

Nuclear, Missile & Space Digest

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A Fortnightly Newsletter from the MP-IDSA

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A. India

Tamil Nadu-based space startup launches India's first reusable hybrid rocket

The Times of India, August 25, 2024

A day after the country celebrated the first National Space Day, Tamil Nadu-based startup Space Zone India launched India's first reusable hybrid rocket, Mission RHUMI-2024, on board a mobile platform from the TTDC Ground in Thiruvidadandai, East Coast Road, Chennai on Saturday. RHUMI-1 rocket launched three Cube satellites and 50 PICO satellites to a suborbital trajectory and the aim of these satellites is to collect data for research purposes on global warming and climate change.

Elon Musk-owned SpaceX is the only company in the world that has the technology to reuse the same rocket for multiple launches. Space Zone India attempted to emulate the same technology but on a small scale. The company has built an innovative, cost-effective, and eco-friendly descent mechanism that will ensure the safe recovery of rocket components. Reusability enables space companies to re-fly the most expensive parts of the rocket. This, in turn, will lower the cost of launches. Equipped with a generic-fuel-based hybrid motor and electrically triggered parachute deployer, the rocket is 100% pyrotechnic- and TNT-free. "The demand for small satellites in Low Earth Orbit (LEO) is increasing in India. This prompted the company to focus on capturing the small satellite market while employing a hybrid propulsion system to ensure cost-effectiveness," said Anand Megalingam, founder and CEO of Space Zone in a company post. Space Zone India launched the reusable rocket in collaboration with Martin Group, which is funding the startup.

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/tamil-nadu-based-space-startup-launches-indias-first-reusable-hybrid-rocket/articleshow/112769989.cms>

India's second 700 MW nuclear power KAPS-4 plant starts operations at full capacity

The Hindu, August 21, 2024

India's second home-built 700 MW nuclear power reactor at Kakrapar Atomic Power Station (KAPS) in Gujarat on Wednesday (August 21, 2024) started operating at its full capacity, the plant operator said.

The Nuclear Power Corporation of India Limited (NPCIL) said Unit 4 at KAPS had been operating at 90% capacity before raising it to full power of 700 MWe.

"The full power operation of KAPS-4 after the smooth operation of its twin unit KAPS-3 at full power demonstrates the strength of the first of a kind indigenous 700 MW Pressurised Heavy Water Reactor (PHWR) design," the NPCIL said.

The KAPS-4 unit achieved first criticality on December 17 last year and commenced commercial operations on March 31.

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/indias-second-700-mw-nuclear-power-kaps-4-plant-starts-operations-at-full-capacity/article68549652.ece>

India's space agency chief sees higher funding

Reuters, August 27, 2024

India's space agency expects a 20%-30% increase in its budget in the coming years, its head said in a Reuters NEXT Newsmaker interview on Tuesday, describing the agency's rocket launch prices as on a par with SpaceX's, though without giving details.

In a wide-ranging interview, Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) Chairman S Somanath discussed ongoing plans for a heavy-lift booster rocket - capable of carrying large payloads - using a combination of private and public money. He also talked up other goals, including crewed spaceflight.

The government has allotted nearly 130 billion rupees (\$1.55 billion) to India's space department this year.

Asked how much he expected funding to increase, Somanath said "something like an additional 20-30%", though "over a long period of time".

NASA's approved budget for the current fiscal year stands at \$25 billion after cuts.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has called on ISRO to make India a profitable space superpower, and the agency has responded by looking to work with the private sector.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/india/indias-space-agency-chief-sees-higher-funding-2024-08-27/>

India Gets Its Second Nuclear Submarine, INS Arighaat

NDTV, August 29, 2024

India commissioned its second nuclear submarine INS Arighaat today in Visakhapatnam. The Arihant-class submarine will strengthen India's nuclear triad, enhance nuclear deterrence, help in establishing strategic balance and peace in the region, and play a decisive role in the security of the country, the Ministry of Defence said in a statement today.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, who attended the nuclear missile's commissioning ceremony, described the naval milestone as an achievement for the nation and a testament to Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led government's unwavering resolve to achieve *aatmanirbharta* (self-sufficiency) in defence.

The construction of INS Arighaat involved the use of advanced design and manufacturing technology, detailed research and development, use of special material, complex engineering and highly skilled workmanship, the Defence Ministry said.

The country's nuclear submarine has the distinction of having indigenous systems and equipment which were conceptualised, designed, manufactured and integrated by Indian scientists, industry and naval personnel, it said.

The technological advancements undertaken indigenously on the new submarine make it significantly more advanced than its predecessor, Arihant. The presence of both INS Arihant and INS Arighaat will enhance India's capability to deter potential adversaries and safeguard its national interests, the Defence Ministry said.

Rajnath Singh commended the Indian Navy, Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and the industry for their hard work and synergy in achieving this capability. He called this level of self-reliance the foundation of "self power". The country's industry including micro, small and medium enterprises received a huge boost and created jobs through this project.

<https://www.ndtv.com/india-news/india-gets-its-second-nuclear-submarine-ins-arighat-6445867>

India's nuclear triad projects dominance over the Indo-Pacific

Hindustan Times, August 30, 2024

By commissioning two nuclear ballistic missile submarines during his two terms in office, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has shown commitment to "India First" policy commensurate with the stated objective of India acquiring 'credible, minimum' and indigenous nuclear deterrent with second strike capability. The first ballistic missile submarine SSBN INS Arihant was commissioned in 2018, nine years after it was launched, second one INS Arighaat was commissioned on August 29, 2024, seven years after it was launched and the third one INS Aridaman will be commissioned next year within the same time frame of launching. In the meantime, INS Dhruv, India's first ballistic missile tracker ship, was commissioned on September 10, 2021 by National Security Advisor Ajit Doval.

While the SSBN is part of India's stated policy of a nuclear triad, the two ballistic missile submarines project India as a major blue water Navy with across the horizon missile capabilities. It not only strengthens

India's access denial capabilities in the Indo-Pacific but also deters any threat to India's land and coastline from the source of origin of that threat.

Today with two aircraft carriers and two SSBNs, India dominates the Indian Ocean region with a potent fleet of destroyers, frigates and diesel attack submarines. It is also a message to Indian adversaries in the neighborhood that any aggression will be met with larger force.

<https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/indias-nuclear-triad-projects-dominance-over-the-indopacific-101724995706126.html>

B. Pakistan

Pakistan Conducts Successful Training Launch Of Shaheen-II Ballistic Missile

NDTV World, August 20, 2024

The Pakistani military on Tuesday conducted the successful training launch of its surface-to-surface ballistic missile Shaheen-II, the army said.

"The training launch was aimed at training of troops, validating various technical parameters and performance evaluation of different sub-systems incorporated for improved accuracy and enhanced survivability," the army said in a statement.

The military provided no further technical information.

The training launch was witnessed by senior officers from the Strategic Plans Division, Army Strategic Forces Command, scientists and engineers of strategic organisations. The Director General Strategic Plans Division appreciated the technical prowess, dedication and commitment of scientists who contributed towards this achievement. President Asif Ali Zardari, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee General Sahir Shamshad Mirza and services chiefs congratulated the scientists and engineers on the achievement.

<https://www.ndtv.com/world-news/pakistan-conducts-successful-training-launch-of-shaheen-ii-ballistic-missile-6377968>

C. China

China approves record 11 new nuclear power reactors at five sites, aims to reduce emissions

Mint, August 20, 2024

China approved 11 nuclear reactors across five sites Monday, a record amount of new permits as the nation leans even more heavily on atomic energy to support its push to eliminate emissions.

