

Nuclear, Missile & Space Digest

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- French space propulsion firm ThrustMe expands U.S. footprint
- France unveils 109-billion-euro AI investment as Europe looks to keep up with U.S.

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- UK-India defence agreements boost 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' ambition
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- Argentina may buy three German 209NG submarines – sources

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- Eletronuclear cost-savings, plans for Angra 3 operation in 2031

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- Canada and Poland sign nuclear energy cooperation agreement
- Canada willing to join US 'Iron Dome' missile shield, defence minister says

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A. India

Indian budget launches nuclear energy mission

World Nuclear News, February 3, 2025

Minister of Finance Nirmala Sitharaman promised federal funds for an initiative to develop at least five Indian-designed small modular reactors to be operational by 2033, as well as amendments to Indian legislation to encourage private sector participation, in the budget for 2025-2026. In her budget speech, Sitharaman announced the Nuclear Energy Mission for Viksit Bharat (Viksit Bharat is the government's strategy to make India into a completely developed nation by 2047). "Development of at least 100 GW of nuclear energy by 2047 is essential for our energy transition efforts. For an active partnership with the private sector towards this goal, amendments to the Atomic Energy Act and the Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage Act will be taken up," Sitharaman said. "A Nuclear Energy Mission for research & development of Small Modular Reactors (SMRs) with an outlay of INR20,000 crore will be set up. At least 5 indigenously developed SMRs will be operationalized by 2033."

<https://www.world-nuclear-news.org/articles/indian-budget-launches-nuclear-energy-mission>

India and France plan small modular nuclear reactors

Nikita Yadav

BBC News, February 13, 2025

India and France plan to work together on developing small modular nuclear reactors, India's foreign ministry said after Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to the country. Modi and French President Emmanuel Macron emphasised the importance of nuclear energy for "strengthening energy security" and transitioning towards a "low-carbon economy". It comes days after Delhi announced plans to change its strict nuclear liability law, which holds operators accountable for accidents or incidents and has been blamed for delays to previous nuclear projects. Modi is also expected to

discuss potential nuclear investments by US firms during his visit to Washington on 13 February.

<https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cvg8yge40eqo>

Modi, Trump commit to US-India partnership

World Nuclear News, February 14, 2025

The leaders of India and the USA have said their nations will work together towards the construction of large-scale US-designed nuclear reactors in India and facilitating further collaboration including the deployment small modular reactors. In a joint statement issued during the official visit to the USA by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the two leaders agreed that energy security was fundamental to economic growth, social well-being and technical innovation in both countries and "re-committed to the US-India Energy Security Partnership, including in oil, gas, and civil nuclear energy". The joint statement paid particular attention to the two countries' view of the importance of hydrocarbons, and enhancing production "to ensure better global energy prices and secure affordable and reliable energy access for their citizens" as well as the value of strategic petroleum reserves "to preserve economic stability during crises".

<https://www.world-nuclear-news.org/articles/modi-trump-commit-to-us-india-partnership>

India wants to embrace nuclear power. To do it, it'll need a lot of time and money

The Economic Times, February 12, 2025

India wants more nuclear power, has pledged over \$2 billion toward research and will change laws to boost investment to do it. The pledges were made by India's finance minister earlier this month as part of a plan to expand electricity generation and reduce emissions. Nuclear power is a way to make electricity that doesn't emit planet-warming gases, although it does create radioactive waste. India is one of the world's biggest emitters of planet-

heating gases and over 75% of its power is still generated by burning fossil fuels, mostly coal. India wants to install 100 gigawatts of nuclear power by 2047 - enough to power nearly 60 million Indian homes a year. Energy experts say that for the world to move away from carbon-polluting fuels like coal, oil and gas, sources like nuclear that don't rely on the sun and the wind - which aren't always available - are needed.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/energy/power/india-wants-to-embrace-nuclear-power-to-do-it-itll-need-a-lot-of-time-and-money/articleshow/118161499.cms?from=mdr>

Experts throw light on India's aspirations in semiconductor technology

The Hindu, February 13, 2025

The three-day professional development programme (PDP) on "Scaling the Future: Trends and Challenges in Semiconductor Technology" began at the Department of Electronics and Communication Engineering of JSS Science and Technology University here on February 13. The programme aims to provide professional insights into emerging trends in semiconductor technology, including fabrication, characterisation, miniaturisation, design, manufacturing, and packaging while fostering collaborations, innovation, and technical expertise. It serves as a platform for industry professionals, academicians, and researchers to exchange knowledge on advancements and challenges in the field, the organisers said.

