on use of fleets, Caspian Flotilla – Defense Ministry

TASS, August 9, 2024

The Russian Navy has completed large-scale drills involving its fleets as well as the Caspian Flotilla, the Defense Ministry said in a statement.

“The Russian Navy has completed large-scale drills on the use of its fleets and the Caspian Flotilla in special operational areas. Navy units that took part in the routine drills in the operational areas of the Northern, the Pacific and Baltic fleets, as well as in the area of responsibility of the Caspian Flotilla, have started to scale down their forces,” the statement reads.

According to the Defense Ministry, ship crews will soon return to their permanent bases.

“Based on how the fleets and the flotilla implemented their assigned missions, I believe that the goal of the exercise has been achieved. The Navy’s General Staff will thoroughly assess the performance of ship and aircraft crews and coastal units during the comprehensive combat training,” Navy Commander Admiral Alexander Moiseyev said.

A total of 300 ships, boats, submarines and support vessels, as well as over 50 aircraft and more than 200 pieces of military and special equipment were involved in the exercise. Over 20,000 troops and civilian personnel took part in the drills. Within a few days, they carried out more than 300 combat exercises involving the use of weapons, including anti-aircraft missile firing and artillery firing at mock sea and air targets.

During the exercise, command units trained on how to cooperate with other security agencies and federal bodies to organize bases, suppress illegal activities at sea, carry out rescue operations at sea and other missions.

<https://tass.com/defense/1827101>

Russian training ship Smolny ends visit to Venezuela’s port of La Guaira

TASS, August 9, 2024

The training ship The Smolny of Russia’s Baltic Fleet has completed a visit to the port of La Guaira (Venezuela).

“The Baltic Fleet’s training ship The Smolny, making a long-range sea voyage in order to conduct maritime practice for cadets of naval educational institutions of Russia’s Ministry of Defense, has completed an unofficial visit to the port of La Guaira of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela,” the fleet’s press-service said in a news release.

The training ship has been in the Venezuelan port since August 6. The Smolny replenished water and food supplies. Cadets and crew spent some time on the shore for recreation and conducted technical checks the ship’s condition and its equipment. During their stay in Venezuela the Russian military sailors visited historical sites of the administrative center of the State of La Guaira and enjoyed sports events. The Smolny has now left the port and set course to the designated area of the Atlantic Ocean according to the plan of the voyage.

From July 27 to July 30, The Smolny was on an unofficial visit to the port of Havana (Cuba).

“The long-range sea voyage of the training ship is being held within the framework of maritime practice of cadets of naval educational institutions of Russia’s Ministry of Defense. Future naval officers are carrying out a training program, in particular, communication and ship navigation drills. In all, more than 300 cadets are participating,” the Baltic Fleet’s press service reported.

The Smolny is a training ship of the Baltic Fleet. Special classes and simulator complexes, including navigation equipment, have been created on the ship for cadets’ training. There is an

astronomical deck for practicing skills and knowledge. Up to 300 future navigators, mechanics and shipmasters can undergo maritime practice on The Smolny training ship simultaneously.

<https://tass.com/defense/1827257>

Rosatom temporarily reduces staff at Kursk-2 nuke plant construction site

TASS, August 9, 2024

Russia's Rosatom State Atomic Energy Corporation has decided to temporarily reduce staff at the construction site of the Kursk-2 Nuclear Power Plant's energy units but work continues on schedule, Rosatom's Engineering Division said in a statement.

"It has been decided to temporarily reduce staff at the construction site of energy units at the Kursk-2 Nuclear Power Plant as a federal state of emergency is in effect in the region. Specialists remaining at the construction site continue working according to schedule. All systems crucial for the construction of energy units are operating normally," the statement reads.

A federal state of emergency was declared in the Kursk Region on August 9 amid an attack by the Ukrainian army. This makes it possible for the regional authorities to request assistance from across the country and receive federal funds to provide payments to local residents.

A spokesperson for Russia's nuclear power plant operator Rosenergoatom told TASS that the Kursk Nuclear Power Plant continued to operate normally, with both of its energy units generating a total of 2,000 MW.

<https://tass.com/defense/1827273>

Group of Russia's Northern Fleet ships holds drills in Barents Sea

TASS, August 10, 2024

A group of ships from Russia's Northern Fleet on a long-range cruise in the Arctic held drills in the Barents Sea, the fleet's press service said.

"A group of Northern Fleet ships held drills on ensuring Russia's economic security in the Barents Sea," it said in a statement.

According to the press service, the crews also practiced resolving hypothetical crisis situations.

<https://tass.com/defense/1827421>

Russia begins mass production of heavy-duty UAV Privet-82XL

TASS, August 11, 2024

Russia started mass production of heavy-duty fixed-wing drone Privet-82XL with a warhead of up to 10 kg, design bureau Otko told TASS.

"The new heavy-duty device is equipped with a payload of up to 10 kg, this is a 10 kg warhead. At the moment, Privet-82XL is not used in the special operation zone, the launch of its mass production is in the works. The new heavy-duty drone has already been tested, it is already an operational aircraft," the organization said.

According to the company's representative, the drone with an increased payload will allow unexpected strikes to be carried out on the enemy deep within the frontlines.

<https://tass.com/defense/1827545>

Su-25 fighter crews destroy Ukrainian troops, equipment in Kursk region border area

TASS, August 11, 2024

Crews of Su-25 fighter aircraft destroyed a concentration of manpower, armored vehicles and automobile military equipment of the Ukrainian armed forces in the border area of Kursk region, the Russian Defense Ministry said.

"The crews of Su-25 fighters launched an attack with unguided air-to-air missiles against a concentration of manpower, armored vehicles and automobile military equipment of the Ukrainian armed forces

in the border area of Kursk region. The attack was carried out with unguided air-to-air missiles against reconnaissance targets," the ministry said.

The Russian Defense Ministry added that after using air-to-air weapons, the crews performed an anti-missile maneuver, released heat flares and returned to their departure airfield.

"According to intelligence reports, all the indicated targets were destroyed," the ministry said.

<https://tass.com/defense/1827575>

Russia redeploys recon, attack drone units to Kursk Region – governor

TASS, August 12, 2024

Russian aerial reconnaissance and attack drone units are heading from the Zaporozhye Region to the Kursk Region to help repel a Ukrainian assault, Zaporozhye Region Governor Yevgeny Balitsky said.