China's cabinet approved the new reactors in sites spread across Jiangsu, Shandong, Guangdong, Zhejiang and Guangxi, state-run China Energy News reported. The total investment for all 11 units will be at least 220 billion yuan with construction taking about five years, according to a report from financial publication Jiemian.

China has more nuclear reactors under construction than any other nation in the world, and approved 10 new reactors in both 2022 and 2023.

CGN Power Co., the listed unit of state-owned China General Nuclear Power Corp., said in a Hong Kong stock exchange filing that it received approvals for six reactors across three sites. China National Nuclear Power Co. said on WeChat it had been approved for three reactors, while State Power Investment Corp. said it received approval for two units.

<https://www.livemint.com/news/world/china-approves-record-11-new-nuclear-power-reactors-at-5-sites-atomic-energy-aims-to-cut-emissions-climate-change-11724121973384.html>

China to launch "Earth 2.0" exoplanet observatory in 2028

SpaceNews, August 22, 2024

China plans to launch an exoplanet observatory in 2028 with the aim of making a breakthrough detection of a potential second Earth.

Around 5,000 exoplanets have been found since 1995, but no Earth-sized planets in

the habitable zones of sun-like stars have been spotted.

Earth 2.0, or ET, proposed by the Shanghai Astronomical Observatory under the Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS), intends to use six 28-centimeter-aperture wide-field optical telescopes to observe about 2 million stars in the Kepler mission star field and other, larger nearby regions, continuously monitoring for transits of so-called exo-Earths over four years.

The mission is now targeting launch in 2028, according to a new paper authored by the mission principal investigator and others and published in the Chinese Journal of Space Science.

The spacecraft will be launched to Sun-Earth Lagrange point 2—the same gravitationally stable region of space as the James Webb Space Telescope—which will provide a stable orbit, a constant view of deep space, and reduced interference from Earth.

There, ET's optimized transit telescopes will deliver high photometric precision—the accuracy and consistency with which the telescopes can measure the brightness of stars—that will allow for the detection of small, rocky planets, previously beyond the scope of missions such as NASA's Kepler exoplanet observatory.

<https://spacenews.com/china-to-launch-earth-2-0-exoplanet-observatory-in-2028/>

China space engineers kick 'doomed' satellite pair into life in lunar orbit

South China Morning Post, August 22, 2024

China has "kicked" two of its experimental satellites into their designated lunar orbit, five months after they were left in limbo when the launch rocket's upper stage did not fire properly.

The satellites, developed by the Chinese Academy of Sciences, were shown operating in their planned distant retrograde orbit (DRO) in a PowerPoint slide attributed to CAS that started circulating on social media platform Weibo from Tuesday.

A researcher who works for CAS in Beijing and is familiar with the project confirmed to the Post on Wednesday that the satellites DRO-A and B had been recovered.

The recovery was achieved by getting the spacecraft to fire their engines in a series of "perigee kicks" aimed at the closest point to the Earth, increasing velocity and extending their reach, the researcher said, on condition of anonymity. The satellites left the Xichang launch centre on March 13 on top of a Long March 2C rocket but did not reach their destination, tens of thousands of kilometres above the moon's surface.

The rocket's first and second stages worked normally, but the Yuanzheng-1S upper stage did not, state news agency Xinhua reported the next day. "The satellites have not been inserted into their designated orbit, and work is under way to address this problem," it said.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/science/article/3275415/china-space-engineers-kick-doomed-satellite-pair-life-lunar-orbit>

China launches ChinaSat-4A communications satellite

SpaceNews, August 22, 2024

China launched a new communications satellite towards the geostationary belt Thursday, but revealed very little information about the spacecraft.

A Long March 7A lifted off from Wenchang Satellite Launch Center on Hainan island at 8:25 a.m. Eastern (1225 UTC) Aug. 22, rising into night skies above the coastal spaceport. State media Xinhua announced launch success around 45 minutes after liftoff.

"The satellite successfully entered the predetermined orbit and the launch mission was a complete success," the terse news release stated.

While the launch was expected, due to images of the rocket at Wenchang posted on Chinese social media and maritime

navigation warnings, the payload was unknown to the outside until launch success was announced.

Xinhua stated that the ChinaSat 4A satellite can “provide users with voice, data, radio and television transmission services.” The intended users were not specified.

<https://spacenews.com/china-launches-chinasat-4a-communications-satellite/>

Chinese scientists use lunar soil to produce water, state media reports

NBC News, August 23, 2024

Chinese scientists have discovered a “brand-new method” of producing large quantities of water using lunar soil brought back from a 2020 expedition, state broadcaster CCTV reported on Thursday.

In 2020, China’s Chang’e-5 mission marked the first time humans had retrieved lunar samples in 44 years. Researchers from the state-run Chinese Academy of Sciences discovered that the minerals in this “moon soil” contain large amounts of hydrogen, which reacts with other elements when heated to very high temperatures, producing water vapor, CCTV reported.

“After three years of in-depth research and repeated verification, a brand-new method of using lunar soil to produce large amounts of water was discovered, which is expected to provide important design basis for the construction of future lunar scientific research stations and space stations,” said CCTV.

The discovery could have important implications for China’s decades-long project of building a permanent lunar outpost amid a U.S.-China race to find and mine the moon’s resources.

<https://www.nbcnews.com/science/space/chinese-scientists-use-lunar-soil-produce-water-rcna167951>

China’s nuclear weapons a growing concern for US

DW, August 29, 2024

US National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan was in Beijing this week for talks

with Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi, and high-level military officials, as the US and China try and maintain guardrails on their growing strategic rivalry.

Sullivan’s talks on Wednesday with General Zhang Youxian, vice chairman of China’s Central Military Commission, included arrangements to improve communication between both militaries, including between high-ranking commanders.

The White House said in a statement that the first trip by a US national security advisor to China since 2016 was part of ongoing efforts to “maintain channels of communication to responsibly manage the relationship.”

As tension continues between the US and China over issues including Beijing’s expansionist moves in the South China Sea and consistent military pressure on Taiwan, avoiding miscalculations that could lead to open conflict is a shared priority.

<https://www.dw.com/en/chinas-nuclear-weapons-a-growing-concern-for-us/a-70081696>

Galactic Energy launches six satellites with third sea launch

SpaceNews, August 29, 2024

China’s Galactic Energy conducted its third Ceres-1 solid rocket sea launch Thursday, successfully sending six satellites into orbit.

The Ceres-1 lifted off from a transport erector launcher on a mobile sea platform off the coast of Haiyang, Shandong province, at 1:22 a.m. Eastern (0522 UTC) Aug. 29.

Galactic Energy confirmed launch success within an hour of liftoff. Aboard were six remote sensing satellites for commercial customers.

Three of the satellites were Yunyao-1 spacecraft, equipped with GNSS occultation (GNSS-RO) and infrared imaging payloads, intended to provide meteorological data for commercial firm Yunyao Yuhang.

Also aboard was Jitian-A03, the first satellite for Suzhou Jitian Xingzhou Space Technology Co. Ltd. The satellite is equipped with a hyperspectral remote sensing payload for high-resolution optical remote sensing technology verification. Hyperspectral sensors capture data across hundreds of narrow, contiguous spectral bands, allowing these sensors to distinguish between materials, making these useful for applications including mineral exploration, agriculture, and environmental monitoring.

<https://spacenews.com/galactic-energy-launches-six-satellites-with-third-sea-launch/>

D. Russia

Russian troops testing modified FPV drones in special military operation area

TASS, August 16, 2024

An engineering unit of Russia's Battlegroup South has begun testing modified FPV drones in the special military operation in Ukraine, the Russian Defense Ministry reported on Friday.

