

Nuclear, Missile & Space Digest

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A Fortnightly Newsletter from the MP-IDSA

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A. India

Why is ISRO planning to assemble Chandrayaan 4 mission in space?

Hindustan Times, October 2, 2024

Chandrayaan-4, India's next Moon mission will follow a new approach to launch and assembly of the mission's scientific instruments. According to the Indian Space Research Organisation's (ISRO) website, these parts of the mission will be stacked and assembled in space to help India overcome payload limitations.

The mission will also demonstrate advanced in-space docking and transfer capabilities to achieve significant savings in mission cost for the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO).

Chandrayaan-4 was announced on September 18 with an aim to develop and demonstrate technologies that can successfully land on the moon surface and bring back moon samples to Earth for scientific analysis. The government allocated ¹ 2104.06 crore for the mission and set a timeline of 36 months for completion.

News agency ANI reported that "the cost includes spacecraft development and realisation, two launch vehicle missions of LVM3, external deep space network support and conducting special tests for design validation, finally leading to the mission of landing on the moon's surface and safe return to Earth along with the collected lunar sample".

<https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/why-is-isro-planning-to-assemble-chandrayaan-4-mission-in-space-101727847564511.html>

India Clears Deal To Build 2 Nuclear Submarines, Buy 31 Predator Drones

NDTV World, October 9, 2024

In a mega boost for the Indian Navy and surveillance capabilities of the defence forces, the Cabinet Committee on Security has cleared the major deals for building two

nuclear submarines indigenously and buying 31 Predator drones from the US.

As per the plans, the Indian Navy will get two nuclear-powered attack submarines which will help boost its capabilities manifold in the Indian Ocean Region, top sources told ANI.

The deal for building the two submarines at the Ship Building Centre in Vishakhapatnam will be around ¹ 45,000 crore and will see a major involvement of private sector firms like Larsen and Toubro, they said.

The deal had been hanging fire for a long time and the Indian Navy had been pushing it as it was a critical requirement for filling the underwater capability gaps.

India has plans of having six such boats in the long run as part of its submarine induction plans.

<https://www.ndtv.com/india-news/india-clears-mega-deals-worth-rs-80-000-crore-for-nuclear-submarines-predator-drones-6754156>

Space spy squad: India greenlights 52 satellites for Rs 27,000 crore sky-high surveillance

The Economic Times, October 12, 2024

India's Cabinet Committee on Security, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has given the green light for the third phase of the Space Based Surveillance (SBS-III) project. The move will see the launch of 52 spy satellites intended to enhance the country's surveillance capabilities from space amidst the security concerns with Pakistan and China, reported The Times of India.

The Isro source told TOI that the project would cost around Rs 27,000 crore.

The 52 new satellites, which are expected to be launched over five years, aim to improve the monitoring of India's land and sea borders, especially given current security concerns with Pakistan and

China, and Chinese activity in the Indian Ocean, the report said.

The new satellites are designed to complement existing satellites like Risat, Cartosat, and the Gsat-7 series. The initial phase of the SBS program began in 2001 under the Vajpayee administration, resulting in the launch of four satellites. Another six satellites were launched in the second phase in 2013.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/defence/space-spy-squad-india-greenlights-52-satellites-for-rs-27000-crore-sky-high-surveillance/articleshow/114162342.cms?from=mdr>

India to develop new missile testing range on east Coast, CCS gives approval

The Economic Times, October 13, 2024

At a time when the Indian defence researchers are developing a large number of tactical missile systems, the Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) has given approval for setting up a new missiles testing range in Andhra Pradesh.

The proposal was cleared by the CCS headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi last week as per which the new missile range will come up in the Nagayalanka area of Andhra Pradesh, government sources told ANI.

The new missile testing range will be used for test firing of tactical missile systems like the surface to air missile systems, anti tank missiles and various other projects being developed by the Research and Development Organisation, they said. The CCS in its meeting last week gave clearance to major proposals of the armed forces including that of buying 31 Predator drones from the US and two nuclear submarines to be built by the Project ATV for developing strategic submarines for the Indian Navy, they said.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/defence/india-to-develop-new-missile-testing-range-on-east-coast-ccs-gives-approval/articleshow/114193411.cms?from=mdr>

India's nuclear submarine program gains momentum with new VLF facility and nuclear fleet to counter China

The Economic Times, October 14, 2024

As part of its long-term strategy to strengthen its underwater fleet, the Indian Navy is setting up an advanced Very Low Frequency (VLF) transmitting station in Vikarabad, Telangana. This new station will facilitate round-the-clock encrypted communication with submarines patrolling in deep waters across India's vast maritime area of interest. The facility is scheduled to be inaugurated by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on October 15.

According to a source quoted by The Times of India, "The strategically important VLF facility, once it becomes fully operational in two-three years, will provide round-the-clock encrypted communication connectivity to submerged submarines across India's entire area of interest." VLF radio waves, operating within a frequency range of 3 to 30 kilohertz, can penetrate seawater to a certain depth, making them essential for maintaining constant communication with submarines.

India has been running a VLF station at Tirunelveli in Tamil Nadu since 1990. However, the new facility at Vikarabad will enhance the Navy's ability to communicate with both diesel-electric and nuclear submarines, especially given the increasing presence of Chinese naval forces in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR). The Navy has acknowledged that this expanded VLF network is crucial for "maintaining 24x7x365 communication" with submarines as part of its long-term defence strategy.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/defence/indias-nuclear-submarine-program-gains-momentum-with-new-vlf-facility-and-nuclear-fleet-to-counter-china/articleshow/114218667.cms?from=mdr>

India's space strategy: harness data and tiny satellites to capture market beyond SpaceX

Reuters, October 14, 2024

India has a plan to carve out a beachhead in the battle for commercial space, officials say: crunching space data, building small satellites and launching them cheaply into orbit rather than challenging heavyweights such as SpaceX head-on.

In particular, it is taking aim at providing cost-effective services and hardware to sectors such as communications, agriculture and commodities, where high-quality data is a precious resource.

At stake is a launch market worth \$14.54 billion, opens new tab by 2031, and a related data services market pegged at \$45 billion, opens new tab by 2030.

"The world has gone from satellites the size of a Boeing plane to the size of a laptop," said AK Bhatt, director general of the Indian Space Association, an industry body.

"This is a sector that India can win, instead of challenging heavy launches where Elon Musk has dominance. The country already has an historical advantage in data mining and interpretation."

Since February, India has opened its space sector to private players and created a 10 billion rupee (\$119 million) venture fund to support space startups. It has also unveiled plans for crewed space exploration and a mission to Venus, but the focus is on developing commercial ventures.

In many ways it will be an uphill fight. Other countries such as Japan and China have advanced space industries, and designs on cheap launches. Spaceflight itself is difficult; the startup landscape globally is littered with failed boosters and satellite designs.

<https://www.reuters.com/technology/space/indias-space-strategy-harness-data-tiny-satellites-capture-market-beyond-spacex-2024-10-14/>

ISRO Chairman S. Somanath receives IAF World Space Award for Chandrayaan-3's remarkable achievement

The Hindu, October 14, 2024

ISRO said on Monday (October 14, 2024) its Chairman S. Somanath has received the International Astronautical Federation's (IAF) prestigious World Space Award for Chandrayaan-3's remarkable achievement.

"This recognition celebrates India's contributions to space exploration. Celebrations underway in Milan (Italy) as we continue to strive for new frontiers," the national agency headquartered here said in an online post.