"Aerial reconnaissance and attack drone units have been redeployed from the Zaporozhye Region to help in the Kursk region. The technical capabilities of our units allow us to provide substantial support to the region, which came under terrorist attacks by the enemy. The chairman of the defense committee of the Zaporozhye Region's legislature joined the unit on the way to the Kursk Region," he wrote on Telegram.

Ukrainian forces started a major attack on the Kursk Region on August 6. Missile attack alerts have been issued repeatedly in the region since then. According to the Russian Emergency Situations Ministry, more than 8,000 people have been evacuated from border areas over the past day due to Ukrainian attacks, and more than 6,000 people have been placed in temporary accommodation centers.

Hospitals have admitted 69 people that were injured in Ukrainian shelling of the Kursk Region, Russian Health Minister Mikhail Murashko said. Of them, 17 are in serious

condition. According to the latest data from the Russian Defense Ministry, Ukraine has lost up to 1,350 troops, 29 tanks and 23 armored personnel carriers since the start of hostilities in the Kursk Region.

<https://tass.com/defense/1827675>

New modification of Pantsyr system developed for defense against massive attacks

TASS, August 12, 2024

A new modification of the Pantsyr-SMD-E anti-aircraft missile/artillery system to protect areas from massive air strikes has been developed in Russia, it is being demonstrated for the first time at the Army 2024 international military and technical forum, a TASS correspondent reported.

The system is equipped with mini-missiles to defeat drones and, unlike the Pantsir-S1 system, has no cannon armament.

"Anti-aircraft defense of small-sized military and administrative and industrial facilities and areas from the massive use of air attack means. The maximum speed of the targets to be hit is 1,000 m/s," the developer's materials say.

<https://tass.com/defense/1827797>

Russian company picks up pace in nuclear submarine production, CEO says

TASS, August 12, 2024

Russia's Sevmash shipbuilding company (part of the United Shipbuilding Corporation), has picked up the pace in building nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarines, the company's CEO Mikhail Budnichenko said.

"We will strive to work even better and more effectively, and this year will be no exception. The Navy will receive ships expediently, which will strengthen the maritime aspect of our nuclear triad," the Sevmash chief said in an interview with TASS.

According to him, the company has reached a high rate of nuclear submarine production, "the way it was in the Soviet Union." Over the past 20 years, Sevmash has been able to restore cooperation ties that were ruined in the 1990s, revive old technologies and create new unparalleled ones, as well as to maintain its skeleton staff and recruit several thousand young people, training them into highly skilled professionals.

The Sevmash CEO pointed out that two head submarines of the Yasen and Borei-class - the Severodvinsk and Yury Dolgoruky - laid down in 1993 and 1996 respectively, as well as the Alexander Nevsky follow-on ship, were on the company's stocks back in 2004.

This is when clear prospects emerged for the creation of two series of nuclear submarines designed by the Rubin Central Design Bureau for Marine Engineering and the Malakhit Marine Engineering Bureau. "We began to lay down new ships on a regular basis. We set a record in 2014, when four nuclear submarines were laid down on the stocks," Budnichenko added.

<https://tass.com/defense/1827805>

Sevmash forms Russia's new generation nuclear submarine fleet – CEO

TASS, August 12, 2024

The Northern Engineering Enterprise (Sevmash, part of the United Shipbuilding Corporation) is forming Russia's new-generation nuclear submarine fleet under the adopted government decisions, CEO Mikhail Budnichenko has told TASS in an interview.

"We deliver two or three ships each year. Thanks to the support of the country's leadership and governmental decisions on the construction of nuclear-powered ships, a new generation submarine fleet is taking shape. Our ships have no equals in the world in terms of tactical and technical characteristics," Budnichenko said.

He recalled the recent transatlantic voyage of the nuclear-powered submarine Kazan,

which arrived in the port of the Cuban capital Havana as part of a group of Northern Fleet ships after the completion of exercises in the Atlantic.

"The eyes of the whole world were riveted to this event. I reckon that the Kazan nuclear submarine has once again confirmed that the ships of this series boast fundamentally new qualities. This is a long stride into the future, the future of the ships of the 21st century. They have increased stealth, maneuverability and other features," he said.

<https://tass.com/defense/1827815>

Russia unveils new BTR-22 armored vehicle with jammer at Army 2024 arms show

TASS, August 12, 2024

An advanced BTR-22 armored personnel carrier with a set of protective screens and an LGSh-689 electronic warfare system has been unveiled at the Army 2024 international arms show as a replacement for the BTR-82A troop carrier, a TASS correspondent reported from the scene.

"It is designed to replace the BTR-82A armored personnel carrier to transport motor rifle troops to the battlefield, provide fire support, carry military cargo and tow trailers, providing protection for the combat team and equipment inside against small arms fire, fragments of mines, shells and external impacts, move across rough terrain, and also to create a family of combat, technical and logistic support vehicles for armed services and military branches," the presentation materials of the Military Industrial Company say on its display stand.

The new armored vehicle features a set of protective screens and an LGSh-689 electronic warfare system. The BTR-22 armored hull differs from that of the BTR-82A vehicle and has a crew exit in the rear. The vehicle's armor provides protection against 12.7mm armor-piercing rounds. Its bottom features enhanced anti-blast protection for the habitable compartment.

The BTR-22 has a combat crew of 11 and its troop compartment features eight seats.

The Army 2024 international military-technical forum is running at the Patriot Congress/Exhibition Center outside Moscow on August 12-14. The arms show features the most advanced types of armament, military and special hardware. TASS is a strategic media partner of the forum.

<https://tass.com/defense/1827829>

Mi-28NME helicopter first time showed at Army 2024 forum

TASS, August 12, 2024

The Russian strike helicopter Mi-28NME was for the first time presented at the Army 2024 forum, TASS reports.

The helicopter is placed near the entrance group of the Pavilion B. The video on helicopter's combat power is also demonstrated there.

The Army 2024 forum is being held from August 12 to 14 in the Moscow Region. Specimens of armament, materiel and special vehicles will be showed to participants during the event. TASS is the strategic media partner of the forum.

<https://tass.com/defense/1828123>

Yakovlev unveils Yak-130M trainer with expanded combat capabilities

TASS, August 12, 2024

Yakovlev company presents a project of the upgraded Yak-130M combat trainer with expanded fighting capabilities at the Army 2024 forum. Three prototype specimens are being manufactured at the Irkutsk aviation plant, company's press service told TASS.

"Yakovlev presents the project of the modernized Yak-130M fighter trainer at the Army Forum. The upgrade mainly covered the expansion of combat capabilities of this aircraft by installing new onboard equipment and armament systems," the company said.