"The confrontation of electronic warfare systems in the area of the special military operation has shown the presence of many highly qualified specialists in the Russian Armed Forces. Specialists of an engineering unit of the Battlegroup South are no exception in this regard. After a qualitative analysis and the upgrade of strike FPV drones by the unit's engineers, drone operators go out to the fields for testing," the ministry said in a statement.

The tests run in conditions maximally close to a combat environment, it said.

<https://tass.com/defense/1829845>

Russian, Chinese naval drills in Gulf of Finland in line with international law – China

TASS, August 16, 2024

The recent joint exercises of Chinese and Russian warships in the Gulf of Finland

comply with international law and were not directed against any specific targets, said Chinese Defense Ministry Spokesman Zhang Xiaogang.

"Not long ago, the Chinese Navy ships Jiaozuo and Honghu took part in the celebration of the 328th anniversary of the founding of the Russian Navy [in St. Petersburg] and conducted joint exercises with Russian ships in the waters of the Gulf of Finland," Zhang Xiaogang said on the Chinese Defense Ministry's WeChat account. "It should be emphasized that these joint exercises are part of regular Chinese-Russian military-to-military cooperation."

The spokesman said such activities by China and Russia "are in line with international law and practice, not directed against any specific targets and are not related to the current situation in the region."

<https://tass.com/world/1830027>

Future radio-electronic warfare systems to have automatic frequency selection feature

TASS, August 16, 2024

With the development of radio-electronic warfare technologies such systems will soon boast a function to automatically identify and select frequencies to be jammed, the CEO of the company Laboratory PPS, Denis Oslomenko, has told TASS.

"We will eventually achieve the function of detection and suppression, but this is a prospect of the next six months. The frequency spectrum is very wide. To switch on everything at once will require major power consumption," Oslomenko said.

He explained that not all trucks or armored vehicles would be able to provide sufficient power supply for jamming the whole spectrum of frequencies at once.

<https://tass.com/defense/1830049>

IAEA reports worsening nuclear security situation at Zaporozhye NPP

TASS, August 18, 2024

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has reported worsening nuclear safety situation at the Zaporozhye Nuclear Power Plant (ZNPP), following a yet another Ukrainian drone attack on Saturday morning.

"The nuclear safety situation at Ukraine's Zaporizhzhya Nuclear Power Plant (ZNPP) is deteriorating following a drone strike that hit the road around the plant site perimeter today," the international organization said.

According to IAEA, the impact site was close to the essential cooling water sprinkler ponds and about 100 metres from the Dniprovsk power line, the only remaining 750 kilovolt (kV) line providing a power supply to ZNPP.

<https://tass.com/defense/1830429>

Belarus hopes to receive more Russian helicopters, fighter jets next year

TASS, August 18, 2024

Belarus hopes to receive a new batch of Russian Mi-35M helicopters and Su-30SM fighter jets at the beginning of the next year, commander of Belarus' air and air defense forces, Andrey Lukyanovich, said.

"We received another batch of Mi-35M helicopters this spring. We plan to receive two batches of aircraft early next year, including Mi-35M helicopters and a squadron of Su-30SM planes," he said in an interview with the STV television channel.

He also said that Belarus is modernizing Su-25 planes. "We are also equipping our aircraft with onboard defense systems," he added.

<https://tass.com/world/1830643>

Over 20,000 military, dual-purpose products showcased at Army 2024 forum

TASS, August 19, 2024

Russian and foreign producers demonstrated more than 20,000 military and dual-purpose products at the Army 2024 international military-technical forum, the arms show's organizers said in a press release on Monday.

"In the static exposition arranged with its focus on the special military operation, over 1,000 domestic and foreign enterprises and organizations featured more than 20,000 military and dual-purpose products as full-size models, mockups and promotional materials," the press release says.

Specifically, military hardware was demonstrated at open-air sites of the Patriot Congress/Exhibition Center outside Moscow. A special exposition featured weapons systems that had proven their efficiency in the special military operation in Ukraine, according to the press release.

<https://tass.com/defense/1831029>

Rostec subsidiary bank signs agreements worth \$776 mln with enterprises at Army-2024 forum

TASS, August 19, 2024

Novikom, a subsidiary bank of state corporation Rostec, signed agreements with large industrial enterprises for a total of 70 bln rubles (\$776 mln) as part of the Army-2024 forum, the bank said in a press service.

"The subsidiary bank of Rostec worked intensively at the international military-technical forum Army-2024. Over the three days of the event, Novikom signed agreements with large industrial enterprises for a total of 70 billion rubles," the press release notes.

During the forum, Novikom concluded agreements with enterprises of almost all holding companies of the Rostec state

corporation - the United Aircraft Corporation, the Russian Helicopters holding, the United Engine Corporation, the Radio-Electronic Technologies concern and others.

<https://tass.com/defense/1831149>

Ka-52 can leave zone of enemy fire in minimum time after strike — Rostec

TASS, August 19, 2024

The Ka-52 Alligator attack helicopter is capable of making dive turns in a matter of seconds, which enables it to stay in the zone of enemy fire for the minimum time after a strike, Rostec said.

"This helicopter is capable of more than 30-degree pitch-up maneuver and make dive turns in a matter of seconds. After a salvo of unguided missiles this allows the copter to stay within the reach of the enemy's man-portable anti-aircraft missile systems for the minimum time," the corporation said in a news release.

<https://tass.com/defense/1831151>

Russia tests latest Pantsyr surface-to-air missile/gun system on battlefield

TASS, August 20, 2024

The latest Pantsyr-SM-SV surface-to-air missile/gun system has undergone testing on the battlefield and confirmed its designed characteristics, the state tech corporation Rostec told TASS on Tuesday.

"The Pantsyr-SM-SV system engineered by our High Precision Systems Holding Company has confirmed designed characteristics in the course of testing and combat operation," the Rostec press office said.

TASS reported earlier that the Pantsyr-SM-SV latest modification had completed its testing and confirmed that its operational performance complied with the requirements set by the Russian Defense Ministry.

<https://tass.com/defense/1831299>

Russian delegation led by Navy chief to hold talks in India

TASS, August 20, 2024

The Russian Defense Ministry's delegation led by Navy Commander-in-Chief Admiral Alexander Moiseyev will hold talks in India, discussing the future of naval cooperation, the ministry said in a statement.

"The Russian Defense Ministry's official delegation, headed by Navy Commander-in-Chief Admiral Alexander Moiseyev, has arrived in the Republic of India. <...> The parties are expected to hold talks, discussing the current situation and the prospects for the development of Russian-Indian naval cooperation," the statement reads.

The Defense Ministry pointed out that the parties would also touch upon a number of issues related to the exchange of visits by ships and military delegations, naval drills and cooperation in the field of military education.

<https://tass.com/defense/1831333>

Russian, Mongolian forces hold first joint drill in Selenga 2024 exercise

TASS, August 21, 2024

The first joint training drill of the Russian-Mongolian exercise Selenga 2024 has taken place in Mongolia, Russia's Eastern Military District said in a statement.

"The first joint training has been held at the Choibalsan training range in Mongolia. Troops of the joint group of forces from the Eastern Military District and the Mongolian Armed Forces defined a route of movement based on the training range's terrain, and also worked out ways to organize communication and interaction. The Joint Command Staff approved common control signals for both parties," the statement reads.

"The Russian-Mongolian drills for the first time involved FPV drones. Almost all types of troops are participating in the exercise.

Military servicemen from both countries are acting in a coherent and well-organized manner,” the statement quoted Adam Matsiyev, chief of the joint task force, as saying.