<https://www.thehindu.com/sci-tech/science/isro-chairman-s-somanath-receives-iaf-world-space-award-for-chandrayaan-3s-remarkable-achievement/article68752947.ece>

B. China

Special blessings sent from Tiangong Space Station to celebrate National Day; next crew scheduled for late October

Global Times, October 1, 2024

To mark the 75th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China, the Shenzhou-18 crew sent special blessings from space. The Shenzhou-18 crew, who have been on duty at the Tiangong Space Station for more than five months, will welcome the arrival of Shenzhou-19 for the fifth in-orbit crew rotation by late October, the China Manned Space Agency said. Mission commander Ye Guangfu and crew members Li Cong and Li Guangsu entered the Chinese space station on April 26.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202410/1320632.shtml>

What reports got wrong about China's 'sunken nuclear submarine'

Defence One, October 2, 2024

The purported sinking of a Chinese nuclear submarine at a Wuhan shipyard pier is the latest example of Western reporting on military developments in China that overlooks important details and context, or even takes the wrong lessons from the fragments of stories they tell. The incident, which took place in June, drew some mention the following month on social media and even in the defense press, but it went viral after a Sept. 26 report in the Wall Street Journal touched off coverage from Fox News to CBS.

<https://www.defenseone.com/ideas/2024/10/chinas-sunken-nuclear-sub-was-likely-nothing-sort/400001/>

Escalating contest over South China Sea disrupts international cable system

The Washington Post, October 3, 2024

Undersea cables below the South China Sea have long provided vital connectivity to countries in Southeast Asia as demand for internet service has surged. As China presses its claim over most of the strategic waterway, companies have found it harder to get approval from Beijing to operate there and riskier to do so without Chinese permission, said executives at cable companies, consultants and government regulators. Some cable repairs have been delayed months because of lags in Chinese permitting. At least two new cable projects are years overdue.

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2024/10/03/south-china-sea-underwater-cables/>

China develops Aegis-like Ballistic Missile Defence for its Type 055 Destroyers

Warrior Maven, October 4, 2024

The Chinese Navy has commissioned its 8th quasi-stealthy, high-tech and heavily armed Type-055 Destroyer, a development likely

noticed by the Pentagon as the PRC Navy continues to accelerate both ship production quantity as well as advanced technology development. Built with what looks like a curved US Navy Zumwalt-like stealthy configuration, China's Type-055 destroyer looks like a hybrid blend between the stealthy Zumwalt-class destroyers and greatly up-gunned U.S. Navy DDG 51 Arleigh Burke-class destroyers. It has concentrated Vertical Launch Systems, a smoother, straighter hull configuration with fewer radar signature-increasing protruding structures such as guns on the side, deck masts or antennas.

<https://warriormaven.com/china/china-develops-aegis-like-ballistic-missile-defense-for-its-type-055-destroyers>

China and North Korea mark 75th anniversary of ties

The Washington Post, October 5, 2024

The leaders of North Korea and China marked the 75th anniversary of their diplomatic relations by exchanging messages that expressed hopes for stronger ties, as outsiders raised questions about their relationship. The message exchange came as North Korea and Russia have been sharply expanding their cooperation while China apparently keeps its distance.

Experts say that the level of exchanges and commemorative programs between North Korea and China in the coming months will provide a clue to the exact status of their ties.

https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2024/10/05/north-korea-kim-china-xi/24fe2916-8397-11ef-90f2-d1fc6303655d_story.html

China claims breakthrough in silicon photonics that could clear technical hurdle

South China Morning Post, October 6, 2024

A state-funded semiconductor lab in China said it has achieved a "milestone" in the development of silicon photonics,

which could help the country overcome current technical barriers in chip design and achieve self-sufficiency amid US sanctions. JFS Laboratory – based in Wuhan, capital of central Hubei province and a national base for photonics research – was able to light up a laser light source integrated with a silicon-based chip, the first time this was successfully done in China, according to a blog post published by the lab.

<https://www.scmp.com/tech/tech-war/article/3281156/chip-war-china-claims-breakthrough-silicon-photonics-could-clear-technical-hurdle>

China hacked major U.S. telecom firms in apparent counterspy operation

The Washington Post, October 6, 2024

Chinese hackers have breached at least three major U.S. telecommunications providers in what appears to be an audacious espionage operation likely aimed in part at discovering the Chinese targets of American surveillance, according to U.S. officials. The investigation by the FBI, U.S. intelligence agencies and the Department of Homeland Security is in its early stages. The full scope of the compromises and their impact is not yet known, said the officials, who spoke on the condition of anonymity because of the matter's sensitivity. China has been actively targeting Western democracies, particularly the United States, for years – engaging in industrial and technological espionage as well efforts to learn politicians' and policymakers' plans and intentions.

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/national-security/2024/10/06/salt-typhoon-china-espionage-telecom/>

China is rapidly building warships. Satellite images reveal the scale.

The Washington Post, October 7, 2024

China has been investing so much in shipbuilding over the past 18 years that it can now build more ships in a month than the United States can in a year – and Beijing aims to keep widening its advantage. If the U.S. military does not soon catch up to this capacity, it risks finding itself off-guard and

ill-equipped in a conflict scenario. China's recent expansions should alarm American military planners and spur investments to bolster naval power.

Satellite imagery reveals the recent major expansions that have made China's shipbuilding infrastructure the most robust in the world.

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2024/10/07/china-shipbuilding-navy-military/>

China's 'wiser' long-term strategy paves way to No 1 world power: Kishore Mahbubani

South China Morning Post, October 7, 2024

The pressure on China has not subsided in any significant way. And here, the main problem with the Biden administration – or the US government in general – is that it seems to have mounted a campaign against China without any clear, comprehensive long-term strategy in mind. A strategy is intended to achieve certain goals. It is not clear what the goals of the Biden administration are – what would constitute a victory for the United States over China as a result of all these measures? That has never been spelled out.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/diplomacy/article/3281151/chinas-wiser-long-term-strategy-paves-way-no-1-world-power-kishore-mahbubani>

China's nuclear shadow reaches Europe

RUSI, October 8, 2024

Many observers of European security still assume that China's nuclear arsenal build-up does not threaten European interests. Yet as China moves away from a minimalist nuclear force posture, the US must necessarily recalibrate its own strategy and posture. This has a grave bearing on NATO's deterrence construct, in which nearly all European allies depend on US nuclear weapons to provide for their fundamental security needs. China's nuclear expansion thus adds urgency to

the need to adapt NATO's nuclear posture to the post-2022 environment.