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/karnataka/experts-throw-light-on-indias-aspirations-in-semiconductor-technology/article69215208.ece>

Why it's hard for India to compete with global tech companies without strong IP

Anuj Bhatia

The India Express, February 13, 2025

HBO's Silicon Valley depicts a fictional startup, Pied Piper, and a group of nerds who create an algorithm for a video

compression software programme. As the show progresses, one of the plots involves the efforts of Hooli, a major tech giant, to reverse-engineer the technology from the struggling Pied Piper. This happens because Pied Piper's founder handed it over without any intellectual property protection. The "Pied Piper IP" refers to the intellectual property rights associated with the Pied Piper algorithm. If you're wondering why the subplot revolving around the "Pied Piper IP" is the most important aspect of the show, it's because IP is the most valuable asset to tech companies and startups.

<https://indianexpress.com/article/technology/opinion-technology/why-its-hard-for-india-to-compete-with-global-tech-companies-without-strong-ip-9823111/>

Russia offers Su-57 E to India, including production and transfer of critical technology

Hemanth C.S.

The Hindu, February 12, 2025

The production of the fifth generation fighter aircraft at the Hindustan Aeronautics plant may take place as early as 2025. Rosoboronexport, Russia's State-owned defence exports company, a participant in the ongoing Aero India 2025, has offered to partner with India on the Russian fifth generation fighter aircraft (FGFA), the Su-57E. "Rosoboronexport, together with United Aircraft Corporation (UAC), proposes to localise FGFA aircraft in India. This production of the FGFA at the HAL (Hindustan Aeronautics Limited) plant might take place as early as 2025. It can be provided this year itself," a representative of Rosoboronexport said on the second day of the airshow. UAC is the manufacturer of the aircraft. The representative further said that fifth generation technologies would be provided to India. "Additionally, Rosoboronexport offers technological development in terms of fifth generation technologies comprising engine, Active Electronically Scanned Array (AESA) radars, optics, AI elements, software communication means, and air weapons

that might also boost the Advanced Medium Combat Aircraft (AMCA) national programme of India," the representative said.

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/russia-offers-su-57-e-to-india-including-production-and-transfer-of-critical-technology/article69206809.ece>

India's BrahMos supersonic cruise missile is generating significant interest globally: DRDO Chief

The Economic Times, February 12, 2025

Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) Chairperson Samir V Kamat on February 11, said that India's BrahMos supersonic cruise missile is generating significant interest globally, with several countries eager to acquire the advanced weapon system. He said that Indonesia has expressed interest in the BrahMos, along with other countries in the Middle East and Southeast Asia. Speaking with ANI, Kamat said, "Indonesia is interested...There are other countries also who have shown interest in Brahmos...Some countries in the Middle East and some other countries in Southeast Asia." While Kamat refrained from divulging further details, citing the sensitive nature of the discussions, he expressed confidence in India's growing defence exports. "But it's too early because these are sensitive matters. So unless the talks progress to a level where we have confidence that they are going ahead, I don't want to say anything...", he said.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/defence/indias-brahmos-supersonic-cruise-missile-is-generating-significant-interest-globally-drdo-chief/articleshow/118160374.cms?from=mdr>

B. China

Smart turbine engine for China's Mach-4 'Blackbird' completes ground test: study

Stephen Chen

South China Morning Post, February 1, 2025

China's aerospace industry has made significant strides in the development of a

superfast turbojet that can add heat in the global race for new-generation military aircraft. Scientists at Taihang National Laboratory, a leading aerospace engine research institute in southwest China, have completed ground tests of an unnamed turbine engine with advanced artificial intelligence technology that enables it to operate efficiently and stably at speeds of up to Mach 4. The engine meets the military's requirement for "100 per cent supply chain localisation", according to the project team led by researcher Ji Chunsheng in a peer-reviewed paper published on January 16 in the Chinese journal Propulsion Technology.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/science/article/3296089/smart-turbine-engine-chinas-mach4-blackbird-completes-ground-test-study>

China's Type 055 destroyer can stop US fleet with unmanned 'kill web', war game suggests