<https://tass.com/defense/1831901>

Kalashnikov arms producer delivers Kub kamikaze drones to Russian troops

TASS, August 21, 2024

The Kalashnikov Group has delivered Kub kamikaze drones of increased combat power to Russian troops above planned figures, the arms manufacturer’s press office said on Wednesday.

“The Kalashnikov Group has again dispatched Kub guided loitering munitions under 2024 contracts ahead of schedule. The items produced by the Kalashnikov Group have been sent to the customer in an amount considerably exceeding the figures stipulated in the plan, which has become possible thanks to effective operational management and profound production modernization,” the Kalashnikov press office said on its Telegram channel.

As Kalashnikov Group President Alan Lushnikov pointed out, these kamikaze drones are much needed in the special military operation area.

<https://tass.com/defense/1832107>

Russian BMP-3 IFV’s armament to include mini-drones — arms manufacturer

TASS, August 22, 2024

Mini-drones may be shortly introduced into the armament of the BMP-3 infantry fighting vehicle (IFV), the press office of the High Precision Systems Holding Company (part of the state tech corporation Rostec) told TASS on Thursday.

“The work to introduce drones into the armament of armored vehicles is one of the tasks for specialists of SKBM [Special Design Bureau of Machine-Building] at present. Currently, draft organizational decisions

and a schedule of joint work for integrating mini-UAVs into the BMP-3 infantry fighting vehicle are being agreed upon. Drones are planned to be introduced into the design documentation of armored vehicles after the results of type testing,” the press office said in a statement.

Earlier, Rostec announced plans to integrate FPV drones into the armament of light armored vehicles. The state tech corporation did not disclose the specific types of vehicles.

<https://tass.com/defense/1832363>

Russia, China enjoy unprecedented high level of cooperation, senior military official

TASS, August 22, 2024

Relations between Russia and China have reached an unprecedented high level of cooperation, Russian Ground Forces Commander-in-Chief General of the Army Oleg Salyukov said on Thursday.

“Due to the previously exerted efforts on behalf of our countries’ leaders - Russia and China - reached an unprecedented high level and they have turned into a tool guaranteeing peace and security on the scale of all countries,” he said.

“China is our strategic partner. <...> This year we celebrate 75 years since the establishment of diplomatic relations between our countries,” Salyukov stated.

The Russian Defense Ministry reported earlier in the day that a delegation of the Ground Force of the People’s Liberation Army of China arrived in Moscow to discuss military cooperation.

<https://tass.com/defense/1832547>

Belarusian pilots launch short-, medium-range missiles from Su-30SM during exercise

TASS, August 22, 2024

Belarusian pilots launched short-and medium-range missiles for the first time

from Su-30SM fighters during military exercises at Russia's Ashuluk training range (in Astrakhan Region), said Belarusian Defense Minister Viktor Khrenin, who observed the exercise.

"Today we have for the first time tested the capabilities of the Tor-M2 anti-aircraft missile system, whose crews made combat launches on the move. The launches were successful. Also for the first time, pilots of Su-30SM aircraft carried out launches of short-and medium-range missiles," the Defense Ministry's Telegram channel quotes Khrenin as saying.

<https://tass.com/world/1832569>

High-voltage 330kV power supply line automatically turns off at Zaporozhye NPP

TASS, August 23, 2024

A high-voltage 330kV power supply line, known as Ferrosplavnaya-1, which feeds the Zaporozhye Nuclear Power Plant (ZNPP) has been switched off automatically, the NPP's official Telegram channel reported.

"The NPP relies on 750kV 'Dneprovskaya' power supply line for its own needs," the NPP said in a statement.

The incident "did not go beyond security limits and requirements," it said.

"Radiation levels at the power plant and the adjacent territory remains unchanged. The parameters are consistent with the normal operation of reactors, and do not exceed natural background radiation levels," the ZNPP reported.

<https://tass.com/defense/1832763>

India to produce 600 AK-203 assault rifles per day by April 2026 – IRRPL CEO

TASS, August 23, 2024

The joint Russian-Indian venture Indo-Russian Rifles Private Limited (IRRPL) plans to increase the production of Kalashnikov AK-203 assault rifles to 600 units per day by April 2026, IRRPL CEO and Managing

Director Major General Sudhir Kumar Sharma said in an interview with TASS.

"We are producing at an average rate of 300 rifles a day. And we are likely to enhance it to 600 rifles a day," he said adding that the enterprise is "on the way to make it 600 possibly by April 2026."

According to him, there were various kinds of quality checks and testing conducted together with Russian specialists. "All that took time and we started our first delivery in December 2023," Sharma said.

<https://tass.com/world/1833091>

Production of AK-203 rifles in India to be fully localized in 2025

TASS, August 23, 2024

Kalashnikov AK-203 assault rifles will begin to be fully assembled from locally produced components in India by December 2025, Major-General Sudhir Kumar Sharma, the managing director of the Indo-Russian Rifles Private Limited (IRRPL), a joint Russian-Indian venture, has told TASS in an interview.

"The production of it in India will be done in 5 stages. That is, stage 1 to stage 5, based on the percentage of indigenized content," he said. "I am targeting December 2025 to finish off the 100% indigenization in this country," Sharma said. The first rifle which was assembled or produced in India was in June 2023, which only had 5% components from India; 95% components came from Russia in knockdown condition, he recalled.

<https://tass.com/world/1833077>

Numerous countries express interest in India-produced AK-203 assault rifles – official

TASS, August 23, 2024

Up to ten countries have expressed their interest in acquiring Kalashnikov AK-203 assault rifles, which are manufactured by Indian-Russian Rifles Private Limited (IRRPL), a joint Russian-Indian venture,

Major General Sudhir Kumar Sharma, IRRPL CEO and Managing Director, told TASS on Friday.

"Today our rifles have become so popular and the articles that you have been reading in the media are so positive now that I have already been approached by 8 to 10 countries who are interested in buying the rifles made in India AK-203. They are looking at us because Kalashnikov rifles are very famous," the high-ranking Indian military official said in an interview with TASS.

<https://tass.com/defense/1833215>

Manufacturers of FPV drone Upyr found drone producing plant Uraldronzavod

TASS, August 24, 2024

The manufacturers of the FPV drone Upyr (Vampire), which is used in all areas of the special military operation in Ukraine founded a plant named Uraldronzavod, a representative of the enterprise told TASS.

"As a result, we really named our enterprise "Uraldronzavod". Our contribution to the common victory is noted both in Russia, by military personnel and other residents of the country who help us with funds, and in other countries," the representative of the enterprise said commenting on the inclusion of Uraldronzavod in the American sanctions list.

On August 23, the US authorities introduced restrictive measures against nearly 400 individuals and legal entities.

<https://tass.com/defense/1833233>

Russian Navy accepts latest Project 22800 missile corvette Amur for service

TASS, August 26, 2024

The Russian Navy has accepted the latest Project 22800 missile corvette Amur carrying Kalibr-NK cruise missiles for service, Russia's Defense Ministry reported on Monday.

"An official ceremony took place in Kaspiysk under the direction of Navy Commander-in-Chief Admiral Alexander Moiseyev to accept the Project 22800 missile corvette Amur for service and raise the St. Andrew's flag aboard it," the ministry said in a statement.

The ceremony of accepting the latest warship for service took place during a working trip by the Russian Navy's chief to the Caspian Flotilla, it specified.

"From now on, a new ship will defend national interests of our great Motherland," the Navy chief said.

<https://tass.com/defense/1834063>

Shipborne Pantsyr missile system to protect latest Amur corvette from enemy UAVs

TASS, August 27, 2024

The latest Project 22800 missile corvette Amur delivered to the Russian Navy will be protected by a shipborne Pantsyr surface-to-air missile/artillery system from enemy drones and boats, the press office of the High Precision Systems Holding Company (part of the state tech corporation Rostec) said on Tuesday.