The project is targeting the export market in the first instance and the configuration of the aircraft was formed with consideration of comments made by current operators of Yak-130 trainers, the press service added.

The Army 2024 forum is being held from August 12 to 14 in the Moscow Region. Specimens of armament, materiel and special vehicles will be showed to participants during the event. TASS is the strategic media partner of the forum.

<https://tass.com/defense/1828155>

Rostec presents import substituted version of Ansat helicopter at Army 2024 forum

TASS, August 12, 2024

Russian Helicopters holding, a member of Rostec, has presented the ambulance version of the Ansat helicopter in the fully import substituted configuration at the Army 2024 forum, Rostec said in its press release.

"We show the Ansat demonstrator in the fully import substituted configuration for the first time today. All the foreign components of helicopter's control system and autopilot were replaced by domestic ones; engines of the Russian make were installed," First Deputy CEO of Rostec Vladimir Artyakov said, cited by the company.

Helicopters are in service with the National Ambulance Aviation Services, he noted. They helped to save more than five thousand people during the first five months of this year, including almost one thousand children.

The Army 2024 forum is being held from August 12 to 14 in the Moscow Region. Specimens of armament, materiel and special vehicles will be showed to participants during the event. TASS is the strategic media partner of the forum.

<https://tass.com/defense/1828161>

New Pantsyr air defense system can be mounted on roofs to shield buildings against UAVs

TASS, August 14, 2024

The new Pantsyr-SMD-E surface-to-air missile/gun system modification unveiled at the Army 2024 arms show features a reduced weight that allows mounting it on the roofs of buildings to shield them against unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), the Tula Design Bureau of Instrument-Making said on Wednesday.

"It is specifically designed for protecting civilian and military sites. Considering that its weight has been reduced, it can be mounted on the roofs of buildings for protection," the Design Bureau's representative said.

"As its specific feature, the system is remotely operated and one operator can cope with the task. The operator can be located, for example, in a bunker at a distance of 500 meters and the system is controlled via fiber optics," the representative said.

The new Pantsyr modification can be armed with 48 short-range interceptor missiles, he added.

The new Pantsyr-SMD-E modification designed to protect areas from massive air strikes is on display at the Army 2024 international arms show for the first time. The air defense system is outfitted with mini-missiles to strike UAVs and, as compared to the Pantsyr-S1 version, lacks artillery guns.

The Pantsyr self-propelled surface-to-air missile/gun system engineered by the Shipunov Design Bureau of Instrument-Making is designed to shield military, administrative and industrial facilities and areas from enemy aircraft, helicopters, cruise missiles and precision weapons and to boost air defenses in repelling massive air strikes. The Russian Army operates the Pantsyr-S1 modification with a multi-channel system of locking on and tracking targets. It is capable of striking aerial targets flying at a speed of

up to 1,000 m/s and at a distance of 200 meters to 20 km.

The Army 2024 international military-technical forum is running at the Patriot Congress/Exhibition Center outside Moscow on August 12-14. The arms show features the most advanced types of armament, military and special hardware. TASS is a strategic media partner of the forum.

<https://tass.com/defense/1828933>

Two Russian Tu-95MS strategic bombers perform flight over Barents, Norwegian Seas

TASS, August 14, 2024

Two Russian Tupolev Tu-95MS strategic bombers flew over the neutral waters of the Barents and Norwegian Seas and were escorted by foreign fighter jets at some stages of the flight, Russia's Defense Ministry reported on Wednesday.

"Two Tu-95MS strategic missile-carrying bombers of the Russian Aerospace Forces' long-range aviation performed a scheduled flight in the airspace over the neutral waters of the Barents and Norwegian Seas. The flight lasted over four hours. The crews of MiG-31 aircraft of the Aerospace Forces provided fighter support for the flight," the ministry said in a statement.

At some stages of the flight, the Russian Tu-95MS strategic bombers were escorted by fighter jets of foreign states, it said.

The crews of Russia's long-range aircraft regularly perform flights over the neutral waters of the Arctic, the Northern Atlantic, the Pacific Ocean, the Black and Baltic Seas, the ministry said.

"The aircraft of Russia's Aerospace Forces perform all the flights in strict compliance with the international rules of using the airspace," it stressed.

<https://tass.com/defense/1829153>

E. Europe

Ukraine receives first F-16 fighter jets – Zelensky

BBC, August 4, 2024

Ukraine has received its first American-made F-16 fighter jets, President Volodymyr Zelensky has said.

"F-16s in Ukraine. We did it," President Zelensky said at a ceremony at an unnamed airbase, flanked by two of the planes.

Ukraine's leader thanked allies for what they were once very hesitant to provide - though he added that many more were needed.

The arrival of the jets marks a crucial milestone in boosting the capabilities of Ukraine's air force, which largely relies on old Soviet-era jets.

More F-16s are expected and hoped in the months ahead, though Mr Zelensky admitted that Ukraine does not yet have enough trained pilots to fly them all.

He did not specify how many aircraft had arrived in Ukraine - or whether they had all been sent by Denmark, the Netherlands and the US, which he specifically thanked.

Around 65 F-16s have been pledged by Nato countries since US President Joe Biden first authorised willing European allies to send them to Ukraine in August 2023.

The F-16 was introduced in 1978. Many Western militaries are in the process of retiring the ageing fighters, replacing them with the US-made F-35, introduced in 2015.

The UK does not have any F-16s in its air force, though it is supplying long-range Storm Shadow missiles which can be fitted to the jets.

Ukraine's F-16s will work alongside a limited number of Western-supplied surface-to-air missile systems such as Patriot and Nasams which are already on the ground.

<https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c4ng1p72wlwo>

Raytheon awarded \$478m to supply Patriot missiles to Germany

UK Defence Journal, August 12, 2024

Raytheon has been awarded a \$478 million contract by the NATO Support and Procurement Agency (NSPA) to supply additional GEM-T missiles to Germany, according to a press release.

The contract is intended to replenish Germany's inventory of Patriot missiles following donations made to Ukraine as part of ongoing support efforts.

The deal, which is being financed with the help of Denmark, the Netherlands, and Norway, reflects a coordinated European approach to strengthening missile defence capabilities. These nations have agreed to contribute to the procurement, demonstrating their collective commitment to supporting Ukraine and enhancing NATO's defensive posture.

"Our customers are already realizing the benefits of bundled, multi-national procurement of Patriot missiles through NSPA, including the economies that offer greater affordability and the pre-negotiated contracting framework that shortens the acquisition timeline," he said.

