

Nuclear, Missile & Space Digest

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A Fortnightly Newsletter from the MP-IDSA

February 15, 2024

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A. India

India will 'commission a nuclear power reactor every year': NPCIL chief

The Hindu, January 18, 2024

On December 17, 2023, India's largest indigenously developed 700-MWe pressurised heavy water reactor (PHWR) – the fourth unit in Kakrapar, Gujarat – attained criticality. Six months earlier, another 700-MWe unit in the same facility had started producing commercial electricity. In 2024, another unit with the same capacity is expected to be commissioned in Rawatbhata, Rajasthan. Behind all these reactors is the Nuclear Power Corporation of India Limited (NPCIL).

India will 'commission a nuclear power reactor every year': NPCIL chief - The Hindu

India's newest Nuclear reactor connects to Grid

Nuclear Newswire, February 28, 2024

Unit 4 at Kakrapar nuclear power plant was connected to the grid on February 20, the Nuclear Power Corporation of India Ltd. (NPCIL) has announced. The 700-MWe pressurized heavy water reactor achieved first criticality on December 17, 2023.

The company announced the grid connection as part of Indian prime minister Narendra Modi's visit to the plant last week. Modi also officially dedicated Units 3 and 4 at Kakrapar, which is located along India's west coast in the state of Gujarat.

At this time, NPCIL is building eight additional reactors with a total capacity of 6,800 MWe. Preproject activities are underway for a further 10 reactors, targeted for completion by 2031 or 2032, which would add another capacity of 7,000 MWe.

Once completed, NPCIL anticipates nuclear power capacity of 22,480 MWe.

India's newest nuclear reactor connects to grid – ANS/Nuclear Newswire

Reactor pressure vessel installed at Kudankulam 4

Nuclear Engineering International, January 30, 2024

The reactor pressure vessel (RPV) has been installed at unit 4 of the Kudankulam NPP under construction in the southern state of Tamil Nadu in India with the assistance of Rosatom. The RPV installation was carried out using open top technology, which had already been used at Kudankulam 3. This involves installing reactor components through the open dome, which significantly reduces the time required for the operation. Preparation was carried out in record time, according to Rosatom. In the morning the equipment was transferred to a vertical position, then the crane lifted it to a height of 50 metres and lowered it into the reactor building. Installation of key equipment such as steam generators, the main circulation pumping units and the pressure compensator will now begin.

Reactor pressure vessel installed at Kudankulam 4 - Nuclear Engineering International (neimagazine.com)

B. Russia

First lead-cooled fast neutron reactor's installation under way

World Nuclear News, January 17, 2024

A steel reactor base plate and the lower tier of the containment has been installed in what is being called a landmark moment for construction of the BREST-OD-300 generation IV fast neutron reactor in Russia. The lead-cooled BREST-OD-300 fast reactor is part of Rosatom's *Proryv*, or *Breakthrough*, project to enable a closed nuclear fuel cycle. The 300 MWe unit will be the main facility of the Pilot Demonstration Energy Complex at the Siberian Chemical Combine site. The complex will demonstrate an on-site closed nuclear fuel cycle with a facility for the fabrication/re-fabrication of mixed

uranium-plutonium nitride nuclear fuel, as well as a used fuel reprocessing facility.

<https://world-nuclear-news.org/Articles/First-lead-cooled-fast-neutron-reactor-s-installat>

IAEA experts visit Energodar to assess damage after Ukrainian drone attack

TASS, January 17, 2024

Experts of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) visited the city of Energodar to assess the damage after a drone attack, the agency said in a press statement.

"This week, the IAEA experts were in Energodar to assess damage that the Russian Federation said was caused by drone attacks on the town where many ZNPP staff live a few kilometers from the site," it said.

"There were no casualties reported. The team did not observe any remnants of the drone, which had reportedly been removed, and was therefore not able to confirm whether the damage observed was directly related to a drone attack the previous day, or is the result of damage sustained previously," the IAEA said.

<https://tass.com/defense/1747797>

Russia rejects US arms control talks for now, citing Ukraine

Reuters, January 19, 2024

Russia on Thursday publicly rejected U.S.-Russian arms control talks for now because of U.S. support for Ukraine, a stance Washington said cast doubt on Moscow's openness to a successor to the last treaty limiting their strategic nuclear arsenals.

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov told reporters that Washington had proposed separating the issues of Ukraine, which Russia invaded in 2022, sparking a nearly two-year war, and the resumption of "strategic stability" talks on arms control.

But Lavrov said the U.S. proposal was unacceptable to Russia because of the West's backing for Ukraine and accused the West of conducting a "hybrid war" against

Moscow. However, he did not rule out the possibility of future arms control talks between the two, which possess the world's largest nuclear arsenals.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/russia-says-it-wont-discuss-nuclear-arms-control-with-us-while-it-backs-ukraine-2024-01-18/>

Putin, Sisi mark new phase of Egypt's Russian-built nuclear plant

Reuters, January 23, 2024

Russian President Vladimir Putin and Egypt's Abdel Fattah al-Sisi on Tuesday inaugurated the construction of a new unit at Egypt's Dabaa nuclear power plant via video link, as Moscow moves ahead with its global nuclear ambitions.

The power plant is being built by the Russian state corporation Rosatom at a reported cost of \$30 billion, and will consist of four power units with a combined capacity of 4.8 gigawatts.

Egypt, which faces increasing power demand from a population of a 105 million, is seeking to position itself as a regional energy hub that exports electricity to neighbouring countries, and to diversify its energy sources.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/energy/putin-sisi-mark-new-phase-egypts-russian-built-nuclear-plant-2024-01-23/>

Belarus and Russia aim to deepen nuclear cooperation

World Nuclear News, January 30, 2024

The MoU was signed by Rosatom Director General Alexei Likhachev and the Chairman of the State Committee on Science and Technology in Belarus, Sergey Shlychkov. Rosatom said in a statement that the MoU "provides for the implementation of joint projects in the field of nuclear medicine, digitalisation, additive technologies, elimination of accumulated environmental harm and radioactive waste management. Russian-Belarusian cooperation in these areas is focused on using the competencies of the Russian nuclear energy industry complex

and Belarusian enterprises in the interests of ensuring the technological sovereignty of our countries”.

<https://www.world-nuclear-news.org/Articles/Belarus-and-Russia-aim-to-deepen-nuclear-cooperati>

Kursk's second unit retires after 45 years operation

World Nuclear News, January 31, 2024

At 04:01 Moscow time on 31 January the second unit at the Kursk nuclear power plant, an RBMK-1000 reactor, came to the end of its service life and stopped generating power. It began commercial operation in 1979.

The first unit at Kursk was shut down in December 2021. The original design life for the four RBMK-1000 reactors at the plant was for 30 years but had been extended by 15 years following life extension programmes.