"The Russian Navy has accepted the Project 22800 missile corvette Amur for service, the Defense Ministry of Russia reported. The ship is outfitted with a Pantsyr-M surface-to-air missile/artillery system produced by the Tula Design Bureau of Instrument-Making within the High Precision Holding Company," the press office said on its Telegram channel.

The shipborne Pantsyr surface-to-air missile/gun system is capable of effectively repelling multiple air strikes from different directions. It offers high combat sustainability against massive strikes by precision weapons, including anti-ship missiles and unmanned aerial vehicles, and also small-size boats.

<https://tass.com/defense/1834691>

Kalashnikov gunmaker to unveil new grenade launcher at overseas arms show

TASS, August 27, 2024

The Kalashnikov Group will unveil the latest GP-46 under-barrel grenade launcher at an overseas arms show in September, the defense company's press office reported on Tuesday.

"The 40x46mm GP-46 under-barrel grenade launcher produced by the Kalashnikov Group will be unveiled at the 5th ADEX 2024 International Defense Exhibition that will run in Baku on September 24-26," the press office said in a statement. The Kalashnikov Group demonstrated the latest GP-46 under-barrel grenade launcher for the first time in August along with the presentation of the new RPL-20 machinegun.

The grenade launcher is designed to strike enemy manpower on terrain, in trenches and unarmored vehicles. It can be attached to a Kalashnikov assault rifle or used as a separate weapon with a quick-detach buttstock module.

<https://tass.com/defense/1834719>

Russia's drone production should increase fivefold by 2030 – PM Mishustin

TASS, August 27, 2024

Russia should increase the production of drones more than fivefold in the coming years, Russian Prime Minister Mikhail Mishustin said at a strategic meeting dedicated to new national projects.

"In the coming years, it is important for Russia to continue actively creating its own technical and production base. For example, by the end of the decade dozens of new technological chains are expected to be created in the chemical industry. In the field of composite materials - over 15 production facilities and 60 products. The production of drones should increase more than fivefold," the Prime Minister said.

<https://tass.com/defense/1834769>

Russian nuclear plant at risk as war with Ukraine rages, UN watchdog warns

Al Jazeera, August 27, 2024

Ukrainian forces is vulnerable to a serious accident because it lacks a protective dome that could shield it from missiles, drones and artillery, the head of the United Nations nuclear watchdog says.

Rafael Grossi, director general at the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), on Tuesday visited the Kursk Nuclear Power Plant outside the town of Kurchatov in Russia's Kursk region, where Ukrainian forces broke across the border three weeks ago and Russia is battling to eject them.

"The danger or possibility of a nuclear accident has emerged near here," Grossi told reporters.

Grossi said the RBMK-type facility – the same model as the Chornobyl plant in Ukraine, which witnessed the world's worst civilian nuclear disaster in 1986 – lacks the containment dome and protective structure that is typical of modern nuclear power plants.

"This means that the core of the reactor containing nuclear material is protected just by a normal roof. This makes it extremely exposed and fragile, for example, to an artillery impact or a drone or a missile," he said.

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2024/8/27/russian-nuclear-plant-at-risk-as-war-with-ukraine-rages-un-watchdog-warns>

E. The United States of America

Biden Approved Secret Nuclear Strategy Refocusing on Chinese Threat

The New York Times, August 20, 2024

President Biden approved in March a highly classified nuclear strategic plan for the United States that, for the first time, reorients America's deterrent strategy to

focus on China's rapid expansion in its nuclear arsenal.

The shift comes as the Pentagon believes China's stockpiles will rival the size and diversity of the United States' and Russia's over the next decade.

The White House never announced that Mr. Biden had approved the revised strategy, called the "Nuclear Employment Guidance," which also newly seeks to prepare the United States for possible coordinated nuclear challenges from China, Russia and North Korea. The document, updated every four years or so, is so highly classified that there are no electronic copies, only a small number of hard copies distributed to a few national security officials and Pentagon commanders.

But in recent speeches, two senior administration officials were allowed to allude to the change — in carefully constrained, single sentences — ahead of a more detailed, unclassified notification to Congress expected before Mr. Biden leaves office.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2024/08/20/us/politics/biden-nuclear-china-russia.html>

Biden revamps US nuclear deterrence posture in face of China, Russia, North Korea aggression

FOX News, August 21, 2024

President Biden in March reportedly approved in secret a change to the highly classified U.S. nuclear posture in the wake of growing aggression from nations like Russia and China, but the White House on Tuesday said this step was just business as usual.

In response to a report by The New York Times that suggested Washington's nuclear posture had been altered to address Beijing's expanding nuclear arsenal, a White House spokesperson told reporters the "guidance issued earlier this year is not a response to any single entity, country, nor threat."

"This administration, like the four administrations before it, issued a Nuclear

Posture Review and Nuclear Weapons Employment Planning Guidance," White House spokesperson Sean Savett said.

"While the specific text of the Guidance is classified, its existence is in no way secret," he added.

Questions have mounted regarding any potential changes to the U.S. nuclear strategy of deterrence after The New York Times reported on Tuesday that Biden shifted Washington's strategy for the "first time" to focus on China.

<https://www.foxnews.com/world/biden-revamps-us-nuclear-deterrence-posture-face-china-russia-north-korea-aggression>

Here's how the US Navy's AIM-174B missile aims to shift air supremacy away from China in the Indo-Pacific

The Economic Times, August 27, 2024

The United States has introduced a new long-range air-to-air missile, the AIM-174B, into the Indo-Pacific region, potentially altering the balance of power amidst growing tensions with China. This missile, deployed on the US Navy's F-18 Super Hornet, boasts an operational range of approximately 400 kilometers. It is an air-to-air version of the Raytheon SM-6 missile, a versatile weapon known for its roles in anti-air, anti-ballistic, and anti-surface warfare. The AIM-174B was first publicly observed during the Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) exercise, the world's largest naval exercise, highlighting its strategic significance.

The AIM-174B missile is built on the existing production line of the SM-6, but it is specifically designed for air-to-air combat. With a speed of Mach 3.5, it is capable of striking targets at significant distances, positioning it as a direct equivalent to Russia's Rh-37 Vypel and China's PL-15 and PL-17 missiles. The PL-17, reportedly deployed by the Chinese PLA Navy, also has a range of 400 kilometers, making it a formidable counterpart in the region.

The AIM-174B's deployment signals a shift in US military strategy, one that harkens back to the Cold War era when the US Navy relied on long-range missiles like the AIM-54 Phoenix to protect its carrier battle groups from Soviet air threats. "The United States has waited more than three decades to field an entirely new type of long-range air-to-air missile," reported Forbes, emphasizing the missile's significance. The Phoenix missile, which was retired along with the F-14 Tomcat in 2004, served a similar purpose during its time. The revival of such capabilities indicates the US's recognition of China as a major maritime threat, akin to the former Soviet Union.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/defence/heres-how-the-us-navys-aim-174b-missile-aims-to-shift-air-supremacy-away-from-china-in-the-indo-pacific/articleshow/112836659.cms?from=mdr>

Experts warn U.S. falling behind in satellite imaging race: 'We've gone backwards'

SpaceNews, August 27, 2024

The U.S. government's support for the commercial remote sensing satellite industry is at a critical juncture amid growing military demand for real-time intelligence, industry experts said Aug. 27.

The commercial remote sensing satellite industry is expanding, but it's still not equipped to meet evolving U.S. military needs for tactical intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR), said David Gauthier, former head of commercial operations at the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGA). Tactical ISR refers to the immediate collection and analysis of data to inform military operations on the battlefield. This intelligence is crucial for decision making during to dynamic situations.