Laliberty highlighted that this approach not only bolsters missile inventories for European partners but also enhances cooperation, interoperability, and contributions to NATO's essential missions.

NSPA General Manager Stacy A. Cummings added, *"This contract demonstrates once again that NSPA, as NATO's lead organisation for multinational acquisition, support and sustainment, delivers effective and cost-efficient multinational solutions to nations, while reinforcing European industrial capacities."*

<https://ukdefencejournal.org.uk/raytheon-awarded-478m-to-supply-patriot-missiles-to-germany/>

Fire At Europe's Largest Nuclear Power Plant, Russia, Ukraine Trade Blames

NDTV, August 12, 2024

Moscow and Kyiv accused each other of starting a fire on the grounds of Europe's largest and now Russian-occupied Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant in Ukraine on Sunday, with both sides reporting no sign of elevated radiation.

The UN's International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) nuclear watchdog, which has a presence at the vast six-reactor facility, said its experts had seen strong, dark smoke coming from the northern area of the plant in southern Ukraine following multiple explosions.

Russian state news agencies, TASS and RIA, cited the country's nuclear energy company Rosatom as saying the main fire was extinguished shortly before midnight on Sunday.

The fire comes less than a week after Ukraine's forces launched their largest incursion into Russian territory since the war started in 2022, a surprise move that has brought conflict into a new phase, after weeks of Moscow's battlefield gains.

Ukraine's nuclear power company Energoatom said in a statement on the Telegram messaging app that one of the cooling towers and other equipment were damaged.

Russia's TASS agency also reported, citing Rosatom's statement, that a cooling tower was damaged. Citing local Russian emergency ministry representatives, TASS said it was a non-functioning tower.

<https://www.ndtv.com/world-news/zaporizhzhia-fire-at-europes-largest-nuclear-power-plant-russia-ukraine-trade-blames-6317452>

Poland Inks Deal for 48 Patriot Air Defense Launchers

The Defense Post, August 12, 2024

Poland signed a contract on Monday to build 48 launchers for the US-designed

Patriot air and missile defense systems to boost Warsaw's military capabilities.

The eastern European country has accelerated the modernization of its armed forces after Russia began a full-scale invasion of neighboring Ukraine in 2022.

According to the deal signed on Monday, the M903 launchers will be produced at Stalowa Wola steelworks in Poland and are expected to be delivered to the Polish army between 2027 and 2029.

"This contract strengthens Polish security," Defense Minister **Wladyslaw Kosiniak-Kamysz** told reporters after signing the deal worth \$1.23 billion.

Poland, a staunch ally of Ukraine, has announced it would spend more than four percent of its annual economic output on defense this year — double NATO's target of two percent.

On Friday, Poland inked a deal with the United States to buy hundreds of AIM-120C AMRAAM air-to-air missiles.

According to Polish media, Warsaw and Washington will in the coming days sign another defense deal on the purchase of 96 US-made AH-64E Apache combat helicopters valued at more than \$9 billion.

Washington gave the green light for the deal last year, which will allow Poland to replace its aging fleet of Soviet-era Mi-24 helicopters.

<https://www.thedefensepost.com/2024/08/12/poland-patriot-air-defense-launchers/>

US Approves Selling 16 HIMARS to Norway

The Defense Post, August 12, 2024

The US State Department has approved the sale of 16 M142 High Mobility Artillery Rocket Systems (HIMARS) to Norway.

The \$580-million potential sale includes 15 Guided Multiple Launch Rocket System (GMLRS) alternative warhead pods with an insensitive munitions propulsion

system (IMPS), 15 GMLRS unitary high explosive pods with IMPS, and 100 M57 Army Tactical Missile System pods.

It is intended to enhance Norway's artillery and mid-range fire capability, enabling the country to better defend itself against current and future threats in response to the Ukraine war.

Additionally, the sale is expected to increase the Norwegian military's interoperability with US and other allied forces.

Lockheed Martin will be the principal contractor, with potential offset agreements to be defined during negotiations.

"This proposed sale will support the foreign policy goals and national security objectives of the United States by improving the security of a NATO Ally that is an important force for political stability and economic progress in Europe," the Defense Security Cooperation Agency stated.

"The proposed sale of this equipment and support will not alter the basic military balance in the region."

Oslo has donated multiple launch rocket systems to Ukraine to help it defend itself against the Russian invasion.

Three systems were donated at the start of the war in June 2022 and an additional batch of eight were announced in collaboration with the UK in May 2023.

<https://www.thedefensepost.com/2024/08/12/us-selling-himars-norway/>

Poland Purchases Dozens of Boeing Apache Helicopters

Israel Defense, August 14, 2024

The Polish Ministry of Defense has signed offset agreements with Boeing and General Electric for the purchase of 96 AH-64E Apache helicopters. The offset agreements total \$25 million, while the value of the helicopter purchase itself amounts to \$12 billion.

Polish Deputy Defense Minister Pawel Bejda noted that the acquisition is intended to

strengthen Poland's readiness and security in light of the situation in Ukraine. The offset agreements include the maintenance of the helicopters, while the deal with General Electric pertains to procure the helicopter engines.

According to a Reuters report, the United States approved the sale of the helicopters to Poland in August 2023. Subsequently, agreements were signed allowing local Polish companies to maintain and repair the helicopters' radar equipment and missile guidance systems.

<https://www.israeldefense.co.il/en/node/62845>

F. The United States of America

IsoEnergy reopens US underground uranium mine

World Nuclear News, August 8, 2024

Initial observations of underground conditions indicate that the main decline and underground equipment shops are in good condition, IsoEnergy Ltd said. Rehabilitation of the underground, including scaling, installation of ground support and ventilation systems, is expected to take 8 to 10 weeks depending on the ground conditions encountered.

The underground rehabilitation work is being carried out by Tomcat Mining. IsoEnergy is also working with international mining consulting firms SRK Consulting Ltd, on the design and implementation of the ventilation plans, and Call & Nicholas Inc, on the design and implementation of the ground control plans.

As sections of the underground are made safe for entry, it is expected that exploration and geological work will begin to map out the orebody from underground. IsoEnergy is also in the process of contracting a surveying company to complete a LiDAR survey of the complete underground at Tony M. This will be the first time any such survey has been completed at the mine and will be an important tool in future mine planning.

The Saskatoon-based company has been working towards reopening the Tony M underground for access over the course of the last year. Site communications have been re-established, and electrical systems have been upgraded and refurbished where necessary, including the installation of “at least” one new generator meeting the US Environmental Protection Agency’s Tier 4 emission standards, it said. Several new fans have been installed and will continue to be installed as part of the rehabilitation, and several existing fans are to be refurbished.