All the four units at Kursk are scheduled to shut by 2031. They are being replaced by new reactors at the Kursk II site, which is next to the original plant in western Russia, about 60 kilometres (37.5 miles) from the Ukraine border. It will feature four VVER-TOI reactors, the latest version of Russia's large light-water designs. They have upgraded pressure vessels and a higher power rating of 3300 MWt that enables them to generate 1300 MWe gross.

<https://www.world-nuclear-news.org/Articles/Kursk-s-second-unit-retired-after-45-years-operati>

Russia to contract Koalitsia-SV guns – Shoigu

TASS, January 31, 2024

The Russian Defense Ministry will sign a long-term contract for the latest Koalitsia-SV self-propelled artillery guns, Defense Minister Sergey Shoigu said during an inspection of Uraltransmash enterprise in Yekaterinburg. He called to accelerate the trials and launch batch production. “We highly need the weapons. I believe we shall discuss it and decide on a long-term

contract. It will make the prospects clear,” he said.

The minister noted that Uraltransmash had acquired new tools and considerably increased the output.

<https://tass.com/defense/1739487>

Kalashnikov upgrades Supercam scout drone

TASS, January 26, 2024

The Kalashnikov Company said it had deeply upgraded the Supercam 350 drone. It got a new wing design, increased durability and the name of SKAT 350 M.

“The serially produced SKAT 350 M drone was designed for air survey, search in the optical and infrared bands, and is the result of a deep modernization of the well-known Supercam 350. The Kalashnikov specialists have considerably upgraded the aerodynamic features according to the engagement experience, as well as ground controls,” it said.

Many functions have become automatic to simplify training and operation. The air intake has become automatic, a new battery controller was installed to increase operational characteristics, the company said.

SKAT 350 M carries a new payload with higher operational characteristics. The designers improved the daytime and night cameras. The module with updated algorithms simplifies the work of the operator to lock on and track targets.

<https://tass.com/defense/1737637>

C. China

The nuclear programs of Russia, China, North Korea, And Iran

CNA, January 21, 2024

China is a rapidly maturing nuclear weapons state with a declared no-first-use employment policy. Historically, China maintained a relatively low number of

nuclear weapons compared to the United States and Russia. People's Republic of China (PRC) leaders viewed this "lean and effective" arsenal as a part of the PRC's asymmetric strategic posture—maintaining low but sufficient numbers to ensure mutual vulnerability and to provide for a retaliatory strike if attacked with nuclear weapons. China's current perceptions of an evolving global strategic landscape appear to be encouraging the modernization and expansion of its nuclear arsenal as well as extending its suite of strategic options.

<https://www.cna.org/reports/2024/01/the-nuclear-programs-of-russia-china-north-korea-and-iran>

Private players make their mark with space missions

China Daily, January 22, 2024

In China, a commercial space mission generally refers to a space activity paid for by a business entity rather than a government department. Construction of the new center, which began in July 2022, was undertaken by China Aerospace Construction Group. The No 1 service tower is about 90 meters high and incorporates the latest rocket-launch technologies. It is specifically tasked with servicing Long March 8 carrier rockets. Developed by the China Academy of Launch Vehicle Technology, a subsidiary of China Aerospace Science and Technology Corp, the Long March 8 family consists of multiple medium-lift launch vehicles designated for commercial space missions.

<https://www.chinadailyhk.com/article/372662>

China buys near-record \$40 billion of chip gear to beat US curbs

Bloomberg, January 22, 2024

China's imports of chipmaking machines jumped last year as firms ramped up investment in an attempt to get around US-led efforts to hobble the nation's semiconductor industry. Imports of the machinery used to make computer chips rose 14% in 2023 to almost \$40 billion — the second largest amount by value on record

in data going back to 2015, according to Bloomberg calculations based on official customs data. The increase came despite a 5.5% drop in total imports last year, underscoring the importance that the Chinese government and the nation's chip industry have placed on becoming self-sufficient.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2024-01-22/china-buys-near-record-40-billion-of-chip-gear-to-beat-us-curbs>

Commercial aerospace firm sends 5 satellites into planned orbit.

Global Times, January 23, 2024

The Lijian-1 carrier rocket, developed by Chinese commercial aerospace company CASpace, sent five satellites into planned orbit, the company told the Global Times, consolidating China's launching capacity of low- and middle-orbit satellites. The five satellites carried by the Lijian-1 were developed by Beijing Minospace Technology Co. The Taijing-4 03 satellite, one of the five, is equipped with synthetic aperture radar and artificial intelligence processors, which can realize rapid detection and identification of targets at sea and airports via real-time image transmission. The satellite can be used in disaster and environment monitoring, natural resource exploration, agricultural yield projection and land and sea mapping.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202401/1305903.shtml>

China takes its chip war to space as it uses Tiangong space station to test processors and gain a tech edge

South China Morning Post, January 24, 2024

The chip war between China and the United States now extends beyond the Earth and into space. According to scientists directly involved in China's extraterrestrial chip programme, China's Tiangong space station can now test more than 100 computer processors

simultaneously. More than 20 new high-performance chips spanning the 28 to 16-nanometre process range have already passed testing. They are considerably more advanced than chips used by other countries in space.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/science/article/3249569/china-takes-its-chip-war-space-ituses-tiangong-space-station-test-processors-and-gain-tech-edge>

China's nuclear power to accelerate clean energy initiatives

China Daily, January 24, 2024

China General Nuclear Power Corp has accelerated its clean energy initiatives both domestically and internationally throughout 2023, continuously increasing the share of renewable energy in the company's power generation portfolio. As the main force in China's clean energy development, CGN has been vigorously developing nuclear, wind and solar energies in recent years, with the installed capacity of clean energy in operation and under construction exceeding 100 million kilowatts last year, said the country's largest nuclear operator during a press conference held in Beijing.

<https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202401/24/WS65b0d32fa3105f21a507e1c0.html>

China's nuclear power collaboration with France remains promising four decades later

Xinhua, January 27, 2024

Four decades of nuclear power collaboration remains a noteworthy feature of the France-China relationship and continues to hold potential as the two countries mark the 60th anniversary of establishing diplomatic ties. Nuclear energy cooperation between China and France dates back to the establishment of the Daya Bay Nuclear Power Plant. The power plant in the southern Chinese city of Shenzhen had its roots in the early 1980s when China was opening up. France, which became one of the first major Western countries to recognize the People's Republic of China and whose nuclear industry had

been enjoying a golden age since the 1970s, was approached.

<https://english.news.cn/20240127/f00daa140c6446b5a1c98d54118e83c0/c.html>

China rejects supplying weapons to Hamas

The Hindu, January 25, 2024

The Chinese military on January 25 asserted that it has never supplied any weapons to conflict areas and always adopted a "responsible attitude" to defence exports as it rejected allegations of China providing arms to the Palestinian militant group Hamas in its ongoing conflict against Israel. Earlier this month, quoting the Israel Defence Forces (IDF), The Telegraph newspaper reported that it discovered a "massive" stockpile of Chinese-made weapons being used by Hamas. According to the IDF's investigation, Hamas possessed advanced weapons and equipment made in China, such as cartridges and rifle sights for M16 assault rifles, automatic grenade launchers and communications devices, a report in the Hong Kong-based South China Morning Post said.