Speaking at the AFCEA-NSA Intelligence and National Security Summit, Gauthier, who is chief strategy officer of the consulting firm GXO Inc., said the Pentagon could find itself at a disadvantage against adversaries unless it has access to satellites capable of real-time monitoring.

The U.S. government owns and operates its own ISR satellites, he said, but the conflict in Ukraine has underscored the strategic importance of commercial remote sensing satellites, showcasing their ability to provide unclassified and easily shareable intelligence. The war has been described as one of the most documented conflicts in history, largely due to the continuous flow of satellite data that has shaped public perception and countered misinformation.

Despite these advancements, Gauthier argued, the commercial satellite industry has to innovate further to meet the U.S. military's needs for continuous monitoring of military activity. He emphasized the necessity of integrating "virtual constellations" of Earth observation (EO), infrared (IR), synthetic aperture radar (SAR), and radio frequency (RF) systems to achieve more precise intelligence.

<https://spacenews.com/experts-warn-u-s-falling-behind-in-satellite-imaging-race-weve-gone-backwards/>

U.S. Government Approves RIM-116 Missile Sale To Turkish Navy

Naval News, August 28, 2024

According to the report, the FMS, valued at \$90 million, includes the sale of 94 Mk 44 MOD 4 (tactical) RAM Guided Missile Round Packs, 3 Mk 47 MOD 9 telemeter missiles, and 1 blast test vehicle. The package also covers transportation and storage containers, as well as technical data from the U.S. Navy's RAM Program Office on behalf of RAM-System GmbH (RAMSYS) for the Turkish Navy.

Naval News reached out to RAMSYS for comments and transfer schedule but the company declined to comment.

The missiles will be deployed on the Turkish Navy's ADA-class corvettes, which are equipped with the RAM point defence missile system as part of their self-defence capabilities. Originally, the system was intended to be installed on I-class frigates, but after U.S. sanctions were imposed, the Turkish defence industry

opted to mount the indigenous Gökdeniz 35-mm close-in weapon system (CIWS) on the *TCG Istanbul* instead.

To address the point defence needs of Turkish surface combatants, Aselsan is developing the Göksur, and Roketsan is working on the Levent point defence missile systems. Both systems are currently in the development phase and are expected to begin trials soon.

<https://www.navalnews.com/naval-news/2024/08/u-s-government-approves-rim-116-missile-sale-to-turkish-navy/>

F. Europe

US Approves Sale Of 600 Patriot Missiles To Germany

NDTV World, August 16, 2024

The United States on Thursday announced its approval of a \$5 billion sale of up to 600 Patriot missiles and related equipment to Germany, which has donated several of the advanced air defense systems to Ukraine.

The proposed sale of the PAC-3 MSE missiles “will support the foreign policy and national security of the United States by improving the security of a NATO ally that is an important force for political and economic stability in Europe,” the Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA) said in a statement.

It “will improve Germany’s capability to meet current and future threats and increase the defensive capabilities of its military. It will support Germany’s goal of improving national and territorial defense as well as interoperability with US and NATO forces,” the statement added.

The State Department approved the possible sale of the missiles to Germany, and the DSCA on Thursday provided the required notification to Congress, which still needs to sign off on the transaction.

Germany has donated several Patriot systems to Ukraine, which has faced repeated Russian missile barrages and drone attacks targeting its infrastructure, leaving

it in desperate need of additional air defenses.

<https://www.ndtv.com/world-news/us-approves-sale-of-600-patriot-missiles-to-germany-6347396>

Finnish FMS purchase of M1156A1 Precision Guidance Kits approved

European Security & Defence, August 22, 2024

The US State Department has approved a possible Foreign Military Sale (FMS) to Finland of M1156A1 Precision Guidance Kits (PGKs) and related equipment, the US Defense Security Cooperation Agency announced on 19 August 2024.

The proposed sale, which is worth an estimated USD 70 million (EUR 63 million), has been passed to the US Congress for final approval.

Finland has requested to buy 5,500 M1156A1 PGK multi-option fuzes that will be added to a previously implemented FMS case, the value of which was under the congressional notification threshold. The original FMS case, valued at US 0.97 million, included items such as technical data/reports, US government technical assistance, training and related elements of logistics and programme support, while the latest notification adds the 5,500 M1156A1 PGK multi-option fuzes.

The estimated total programme cost is thus USD 70 million.

The M1156 PGK is a precision guidance system that replaces the conventional fuzes of unguided 155 mm artillery rounds to turn them into near-precision-guided munitions by using GPS and aerodynamic fins that adjust a round’s flight path. The M1156 PGK offers a circular error probable of 30-50 m, while the M1156A1 variant introduces compatibility with XM1113 and XM1128 39 calibre 155 mm projectiles and M-Code jamming resistance.

<https://euro-sd.com/2024/08/major-news/39952/finnish-m1156a1-buy-approved/>

United States Approves Sale of AIM-120 AMRAAM Missiles to Romania

US Embassy in Romania, August 22, 2024

The United States has approved the sale of AIM-120 AMRAAM missiles to Romania to provide advanced air-to-air capabilities for Romania's Air Force. The initial sale is valued at approximately 180 million U.S. dollars, with the option to purchase additional missiles in the future.

This sale builds on the Romanian Air Force modernization effort, with the AIM-120 missiles compatible with Romania's F-16 aircraft as well as other U.S. and NATO aircraft including the F-35.

U.S. Ambassador to Romania Kathleen Kavalec congratulated Romania for this important acquisition, which she noted will substantially increase the Romanian Air Force's ability to defend Romanian territory and contribute to peace and stability in the region. Recalling her recent visit to the 86th Air Base in Borcea, she commented, "I was truly impressed to see Romanian F-16's in action. This acquisition demonstrates the Romanian government's strong commitment to security and defense."

<https://ro.usembassy.gov/aim-120-amraam-08222024/>

Rafael Secures •237.5 Million Deal to Supply Spike LR2 Systems to Spanish Army

Israel Defense, August 28, 2024

Rafael Advanced Defense Systems secured a significant procurement agreement last year that has not yet been covered by the Israeli media. Under this deal, Rafael will supply launchers and Spike missiles to the Spanish Army. Signed in October 2023, the agreement involves the delivery of 168 Spike LR2 anti-tank missile systems to the Spanish Army, with a total value of •237.5 million. The contract is being executed through PAP TECNOS, a Spanish company acquired by Rafael in 2010. In addition to the Spike missile deal, PAP TECNOS recently secured a maintenance contract worth •3.8 million

for 18 of Rafael's "Mini Samson" remote-controlled weapon stations (RCWS), which are integrated into the Spanish Army's RG-31 armored vehicles, originally purchased in 2011.

In 2023, Rafael's subsidiary won contracts totaling •238 million, some of which also cover the maintenance of the "Mini Samson" weapon stations.

<https://www.israeldefense.co.il/en/node/62965>

Serbia, France sign agreement on purchase of Rafale fighter jets

Al Arabiya News, August 29, 2024

Serbia on Thursday signed a landmark agreement with France's Dassault Aviation for the purchase of an undisclosed number of Rafale fighter jets.

The agreement, signed by Serbia's Defense Minister Bratislav Gasic and Dassault Aviation CEO Eric Trappier, also includes the purchase of "accompanying equipment and services," an announcement said.

The acquisition, made during French President Emmanuel Macron's visit to Belgrade, signals a major shift in Serbia's security and political stance, moving away from Russia, its traditional ally and weapons supplier.

This is the single biggest weapons deal since Serbia became independent from its state union with Montenegro in 2006.