Stephen Chen

South China Morning Post, February 2, 2025

A simulated battle by the team, set in the western Pacific, just a few hundred kilometres east of Taiwan, saw a Type 055 destroyer confront an advancing US naval fleet. China's Type 055 is one of the largest warships in the world, but in the simulation the US fleet boasted eight Arleigh Burke-class destroyers. Accompanying the Type 055, two unmanned mother ships were commanded to move forward and release 32 drones and 14 unmanned boats. In response, the US fleet launched 32 Tomahawk and LRASM stealth anti-ship missiles, all aimed at the single Chinese warship.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/science/article/3296056/chinas-type-055-destroyer-can-stop-us-fleet-unmanned-kill-web-war-game-suggests>

China warns Japan chip curbs would threaten supply chains **Ouyang Shijia**

China Daily, February 2, 2025

The Ministry of Commerce said Japan's plans for export controls on semiconductors will undermine the stability of the global industrial and supply chains as well as disrupt normal business operations. "For some time, certain countries have been stretching the concept of national security and abusing export control measures to impose sanctions aimed at suppressing China's semiconductor and other industries," a spokesperson with the Ministry of Commerce said. According to the MOC spokesperson, China urges Japan to listen to the rational voices of industry stakeholders and reconsider its course of action.

<http://global.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202502/02/WS679e57bea310a2ab06ea9e46.html>

Home-grown aircraft carrier Fujian will be the tip of China's blue-water spear

Seong Hyeon Choi

South China Morning Post, February 2, 2025

China's third and most advanced aircraft carrier the Fujian represents the tip of the Chinese navy's spear and is a crucial part of Beijing's efforts to keep up with the US carrier strike groups in the Indo-Pacific region. The People's Liberation Army plans to have six carriers by 2035, a fleet that would make it the world's second-largest blue-water navy after the United States. The Fujian is China's second domestically designed aircraft carrier and the only one equipped with cutting-edge electromagnetic catapults. The US is the only other country to use the technology on its carriers.

https://www.scmp.com/news/china/military/article/3297057/home-grown-aircraft-carrier-fujianwill-be-tip-chinas-blue-water-spear?module=top_story&pgtype=subsection

China's submersible, research vessels fine-tuned for deep-sea missions

CGTN, February 3, 2025

China's manned deep-sea submersible Jiaolong and research vessel Dayang Yihao (Ocean No. 1) are set to complete major upgrades in preparation for deep-sea exploration missions this year, according to the country's oceanic affairs administration. Jiaolong, named after a mythical sea dragon, is capable of diving to depths exceeding 7,000 meters. The China-made underwater ship has explored waters in the Pacific Ocean, Indian Ocean and Atlantic Ocean. Its upgrades are currently in progress and technicians have already completed major enhancements to its critical components, including the lithium battery system. The sea dragon-inspired submersible is scheduled to undergo tank tests in February and sea trials in the South China Sea in March.

<https://news.cgtn.com/news/2025-02-03/China-gears-up-for-future-deep-sea-missions1AGxiLeegpy/p.html>

China announces export controls on items related to tungsten, tellurium, bismuth, molybdenum, indium

Xinhua, February 4, 2025

China announced export controls on items related to tungsten, tellurium, bismuth, molybdenum and indium, according to a statement jointly issued by the Ministry of Commerce (MOC) and the General Administration of Customs. In response to media inquiries, an MOC spokesperson said the move is a common international practice. As a major global producer and exporter of tungsten and other items, China has long been committed to fulfilling non-proliferation and other international obligations and imposed export controls on specific items according

to laws and based on the need to safeguard national security and interests, the spokesperson said. This move not only serves to better protect China's national security and interests, but also enables the country to better fulfill non-proliferation and other international obligations, the spokesperson said, adding that it also safeguards the security and stability of global industrial and supply chains.

<https://english.news.cn/20250204/cb07a7cd42a94ba3b4ed44cbcdcd9e4/c.html>

China displays multiple weapons in retaliation for Trump's tariffs

David J. Lynch, Katrina Northrop, Lyric Li and Vic Chiang

The Washington Post, February 4, 2025

China retaliated Tuesday for President Donald Trump's tariffs on Chinese imports with an array of economic weapons designed to convince Washington that an escalation in the trans-Pacific trade war would quickly become painful for the United States. The Chinese government announced 15 percent tariffs on imports of U.S. coal, liquefied natural gas, agricultural equipment and other goods; restrictions on exports of minerals used to make high-tech products; an antitrust investigation of Google; and the blacklisting of two other U.S. companies.