<https://www.rusi.org/explore-our-research/publications/commentary/chinas-nuclear-shadow-reaches-europe>

China scientists develop space battery that can run on Mars' atmosphere: paper

South China Morning Post, October 8, 2024

Scientists in China say they have developed a lightweight, rechargeable battery for Mars exploration that could be powered by the Martian atmosphere while withstanding the planet's extreme temperatures. The researchers, from the University of Science and Technology of China, said the battery was capable of "direct inhalation of the Mars atmosphere as fuel" during discharge and secondary charging by external solar and nuclear energy sources. According to the paper published by peer-reviewed journal *Science Bulletin*, the battery can run for more than 1,350 hours – nearly two Martian months – at zero degrees Celsius (32 Fahrenheit). A day on Mars is around 40 minutes longer than on Earth.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/science/article/3281325/china-scientists-develop-space-battery-can-run-mars-atmosphere-paper>

'Chinese hacking threat': a farce of US smear tactics against China

Global Times, October 8, 2024

The US is particularly keen on discrediting China, and hyping up the "Chinese hacking threat" has practically become routine. Recently, US media outlets once again "revealed" that Chinese hackers "may have gained access to systems used by federal authorities for court-approved eavesdropping" and "breached at least three major US telecommunications providers." Notably, these accusations lack any concrete evidence to substantiate them. They rely solely on vague terms like "may" & "potentially" or "premature" which offer no substantive proof.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202410/1320848.shtml>

China achieves breakthrough in low-temperature distillation of boron-10 isotopes to support nuclear safety

Global Times, October 9, 2024

Chinese scientists have achieved a breakthrough in low-temperature distillation of boron-10 isotopes to stably produce enriched boron-10 products with an abundance of 70 percent, significantly enhancing China's capacity for large-scale production of boron isotopes and providing strong support for the safe and orderly development of the country's nuclear power industry. According to China Institute of Atomic Energy (CIAE) of China National Nuclear Corporation (CNNC), who developed the technology with China's completely independent intellectual property right, boron-10 possesses excellent neutron absorption characteristics and can be used as a neutron absorber or radiation shielding material in nuclear reactors for reactivity control and in emergency shutdown systems, playing an important role in the field of nuclear industry, *Peoples Daily* reported.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202410/1320888.shtml>

Report to Congress on Chinese nuclear weapons

U.S. Naval Institute Staff, October 9, 2024

The U.S. government has for decades expressed concerns about China's proliferation of nuclear- and missile-related technologies to other countries, with more recent focus on the threat of Chinese acquisition of U.S.-origin nuclear technology. Official U.S. government sources indicate that the Chinese government has ended its direct involvement in the transfer of nuclear- and missile-related items, but China-based companies and individuals continue to export goods relevant to those items, particularly to Iran and North Korea. U.S. officials have also raised concerns about entities operating in China that provide other forms of support for proliferation-

sensitive activities, such as illicit finance and money laundering.

<https://news.usni.org/2024/10/09/report-to-congress-on-chinese-nuclear-weapons>

Nation to launch satellite able to carry multiple payloads

Global Times, October 9, 2024

Chinese remote-sensing commercial satellite manufacturer Changguang Satellite Technology is scheduled to launch its “Jilin-1” platform 02A03 satellite in October at the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center, which is capable of supporting multiple payloads, the Global Times learnt from the satellite manufacturer. A departure ceremony for the “Jilin-1” platform 02A03 satellite was held in the Jilin Aerospace Information Industrial Park in Changchun, Northeast China’s Jilin Province. The satellite is a low-cost, high-capacity, high-resolution shared remote sensing satellite developed independently by Changguang Satellite Technology, China’s first commercial remote sensing satellite company.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202410/1320920.shtml>

Beyond the politics, China’s missile test reflects military need

Reuters, October 10, 2024

From a missile discreetly ferried more than 1,000 km (620 miles) to a launch site, to the use of remote bases and satellites to track it from Hainan Island to the South Pacific, China’s September ICBM flight marked a test of operational necessity. Six security analysts and four diplomats evaluating the Sept. 25 launch said that although the rare test carried political messaging amid China’s nuclear weapons buildup, it also met a long-overdue need for the People’s Liberation Army’s Rocket Force to ensure its nuclear deterrent worked as advertised.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/china/beyond-politics-chinas-missile-test-reflects-military-need-2024-10-09/>

China’s great submarine sinking: What we know and why it matters

The Heritage Foundation, October 10, 2024

Earlier this year, naval experts tracking developments of China’s military noticed from satellite imagery a new class of submarine being built at Wuchang Shipyard, a yard in Wuhan known for constructing conventional submarines. Last Spring, satellite imagery detected barges and floating cranes at the new sub’s pier. A year ago, similar stories of a lost Chinese nuclear submarine were being reported. That case involved the loss in the Yellow Sea of a nuclear submarine ensnared by seafloor devices and corroborated by United Kingdom government sources. The details of that story never had compelling satellite imagery nor naval activity to corroborate the loss or even a recovery. As the story gained traction, eventually a Taiwan Ministry of Defense spokesman denied there was evidence to back this story.

<https://www.heritage.org/china/commentary/chinas-great-submarine-sinking-what-we-know-and-why-it-matters>

C. Russia

Kremlin Calls for ‘Restraint’ After Iran Missile Attack on Israel

Moscow Times, October 2, 2024

The Kremlin on Wednesday expressed worry over the latest escalation in the Middle East, calling on “all sides” to show “restraint” after Israel vowed to make Iran “pay” for firing a barrage of missiles at its territory.

“This situation is developing according to the most worrying scenario,” Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said. “We call all sides toward restraint ... and we condemn any acts that could lead to the death of the civilian population.”

Iran launched its second direct attack on Israel in its history on Tuesday, firing what it said were 200 missiles including hypersonic weapons, sending Israeli

civilians into shelters and prompting several countries in the region to close their airspace. Israel put the number of missiles fired at its territory at 180.

<https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2024/10/02/kremlin-calls-for-restraint-after-iran-missile-attack-on-israel-a86547>

'Russia doesn't want to use nuclear weapons': The view from wartime Moscow

Al Jazeera, October 7, 2024

The revised rules, outlined by President Vladimir Putin, say that an attack on Russia with "participation or support of a nuclear power" will be seen as their "joint attack on the Russian Federation", seemingly responding to the possibility that Ukraine could strike targets deep within Russian territory using long-range weapons supplied by Western allies.

The United States, Ukraine's most important ally, is the world's second-largest nuclear power, with 5,224 warheads compared to Russia's 5,889.

Alexey Malinin, the Moscow-based founder of the Center for International Interaction and Cooperation, told Al Jazeera that from the Russian perspective, a reassessment of nuclear capabilities was necessary in the face of encirclement by hostile powers.

"Russia does not want to use nuclear weapons, understanding the seriousness of the consequences of a conflict with the use of such weapons," he said.

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2024/10/7/russia-doesnt-want-to-use-nuclear-weapons-the-view-from-wartime-moscow>

EU sanctions Iran over alleged missile transfers to Russia

Al Jazeera, October 15, 2024

The European Union has announced sanctions against more than a dozen Iranian individuals and firms, including the country's deputy defence minister and

national airline, over the alleged transfer of missiles and drones to Russia.

The European Council said on Monday that seven individuals and as many entities in total would be subject to an asset freeze and travel ban over their involvement in transferring weapons and equipment to Moscow for use in its war against Ukraine.

Those targeted include Iranian Deputy Defence Minister Seyed Hamzeh Ghalandari, high-ranking members of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps' Quds Force, and three Iranian airlines, including Iran Air.

European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen welcomed the sanctions.

"The Iranian regime's support to Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine is unacceptable and must stop," von der Leyen said in a post on X.

<https://www.aljazeera.com/economy/2024/10/15/eu-sanctions-iran-over-alleged-missile-transfers-to-russia>

D. The United States of America

US approves Hellfire, AIM-9X missiles sale to Saudi Arabia

Airforce Technology, October 14, 2024

The US State Department has approved three foreign military sales to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to enhance Saudi Arabia's air defence capabilities and support its self-defence and regional security missions. The Defence Security Cooperation Agency has notified Congress of the potential sales. The first sale includes 220 AIM-9X Block II Sidewinder tactical missiles, missile containers, missile software, training, support equipment, spares, and US Government and contractor technical assistance, totalling an estimated \$251.8m (Sr944m). Additionally, Saudi Arabia has requested 2,503 AGM-114R3 Hellfire II missiles.