Belgrade curtailed military cooperation with Moscow after Russia invaded Ukraine and it has condemned the invasion, but unlike the EU, which it wants to join, and other Western countries, it has not imposed sanctions on Moscow.

Serbia's military and air force are loosely based on Soviet technology, but it has also purchased helicopters and transport planes from Airbus, radars from Thales and France's Mistral surface-to-air missiles.

<https://english.alarabiya.net/News/world/2024/08/29/serbia-france-sign-agreement-on-purchase-of-rafale-fighter-jets>

State Department approved sale of Patriot air defense systems to Netherlands

AzerNews, August 30, 2024

The State Department has authorized the potential sale of Patriot anti-aircraft missile launchers and other equipment to the Netherlands in the amount of \$224 million, **Azernews** reports.

The agency's statement notes that the US Foreign Ministry "approved the possible sale of Patriot M903 launchers and related equipment to the Dutch government for \$224 million. The document clarifies that the authorities of the republic had previously requested permission to purchase two such installations from the United States, equipment for upgrading existing ones, as well as other systems.

The American administration has already notified Congress of this decision. The legislature now has 30 days to review the potential deal and possibly block it.

The Pentagon assured that the sale of weapons will not harm the combat readiness of the United States. Lockheed Martin and RTX are expected to be the main contractors.

<https://www.azernews.az/region/230557.html>

West Asia

G. Iran

Chief of the South African Navy visits Iran's Bandar Abbas

IRNA, August 16, 2024

Lobese attended the Iranian army large industrial complex and got to know a part of its capabilities in the field of design, construction, equipping and maintenance of naval defense and combat equipment.

He also toured Dena destroyer which is equipped with anti-ship cruise missiles, torpedoes, and naval cannons.

Pointing to the presence of the Iranian Navy and Dena destroyer in Cape Town port, Lobese said: "Cape Town port was a good

host for the Dena destroyer, and this makes us proud, and also my presence on the deck of the Dena destroyer shows the good relations between the Iranian and South African navies."

He wished success for Dena destroyer's crew on international missions.

<https://en.irna.ir/news/85569968/Chief-of-the-South-African-Navy-visits-Iran-s-Bandar-Abbas>

Iranian colonel: We are ready to respond to threats

IRNA, August 17, 2024

Colonel Ali-Akbar Arab, who is the commander of the 230th Mobile Assault Brigade in Gorgan Province, made the comment on Saturday as he toured the provincial office of the Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA).

He said that the brigade's staff, having received military training and operational techniques and tactics, have already fulfilled their duty to protect security at Iran's eastern borders.

The staff, who have recently returned to their unit in Gorgan, are now receiving new trainings and are fully prepared for any mission to protect and guard the Islamic Republic, the commander added.

<https://en.irna.ir/news/85570562/Iranian-colonel-We-are-ready-to-respond-to-threats>

Iran's pick for defense minister vows to boost deterrence power

IRNA, August 19, 2024

Brigadier General Aziz Nasirzadeh, appeared before the parliament on Monday to describe his future plans for the lawmakers who are considering a vote of confidence to him.

Nasirzadeh, a former commander of the Air Force, said he will carry out research projects and adopt military policies so as to increase the Iranian defensive capabilities as the threats on the country are on the rise.

Noting that ensuring active deterrence is his ultimate goal, he said that the enemies would have attacked Iran, shouldn't the country have this active deterrence.

He stressed that as defense minister he would focus on boosting the country's military capabilities in eight areas, namely defense, missile, air, naval, ground, electronic and modern warfare areas.

"If we do not engage in modern warfare, we will be surprised; We are looking for equipment to surprise the enemy."

<https://en.irna.ir/news/85573062/Iran-s-pick-for-defense-minister-vows-to-boost-deterrence-power>

Iran's defense sector symbol of national pride: Ministry

IRNA, August 20, 2024

On the occasion of National Defense Industry Day on Tuesday, Iran's Ministry of Defense and Armed Forces Logistics released a statement emphasizing the Ministry's pivotal role in producing defense products and combating the harsh sanctions imposed by adversaries.

The statement further noted that despite facing unilateral sanctions, the MODAFL stands as a beacon of national pride, embodying self-reliance and self-sufficiency.

Iran's Ministry of Defense and Armed Forces Logistics serves as an exemplary model for other sovereign nations, emphasizing its role as a central pillar of deterrence and an emblem of national strength, the statement added.

<https://en.irna.ir/news/85573998/Iran-s-defense-sector-symbol-of-national-pride-Ministry>

H. Israel

Meprolight Expands Global Reach with New Assembly Line in India

Israel Defense, August 22, 2024

Meprolight (1990), a member of the SK Group and an Israeli manufacturer of electro-optical systems, thermal and night vision equipment, and self-illuminated sights

for military, law enforcement, and civilian applications, has announced the opening of a new assembly line in India. The official launch event took place last July in Mumbai.

According to Meprolight, the Technology Transfer Agreement (ToT) with RRP S4E Innovation Pvt Ltd., a leading Indian defense innovator, is a response to the increasing global demand for Meprolight's electro-optical and optical sights. This agreement also supports the expansion of Meprolight's manufacturing capabilities by sharing production knowledge with RRP S4E Innovation Pvt Ltd.

The assembly line will produce the MEPRO MOR, a versatile reflex sight designed for day, low-light, and night operations, featuring integrated laser pointers; the MEPRO M5, a red dot sight with multiple brightness levels and NVG compatibility; and the MEPRO M21, a self-illuminated reflex sight that utilizes fiber-optic and tritium technology for continuous operation without batteries. These sights will be manufactured at RRP S4E Innovation Pvt Ltd. in India.

<https://www.israeldefense.co.il/en/node/62906>

Israel's MoD Secures USD 23 M. Deal for Tank and APC Components, Boosting IDF Readiness

Israel Defense, August 22, 2024

The Israeli Ministry of Defense will purchase components for Merkava tanks and Namer APCs from local manufacturer Ashot Ashkelon Industries Ltd., in a deal worth approximately NIS 86 million (approximately USD 23 million). This is part of the ministry's efforts to strengthen the IDF's ground maneuver capabilities and support Israel's local industries.

Director-General of the Ministry of Defense, Maj. Gen. (Res.) Eyal Zamir, signed the order as part of a broader initiative to enhance the readiness of advanced ground combat vehicles – the

Merkava tanks and the Namer and Eitan APCs – proven to be key elements in ground maneuvers during the ongoing Iron Swords War.

The agreement also includes the procurement of spare parts and refurbishment of advanced systems for 1200- and 1500-horsepower transmissions, suspensions, and drives – to be delivered to the IDF over the next two years.

<https://www.israeldefense.co.il/en/node/62907>

Orbit Secures \$6M Contract for Advanced Naval SATCOM Systems with Asian Integrator

Israel Defense, August 29, 2024

Orbit Communication Systems, an Israeli provider of maritime and airborne SATCOM terminals, tracking ground station solutions, and mission-critical airborne audio management systems, has announced a \$6 million contract with an Asian integrator to supply OceanTRx 7MIL advanced satellite communication systems for new naval military platforms between 2025 and 2030.

Orbit describes the OceanTRx 7MIL as the latest in a long line of maritime SATCOM terminal systems, field-proven over more than 30 years with leading NATO and allied navies. The system delivers reliable, high-capacity, long-range communications to naval vessels, even in extreme conditions. It supports various antenna configurations, and with a diameter of 2.2 meters, it operates on X, Ku, Ka, and C frequencies, enabling simultaneous use of multiple frequencies for global operations.