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2025/02/04/trump-china-tariffs-trade/>

PLA decries US-Philippine air drill over South China Sea as tensions escalate

Enoch Wong

South China Morning Post, February 4, 2025

The Chinese military conducted routine airspace patrols over Scarborough Shoal, coinciding with a Philippine Air Force exercise with the US above the South China Sea, in a continuing escalation of bilateral tensions. "On February 4, the Air Force of the Southern Theatre Command of the People's Liberation Army conducted a

routine patrol in the airspace above Huangyan Island," PLA spokesman Senior Colonel Li Jianjian said, using the Chinese name for the shoal. "During this period, the Philippines colluded with extraterritorial countries to organise a so-called joint patrol, deliberately undermining peace and stability in the South China Sea region," Li said in a statement.

https://www.scmp.com/news/china/military/article/3297247/chinese-military-disputes-manilasversion-south-china-sea-naval-crossing?module=top_story&pgtype=subsection

China is building a giant laser facility to master near-limitless clean energy, satellite images appear to show

Laura Paddison

CNN, February 5, 2025

Images from space reveal an enormous X-shaped building rising up from rocky terrain in southwestern China. This is a huge nuclear fusion research facility, analysts say, and it could be a sign China is leaping ahead in the quest to harness this futuristic energy source. It could also mean they are amping up nuclear weapons development. Decker Eveleth, an analyst at US-based research organization the CNA Corporation, has been among those watching this facility for years. In 2020, a US official released images purporting to show various potential Chinese nuclear locations, including the site near Mianyang in Sichuan province.

<https://edition.cnn.com/2025/02/05/climate/china-nuclear-fusion/index.html>

Chinese military conducts routine patrol in South China Sea

China Military Online, February 5, 2025

The Chinese PLA Southern Theater Command conducted a routine patrol in the waters of South China Sea on February 5, said Air Force Senior Colonel Tian Junli, spokesperson for the PLA Southern

Theater Command (STC) in a written statement. The spokesperson pointed out that the Philippines has been colluding with countries outside the region to organize the so-called “joint patrols” in an attempt to destabilize the South China Sea and endorse its illegal claims in the South China Sea, which undermines China’s legitimate maritime rights and interests in the South China Sea. The theater command will remain on high alert to resolutely defend China’s territorial sovereignty and maritime rights and interests. Any military activities that disrupt the South China Sea are fully under control, stressed the spokesperson.

http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/CHINA_209163/TopStories_209189/16367764.html

Nuclear power is ‘making a comeback’ around the world, says IEA executive director Fatih Birol

Daniel Hojnacki

Atlantic Council, February 6, 2025

“Today I can confirm that nuclear is making a comeback,” said Fatih Birol, the executive director of the International Energy Agency (IEA) at an Atlantic Council event. Birol, who is also an Atlantic Council International Advisory Board member, spoke about his organization’s first-ever report dedicated solely to nuclear energy and what its findings could mean for the future of global energy security. “More than forty countries have concrete plans and projects in place to build or expand their nuclear capacity,” said Birol. “We have never seen this before.” The IEA, an independent intergovernmental organization based in Paris, commissioned its report on nuclear energy in June 2024 amid growing global interest in nuclear power and increased electricity demand.

<https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/new-atlanticist/nuclear-power-is-making-a-comeback-around-the-world-says-iea-executive-director-fatih-birol/>

China can detect US Seawolf-class submarine with magnetic wake tracking: study

Stephen Chen

South China Morning Post, February 7, 2025

For US submarines operating in waters near China, the era of absolute stealth may be ending one magnetic ripple at a time. Researchers with Northwestern Polytechnical University (NPU) in Xian claim to have developed a groundbreaking method to detect even the quietest underwater vessels by harnessing the magnetic fields generated by their wakes – a discovery that could reshape naval warfare. Led by associate professor Wang Honglei, the team modelled the Kelvin wake, a V-shaped surface disturbance created by submarines as they slice through water.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/science/article/3297575/china-can-detect-us-seawolf-classsubmarine-magnetic-wake-tracking-study>

Full text: China-Thailand joint statement on advancing comprehensive strategic cooperative partnership

The State Council, The People’s Republic of China, February 8, 2025

The government of the People’s Republic of China and the government of the Kingdom of Thailand issued a joint statement on advancing the comprehensive strategic cooperative partnership and building a China-Thailand community with a shared future for enhanced stability, prosperity, and sustainability through a forward-looking and people-centered vision. The two sides signed cooperation documents on economic development, digital economy, AI, customs facilitation and market access for food and agricultural products (farmed

aquatic products), nuclear technology, lunar exploration, green development, postal service, press and media.