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/international/china-rejects-supplying-weapons-tohamas/article67776584.ece>

China's PLAN exercises with YJ-62 Anti-Ship Missile

Naval News, January 27, 2024

According to the drill's one-minute-plus video footage released by Chinese state-owned broadcaster China Central Television (CCTV), the brigade was seen exercising with four 8×8 WS2400 transporter-erector-launchers (TELs) – each equipped with three YJ-62 ASCMs – and a single 8×8 command post vehicle. The YJ-62 missiles have so far been deployed mainly in the Eastern Theatre Command headquartered in Nanjing City of Jiangsu Province, which has jurisdiction over Taiwan, and the Southern Theatre Command headquartered in Nanjing City

of Guangdong Province, which has jurisdiction over the South China Sea. It is likely that the missiles were deployed for the first time to units in the Northern Theatre Command.

<https://www.navalnews.com/naval-news/2024/01/chinas-plan-exercises-with-yj-62-anti-ship-missile>

China's nuclear arsenal could grow to 1,500 weapons by 2035

Foundation for Defence of Democracies, January 30, 2024

China's nuclear weapon stockpile may grow to 1,500 nuclear warheads by 2035, according to a new estimate by a U.S. scientific group. The finding increases the urgency to address U.S. preparedness to deter two near-peer nuclear competitors — China and Russia — for the first time in American history. The report, released on January 15 by the Federation of American Scientists (FAS), projected that China will likely field around 850 nuclear warheads by 2035. However, the study concluded that the figure could be as high as 1,500 warheads, depending on several factors. That worst-case scenario fits with a previous projection by the Department of Defense (DoD). "If China continues the pace of its nuclear expansion, it will likely field a stockpile of about 1,500 warheads by" 2035, the Pentagon wrote in a 2022 report to Congress.

<https://www.fdd.org/analysis/2024/01/30/chinas-nuclear-arsenal-could-grow-to-1500-weapons-by-2035>

Chinese company unveils revolutionary nuclear battery with 50-year lifespan

China Daily, January 16, 2024

Recently, a Chinese company claimed to have developed a new battery that could generate power for 50 years. Released by Beijing Betavolt New Energy Technology Co Ltd, the nuclear battery utilizes nickel-63, a kind of nuclear isotope, decay technology and diamond semiconductors to

miniaturize, modularize and reduce the cost of atomic energy batteries, Science and Technology Daily reported. The company's first product, the BV100 battery, has a power of 100 microwatts, a voltage of three volts and a size of 15×15×5 cubic millimeters, which is smaller than a coin. Atomic energy batteries, also known as nuclear or radioactive isotope batteries, work by converting the energy released from the decay of nuclear isotopes into electricity.

<https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202401/16/WS65a68ff7a3105f21a507c9b7.html>

China-Russia nuclear industry cooperation

Air University, January 16, 2024

In May 2021, Russian president Vladimir Putin and Chinese president Xi Jinping presided over a groundbreaking ceremony for their countries' biggest joint nuclear energy project to date: the construction of four new nuclear reactors in China's Jiangsu and Liaoning Provinces. The 20 billion renminbi (RMB) (\$2.81 billion USD) construction project is part of a package of strategic cooperation agreements signed by Russia and China in 2018.

More generally, it is a manifestation of growing China-Russia cooperation in the nuclear field since the 1990s, which has accelerated in recent years due to both countries' ambitious nuclear energy goals and increasingly close relationship. While the larger China-Russia partnership has become increasingly lopsided with Russia finding itself in the position of junior partner, nuclear energy is a rare area where Russia continues to play the more senior role. However, this dominance is also likely to wane in the coming years as China's nuclear industry continues to mature.

<https://www.airuniversity.af.edu/CASI/Display/Article/3642740/china-russia-nuclear-industry-cooperation/>

Simulation experiments expected on China's space station to explore the existence of extraterrestrial life

Global Times, January 18, 2024

Along with the Tianzhou-7 cargo spacecraft that has successfully docked with China's Tiangong space station, a special delivery has arrived - anaerobic archaea. By simulating extraterrestrial environments, Chinese researchers aim to verify the age-old mystery of whether life exists outside of Earth. The anaerobic archaea are one of the oldest life forms on Earth and a major contributor to methane in the Earth's atmosphere. They are widely distributed in anaerobic environments such as deep-sea environments, rice paddies, and the stomachs of ruminant animals. <https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202401/1305634.shtml> Tianzhou-7 cargo craft docks with Tiangong space station CGTN, January 18, 2024 China's cargo craft Tianzhou-7 has docked with the Tiangong space station. On January 17 night, China successfully launched the Tianzhou-7 to deliver supplies to China's Tiangong Space Station. The launch site was in Wenchang, southern China's island province of Hainan. CGTN's Zheng Yibing reports. This is the first spacecraft to visit China's space station in 2024. The liftoff of the eighth Long March 7 carrier rocket drew great attention. The mission sent the Tianzhou7 cargo spaceship into the low Earth orbit to supply China's Space Station, the Shenzhou-17 crew and the Shenzhou-18 crew's upcoming launch this year. The mission was a complete success.

<https://news.cgtn.com/news/2024-01-18/VHJhbnNjcmlwdDc2OTQ5/index.html#:~:text=On%20Wednesday%20night%2C%20China%20successfully,China's%20space%20station%20in%202024.>

D. Europe

Newcleo and Naarea launch Gen-IV partnership

World Nuclear News, January 16, 2024

France's Naarea and the UK-headquartered Newcleo have announced a strategic and industrial partnership designed "to support

all players in their industrial, technological, scientific and regulatory development" of Generation IV fast neutron reactors.

The companies say that the partnership will be open to others to join and said it will focus on key areas where there are common interests, such as gaining access to the used nuclear fuel from conventional nuclear reactors that their Gen-IV reactors are designed to use as part of their efforts to close the fuel cycle.

Stefano Buono, Newcleo chairman and CEO, said that by joining forces the two companies were "further encouraging the development and deployment of Gen-IV nuclear technology in Europe. This collaboration reinforces our shared commitment to innovation and sustainability in the nuclear sector".

<https://www.world-nuclear-news.org/Articles/Newcleo-and-NAAREA-launch-Gen-IV-reactor-partnersh>

Belarus adopts new military doctrine involving nuclear weapons

CNN, January 20, 2024

Belarus on Friday adopted a new military doctrine that – if approved – would be the first step toward deploying nuclear weapons across the country.

"The deployment of tactical nuclear weapons on the territory of the Republic of Belarus is considered an important measure of the preventive deterrence for potential adversaries from unleashing armed aggression against the Republic of Belarus," Belarusian Defense Minister Viktor Khrenin told a briefing Friday.

The doctrine still requires approval from the All-Belarusian People's Assembly, a representative body that operates in Belarus in parallel with the parliament, which will be held in April, according to Russian state media RIA Novosti.