<https://www.airforce-technology.com/news/us-approves-hellfire-missiles-sale-saudi-arabia/>

US approves \$1.2bn sale of GMLRS and ATACMS to UAE

Army Technology, October 14, 2024

The US State Department has approved a potential Foreign Military Sale to United Arab Emirates (UAE), involving Guided Multiple Launch Rocket System (GMLRS) and Army Tactical Missile Systems (ATACMS) munitions, along with related logistics and programme support. The deal is valued at an estimated \$1.2bn (Dh4.4bn). It will help the UAE modernise its military capabilities and enhance interoperability with the US and other partners. The Defence Security Cooperation Agency has formally notified Congress of the possible sale, which includes 259 GMLRS M31A1 unitary pods and 203 ATACMS M57 unitary missiles. ATACMS is a surface-to-surface artillery system designed to engage targets at distances greater. The system can be launched from the HIMARS and MLRS M270 platforms. Guided MLRS Unitary round offers precision strike for point targets. It integrates a 200lb unitary warhead and has a range of more than 70km.

<https://www.army-technology.com/news/us-sale-gmlrs-atacms-uae/>

US to deploy THAAD missile defence system in Israel, to be operational against ballistic and hypersonic missiles

Middle East Monitor, October 15, 2024

Following the Pentagon's decision to send a Terminal High Altitude Area Defence (THAAD) battery and military personnel to Israel amid rising tensions with Iran, the technical capabilities of the system have drawn considerable attention. Anadolu has compiled details of the THAAD system, a highly regarded air defence technology designed to intercept ballistic missiles that travel within and outside the Earth's atmosphere. The US plans to deploy it in Israel to counter threats from Iran, Houthi rebels in Yemen and the Hezbollah group in Lebanon. Currently, Israel employs three air defence systems – the long-range Arrow, medium-range David's Sling and short-range Iron Dome. However, these systems

have struggled to intercept certain types of missiles during recent Iranian retaliatory attacks.

<https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20241015-us-to-deploy-thaad-missile-defence-system-in-israel-to-be-operational-against-ballistic-and-hypersonic-missiles/>

E. Europe

France helps down Iran missiles, Germany sees risk of region ablaze

Reuters, October 2, 2024

France said on Wednesday it had mobilised its military resources in the Middle East to counter what it called the Iranian threat and Germany warned the region risked being set on fire after Tehran launched a barrage of missiles at Israel.

Iran said early on Wednesday that its missile attack on Israel was finished barring further provocation, while Israel and the U.S. promised to retaliate against Tehran's assault as fears of a wider war intensified.

The United Nations Security Council will meet later in the day to discuss the escalation, but in a sign that Western states are looking to anticipate the worsening situation, Cyprus said it had activated a mechanism to allow third-country nationals evacuating the Middle East safe passage through the island.

"France condemns the attack on Israel by ballistic missiles fired from Iran. It reiterates its absolute commitment to the security of Israel. It participated through its military means in the Middle East to counter the Iranian threat," the foreign ministry said in a statement.

It gave no further details on what role it had played in countering the Iranian attack, but an official said France had participated on Tuesday night to stop Iranian missiles.

Foreign Minister Jean-Noel Barrot spoke to his U.S. counterpart Antony Blinken to coordinate diplomatic efforts and will hold

talks in Berlin with his counterpart on Wednesday.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/frances-macron-condemns-irans-attacks-israel-2024-10-02/>

Europe Shrugs Off Russia's Latest Nuclear Threats

Time Magazine, October 3, 2024

The nuclear threats from Russia have come hard and fast in recent days. In a Telegram post last month, one member of the Kremlin's security council even named a specific target in the heart of Europe, along with the time it would take a Russian missile to deliver a warhead to that spot. But European leaders barely seemed to flinch. In interviews with TIME, two of them brushed aside Vladimir Putin's warnings of annihilation.

"I cannot assure you whether it is a bluff or not," says Mette Frederiksen, the prime minister of Denmark, who has been among the most forceful advocates within the NATO alliance for stronger military aid to Ukraine. "But my take is that we can never let someone who does not respect democracy, human rights and all the things that we believe in — we cannot let him decide what the rest of us should do."

Through its escalating threats of nuclear war, Russia has tried to stop Western countries from supporting Ukraine, particularly when it comes to long-distance strikes against Russian targets. On Sept. 19, the European Parliament passed a resolution that called for Ukraine to receive the weapons and permission to launch such strikes, and the response from Moscow was unusually blunt.

<https://time.com/7027988/russia-nuclear-black-mail-europe-response/>

Polish-Korean Deals for Drones and Rockets, FA-50PL Photos Revealed, US Loan for Apache

Defense 24, October 4, 2024

For another consecutive year, Polish arms exports are rising. Similar to last year, the

driving force behind this trend is Ukraine's war-driven demand for weapons and ammunition. Ukraine was the top importer of Polish arms in 2023, purchasing weapons worth •1.419 billion. The U.S. ranked second with •118 million, followed by Spain (•26 million), and Germany (•24 million). Other notable importers include Norway (•21 million), Switzerland (•21 million), the Czech Republic (•19 million), Latvia (•18 million), and France (•16 million). Remaining countries made smaller procurements in Poland, below •10 million.

The MFA's report highlights both the value of export licenses issued and the actual export value. There were major discrepancies between these values, as in previous years. In 2023, licenses worth •10.788 billion were issued, while the actual export value was only •1.753 billion - 16% of the licensed amount. Part of the export licensed in 2023 will be taking place in the future, but most won't be. Historical data supports this. In 2018, 31% of the licensed exports were realized, 20% in 2019, 28% in 2020, 9% in 2021, and 21% in 2022. While the overall financial performance of Poland's arms industry in 2022-2023 has improved significantly compared to earlier weaker years, this is primarily due to the war in Ukraine. Worryingly, aside from Ukraine, Poland's arms industry has not yet found other large markets for its products.

A Polish government delegation, led by Paweł Bejda, Secretary of State in the Ministry of Defence, traveled to the Republic of Korea. The intergovernmental talks focused on cooperation between the two countries in key modernization programs of the Polish Armed Forces. The visit of the Polish delegation, headed by Deputy Minister Paweł Bejda, began with a meeting with Minister Seok Jonggun, head of the Defense Acquisition Program Administration (DAPA). The minister, responsible for key projects related to South Korea's defence policy, played a crucial role in discussions on cooperation with Poland regarding the modernization and development of the Armed Forces.

As the Polish MoD highlighted, during the meeting both sides discussed the status of the most important defense programs that Poland and South Korea are jointly working on. One of the key topics of the meeting was the production of large-caliber ammunition in Poland, which plays a strategic role in ensuring the country's defense capabilities. The talks also covered the production of K2 tanks by the Polish defense industry.

<https://defence24.com/armed-forces/east-front-news-14-polish-korean-deals-for-drones-and-rockets-fa-50pl-photos-revealed-us-loan-for-apache>

France, India to set up aeronautics cluster; campus for aeronautics, space training

The Economic Times, October 7, 2024

France and India will be setting up an aeronautics cluster as well as developing an Indo-French campus for professional training in aeronautics and space. French Ambassador to India Thierry Mathou on Monday said the two countries have been strategic partners for a long time, especially in the fields of defence and aerospace.

Speaking at the conference organised by the French Aerospace Industries Association (GIFAS) in the national capital, he said 55 per cent of French exports to India are in the aeronautical sector, amounting to 2.7 billion euros in the first half of 2024.

While noting that the partnership is not just strategic but universal, he said they are currently working on an Indo-French campus for professional training in aeronautics and space. "We are also working with the civil aviation ministry to set up an aeronautics cluster...", he said.