The company announced last February its strategic decision to reopen the past-producing mine during the first half of this year, with the aim of restarting uranium production operations in 2025, depending on market conditions. Energy Fuels Inc’s White Mesa - the only currently operational conventional uranium mill in the USA - is within trucking distance to Tony M, and IsoEnergy has a toll-milling agreement which guarantees it access to the mill’s capacity.

<https://www.world-nuclear-news.org/Articles/IsoEnergy-reopens-US-underground-uranium-mine>

Army’s successful hypersonic missile test puts fielding on horizon

Defense News, August 9, 2024

The U.S. Army has deemed a first complete, end-to-end flight test of its hypersonic missile a success, which puts the initial fielding to the first unit closer on the horizon, Lt. Gen. Robert Rasch, Rapid Capabilities and Critical Technologies Office director, told Defense News at the Space and Missile Defense Symposium.

“We’re really close,” Rasch said. “I’m super proud of the team because this is an important capability.”

But he cautioned that more testing remains before any decision is made on the future of its ground-launched hypersonic missile.

“We’ve got to make sure this capability works. If the decision is made to implement this, it’s for real, serious reasons, strategic-level reasons and we need it to work every time,” Rasch said.

The first flight test of the industry-manufactured missile — which took place at the Pacific Missile Range Facility in Hawaii in May — was highly anticipated as part of a joint development program between the U.S. Navy and Army following a series of failed or aborted tests of the Common Hypersonic Glide Body.

Hypersonic weapons are capable of flying faster than Mach 5 — or more than 3,836 miles per hour — and can maneuver between varying altitudes, making them difficult to detect. The C-HGB is made up of the weapon’s warhead, guidance system, cabling and thermal protection shield.

<https://www.defensenews.com/digital-show-dailies/smd/2024/08/08/armys-successful-hypersonic-missile-test-puts-fielding-on-horizon/>

Australia, US, UK sign nuclear transfer deal for AUKUS subs

Arab News, August 12, 2024

Australia said Monday it had signed a deal to allow the exchange of nuclear secrets and material with the United States and Britain, a key step toward equipping its navy with nuclear-powered submarines.

It binds the three countries to security arrangements for the transfer of sensitive US and UK nuclear material and knowhow as part of the tripartite 2021 AUKUS security accord.

AUKUS, which envisages building an Australian nuclear-powered submarine fleet and jointly developing advanced warfighting capabilities, is seen as a strategic answer to Chinese military ambitions in the Pacific region.

“This agreement is an important step toward Australia’s acquisition of conventionally-armed, nuclear-powered submarines for the Royal Australian Navy,” said Richard Marles, Australia’s defense minister and deputy prime minister.

Australia’s acquisition of a nuclear-powered submarine fleet would set the “highest non-proliferation standards,” he

said, stressing that the country did not seek nuclear weapons.

The latest deal — signed in Washington last week and tabled in the Australian parliament on Monday — includes a provision for Australia to indemnify its partners against any liability for nuclear risks from material sent to the country.

<https://www.arabnews.com/node/2567066/world>

Uranium production resumes at Christensen Ranch

World Nuclear News, August 14, 2024

Production commenced in the previously operated Mine Unit 10 at Christensen Ranch on 6 August, the company said. To date, uranium concentrations in the initial production patterns are meeting expectations and are anticipated to rise in the coming weeks, it noted.

UEC said all planned start-up milestones, including the hiring and training of the initial restart personnel for both the Irigaray Central Processing Plant and Christensen Ranch, have been achieved to ensure a successful ramp-up of uranium production.

Extensive preparations, including the re-installation of equipment, re-attachment of piping and a variety of electrical testing, repairs and upgrades to the existing facilities, were completed at the Christensen Ranch wellfields and satellite processing plant last year.

UEC's board of directors approved restarting the Christensen Ranch operation in January.

Uranium recovered from Christensen Ranch will be processed at the Irigaray plant, located about 15 miles (24 kilometres) northwest of Christensen Ranch. Irigaray has a current licensed capacity of 2.5 million pounds U₃O₈ (962 tU) per year, with a licence amendment currently under regulatory review that is expected to increase capacity to 4.0 million pounds annually. The Irigaray plant is the hub at the centre of the UEC's Wyoming hub-and-spoke project which includes eleven satellite ISL projects, four of which are fully permitted.

The first shipment of yellowcake is anticipated to occur in November or December this year.

<https://www.world-nuclear-news.org/Articles/Uranium-production-resumes-at-Christensen-Ranch>

US Navy's newest air-to-air missile could tilt balance in South China Sea

Reuters, August 15, 2024

The U.S. Navy's deployment of new extremely long-range air-to-air missiles in the Indo-Pacific could erase China's advantage in aerial reach, experts say, part of an intensifying focus on projecting power amid high tensions in the region.

The AIM-174B, developed from the readily available Raytheon (RTX.N), opens new tab SM-6 air defence missile, is the longest-range such missile the United States has ever fielded and was officially acknowledged in July.

It has three key advantages: it can fly several times farther than the next-best U.S. option, the AIM-120 AMRAAM; it does not require new production lines; and it is compatible with the aircraft of at least one ally, Australia. Crucially, a weapon such as the AIM-174B, which can attack aerial targets as far away as 400 km (250 miles), outranges China's PL-15 missile, allowing U.S. jets to keep threats farther from aircraft carriers, and safely strike "high-value" Chinese targets, such as command-and-control planes.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/us-navys-newest-air-to-air-missile-could-tilt-balance-south-china-sea-2024-08-14/>

West Asia

G.Türkiye

Exclusive: Turkey pleased with F-16 jets deal with US, defence minister says

Reuters, August 12, 2024

Turkey is pleased with its deal with the United States regarding the procurement

of Block-70 F-16 fighter jets and modernisation kits, and the process is continuing as planned, Defence Minister Yasar Guler said.

"We hope the project will be completed without any problems until the last jet is delivered," Guler said in written responses to Reuters questions, adding that officials from the two NATO allies are still discussing details of the deal.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/aerospace-defense/turkey-pleased-with-f-16-jets-deal-with-us-defence-minister-says-2024-08-12/>

Turkey to use Russian S-400s until it builds its own air defense network

TASS, August 15, 2024

Turkey will use, not sell, the S-400 air defense systems it purchased from Russia until it builds up its own domestic air defense system, the Turkiye newspaper reported.