<https://edition.cnn.com/2024/01/19/europe/belarus-adopts-doctrine-involving-nuclear-weapons-intl-hnk/index.html>

Poland – Government Considering Contracts For Difference Financing For First Nuclear Plant, Reports Say

NucNet, January 30, 2024

Warsaw plans to have country's first nuclear power station on Baltic coast.

Warsaw sees nuclear power as an essential element in its energy transition away from coal-fired power generation over the next decade.

Poland is working towards developing a contracts for difference (CfD) scheme to finance its first nuclear power station in the northern Pomerania province, a ministerial spokesperson told local energy portal BiznesAlert.

The ministry of climate and the environment said that a CfD arrangement is the "only form of price support" provided in the recent proposal to reform the European Union electricity market design regulation.

<https://www.nucnet.org/news/government-considering-contracts-for-difference-financing-for-first-nuclear-plant-reports-say-1-2-2024>

Halushchenko: Khmelnytsky can become Europe's most powerful nuclear plant

World Nuclear News, January 29, 2024

Halushchenko said that Ukraine was working closely with Westinghouse for the construction/completion of the third and fourth units, based on VVER-1000 technology, as well as the construction of two completely new units using Westinghouse's AP1000 technology. Because the third reactor is already more than half completed, he estimated that it could come into operation in as little as two and a half years. The others will take longer, the energy ministry quoted him as telling Ukrainian television, but when completed "with the power that the six reactors at the Khmelnytsky will be able to produce, it will be the largest in Europe and even more powerful than Zaporizhzhia".

<https://www.world-nuclear-news.org/Articles/Haluschenko-Khmelnytsky-to-become-Europe-s-most-po>

Czech government now seeks to build up to 4 nuclear reactors instead 1 to reduce price

Associated Press, January 31, 2024

The Czech government said Wednesday it plans to build up to four nuclear reactors instead of one as the country tries to become more energy independent and wean itself off fossil fuels.

Prime Minister Petr Fiala said the decision to seek more reactors could reduce the price per reactor by up to 25%. The timing and locations are not yet decided.

Another two European Union countries in Central Europe, Slovakia and Hungary, have been working to expand nuclear power production. Another neighbor, Poland, has selected Westinghouse to build its first nuclear power plant as part of an effort to burn less coal and gain greater energy independence.

<https://apnews.com/article/czech-nuclear-reactors-fossil-fuels-energy-fafe34fb2e16446a75eeca7fdfe5e02>

German government considers delivery of tank ammunition to Israel – Spiegel

Reuters, January 16, 2024

Germany's government is considering the delivery of tank ammunition to Israel to support it in its fight against Hamas, according to German magazine Der Spiegel on Tuesday.

The departments involved have already agreed in principle to fulfil a request from the Israeli government, the report said.

The request to supply around 10,000 rounds of 120mm precision ammunition for the Israeli army was received by Berlin in November.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/german-government-considers-delivery-tank-ammunition-israel-spiegel-2024-01-16/>

E. United States of America

U.S. Conducts Defensive Strikes on Houthi Missiles

US Department of Defense, January 18, 2024

U.S. Central Command forces conducted defensive strikes on two Houthi antiship missiles that were aimed into the southern Red Sea, said Deputy Pentagon Press Secretary Sabrina Singh, who spoke today at a news conference at the Pentagon.

Also, last night, U.S. Centcom conducted defensive strikes on 14 Houthi missiles at over a dozen locations, she said.

These strikes and others in past weeks were designed to degrade the Houthis capabilities to continue their reckless attacks on international and commercial shipping in the Red Sea, the Bab-el-Mandeb Strait and the Gulf of Aden, Singh said.

<https://www.defense.gov/News/News-Stories/Article/Article/3649701/us-conducts-defensive-strikes-on-houthi-missiles/>

U.S.-Led Coalition Announces New Initiatives to Bolster Ukraine's Long-Term Armor, Drone Capabilities

US Department of Defense, January 23, 2024

The U.S.-led Ukraine Defense Contact Group is undertaking two new initiatives aimed at bolstering Ukraine's armor and drone capabilities, a senior Pentagon official announced today. The formation of the two new capability coalitions builds upon ongoing efforts by the coalition of close to 50 partner nations to build a future Ukrainian force capable of deterring Russian aggression for the long term.

<https://www.defense.gov/News/News-Stories/Article/Article/3653678/us-led-coalition-announces-new-initiatives-to-bolster-ukraines-long-term-armor/>

US Space Development Agency to Buy 54 Satellites to Track Missiles

The Defense Post, January 17, 2024

The US Space Development Agency (SDA) has signed contracts with three companies

to produce 54 satellites to track missiles globally.

L3Harris, Lockheed Martin, and Sierra Space will each develop 18 space vehicles for the SDA's Tranche 2 Tracking Layer program, establishing missile warning and tracking and fire control-quality infrared sensors for missile defense.

The Tranche 2 Tracking Layer will be integrated with and build upon the SDA's older layer systems, creating a 270-strong network of transport and tracking satellites.

The total potential value of the three contracts is \$2.5 billion.

According to SDA, the 54 satellites will launch no later than April 2027 if a full defense budget is passed by the end of March.

<https://www.thedefensepost.com/2024/01/17/space-agency-missile-tracking/>

West Asia

F. Iran

Iranian missiles destroy Mossad HQ in Iraqi Kurdistan: IRGC

IRNA, January 16, 2024

The IRGC in three separate announcements linked the overnight operations to terrorists and their backers involved in the recent terror attacks in the Iranian cities of Kerman and Rasak. Two earlier statements published by the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps clarified that it fired a number of missiles on spy centers and the gathering of anti-Iran terrorist groups in parts of the region, including in Syria. A third statement addressing to the Iranian nation, the IRGC announced the targeting and destruction of the Mossad headquarters in Iraq's Kurdistan with ballistic missiles for its role as well as the plot the Israeli regime's spy agency hatched to assassinate Iranian and resistance commanders.

<https://en.irna.ir/news/85355520/Iranian-missiles-destroy-Mossad-HQ-in-Iraqi-Kurdistan-IRGC>

Americans have purchased Iranian heavy water, Iran nuclear chief says

Tehran Times, January 17, 2024

Mohammad Eslami, the head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) revealed that the United States has previously purchased Iran's heavy water. Speaking to reporters on Wednesday, Eslami stated that Iran exports heavy nuclear water to various advanced nations. He emphasized Tehran's commitment to cooperating with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), adding that Iran collaborates with the IAEA in accordance with standards. He also said that under the IAEA terms, the agency can deploy experts and install cameras in Iran's nuclear facilities. Eslami clarified that the IAEA is not obligated to report any non-compliance with the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) by its parties, stressing that the responsibility to communicate such matters lies with Tehran, but unfortunately, Tehran's reports have not garnered attention.