Specific details about the cluster proposal could not be immediately ascertained.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/transportation/airlines/-aviation/france-india-to-set-up-aeronautics-cluster-campus-for-aeronautics-space-training/articleshow/114017297.cms?from=mdr>

France kicks off development of wingman drone for Rafale fighter jet

Defense News, October 9, 2024

France kicked off the development of an air-combat drone that will serve as an unmanned wingman for the country's Rafale fighter, part of a contract with Dassault Aviation to start work on an upgrade package for the aircraft.

The stealthy wingman drone will be operated directly from the Rafale cockpit, the Armed Forces Ministry said in a post on X, formerly Twitter. The unmanned combat aerial vehicle will build on Dassault Aviation's work on its unmanned nEUROn demonstrator, the company said in a statement on Tuesday.

"This stealth combat drone will contribute to the technological and operational superiority of the French Air Force by 2033," Dassault Aviation CEO Éric Trappier said in the statement.

The French plan to give Rafale pilots a drone buddy come as the timetable for the jet's successor remains unclear. France's senate in November had called on Dassault Aviation to start work on the Rafale upgrade, including a so-called loyal wingman, as soon as 2024 because of the lack of visibility on the Future Combat Air System being developed with Germany and Spain.

<https://www.defensenews.com/global/europe/2024/10/09/france-kicks-off-development-of-wingman-drone-for-rafale-fighter-jet/>

UK has not agreed to long-range missile use after Zelenskyy meeting, No 10 says

The Guardian, October 10, 2024

The UK has not lifted restrictions on Ukraine using long-range missiles after Volodymyr Zelenskyy's visit, Downing Street has said.

The Ukrainian president met Keir Starmer in No 10 on Thursday and reiterated his request to fire Storm Shadow missiles and other western-supplied weapons deep inside Russian territory.

Zelenskyy has repeatedly urged western powers including the UK to give Kyiv the green light to fire the weapons, which have a maximum range of about 250km (155 miles), at Russian military sites that are being used to target Ukrainian cities and infrastructure.

The US and UK seemed poised to cede to Kyiv's request last month before Starmer's trip to Washington DC, where the prime minister held talks with the US president, Joe Biden. There was no change in position after the meeting between Starmer and Biden, however, and Downing Street indicated on Thursday that none was forthcoming.

The prime minister's spokesperson told reporters that "no war has ever been won by a single weapon and there's no change in the government's policy on the use of long-range missiles". They indicated that ministers were looking at other ways of supporting Ukraine. "These discussions aren't focused on single pieces of equipment, they're looking at strategic support for Ukraine," they said. "Getting into more detail on operational matters would be a gift to Putin."

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2024/oct/10/zelenskyy-at-no-10-for-talks-with-starmer-and-nato-secretary-general>

First test firing of new French-Italian ASTER 30 B1 NT surface to air missile

Naval News, October 9, 2024

On October 8, the French defense procurement agency DGA (Direction Générale de l'Armement) carried out the first qualification firing of the new-generation Franco-Italian ASTER B1 NT system at the DGA missile test site in Biscarrosse (South Western France), in the presence of Sébastien Lecornu, Minister of the French Armed Forces and Veterans Affairs.

This was the first development firing of the ASTER 30 B1 NT (New Technology) missile, which will equip the future Franco-Italian SAMP/T NG land-based air defense system. The missile will also be fitted aboard the Horizon type air defense destroyers of the Italian Navy (from 2027) and the French Navy (from 2030) following their mid-life update.

During this test-firing, two aerial targets were deployed to simulate a complex surface-to-air defense situation, with one target representative of an enemy fighter and one representative of a friendly aircraft to be defended.

<https://www.navalnews.com/naval-news/2024/10/first-test-firing-of-new-french-italian-aster-30-b1-nt-surface-to-air-missile/>

First SMR projects selected by European Industrial Alliance

World Nuclear News, October 14, 2024

The European Commission (EC) launched an Industrial Alliance dedicated to SMRs in February this year, aiming to facilitate the development of SMRs in Europe by the early 2030s. The Alliance works through working groups to improve the conditions for the development and deployment of SMRs, including rebuilding the supply chain for nuclear power. The activities aim to support specific SMR projects and accelerate their deployment on the European market.

The EC said the initial membership call elicited responses from more than 300 stakeholders, encompassing SMR technology designers, utilities, energy-intensive users, supply chain companies, research institutes, financial institutions, and civil society organisations. The alliance members and its governing board were formally confirmed at the inaugural General Assembly in Brussels on 29-30 May.

In pursuit of tangible project outcomes, in June the Alliance launched a call for SMR projects wishing to be considered for the Alliance's Project Working Groups (PWGs). Subsequently, the governing

board, with the assistance of the Alliance secretariat, conducted a review and assessment of the 22 applications received.

<https://www.world-nuclear-news.org/articles/first-smr-projects-selected-by-european-industrial-alliance>

German opposition leader would deliver Taurus to Ukraine after certain steps

The Kyiv Independent, October 14, 2024

Friedrich Merz, an opposition candidate for the German chancellor, said he is open to supplying Taurus long-range missiles to Ukraine but under some conditions, N-TV reported on Oct. 14.

Despite providing extensive military aid to Kyiv, German Chancellor Olaf Scholz has been adamant in his position not to approve the supply of the Taurus missiles, citing a fear of escalation.

"I wouldn't do it just like that," Merz said on the ARD channel regarding the supply of the Taurus missiles.

At first, there should be an appeal to Russian President Vladimir Putin to stop attacking civilian targets in Ukraine. If Moscow does not concede, Ukraine should be free to use already delivered weapons without restrictions, said the German opposition leader.

Merz is the parliamentary leader and chancellor candidate of the center-right CDU/CSU, which is leading the polls one year before the federal parliamentary elections. This makes him currently the most likely candidate to unseat social democrat Scholz.

"And the second step would be to supply the Taurus missiles. Then it is up to (Russian President Vladimir) Putin to decide how far he wants to escalate this war," Merz said.

Taurus is a joint German-Swedish cruise missile with a range of over 500 kilometers (310 miles). It boasts a longer reach than missiles that Ukraine has received from other partners, such as the British-French-

made SCALP/Storm Shadow and American ATACMS.

<https://kyivindependent.com/merz-aurus-missiles/>

France and Germany join U.S.-led space defense coalition

Space News, October 14, 2024

France and Germany formally joined Operation Olympic Defender, a U.S.-led initiative aimed at bolstering international cooperation in space defense, U.S. Space Command announced Oct. 14.

The move signals a deepening of military space ties between Europe and the United States, as concerns grow over the militarization of outer space.

In existence since 2013, the multinational Operation Olympic Defender is overseen by U.S. Space Command. It coordinates efforts among partner nations to protect space assets from potential threats, including cyberattacks, satellite jamming and anti-satellite weapons. The coalition previously included the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia and Canada. New Zealand officially joined in September. The newest members France and Germany bring significant military and technological capabilities to the group.

France, which has ramped up its military space efforts in recent years, established its own Space Command in 2019, emphasizing its ambition to be a leader in European space defense. Germany, too, has advanced space surveillance capabilities.

As nations increasingly rely on space-based systems for civilian and military purposes, ensuring their protection has become a strategic priority, said the commander of U.S. Space Command Gen. Stephen Whiting. Satellites, once primarily viewed as tools of communication and science, are now seen as potential targets in the event of a conflict.