Forbes magazine reported earlier that Turkey, which is currently building the Steel Dome air defense system, may sell the S-400s it is holding to third countries, particularly India or Pakistan, after the system is activated. This would allow it to again work with the US to build next-generation F-35 fighter jets. Ankara lost out on this opportunity after signing a contract with Russia for the delivery of a regimental set of S-400s. Washington has repeatedly said that cooperation between the two countries along these lines will be put on ice until Turkey gets rid of its Russian systems.

According to Turan Oguz, a prominent Turkish defense and security expert, Istanbul does not yet have air defense systems that would protect its airspace from medium-range ballistic missiles, which the Russian S-400s allow. "The S-400 SAMs have not been integrated into NATO systems, but Turkey has connected Russian SAMs to its own radar network and receives the necessary support from them. The system operates autonomously. In terms of military necessity, you will continue to use what you have available until you can build the same thing. Domestically produced defense systems do not have a ballistic missile

defense network, and the S-400 protects Turkish airspace from ballistic missiles within a 400 km range. The Siper SAM, which will come into Turkish service this year, will only provide protection within 100 kilometers," Oguz told the newspaper.

Earlier in his interview with the Hurriyet newspaper, he did not rule out that the S-400 could be integrated into Turkey's Steel Dome air defense system.

In 2017, Turkey purchased four divisions of S-400 air defense systems from Russia at a cost of \$2.5 billion. In October 2019, Rosoboronexport reported that the contract for the delivery of the systems had been fulfilled.

<https://tass.com/world/1829403>

H. Iran

Iran's east air defense gets new radars, missile interceptors

IRNA, August 7, 2024

Brigadier General Alireza Sabahifard visited the different parts, sites and radar positions of an air defense unit in the east of the country, and evaluated the level of combat readiness and operational capability of these units.

During his visit, Sabahifard told a group of commanders and employees that the Air Defense Force, as Iran's main defense system, is playing an effective role in improving the country's armed forces combat power. He said that Iran is stronger than ever in the defense sector, adding that "we ensure that we respond decisively to any kind of threat."

<https://en.irna.ir/news/85561101/Iran-s-east-air-defense-gets-new-radars-missile-interceptors>

Belarus' Air Force chief meets Iranian commanders to discuss defense ties

IRNA, August 7, 2024

Gen. Lukyanovich, who is also the commander of Belarus' Air Defense Force, met with Major General Seyyed

Abdolrahim Mousavi, the chief commander of the Iranian Army, on Wednesday.

The meeting focused on the shared threats and common interests faced by both Iran and Belarus, including American unilateralism and sanctions imposed by the United States and its European allies.

Gen. Mousavi highlighted Belarus's strategic position as a barrier against NATO's expansion, saying that the Islamic Republic is also opposed to the enlargement of the US-led military alliance.

Lukyanovich, in response, reiterated his country's opposition to American unilateralism and NATO's expansion. He also said that Belarus is committed to deepening military ties with Iran.

Additionally, the Belarusian commander visited the Iranian Air Force Headquarters, where he met with Brigadier General Hamid Vahedi, the commander of the Iranian Air Force.

General Vahedi said Iran and Belarus have the same views on regional and global challenges, which he attributed to the actions of the US and the Zionist regime.

Lukyanovich also expressed Belarus's desire to expand military and defense cooperation with Iran's Armed Forces.

<https://en.irna.ir/news/85561497/Belarus-Air-Force-chief-meets-Iranian-commanders-to-discuss>

Iran's defense achievements on display at Russia's "ARMY 2024" Exhibition

IRNA, August 8, 2024

The three-day exhibition opened on Monday. General Ali Shademani attended the opening ceremony of the exhibition on behalf of Chief of Staff of the Iranian Armed Forces Major General Mohammad Bagheri.

On the first day of the exhibition, Iran's "Mohajer 10" drone was put on display for the first time, which is said to be technologically much more advanced than previous Iranian-developed UAVs.

Some radar and electronic warfare systems were other Iranian military developments showcased in the Russian exhibition.

Iran's Ambassador to Moscow, while referring to the visit of Iran's pavilion by officials and people from Russia and other countries praised his country's defense achievements and capabilities.

Kazem Jalali in an interview with IRNA on the sidelines of the exhibition on the outskirts of Moscow on Monday said that officials of many countries are envious of the Iranian progress when they visit the pavilion of the Islamic Republic, and therefore, "progress in the fields of defense and military are not a rhetorical issue, but a proud reality".

<https://en.irna.ir/news/85566326/Iran-s-defense-achievements-on-display-at-Russia-s-ARMY-2024>

Iran Navy Unveils Advanced Missiles As Regional Tensions Spike

NDTV World, August 9, 2024

The Iranian Revolutionary Guards said on Friday that its navy has new cruise missiles equipped with highly explosive warheads that are undetectable, state media reported.

The announcement by the country's most powerful security organisation coincides with fears of a full-blown Middle East war after Iran vowed to avenge the assassination in Tehran on July 31 of Ismail Haniyeh, leader of the Palestinian Islamist Hamas.

Iran has blamed Israel, while Israel has neither confirmed nor denied involvement.

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“In today’s world you either have to be powerful to survive, or surrender. There’s no middle ground,” said the Guards’ top commander, Major-General Hossein Salami.

“A large number of cruise missiles have been added to the Guards’ navy fleet. These new missiles have capabilities of highly explosive warheads that are undetectable and can cause extensive damage and sink their targets,” a Guards statement said.

The Guards’ navy also said in a statement that various types of long and medium-range missile systems, as well as reconnaissance drones and naval radars, have been added to its fleet.

<https://www.ndtv.com/world-news/iran-navy-unveils-advanced-missiles-as-regional-tensions-spike-6300509>

Iran’s defense capabilities on par with its drone, missile power: IRGC general

IRNA, August 13, 2024

In an interview with IRNA on the sideline of the 10th International Military-Technical Forum “Army-2024” in Russia, Brigadier General Shadmani said the forum is a platform for countries to display their capabilities and achievements, and Iran will be putting on display its achievements in defense and drone industry.

He said that Iran’s defense industry has achieved great success in various fields, including cyber, naval and air equipment, and the country’s achievements in the defense industry are on the path of evolution.

Iran has made great achievements in the field of communications, laser technology and artificial intelligence, he added.

Brigadier General Shadmani also hailed the efforts and support of Iran’s Ministry of Defense and General Staff of the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran on setting up the Iranian pavilion and exhibiting part of the defense capabilities of Iran’s armed forces.