<https://www.israeldefense.co.il/en/node/62979>

Colombia to Manufacture Israeli Galil Rifles Locally

Israel Defense, August 29, 2024

Due to Colombia's need to replace 6,712 Galil rifles currently in service, the Colombian Military Industry, INDUMIL,

plans to manufacture the same number of units domestically. This, according to a report by the Spanish military website Defensa.com. This initiative is supported by a contract with Israel that allows parts to be produced and the rifles assembled in Colombia until the end of 2026.

Defense Minister Iván Velázquez announced that barrels and sights, the only components of the Galil rifle not yet manufactured in Colombia, are currently in stock and necessary for the 6,712 rifles that will be deployed. The Minister also stated that efforts are underway to enable INDUMIL to produce these parts, thereby ending Colombia's reliance on Israel in this regard. This comes after President Petro suspended all purchases of military systems from Israel due to the conflict in Gaza.

<https://www.israeldefense.co.il/en/node/62978>

I. Türkiye

Türkiye tests cruise missile Kara Atmaca in longest trial yet

Daily Sabah, August 19, 2024

Türkiye's latest defense innovation, the Kara Atmaca long-range surface-to-surface cruise missile, has undergone its longest-range and longest-duration flight test yet, a senior official said on Monday.

Powered by the domestically developed KTJ3700 engine, the missile successfully hit a floating target after being fired from a mobile launcher, according to a video shared by its developer, Roketsan, on Sunday.

The manufacturer did not disclose the location, although similar tests are typically conducted at a facility in Sinop, Türkiye's northernmost province.

"During its most recent test, Kara Atmaca, powered by the KTJ3700 engine, successfully hit its target with pinpoint accuracy and completed its

longest flight to date,” said Haluk Görgün, the head of the Presidency of Defense Industries (SSB).

Görgün stated that the system is designed for use against strategic land targets requiring high precision and will further bolster the strength of Türkiye’s military.

“With its distinctive features, Kara Atmaca will be a step ahead of its global competitors,” he wrote on the social media platform X.

The jamming-resistant missile system can be launched from tactical-wheeled vehicles and is expected to target strategic land-based assets, air defense batteries, and both fixed and mobile land-based missile systems.

<https://www.dailysabah.com/business/defense/turkiye-tests-cruise-missile-kara-atmaca-in-longest-trial-yet>

Indonesia And Malaysia Are Big Buyers Of Turkey’s Missiles And Drones

Forbes, August 20, 2024

Marking Indonesia’s 79th Independence Day on Aug. 17, Turkish Defense Minister Yaser Guler expressed Ankara’s “hope to increase the number of joint training and exercises conducted by our armed forces.”

“Our main goal is to elevate our friendship and cooperation to a much stronger level in every field,” he said.

The Indonesian Air Force chief of staff met the Turkish Air Force commander in Ankara on July 1 to discuss collaboration on strengthening air defenses, among other things. In the preceding days, the Indonesian official visited facilities belonging to Baykar Technology, manufacturer of Turkey’s widely exported Bayraktar TB2 drone, and saw a flight demonstration of the company’s advanced Akinci unmanned combat aerial vehicle.

Defense ties between Turkey and Indonesia are undoubtedly burgeoning, with several orders made in the last two years alone.

The Indonesian Navy is interested in acquiring Bayraktar Akinci and Anka UCAVs, made by the state-owned Turkish Aerospace Industries, as part of an initiative announced in June. Baykar and TAI are also prepared to collaborate with Indonesia’s Dirgantara Indonesia aerospace firm.

Jakarta already ordered 12 Anka drones for its army, air force, and navy as part of a \$300 million deal with TAI in 2023, expecting full delivery before November 2025.

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/pauliddon/2024/08/20/indonesia-and-malaysia-are-big-buyers-of-turkeys-missiles-and-drones/>

J. Africa

Ghana signs agreement to build small NuScale nuclear reactor

Reuters, August 30, 2024

Ghana on Thursday signed an agreement with a U.S. developer for a nuclear reactor using technology from NuScale Power (SMR.N), the U.S. State Department said on Thursday, as the country seeks its first atomic power plant.

Nuclear Power Ghana and Regnum Technology Group signed the agreement to deploy a NuScale VOYGR-12 small modular reactor, or SMR, at a U.S.-Africa nuclear energy summit in Nairobi.

SMRs are smaller than today’s reactors and can be built in a factory. But there are lingering questions, about whether they will ever be widespread commercially.

<https://www.reuters.com/markets/deals/ghana-signs-agreement-build-small-nuscale-nuclear-reactor-2024-08-29/>

K. East Asia

South Korea, U.S. kick off annual drills over North's military, cyber threats

The Hindu, August 19, 2024

South Korea and the United States kicked off annual summertime military exercises on Monday (August 19, 2024), seeking to boost their joint readiness to fend off North Korea's weapons and cyber threats.

The Ulchi Freedom Shield exercises, set to end on August 29, come as North Korea races to advance 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 have said.

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/international/south-korea-us-kick-off-annual-drills-over-norths-military-cyber-threats/article68541946.ece>

Taiwan conducts missile drills at sensitive test site

RFI, August 20, 2024

Beijing claims self-ruled Taiwan as part of its territory and has stepped up military pressure by sending drones, fighter jets and naval vessels around the island.

Taiwan has steadily built up its defence capabilities in recent years, making big-ticket weapons purchases while increasing its defence budget to invest in military reforms and a homegrown arsenal.

On Tuesday, the military fired domestically made Sky Bow III and US-made Patriot II missiles into the sky from its Jiupeng base in southern Pingtung County.

It was the first time in over a decade that reporters were granted access to the base, home to the government-run National Chung-Shan Institute of Science and Technology, which specialises in weapons development.

"All the missiles fired today hit their targets smoothly. So it demonstrates... that the training of our officers and soldiers is very solid," defence ministry spokesman Sun Li-fang told reporters.

At dawn, soldiers fired the two types of missiles into the sky as RIM-66 Standard missiles were fired from a frigate off the coast.

Colonel Kao Shu-li of the Air Force's air defence division said the exercise's main goal was to enhance "the overall combat effectiveness of the force".

"We have the ability, confidence, and determination to defend our country, to defend our airspace," added Lieutenant Cheng Yong-ru, who led a battalion in the live-fire mission.

Separately Tuesday, Taiwan's defence ministry reported five Chinese aircraft and 11 naval vessels around the island in a 24-hour window ending at 6 am (2200 GMT Monday).

<https://www.rfi.fr/en/international-news/20240820-taiwan-conducts-missile-drills-at-sensitive-test-site>

Japan's defense ministry seeks record budget as it faces growing threat from China

AP, August 30, 2024

Japan's Defense Ministry on Friday sought a record 8.5 trillion yen (\$59 billion) budget for the next year to fortify its deterrence on southwestern islands against China's increasing threat.

Defense officials were also focusing on unmanned weapons and artificial intelligence to make up for the declining number of servicemembers as a result of the country's shrinking population.

The ministry's request for 2025 marks the third year of Japan's rapid five-year military buildup plan under the government's ongoing security strategy. Japan aims to spend 43 trillion yen (\$297

billion) through 2027 to double its annual military spending to around 10 trillion yen, making it the world's No. 3 military spender after the United States and China.

The budget request was approved at the Defense Ministry meeting Friday before a submission to the Finance Ministry for negotiations through December.

Japan has been rapidly building up the defense of the southwestern region in recent years amid China's growing military threats and tension in the regional seas.

China has escalated clashes with the Philippine coast guards in disputed waters in the South China Sea and sent a fleet of coast guard boats to routinely violate territorial waters around Japanese-controlled disputed islands in the East China Sea that Beijing also claims.

<https://apnews.com/article/japan-defense-budget-china-missile-drones-ba6341c527f5044b6b5a749b6bdf0229>

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