France and Germany are joining the coalition at a time of heightened tension

in space, with both China and Russia demonstrating their ability to disrupt or destroy satellites. Operation Olympic Defender aims to deter such actions through collective defense, shared intelligence, and the promotion of international norms for responsible space activity.

<https://spacenews.com/france-and-germany-join-u-s-led-space-defense-coalition/>

US startup Last Energy plans micro nuclear project in Wales

Reuters, October 15, 2024

U.S. startup Last Energy plans to build a 300 million pound (\$391 million) micro nuclear project in Wales to supply local industrial customers, the company said on Tuesday.

Britain's new Labour government has said small nuclear plants will play an important role in helping the country meet its net zero targets while businesses are also seeking new sources of emissions-free power.

Last Energy UK, a subsidiary of Washington D.C.-based Last Energy, said it would not require any public funding for the project on a former coal plant site in Bridgend, south Wales, which could be generating power in 2027.

The company said it was in commercial discussions with a range of local industrial customers and that power purchase agreements were expected to underpin the finances of the project.

The micro reactors are capable of generating 20 megawatts (MW) of electricity and the company plans to install four at the site giving it a total capacity of 80 MW.

Developers hope micro and small nuclear projects will be cheaper and easier to get off the ground than large projects which have struggled to attract enough investment for the high upfront costs involved.

<https://www.reuters.com/sustainability/climate-energy/us-startup-last-energy-plans-micro-nuclear-project-wales-2024-10-14/>

West Asia

F. Israel

IDF strikes Hezbollah weapon production sites in multiple Beirut strikes

The Jerusalem Post, October 2, 2024

The IDF conducted targeted strikes in the area of Beirut against a number of Hezbollah weapon production facilities and terror infrastructure sites over the past few days, Israel's military announced on October 2 morning. According to the IDF, the strikes were conducted to degrade Hezbollah's military capabilities. It also noted that the Hezbollah terror group deliberately embedded its weapon production facilities beneath residential buildings within central Beirut, hiding them in populated areas. The IDF emphasized that numerous steps were taken to mitigate the risk of harming civilians and that it had sent out warnings in advance about the strikes to civilians in the Furthermore, during the early hours of October 2 morning, The IDF said that it was operating in Beirut, striking terror targets in the area. Following the announcement, IDF Arabic Spokesperson Avichay Adraee posted on X, formerly Twitter, an urgent warning in Arabic calling the residents of the southern suburbs of Beirut to evacuate.

<https://www.jpost.com/breaking-news/article-822914>

Israel turns to defence industry for help in bolstering capabilities against drones

Times of Israel, October 15, 2024

The government has turned to the defence industry to bolster the military's ability to intercept aerial drones launched by Iran or by its proxy terror groups, including Lebanon's Hezbollah. The Defence Ministry said on October 15, that it had launched a competition among eight large

and small companies. "After analyzing the trial results, the Defence Ministry will select several technologies to enter an accelerated development and production process. This aims to deploy new operational capabilities within months," it said. In addition to missiles, rockets and an array of other arms, Iran, Hezbollah and others have used drones in attacks on Israel, a weapon that has proven tough to counter. On October 13, a Hezbollah drone struck the Israel Defence Forces' Golani Brigade training base near Binyamina, killing four soldiers and injuring dozens, after it eluded Israeli air defence radars.

<https://www.timesofisrael.com/israel-turns-to-defense-industry-for-help-in-bolstering-capabilities-against-drones/>

Israel faces potential shortage of interceptor missiles – report

Times of Israel, October 15, 2024

Israel is encountering a potential shortage of rocket and missile interceptors in its air defense array amid the yearlong war in Gaza and Lebanon, and as it prepares for a possible escalating conflict with Iran, according to a British report October 15. Citing experts and former military officials, the Financial Times said that Washington is assisting the Jewish state in addressing the matter, in particular through its promise to send a Terminal High Altitude Area Defense missile system (THAAD), but Jerusalem could increasingly find itself needing to decide which targets it wants to prioritize defending. "Israel's munitions issue is serious," Dana Stroul, an ex-US defense official, said. "If Iran responds to an Israel attack, and Hezbollah joins in too, Israel's air defenses will be stretched." She added that supplies were not unlimited and that Washington could not keep up its ongoing supply of both Ukraine and Israel at the same pace.

<https://www.timesofisrael.com/israel-faces-potential-shortage-of-interceptor-missiles-report/>

Dutch to buy tanks for more than \$1 billion, add Kongsberg air defense

Defense News, October 15, 2024

The Netherlands plans to buy 46 Leopard 2A8 tanks for more than •1 billion (US\$1.1 billion), rebuilding a heavy armor capacity just ten years after selling its last tanks to Finland, as it seeks to present a more credible military deterrent to an aggressive Russia.

The Dutch are also investing in missile defense, acquiring four short-range and six medium-range air-defense batteries from Norway's Kongsberg, State Secretary for Defence Gijs Tuinman told parliament on Monday. The company expects the deal to be valued around 11 billion Norwegian kroner (\$1 billion), it said in a separate statement.

Dutch defense officials and military brass have been showing up on TV shows and at public events in recent months to raise awareness of what they see as a threat of war posed by Russia's invasion of Ukraine, and the need to bolster the country's armed forces. The Netherlands last month announced plans to rebuild a tank battalion and buy additional F-35 fighter jets and anti-submarine frigates, backed by a rising defense budget.

"The war in Ukraine shows that battle tanks are of undiminished importance in modern conflict," Tuinman told parliament in a letter detailing the planned purchase of Leopard tanks from French-German defense firm KNDS.

<https://www.defensenews.com/global/europe/2024/10/15/dutch-to-buy-tanks-for-more-than-1-billion-add-kongsberg-air-defense/#:~:text=The%20Dutch%20are%20also%20investing,Tuinman%20told%20parliament%20on%20Monday.>

G. Iran

Iran hits Israel's Netzarim military facility and Tel Nof intelligence unit

Tehran Times, October 1, 2024

In its retaliatory military strikes on Israel late on October 1, night the Iranian military targeted the Netzarim military facility and the Tel Nof intelligence unit. The military attack was in response to the Israeli assassination of Hamas political chief Ismail Haniyeh in Tehran on July 31 and the killing of Iranian military advisor to Lebanon Brigadier General Abbas Nilforoushan, and Hezbollah leader Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah in the massive airstrike on Beirut on September 27. The Islamic Revolution Guard Corps used hypersonic Fatah missiles in targeting these two sites as well as the Nevatim air base. The Nevatim air base housed F-35 military jets. The fighter jets that bombarded Beirut on September 27 flew from this military air base.

<https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/504423/Iran-hits-Israel-s-Netzarim-military-facility-and-Tel-Nof-intelligence>

Iran launches dozens of missiles at Israel

News.az, October 1, 2024

On October 1, Iran announced it had launched dozens of missiles into Israel, marking a significant escalation in the ongoing conflict with Iran-backed militias Hezbollah and Hamas. There were no immediate reports of casualties, but Israel urged residents to seek shelter as air raid sirens rang out across the country, News.Az reports citing The Times Colonist. A series of window-shaking explosions were heard in Tel Aviv and near Jerusalem, though it was not immediately clear whether the sounds were from missiles landing or being intercepted by Israeli defenses, or both. Israel and the United States have warned there would be severe consequences in the event of an attack on Israel from Iran, which backs the militant group Hezbollah in Lebanon. President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris monitored the attack on

Israel from the White House Situation Room.