<https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/493857/Americans-have-purchased-Iranian-heavy-water-Iran-nuclear-chief>

Khordad-3 air defense system destroys targets in joint drills

IRNA, January 19, 2024

The Khordad-3 air defense system, manufactured by the Aerospace Force of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC), is equipped with homegrown missiles. The air defense system was used to hit mock targets in the second day of the drills on early Friday. Amir-Abbas Farajpour, the spokesperson for the specialized joint air defense exercise Defenders of Velayat Skies 1402, noted that Iranian military forces are exercising the preservation of nuclear, economic, and trade centers of the country in a real combat and 360-degree defense situation during the military exercise. The Khordad-3 air defense system is one of the most advanced and powerful Iranian medium-range air defense missile systems.

<https://en.irna.ir/news/85359066/Khordad3-air-defense-system-destroys-targets-in-joint-drills>

Iran places first satellite into orbit of 750km

IRNA, January 20, 2024

The satellite, dubbed Sorayya which means Pleiades, a space constellation, in Persian, was placed into an orbit of 750 kilometres above the earth's surface on Saturday. Sorayya was launched by Qaem 100 satellite carrier which relies on solid fuel and has been developed by the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC). This is the first time that an Iranian homemade satellite is successfully put on an orbit above 500 kilometres.

<https://en.irna.ir/news/85359665/Iranplaces-first-satellite-into-orbit-of-750km>

Iranian army receives new strategic drones

IRNA, January 23, 2024

The strategic drones were delivered to the Iranian army during a ceremony attended by Army Chief Major General Abdolrahim Mousavi and Defense Minister Brigadier General Mohammad Reza Ashtiani on Tuesday. The unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV) include multipurpose Ababil-4 and Ababil5 drones that can be employed in reconnaissance operations, patrol missions, electronic warfare, data gathering, and aerial combat. The army also received Arash and Bavar drones with the ability to perform long range, strike, and precision operations, as well as Krrar drones capable of performing various target, combat and aerial interception missions.

<https://en.irna.ir/news/85363271/Iranianarmy-receives-new-strategic-drones>

Iran Navy to get new hovercraft equipped with long-range missiles: Cmdr.

IRNA, January 27, 2024

"We have successfully modernized our aging fleet in all dimensions, ensuring entirely Iranian capabilities. Additionally, we have prepared and modernized our aerial fleet," Irani said on Saturday. "New

hovercraft with long-range missile capabilities will soon be added to the naval fleet," he added. The Admiral emphasized significant improvements in missile capabilities of Iran's Southern Fleet, both in terms of quantity and range, with missiles boasting a range of 1,000 kilometres. In addition, the commander said that the operational readiness of all classes of submarines has also been significantly enhanced, especially that of the Fateh-class submarine.

<https://en.irna.ir/news/85367239/IranNavy-to-get-new-hovercraft-equipped-with-long-range-missiles>

Iran simultaneously launches three satellites into orbit

IRNA, January 28, 2024

Mahda, Keyhan-2, and Hatef-1 research satellites were put at altitudes between 450 and 1,100 kilometres above the Earth's surface on Sunday. Mahda is a research satellite developed and tested at the Iranian Space Research Center. It weighs 32 kilograms and has been designed to test advanced satellite subsystems. Mahda's main mission is to examine the performance of the Simorgh satellite carrier in launching multiple space payloads in low Earth altitudes and evaluate new homegrown space technologies.

<https://en.irna.ir/news/85367913/Iransimultaneously-launches-three-satellitesinto-orbit>

G. Iraq

SMC: Plans supported by PM to develop the Air Force

Iraqi News Agency, January 19, 2024

The Security Media Cell confirmed today, Friday, the existence of plans supported by the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, Muhammad Shiaa Al-Sudani, to strengthen and develop the capabilities of the Army Aviation, Air Force, and Air Defense. The head of the Security Media Cell, Major General Tahseen Al-Khafaji, told the Iraqi News Agency (INA): "The Iraqi army ranked fourth in the classification of

Arab armies and ranked 45th in the world according to the results of surveys conducted by centers in developed countries confirming that it deserves those ranks.". He added, "We seek during the current year to arm the army to meet the challenges, and there is great work towards arming and developing our systems, especially in the field of air defense."

<https://ina.iq/eng/30977-security-mediaplans-supported-by-the-commander-inchief-to-develop-the-capabilities-of-their-force.html>

Waad al-Haq operations launch in Diyala, announces JOC

Iraqi News Agency, January 20, 2024

Joint Operations Command (JOC) announced on Saturday, the launch of "Waad al-Haq" operations in the Diyala operations sector. "JOC began "Waad al-Haq" operations in Diyala Operations Sector, using ground, air, and elite units," JOC stated, in a statement received by the Iraqi News Agency (INA). "Our air force has begun directing three strikes against the enemy's hideouts, based on accurate intelligence information and follow-up of the targeting cell/Joint Operations Command, and our operations are still continuing," the statement added.

<https://ina.iq/eng/30983-waad-al-haqoperations-begin-in-diyala-announcesjoc.html>

Iraq No longer needs foreign forces: Rasoul

Iraqi News Agency, January 20, 2024

The spokesman for the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, Major General Yahya Rasoul, confirmed on Saturday, that there is no need for any foreign forces inside Iraqi territory. Rasoul stated in a statement to the Iraqi News Agency (INA) that "the reports that spoke about the entry of additional foreign forces into Iraq are not true," indicating "the activation of the work of the joint committee between Iraq and the international coalition to schedule the coalition's withdrawal from Iraq and reconsider the nature of the relationship

in general.” He added, “The Iraqi government is moving towards ending the foreign presence in Iraq and has a vision in the next stage that includes joint technical work to end the mission of the international coalition and move to the levels of bilateral security and military cooperation in armament and advice.”

<https://ina.iq/eng/30986-iraq-no-longerneeds-foreign-forces-confirmsmajgen.html>

JOC: A complete destruction of ISIS hideouts in Kirkuk

Iraqi News Agency, January 20, 2024

The Joint Operations Command announced today, Saturday, the complete destruction of ISIS terrorist hideouts in Wadi al-Shay in Kirkuk Governorate. A statement by the Joint Operations Command, received by the Iraqi News Agency (INA), stated, “The (Sazna Caravan) aircraft, within the (Waad alHaq) operation, and with accurate intelligence information, planning and follow-up of the targeting cell/Joint Operations Command, directed a crushing air strike against ISIS terrorist cells in Wadi al-Shay/Kirkuk Operations Sector.”., noting that “these guest houses were completely destroyed while a force from the Intelligence Directorate in Kirkuk operations to search and inspect the place with the aim of determining the losses of terrorist elements in this place.”