The 10th International Military-Technical Forum “Army-2024” is being held from August 12-14 at Patriot Expo, Kubinka Air Base and Alabino military training grounds, Russia.

<https://en.irna.ir/news/85566666/Iran-s-defense-capabilities-on-par-with-its-drone-missile-power>

I. Israel

Israeli Navy and IAI Achieve Successful Test of Long-Range Interceptor System

Israel Defense, August 4, 2024

The Israeli Navy, the Ministry of Defense’s Directorate of Defense Research & Development, and the Israel Aerospace Industries completed an interception test using a long-range interceptor – LRAD, last week.

The Israeli Navy’s missile ships, of the Sa’ar 6 class corvette model, which were declared operational during the ‘Swords of Iron’ War, are equipped with wide aerial defense layers combining kinetic and non-kinetic systems. The ‘Barak Magen’ aerial defense system and the LRAD long-range interceptor completed the Israeli Navy the ability to manage a wide variety of aerial threats. The test was carried out by the INS “Atzmaut” (Independence) missile ship.

During the test, a precise rocket was launched at a target that simulated a strategic asset at sea, the ‘Barak Magen’ system detected, tracked, and classified the target as a threat and completed a successful interception process until the target was destroyed. This test is a proof of the system’s operational capability and readiness during combat.

<https://www.israeldefense.co.il/en/node/62767>

IDF Purchases IAI's SDR Airborne Radios for UAVs

Israel Defense, August 5, 2024

Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI), a world-class aerospace and defense leader, has been awarded a contract, by competitive tender, to provide the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) with airborne radios, for installation on Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAV) that operate in maritime patrol missions over the Israeli Economic Exclusion Zone (EEZ). Installed on Heron-type UAVs, they allow shore-based Navy personnel to hail vessels within the EEZ and to communicate with them directly.

The radios, model ARC840 SDR, are developed and manufactured by ELTA Systems Ltd., IAI's defense electronics division. Based on advanced Software Defined Radio (SDR) technology, the radios support voice, video, and data communications, and are able to communicate in a wide variety of communications protocols and modulations enabling forces in the land, air and sea to collaborate – linking between varied communications methods in the separate domains. The ARC840 radio forms part of IAI's product suite for UAV communications, comprising SDR radios, SATCOM, and Line-Of-Sight (LOS) communications systems.

IAI's product line of airborne communications suites is well established, with several decades of operational experience. To date, IAI's systems have been installed on hundreds of aerial platforms – both manned and unmanned – and have accumulated hundreds of thousands of hours in operational and combat environments. These systems have been provided in cooperation with leading platform manufacturers including IAI, Airbus, Boeing, Lockheed Martin, Dassault Aviation, and others.

<https://www.israeldefense.co.il/en/node/62775>

Maris-Tech Secures \$700,000 Order for AI-Enabled Video System Designed for Armored Vehicles

Israel Defense, August 5, 2024

Maris-Tech, an Israeli provider of edge computing artificial intelligence (AI) accelerated video solutions for edge platforms, announced that it has received a \$700,000 order from a repeat customer for the development and production of a new system with AI-enabled video distribution capabilities, specifically designed for armored vehicles.

According to the company, this unique solution is a high-end video system that enhances the driving and control capabilities of armored vehicles. The order is expected to be delivered in tranches from 2024 to 2027.

"We are thrilled to collaborate once again with our esteemed customer on this unique video solution tailored for the defense industry, which will enhance the safety and efficiency of armored vehicles. This significant order underscores our commitment and success in developing cutting-edge AI-enabled video solutions that address the critical needs of both new and existing customers," said Israel Bar, Chief Executive Officer of Maris-Tech.

<https://www.israeldefense.co.il/en/node/62774>

US Boosts Support for Israel with \$3.5 Billion Arms Deal and F-22 Raptors

Israel Defense, August 11, 2024

The US administration is expected to provide Israel with \$3.5 billion for the procurement of American-made weapons and defense systems. This is part of a \$14.1 billion deal Congress approved in April. CNN, which broke this story on Friday, adds that the funding will be allocated to systems currently being built, which aren't likely to be delivered for years. Yet, this is

an indication of American plans and defense policy for the foreseeable future.

Amid the looming threats by Iran and Hezbollah to attack Israel, Israeli Defense Minister Yoav Gallant spoke on Friday with both US Secretary of State Antony Blinken and Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin. Both secretaries reaffirmed the American commitment to protect Israel while calling for a de-escalation of tensions.

Austin and Gallant discussed the deployment of ballistic missile defense assets and the arrival of US F-22 Raptor stealth fighter jets to the Middle East earlier that day. The deployment and location of the jets remain undisclosed. However, on Wednesday The Aviationist reported that 12 US Raptors landed in RAF Lakenheath, England, having flown in from Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Alaska, en route to the Middle East.

In another attempt to end the ongoing crisis by diplomatic measures, Blinken also spoke with Jordan's Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates Ayman Safadi. According to the official statement, they discussed the joint statement by the United States, Egypt, and Qatar which called for an immediate ceasefire to provide relief to both Palestinians in Gaza and the hostages and their families.

<https://www.israeldefense.co.il/en/node/62810>

US Approves \$20 Billion Arms Sale to Israel

Israel Defense, August 14, 2024

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken approved \$20 billion in arms sales to Israel, including F-15 aircraft, advanced air-to-air missiles and tank cartridges. The deals are pending congressional approval.

The US Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA), announced the following potential deals:

*Up to 50 F-15IA and F-15I+ aircraft and

related equipment for an estimated cost of \$18.82 billion. The prime contractor will be The Boeing Corporation. Deliveries are estimated to begin in 2029.

*Thirty AIM-120C-8 advanced medium range air-to-air missiles (AMRAAM) and one AMRAAM guidance section (spare), plus related equipment for an estimated cost of \$102.5 million. These items will be sourced from new production.

*Medium tactical vehicles and related equipment for an estimated cost of \$583.1 million. The principal contractor will be the Oshkosh Corporation. Deliveries are estimated to begin in 2026.

*120mm high explosive mortar cartridges and related equipment for an estimated cost of \$61.1 million. Israel has requested 50 thousand such cartridges. Deliveries are estimated to begin in 2026.

*120mm tank cartridges and related equipment for an estimated cost of \$774.1 million. Israel requested to buy 32,739 such cartridges. Deliveries are estimated to begin in 2027.

"The United States is committed to the security of Israel, and it is vital to U.S. national interests to assist Israel to develop and maintain a strong and ready self-defense capability. This proposed sale is consistent with those objectives," DSCA said in its notification.