<https://news.az/news/iran-launches-dozens-of-missiles-at-israel>

Satellite images show significant damage to Nevatim airbase

Tehran Times, October 3, 2024

Satellite images reveal significant damage to Israel's Nevatim airbase that houses U.S.-made F-35 fighter jets after Iran launched a barrage of ballistic missiles at Israeli military sites in retaliation to Israel's high-profile assassinations in Tehran and Beirut. Satellite images of the airbase show a large hole in the roof of an aircraft hangar. On October 1 evening, the Iranian military fired around 200 ballistic missiles at Israeli military and intelligence bases in response to the July 31 assassinations of Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh in Tehran, and the September 27 killing of Hezbollah leader Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah and Iranian military advisor to Lebanon Brigadier General Abbas Nilforoushan in Beirut. The airbase, located in the Negev desert, houses the Israeli Air Force's most advanced aircraft, including F-35 Lightning II stealth fighters. It also accommodates C-130 transport aircraft, Boeing 707 tankers, and reconnaissance planes. At least seven videos showed 20 to 30 Iranian ballistic missiles hitting the base, causing substantial damage, Tasnim reported. Some sources said over 20 fighter jets were destroyed.

<https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/504494/Satellite-images-show-significant-damage-to-Nevatim-airbase>

Iran's nuclear program operates entirely within NPT framework – MP

Trend News Agency, October 14, 2024

Iran's nuclear activities are exclusively peaceful and are carried out within the framework of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), Iranian MP Mahmoud Nabavian said at the Standing Committee on Peace and

Security of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) in Geneva on October 14, Trend reports. According to him, Iran is a member of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and cooperates with the International Atomic Energy Agency within the framework of the agreement. Nabavian added that in this context, 92 percent of the International Atomic Energy Agency's inspections have been carried out in Iran. "Comparing the peaceful nuclear activities of Iran, a member of the nuclear non-proliferation agreement, with the nuclear activities of North Korea, which lies outside the agreement, is a wrong and unfair comparison," he said. The Iranian MP stated that the NPT has officially recognized the right of everyone to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes and nothing can undermine this right. Iran's peaceful nuclear program poses no threat to human health or the environment.

<https://en.trend.az/iran/3956775.html>

Iran kicking around idea of setting up Atomic Energy Council

Trend News Agency, October 14, 2024

The Atomic Energy Council is set to come into play to champion the peaceful application of Iran's nuclear technology, Trend reports. According to the information, this has been put on the table as a project, drawing from the insights of the research center of the Iranian parliament. The draft in question was put under the microscope last week during the plenary session of the Iranian parliament. At the helm of the 17-person council will be President Masoud Pezeshkian of Iran. According to the research center of the Iranian parliament, the proposed draft outlines a visionary roadmap for the evolution of Iran's nuclear industry over the next two decades, incorporating strategic initiatives and proactive measures. The draft requires the Iranian government to build and put into operation nuclear power plants with a capacity of at least 7,000 megawatts in cooperation with the private sector through the Atomic Energy Organization. The fuel of nuclear reactors at nuclear power plants should be provided fully and reliably.

<https://en.trend.az/iran/3956652.html>

Iran condemns new sanctions imposed by EU, UK

IRNA, October 15, 2024

Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesman has condemned the European Union and Britain for imposing new sanctions on a number of Iranian individuals and entities based on "false and baseless pretexts". Esmail Baghaei, while rejecting the western allegations related to the sale of ballistic missiles by Iran to Russia, said on October 15 night that his country's stance on the conflict in Ukraine is clear and principled as Tehran has always called on all countries to respect each other's sovereignty and territorial integrity as well as a diplomatic solution to differences between Russia and Ukraine..

<https://en.irna.ir/news/85628055/Iran-condemns-new-sanctions-imposed-by-EU-UK>

H. Iraq

Israel's missiles on Iran in Iraqi airspace, Tehran threatens

Shafaq News, October 11, 2024

Iraq and Jordan are the only two countries whose airspace Israel could potentially utilize for a strike on Iran, in response to Iran's missile attack in early October, Reuters reported. Gulf countries are pressuring Washington to prevent Israel from striking Iranian oil fields, fearing that such actions could lead to retaliatory attacks on their own oil facilities by groups aligned with Tehran if the conflict escalates, Reuters quoted Gulf sources as saying. "Gulf states including Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Qatar are also refusing to let Israel fly over their airspace for any attack on Iran and have conveyed this to Washington," the same sources added. The three Gulf sources emphasized that Israel could route strikes through Jordan or Iraq, but using Saudi, UAE, or Qatari airspace was off the table and strategically unnecessary. Analysts also pointed out that Israel has other options, including mid-air refueling capabilities that would enable its jets to fly down the Red Sea into the Indian Ocean,

proceed to the Gulf and then fly back, according to Reuters.

<https://www.shafaq.com/en/Iraq/Israel-s-missiles-on-Iran-in-Iraqi-airspace-Tehran-threatens>

Iraq warns against regional escalation, rejects use of airspace for strikes on Iran

Shafaq News, October 13, 2024

On October 13, Iraqi Foreign Minister Fuad Hussein warned that the ongoing conflict involving Israel could expand to include Iran, potentially threatening global energy supplies and creating a worldwide crisis. During a joint press conference with his Iranian counterpart, Abbas Araghchi, who is visiting Baghdad, Hussein cautioned against the widening of hostilities. "The Israeli aggression on Lebanon could lead to the outbreak of another war," he said. Hussein expressed concern that the continued fighting in Gaza and Lebanon poses a major threat to regional security and stability. "The ongoing war is dangerous, and its escalation threatens the entire region," he said. "Iraq stance is firm, we are against using our airspace as part of any military action," stating, "The Iraqi government has not made any decision to engage in war. Such decisions rest with the state and its three authorities."

<https://www.shafaq.com/en/Iraq/Iraq-warns-against-regional-escalation-rejects-use-of-airspace-for-strikes-on-Iran>

Iraqi airstrikes kill four ISIS members, including a "key" leader

Shafaq News, October 15, 2024

On October 15, the Joint Operations Command (JOC) reported that Iraqi Air Force F-16 jets carried out airstrikes that resulted in the deaths of ISIS members in Kirkuk governorate. The JOC stated, "On October 14, the F-16s executed two successful airstrikes targeting a terrorist hideout in the Laylan area at 11:30 PM." On October 15, at 5:00 AM, a force from

the Iraqi Counter-Terrorism Service assessed the results of the strike and found four bodies of ISIS members, one of whom was a "key" leader. "All information will be verified after investigations are conducted," the JOC said. "The operation also resulted in the destruction of weapons, communication devices, and logistical materials, and the search operation is ongoing." Earlier today, a security source affirmed that a military operation by the Iraqi Counter-Terrorism Service was launched with air support in Kirkuk.

<https://www.shafaq.com/en/Iraq/Source-Iraqi-Counter-Terrorism-Service-launches-operation-against-ISIS-with-air-support>

I. Lebanon

Israeli strikes hit central area of Lebanon's Beirut, killing 22

Aljazeera, October 10, 2024

An Israeli attack has hit central Beirut, Lebanon, outside of the city's southern suburbs where attacks are regular, killing at least 22 and wounding another 117 people. An Israeli attack on a school shelter in central Gaza has killed at least 28 people and wounded many more, health officials say. UNIFIL says Israeli troops have repeatedly opened fire on its positions in southern Lebanon, wounding two peacekeepers. Israeli forces have killed four Palestinians in Khan Younis and three in the Jabalia refugee camp as a siege that forced the United Nations to shut down schools and hospitals in northern Gaza enters a sixth day. In Gaza, at least 42,065 people have been killed and 97,886 wounded in Israeli attacks since October 2023. In Israel, at least 1,139 people were killed in the Hamas-led attacks on October 7, 2023, and more than 200 people were taken captive.