<https://ina.iq/eng/30987-joc-a-completedestruction-of-isis-hideouts-in-kirkuk.html>

Interior Minister receives NATO Assistant Secretary General for Operations

Iraqi News Agency, January 23, 2024

Interior Minister Abdul Amir AlShammari confirmed on Tuesday, the development of a plan to secure the Iraqi borders and combat drugs. “The Minister of Interior received NATO Assistant Secretary for Operations Thomas Goffus, and discussed with him coordination and cooperation between the ministry and NATO in the field of training and consultation,” The ministry of Interior

said in a statement received by the Iraqi News Agency (INA). “The Ministry of Interior has developed a plan to secure the Iraqi borders and combat drugs and crime, which decreased by 40 percent during the year 2023, it has also intensified its intelligence efforts to support the security stability of Iraq,” Al-Shammari confirmed, according to the statement.

SMC: We’ve been successful in hitting ISIS remnants in challenging terrain

Iraqi News Agency, January 31, 2024

The Security Media Cell declared on Wednesday that the security forces had successfully targeted the enemy in geographically challenging areas and that they had located terrorist remnants in three different areas. “The results achieved by the security forces in 2023 against terrorist gangs are the killing of large numbers of them, as only very few numbers remain hiding in some difficult areas such as mountains, valleys, and desert areas,” Major General Tahsin Al-Khafaji, the head of SMC, told the Iraqi News Agency (INA). He went on to say, “The security forces succeeded in reaching those cells through air strikes and qualitative operations. The strategic vision for 2024 is to pursue those terrorist cells and put pressure on them in geographically challenging areas.”

<https://ina.iq/eng/31167-smc-weve-beensuccessful-in-hitting-isis-remnants-inchallenging-terrain.html>

H. Israel

Meet the Rooster, Robotican’s New Hybrid Robotic Drone Employed by the IDF in Gaza

Israel Defense, January 18, 2024

Israel Defense has learned that the IDF is employing a hybrid robotic drone called “Rooster” during its fighting in the Gaza Strip. The drone is manufactured by the Israeli company Robotican, a developer and manufacturer of autonomous robots and drone systems. The Rooster is

designated for commando units and special forces for ISR (Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance) missions and tactical combat, and is already in use by The IDF and various militaries worldwide. According to Robotcan, the Rooster hybrid drone is a groundbreaking solution that seamlessly combines ground robotics and drone capabilities to redefine indoor and underground infrastructure reconnaissance.

<https://www.israeldefense.co.il/en/node/60981>

Elbit to Produce Integrated Headborne Sensor System Prototype for U.S. Army

Israel Defense, January 18, 2024

Elbit Systems of America will produce the Integrated Headborne Sensor System (IHSS) prototype for dismounted Soldiers in the US Army.

The company announced receiving an Other Transaction Authority contract from SOSSEC, Inc. through the Sensors, Communication, and Electronics Consortium (SCEC).

Elbit America's IHSS is a wearable system, which allows soldiers to remain mobile while they acquire, share, and utilize critical information on the battlefield. The system fuses a myriad of sensors into a lightweight head-up display that provides unprecedented situational awareness. Elbit America's prototype evolves through three prototype development phases over 72 months.

<https://www.israeldefense.co.il/en/node/60971>

IDF says it finished razing Hamas's main weapons manufacturing zone in central Gaza

Times of Israel, January 19, 2024

The Israel Defense Forces said Thursday it had completed demolishing Hamas's main rocket and weapons manufacturing industrial zone in the central Gaza Strip, along with a vast tunnel network beneath it that housed some of the facilities. The development came as the army said troops reached the southernmost point of their

ground offensive in Gaza so far on Thursday as they intensified operations across the south of the Palestinian territory. At the same time, a UN rights expert accused Israel Thursday of breaking international law with its "relentless" bombardment of Gaza. Parts of the weapons manufacturing facility were shown to reporters, including The Times of Israel, during a media tour earlier this month on Salah a-Din road in the Bureij area.

<https://www.timesofisrael.com/idf-says-it-finished-razing-hamas-main-weapons-manufacturing-zone-in-central-gaza/>

IMCO Secures NIS 30 M. Contract to Provide Spare Parts for IDF APVs

Israel Defense, January 21, 2024

In continuation of an existing maintenance order from the Israeli Ministry of Defense, Israeli IMCO Group announced that it has received a follow-on order from the IMOD Directorate of Production and Procurement (DOPP) for the supply of spare parts for the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) armored fighting vehicles (AFVs), valued at approximately 30 million NIS (about 8 million USD). These spare parts are essential for the ongoing maintenance and operational readiness of the IDF's AFVs in routine and during the "Swords of Iron" war. The order is scheduled for delivery throughout 2024.

<https://www.israeldefense.co.il/en/node/60986>

Report: Germany to Supply 10,000 120 Tank Shells to Israel

Israel Defense, January 22, 2024

According to Der Spiegel, Germany is about to supply Israel with tank shells to aid in its war in the Gaza Strip. The paper reports that the German government has responded to Israel's request to supply it with 10,000 120 mm caliber tank shells, manufactured by the German Rheinmetall.

The German Chancellor and the German Ministries of Defense and Foreign Affairs

have been discussing the issue since November 2023 and have now agreed in principle to do so, according to the report. However, official confirmation has not yet been given and the website notes that the Israeli embassy in Berlin has also refrained from commenting on this issue.

<https://www.israeldefense.co.il/en/node/60999>

IAI to Maintain PW4000 Engines for Air Transport Services Group

Israel Defense, January 22, 2024

Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI) Aviation Group announced that it will maintain and service PW4000 engines for Air Transport Service Group's (ATSG's) leasing company, Cargo Aircraft Management (CAM), under a long-term contract, the company has said.

The PW4000 engine maintenance will be carried out at IAI's Bedek MRO Division's facilities. ATSG has a long-standing relationship with IAI as they have converted more than 150 Boeing 767 aircraft. Ido Ben Cnaan, VP & General Manager, Bedek MRO, Aviation Group: "For the last 70 years, Bedek MRO has been considered a world leader in the MRO sector, with extensive experience in the fields of maintenance, repair, and overhaul, for a variety of aircraft and engines - including the PW4000.

<https://www.israeldefense.co.il/en/node/61001>

Netherlands Presents Upgraded CV90 IFV Laden with Israeli Defense Systems

Israel Defense, January 29, 2024

The Dutch army revealed at the IHV 2024 exhibition held last week in London the improved version of the CV90 Infantry Fighting Vehicle (IFV), which has been used as the army's main combat vehicle since 2009. The upgraded version of this vehicle includes an Active Protection System "Iron Fist" made by Israeli Elbit Systems and a Spike LR2 anti-tank missile launcher made by Israeli Rafael.

The Dutch army currently has 144 CV9035NL infantry fighting vehicles

purchased from BAE Systems between 2004 and 2009. With the absence of tanks in the Dutch Army, the CV90 plays a pivotal role as the primary weapons system. The mid-life upgrade, set to be completed by 2026, focuses on enhancing firepower, situational awareness, and survivability.