<https://www.israeldefense.co.il/en/node/62847>

J. Egypt

Egypt to Upgrade Inshas Airbase for New CH-47F Chinooks

Israel Defense, August 13, 2024

The Egyptian Air Force plans to designate the Inshas Airbase to receive 12 new CH-47F Chinook helicopters, purchased from Boeing.

This extensive project, estimated to cost between \$25 million and \$100 million, includes construction and preparations at

the base to accommodate the new helicopters. The preparatory work is expected to last about 30 months. The Inshas base will undergo significant construction and upgrade existing facilities to support the new aircraft.

Inshas airbase, located northeast of Cairo, previously served as a site for fighter aircraft. Recently, the base has not received new aircraft, according to a report by Jane's.

The United States has approved the sale of 12 CH-47F helicopters to Egypt, and in January 2023, Boeing received a \$426 million contract to produce the helicopters. Delivery is expected to begin in 2026, with Egypt having the option to purchase an additional 11 helicopters.

<https://www.israeldefense.co.il/en/node/62840>

K. Yemen

Missile attack by Yemen's Houthi rebels hits container ship in first attack in 2 weeks

The Economic Times, August 4, 2024

A missile attack by Yemen's Houthi rebels struck a Liberian-flagged container ship traveling through the Gulf of Aden, authorities said Sunday, the first assault by the group since Israeli airstrikes targeted them.

The Houthis offered no explanation for the two-week pause in their attacks on shipping through the Red Sea corridor, which have seen similar slowdowns since the assaults began in November over Israel's war on Hamas in the Gaza Strip. But the resumption comes after the assassination of Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh in Iran, the Houthis' main benefactor, amid renewed concerns over the war breaking out into a regional conflict. The rebels separately claimed to have shot down another U.S. military spy drone, without offering evidence.

The attack on Saturday happened some 225 kilometers (140 miles) southeast of Aden in a stretch of the Gulf of Aden that has seen numerous Houthi attacks previously. It hit the container ship Groton just above its

waterline, causing minor damage, said the Joint Maritime Information Center, a multinational coalition overseen by the U.S. Navy. An earlier missile attack missed the vessel, the JMIC said.

"All crew on board are safe," the center said. "The vessel was reported diverting to a port nearby."

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/defence/missile-attack-by-yemens-houthi-rebels-hits-container-ship-in-first-attack-in-2-weeks/articleshow/112267631.cms?from=mdr>

L. East Asia

South Korea, U.S. to stage annual drills over North Korea's missile, cyber threats

The Hindu, August 12, 2024

South Korea and the United States will begin annual summertime military drills next week to ramp up their capability to counter North Korea's weapons and cyber threats, officials said on Monday (August 12, 2024).

The Ulchi Freedom Shield exercises, set to run from August 19 to 29, as North Korea continues to develop its nuclear and missile programmes and tries to launch reconnaissance satellites.

The drills will reflect "realistic threats" across all domains, including the North's missile threats but also GPS jamming, cyberattacks and other lessons learned from recent incidents, the two countries' militaries said in a statement.

The alliance "will further strengthen its capability and posture to deter and defend against weapons of mass destruction," Colonel Lee Sung-jun, spokesperson for South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff, told a briefing.

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/international/south-korea-us-to-stage-annual-drills-over-north-koreas-missile-cyber-threats/article68515390.ece>

M. Southeast Asia

Philippines to Receive Two More Israel Shaldag MK5 Vessels

Israel Defense, August 6, 2024

The Philippine military website MaxDefense reports that the Philippine Navy is expected to receive the 7th and 8th Shaldag MK5 fast attack interdiction vessels, manufactured by Israel Shipyards, by late August or early September 2024.

The website notes that both vessels will be equipped with the Rafael MLR-NLOS missile launcher and Spike NLOS missiles. These vessels are part of a roughly \$195 million deal to supply nine Shaldag MK5 fast attack interdiction vessels that the Philippine Navy signed with Israel Shipyards.

Consequently, only the 9th vessel of the class will be assembled in the Philippines as part of the acquisition contract.

<https://www.israeldefense.co.il/en/node/62785>

Southeast Asian countries take interest in Russian-Indian missile

TASS, August 12, 2024

Certain South East Asian countries are showing interest in the Russian-Indian supersonic BrahMos missile, co-director of the BrahMos JV from the Russian side Alexander Maksichev told TASS at the Army 2024 forum.

The Philippines is the only country so far that purchased BrahMos missiles, he noted.

"We have negotiations going on and on. There are interested parties. A new customer will appear when we will sign a contract. When we will sign, we will certainly inform you. This refers to the same region as the Philippines," Maksichev said.

The Army 2024 forum is being held from August 12 to 14 in the Moscow Region. Specimens of armament, materiel and special vehicles will be showed to participants during the event. TASS is the strategic media partner of the forum.

<https://tass.com/defense/1828129>

Thailand Receives Elbit's PULS-Based D11A Rocket Launchers

Israel Defense, August 13, 2024

The Defense Technology Institute (DTI) of Thailand delivered the prototype of the D11A Multi-Purpose Multiple Rocket Launcher Vehicle, based on the Israeli Elbit Systems' PULS system. According to the Thai Defense-studies blog, the system was officially handed over to the 711th Artillery Battalion, 71st Artillery Regiment, 71st Artillery Division, Royal Thai Army, in a ceremony presided over by Thai Minister of Defense, Mr. Sutin Khlangsaeng.

The D11A Multi-Purpose Multiple Launch Rocket System (MPS) is a Thai-developed version of the PULS (Precise and Universal Launching System) from Israeli company Elbit Systems. It features two modular launchers mounted on a 10-tonne Tatra 6x6 truck chassis from the Czech Republic.

The D11A can quickly change rocket pods in under 10 minutes and supports rocket firing with a maximum range from 40 km to 300 km. It accommodates unguided 122mm rockets, such as the Russian GRAD, the Thai-developed DTI-2 rocket, and Chinese SHE-30 and SHE-40 rockets. The system is also compatible with the Chinese SR4 multi-barrel rockets already in service with the Royal Thai Army.

Additionally, the D11A can fire 306mm EXTRA guided missiles with an effective range of 150 km (4 rounds per set, with two pods totaling 8 rounds) and 370mm Predator Hawk guided missiles with an effective range of 300 km (2 rounds per set, with two pods totaling 4 rounds). Elbit Systems has also offered the SkyStriker autonomous loitering munition, which can be launched from the D11A.

<https://www.israeldefense.co.il/en/node/62835>

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