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/liveblog/2024/10/10/live-israel-kills-medics-in-lebanon-as-siege-on-north-gaza-enters-6th-day?update=3238437>

UNSC 'concerned' over Israeli attacks on peacekeepers in Lebanon

Islam Republic News Agency, October 15, 2024

The United Nations Security Council has expressed its "grave concern" over the recent Israeli attacks on United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) and demanded the full implementation of Resolution 1701. In the continuation of conflicts along the Lebanese border, the Security Council members expressed their serious concerns after several UNIFIL positions were targeted by Israeli forces, Pascale Baeriswyl, Permanent Representative of Switzerland to the UN who holds the rotating presidency of the Security Council this month (October), told reporters on October 14 evening local time. She said that the Council has asked warring sides to take into account the safety and security of UNIFIL personnel and premises and reminded that peacekeepers and their premises should never be targeted.

<https://en.irna.ir/news/85628061/UNSC-concerned-over-Israeli-attacks-on-peacekeepers-in-Lebanon>

J. Oman

Iran, Oman conduct first joint ground military exercise

Tehran Times, October 1, 2024

The inaugural joint ground exercise involving the armies of Iran and Oman has started. As reported by ISNA, the "Mountain Falcons-1" military exercise commenced on October 1 in Oman's Jebel Akhdar province, featuring the ground forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran alongside those of the Kingdom of Oman. This collaborative effort includes participation from the ground forces of both nations, supported by the Royal Air Force and the Royal Police of Oman. The primary objectives are facilitating experience sharing, conducting joint combat training, and improving overall combat and operational readiness. As public relations of Iran's army say, this exercise aims to bolster combat readiness and cooperation between the two nations' forces, as outlined in their bilateral agreements on

maritime security. The drill features a range of military assets, including helicopters, destroyers, and drones, working together to enhance interoperability and showcase the combined strength of the Iranian and Omani forces.

<https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/504411/Iran-Oman-conduct-first-joint-ground-military-exercise>

Royal navy of Oman and Indian navy hold 'Sea Breeze 2024' exercise

Muscat Daily, October 14, 2024

The Royal Navy of Oman (RNO), alongside several vessels from the Indian Navy, is currently participating in the annual joint naval exercise, 'Sea Breeze 2024'. The exercise is being held in the Indian maritime region of Goa and will continue until the 18th of October. This joint operation is part of the RNO's yearly training programme, which focuses on exchanging expertise with allied navies. The exercise aims to enhance the operational readiness of the Omani fleet and its personnel across various maritime disciplines. It forms part of ongoing efforts to ensure the RNO is fully prepared for its national duties. 'Sea Breeze 2024' further strengthens the ties between Oman and India, reinforcing their commitment to maritime security and cooperation in the region.

<https://www.muscatdaily.com/2024/10/14/royal-navy-of-oman-and-indian-navy-hold-exercise/>

K. The United Arab Emirates

The UAE Space Pavilion makes its presence at IAC 2024 in Milan

Times Aerospace, October 15, 2024

The pavilion is designed to showcase and highlight the latest developments, leading projects, and milestones in the UAE's national space sector. Additionally, it will shed light on the UAE's ongoing efforts to support innovation, development, and

sustainability in advanced space research. The 75th IAC is being held in Milan, Italy from 14-18 October. "The UAE's participation in the IAC reflects its commitment to consolidating its position as a leading global hub for innovation in the space sector. This participation will open new horizons for international collaboration and exchange of expertise, while supporting the leadership's visions and aspirations to achieve a comprehensive development in all sectors over the next 50 years and realize the UAE's national strategies for economic diversification and technological advancement," said His Excellency Dr. Ahmad Belhouli Al Falasi, Minister of Sports and Chairman of UAE Space Agency.

<https://www.timesaerospace.aero/news/space/the-uae-space-pavilion-makes-its-presence-at-iac-2024-in-milan>

L. East Asia

Nobel peace prize awarded to Japanese atomic bomb survivors' group

The Guardian, October 11, 2024

Survivors of the atomic bombings of Japan almost eight decades ago have won the Nobel peace prize for their campaign to rid the world of nuclear weapons.

The Japan Confederation of A- and H-Bomb Sufferers Organisations – commonly known as Nihon Hidankyo – received the accolade one year before the 80th anniversary of the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and at a time of growing concern about the possible use of nuclear weapons.

The Nobel committee said it had decided to award the prize to Nihon Hidankyo "for its efforts to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons and for demonstrating through witness testimony that nuclear weapons must never be used again".

The Norwegian committee said testimony by *hibakusha* – survivors of the August 1945 bombings by the US – had "helped to generate and consolidate widespread opposition to nuclear weapons around the world by drawing on personal stories,

creating educational campaigns based on their own experience, and issuing urgent warnings against the spread and use of nuclear weapons".

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2024/oct/11/nobel-peace-prize-awarded-to-japanese-atomic-bomb-survivors-group>

North Korea's Kim Jong Un threatens to destroy the South with nuclear weapons if provoked

CNN, October 4, 2024

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un threatened to use nuclear weapons to destroy South Korea if attacked, state media reported Friday, after South Korea's president warned that if the North used nuclear weapons it would "face the end of its regime."

The fiery rhetoric isn't new, but comes at a time of tension on the Korean Peninsula and just weeks after North Korean state media released images of Kim visiting a uranium enrichment facility, which produces weapons-grade nuclear materials.

While touring an army base in the western part of the country Wednesday, Kim said if the South were to encroach upon the North's sovereignty, Pyongyang "would use without hesitation all the offensive forces it has possessed, including nuclear weapons," the state-run Korean Central News Agency reported Friday.

"If such situation comes, the permanent existence of Seoul and the Republic of Korea would be impossible," Kim added, using the proper name for South Korea.

Hostilities between the two Korean leaders have been simmering this year as North Korea has appeared to have intensified its nuclear production efforts and strengthened ties with Russia, deepening widespread concern in the West over the isolated nation's direction.

<https://edition.cnn.com/2024/10/04/asia/north-korea-kim-jong-un-nuclear-weapons-intl-hnk/index.html>

M. Southeast Asia

As interest in nuclear energy hots up, Southeast Asia countries are closely watching each other's moves

CNA, October 4, 2024

Southeast Asia's only nuclear power plant lies around 70km west of the Philippine capital Manila. But since its completion in 1985, it has never been powered up.

Never mind that the 620-megawatt Bataan nuclear power plant was the culmination of a nearly 30-year nuclear development programme that took more than a decade and over US\$2 billion to build. It became a casualty of bad timing.

First, a partial meltdown of the Three Mile Island nuclear facility in Pennsylvania in the United States in March 1979 prompted a pause in the Bataan plant construction. A safety inquiry then revealed defects and safety concerns.

In February 1986, then-president Ferdinand Marcos, who had decided to build the Bataan plant, was overthrown.

Two months later, the deadly Chernobyl nuclear disaster in Ukraine sealed the fate of the Philippines' reactor.

Now, nearly 40 years on, the Bataan plant has become a tourist attraction and a symbol of how complicated it is for a country to venture into nuclear energy.

Still, that has not stopped some Southeast Asian countries from seriously considering nuclear as a potential energy source, as they mull ways to harvest clean energy to power their growing economies while battling climate change.

<https://www.channelnewsasia.com/today/big-read/nuclear-energy-interest-southeast-asia-4652231>

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