<https://www.israeldefense.co.il/en/node/61077>

I. Kuwait

US DoD contracts for support and maintenance of Kuwaiti F/A-18 fleet

Airforce Technology, January 31, 2024

The US Department of Defense (DoD) awarded a \$153.3m contract modification to Kay & Associates, an Illinois-based engineering solutions provider to the US Armed Forces, on 30 January 2024 to support and maintain F/A-18C and D aircraft in the Kuwaiti Air Force. Under this modified contract, the aircraft will receive maintenance, operation, and management support services and missile maintenance repair and storage facilities. Their work will be performed in undisclosed locations in Kuwait, and the DoD expects the work to be completed in January 2025. Foreign Military Sales customer funds in the amount of \$76.6m will be obligated at the time of award, none of which will expire at the end of the current fiscal year.

<https://www.airforcetechnology.com/news/us-dod-to-providesupport-and-maintenance-of-kuwaiti-f-a18-fleet/>

J. Oman

India, Oman ink pact for collaboration in defence sector

Economic Times, January 31, 2024

India and Oman signed an agreement to collaborate in defence engagement, including procurement of military equipment. The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was finalized at a meeting of the India-Oman JMCC in Muscat. The two sides reviewed their

defence cooperation, explored ways to boost it, and focused on collaboration in the defence industrial sector. The talks also addressed security concerns in West Asia and discussed regional and global issues of shared interest. An MoU on procurement of defence material was signed, following the joint vision document titled 'A Partnership for the Future'. India and Oman on Wednesday signed an agreement that would provide a framework for collaboration in new areas of defence engagement including procurement of military equipment. The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was firmed up at a meeting of India-Oman joint military cooperation committee (JMCC) in Muscat.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/defence/india-oman-ink-pact-for-collaboration-in-defence-sector/articleshow/107300991.cms?from=mdr>

K. Saudi Arabia

Eurofighters Or Rafales? Saudi Arabia Might Take A Page From Qatar's Book And Buy Both

Forbes, January 19, 2024

The German government's recent decision to lift its export ban on Eurofighter Typhoons to Saudi Arabia could impact Riyadh's recent decision to negotiate a potential acquisition of Dassault Rafale fighter jets from France. Will Riyadh decide to end negotiations for 54 Rafales now that Germany has lifted its ban on the 2018 deal for 48 Eurofighters from Britain? Or, might it follow in the footsteps of its much smaller neighbor, Qatar, and acquire both? The latter move would result in the Royal Saudi Air Force operating three different 4.5-generation fighter types from three countries. Acquiring different types of advanced fighters would present the kingdom with certain challenges but also some advantages.

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/pauliddon/2024/01/19/eurofighters-or-rafales-saudi-arabia-might-take-a-page-from-qatars-book-and-buy-both/?sh=683a3465508b>

L. Türkiye

'US policy on sale of F-16 jets to Türkiye hasn't changed'

Daily Sabah, January 18, 2024

The U.S. has not changed its stance regarding its backing for the sale of F-16 fighter jets to Türkiye, the White House said Wednesday.

National Security Council Spokesman John Kirby said President Joe Biden "has been pretty consistent and we continue to support the additional sale of F-16s and modernization of the current F-16 fleet for Turkey." "That's a consistent policy position that we've had since coming into office," Kirby told reporters. "I don't have an update for you on the dates and the calendar items in terms of what that looks like but, our policy with respect to F-16s for Turkey has not changed," he added.

<https://www.dailysabah.com/politics/diplomacy/us-policy-on-sale-of-f-16-jets-to-turkiye-hasnt-changed>

Türkiye delivers new ships, sea drone in fresh bolster for navy

Daily Sabah, January 19, 2024

Türkiye on Friday commissioned new maritime platforms, including the country's first sea drone boasting electronic warfare capabilities, as it maintains the drive to bolster the capabilities of its naval forces.

A ceremony in northwestern Yalova province saw the delivery of the replenishment combat support ship TCG Derya, TCG Istanbul frigate, TCG Lt. Arif Ekmekçi logistics support ship, and the armed unmanned surface vessel (AUSV) named Marlin. "Today, we are not only delivering ships but also our navy's first unmanned surface vehicle with electronic warfare capability in the world," President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan told the ceremony at the Sefine Shipyard.

<https://www.dailysabah.com/business/defense/turkiye-delivers-new-ships-sea-drone-in-fresh-bolster-for-navy>

Spotlight on US F-16 deal as Türkiye gives Sweden NATO go-ahead

Daily Sabah, January 24, 2024

As Türkiye has cleared the long-delayed path for Sweden's bid to join NATO, eyes have now turned toward the U.S.' prolonged approval of sales of F-16 fighter jets, which has been linked to Ankara's approval of Stockholm's application to join the military bloc. The Turkish Parliament ratified Sweden's NATO membership bid on Tuesday, clearing the biggest remaining hurdle to expand the Western alliance after 20 months of delay. All existing NATO countries must approve before a new member can join the alliance, and Hungary is now the only member that hasn't given Sweden the green light.

<https://www.dailysabah.com/business/defense/spotlight-on-us-f-16-deal-as-turkiye-gives-sweden-nato-go-ahead>

Biden admin. writes letter to US Congress to OK F-16 sales to Türkiye

Daily Sabah, January 24, 2024

The Joe Biden administration urged the U.S. Congress to approve the sale of F-16 fighter jets and modernization kits to Türkiye in a letter submitted on Wednesday, sources said. The administration wrote to members of Congress, urging the approval of a \$20 billion sale of Lockheed Martin F-16 aircraft and modernization kits, three sources familiar with the letter told Reuters. The Biden administration backs the modernization of Türkiye's F-16 fleet but it recognizes that the U.S. Congress has a significant role to play in this regard, the State Department said Wednesday.

<https://www.dailysabah.com/politics/diplomacy/biden-admin-writes-letter-to-us-congress-to-ok-f-16-sales-to-turkiye>

US finally approves F-16 sale to Türkiye after long-delayed process

Daily Sabah, January 27, 2024

U.S. President Joe Biden's administration has finally approved the sale of F-16 fighter jets

to Türkiye, ending years of sometimes tense negotiations after Ankara formally ratified Sweden's membership in NATO last week.

The State Department late Friday formally informed Congress of its intention to proceed with the \$23 billion (TL 697.8 billion) sale of F-16 warplanes and modernization kits to Türkiye, taking a major step toward completing a longdelayed process that tested ties with Ankara.

<https://www.dailysabah.com/politics/diplomacy/us-finally-approves-f-16-sale-to-turkiye-after-long-delayed-process>

PM Mitsotakis welcomes US decision to sell Greece F-35 jets

Daily Sabah, January 27, 2024

Greece's Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis welcomed the U.S.' approval to sell them up to 40 F-35 fighter jets, as he thanked Secretary of State Antony Blinken. "Today is an important day for our national defense and Greek diplomacy," Mitsotakis said in a video message posted on his Xaccount shortly after receiving a letter from Blinken informing him of the U.S. decision.

<https://www.dailysabah.com/business/defense/pm-mitsotakis-welcomes-us-decision-to-sell-greece-f-35-jets>

Canada resumes weapons exports to Türkiye, including drone tech

Daily Sabah, January 29, 2024

Canada announced late Monday it had dropped weapons export controls to Türkiye, including drone optical technology, according to a notice posted online, saying that from now on, it would review all exports on a case-by-case basis.

Canada suspended drone technology sales to Türkiye in 2020 after concluding its optical equipment attached to Turkish-made drones had been used by Azerbaijan while fighting ethnic Armenian forces in Karabakh, an enclave Baku has since retaken.

The announcement by Global Affairs, the country's foreign ministry, confirms reports from last week.

<https://www.dailysabah.com/business/defense/canada-resumes-weapons-exports-to-turkiye-including-drone-tech>

US open to Türkiye's return to F-35 'family' if S-400 issue resolved

Daily Sabah, January 31, 2024

The United States on Tuesday expressed willingness to welcome Türkiye back into its F-35 fighter jet program if a row over the S-400 air defense system Ankara acquired from Russia is resolved.

"If we could get through this S-400 issue, which we would like to do, the U.S. would be delighted to welcome Türkiye back into the F-35 family," Deputy Secretary of State Nuland said during a visit to the country.

"But first, we need to resolve this other matter and ensure that Türkiye maintains a robust air defense while doing so," Nuland told private broadcaster CNN Türk.

<https://www.dailysabah.com/business/defense/us-open-to-turkeyes-return-to-f-35-family-if-s-400-issue-resolved>

M. United Arab Emirates

Milrem Robotics to Supply Dozens of Robotic Combat vehicles to the UAE

Israel Defense, January 25, 2024

UAE orders dozens of robotic combat vehicles from Estonia. Estonian robotics firm Milrem announced this week that it has signed a significant contract to provide the United Arab Emirates (UAE) Ministry of Defense with 20 tracked robotic combat vehicles (RCVs) and 40 THeMIS unmanned ground vehicles (UGVs) worth more than \$200 million.

Under the terms of the contract, which, according to Milrem Robotics represents the world's largest combat robotics, the company will lead an experimentation and trial program to integrate unmanned ground

capabilities into the UAE Armed Forces' arsenal. This initiative is a significant step towards enhancing the Armed Forces' combat capabilities by deploying THeMIS UGVs and tracked RCVs, which are equipped with advanced autonomy features, third-party payloads, and highquality communication solutions.

<https://www.israeldefense.co.il/en/node/61039>

East Asia

N. Japan

Japan's Reports on Conditions at TEPCO's Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station

IAEA, January 18, 2024

On 18 January 2024, Japan provided the IAEA with a copy of a report on the discharge record and the seawater monitoring results at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station during December, which the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has sent to all international Missions in Japan.

The report contains information on discharges from the subdrain and groundwater drain systems, as well as on groundwater bypassing conducted during the month of December. In both cases, in advance of the action, TEPCO analyzes the quality of the groundwater to be discharged and announces the results. These results confirm that the radiation level of sampled water are substantially below the operational targets set by TEPCO.

Japan's Reports on Conditions at TEPCO's Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station, 18 January 2024 IAEA

North Korea claims to test underwater nuclear-capable drone after US, South Korea and Japan show off naval might

CNN, January 19, 2024

North Korea on Friday claimed it had successfully tested an underwater nuclear

weapons system earlier this week in response to naval drills by the United States, South Korea and Japan.

According to North Korean state media, its military conducted a new test of its underwater nuclear-capable drone, the Haeil, in waters off the southern end of the peninsula, in response to what it described as “frantic” and “provocative” US allied military exercises.

North Korea claims to test underwater nuclear-capable drone after US, South Korea and Japan show off naval might | CNN

Japan signs agreement to purchase 400 Tomahawk missiles as US envoy lauds its defense buildup

AP News, January 18, 2024

Japan signed a deal with the United States on Thursday to purchase up to 400 Tomahawk cruise missiles as part of its ongoing military buildup in response to increased regional threats.

Prime Minister Fumio Kishida's government has pledged to double its annual defense spending to around 10 trillion yen (\$68 billion) by 2027, which would make Japan the world's third-biggest military spender after the United States and China.

Japan signs agreement to purchase 400 Tomahawk missiles as US envoy lauds its defense buildup | AP News

Japan says spacecraft lands on moon, becomes world's 5th country to do so

Times Of India, January 20, 2024

Japan on Friday became the fifth country to put a spacecraft on the moon but the probe was not generating solar power, its space agency said, during a mission to prove a “precision” landing technology and revitalise a space programme that has suffered setbacks.

The Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) said its Smart Lander for Investigating Moon (SLIM) landed the moon's surface at around 12.20am (local

time) and re-established communication with earth, but its solar panels were not able to generate electricity, possibly because they are angled wrong.

Japan becomes world's 5th country to land spacecraft on moon | World News - Times of India (indiatimes.com)

Australia, Japan Agree to Collaborate in Undersea Warfare

The Defence Post, January 26, 2024

Australia and Japan have agreed to explore potential collaborations to enhance their undersea warfare capabilities.

According to the Australian Department of Defence, the deal was struck between Canberra's Defense Science and Technology Group and Tokyo's Acquisition Technology and Logistics Agency.

It said the two entities will pursue advanced research in underwater robotic and autonomous systems, though no specific platforms were mentioned.

Australia, Japan Agree to Collaborate in Undersea Warfare (thedefensepost.com)

North Korea fires cruise missiles off east coast

Reuters, January 28, 2024

North Korea fired multiple cruise missiles off its east coast on Sunday, its second such launch in less than a week, South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) said.

The missiles were launched at around 8 a.m. (2300 GMT on Saturday) and were being analysed by South Korean and U.S.

North Korea fires cruise missiles off east coast | Reuters

North Korea Says It Tested New Strategic Cruise Missile

NDTV, January 25, 2024

North Korea fired several cruise missiles towards the Yellow Sea on Wednesday,

Seoul's military said, the latest in a series of tension-raising moves by the nuclear-armed state.

Hours later, North Korea appeared to confirm the firing, saying it had carried out its first test of a new generation of strategic cruise missiles it is developing, the Pulhwasal-3-31.

Unlike their ballistic counterparts, the testing of cruise missiles is not banned under current UN sanctions against Pyongyang.

Cruise missiles tend to be jet-propelled and fly at a lower altitude than more sophisticated ballistic missiles, making them harder to detect and intercept.

North Korea Says It Tested New Strategic Cruise Missile (ndtv.com)

North Korea tests underwater nuclear drone: 'Prepared for provocations'

Hindustan Times, January 19, 2024

North Korea has conducted a test of its underwater nuclear weapons system in a protest against this week's joint military drills by South Korea, the United States and Japan, state media KCNA said on Friday.

The test of the "Haeil-5-23" system, a name North Korea has given to its nuclear-capable underwater attack drones, was carried out by the defence ministry's think tank in the waters off its east coast

North Korea tests underwater nuclear drone: 'Prepared for provocations' | World News - Hindustan Times

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