https://english.www.gov.cn/news/202502/08/content_WS67a717dbc6d0868f4e8ef7c9.html#:~:text=8%20%2D%2D%20The%20government%20of,enhanced%20stability%2C%20prosperity%2C%20and%20sustainability

Catalyst DeepSeek: How China is building global tech competitors

Yang Zhao

CGTN, February 9, 2025

DeepSeek's rise has not only reshaped perceptions of China's AI capabilities but also sent a wakeup call to tech giants. Traditionally, China has played catch-up in AI applications, but DeepSeek's success proves that China can now compete at the foundational technology level. It's hard to pinpoint exactly how a policy slowly influences the development of a specific technological breakthrough. The chain of causality is complex, but one thing is certain: policies play a pivotal role in creating an environment that nurtures innovation. China is placing greater emphasis on integrating fundamental innovation with the market. The rise of DeepSeek, for instance, is no coincidence.

<https://news.cgtn.com/news/2025-02-09/Catalyst-DeepSeek-How-China-is-building-global-techcompetitors-1ARec7CkiR2/index.html>

Anti-ship missiles are key to defence

Chen Yu-fu and William Hetherington

Taipei Times, February 10, 2025

The military should deploy a large number of anti-ship missiles to counter China's landing vessels and aircraft carriers in the event of an attempted invasion of Taiwan, a defence researcher said. Drones could also be launched from patrol vessels to conduct reconnaissance and speed up responses whenever the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) makes air or sea incursions around Taiwan, National Defence

University distinguished adjunct lecturer Holmes Liao (廖何) said. China engages in such incursions with great regularity, and its construction of new landing vessels should be seen as a warning sign that the PLA is preparing to annex Taiwan, said Liao, who once served as a representative in Taiwan for non-defunct US military contractor McDonnell Douglas Corp.

<https://www.taipeitimes.com/News/taiwan/archives/2025/02/10/2003831628>

Type 094 nuclear submarine is China's 'King of the South China Sea' in bid for deterrence

Amber Wang

South China Morning Post, February 10, 2025

The presence of the Type 094 nuclear ballistic missile submarine marked a significant milestone, with the US defence department describing it as China's "first credible sea-based nuclear deterrent". Beijing operates six of the submarines that are capable of firing JL-2 missiles, and possibly the more sophisticated JL-3 missiles that could strike US territory from Chinese shores.

https://www.scmp.com/news/china/military/article/3298032/type-094-nuclear-submarine-chinasking-south-china-seabiddeterrence?module=top_story&pgtype=subsection

Chinese, Thai firms ink deals on low-orbit satellite technology, fostering closer digital connectivity under BRI

Chu Daye

Global Times, February 10, 2025

Chinese satellite internet solution provider and private satellite maker GalaxySpace and Thai telecom operator True Corporation inked a deal to carry out in-depth cooperation in low-orbit satellite communication technology, space-to-ground integrated network solutions, and mobile phone direct satellite

communication technology to jointly promote the research and development (R&D) and verification of related technologies. The two companies will expand satellite application use cases, and work together to build future-oriented digital infrastructure, according to a statement sent to the Global Times by GalaxySpace. It noted that the cooperation will expand innovative applications of satellite internet in Thailand and ASEAN at large, in areas including maritime, agriculture, education, Internet of Vehicles (IoV).

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202502/1328184.shtml>

China tightens rules on publishing information about the military online

Hayley Wong

South China Morning Post, February 10, 2025

China has announced new rules limiting what information can be shared about the military. Beijing said the rules were designed to protect defence sources and the People's Liberation Army's public image, but they may mean it will be harder to monitor the development and evolution of China's military. From March 1 "online military information providers" will be banned from "producing, copying, publishing, or disseminating" previously undisclosed information, including details of weapon systems and military facilities.

https://www.scmp.com/news/china/military/article/3298106/china-tightens-rules-publishing-information-about-military-online?module=top_story&pgtype=subsection

China's space station to welcome more commercial spaceflights in 2025 including cargo crafts and launch vehicles

Fan Anqi

Global Times, February 11, 2025

As China's aerospace industry achieved a record-breaking 68 rocket launches in the past year, the country has promised even

greater excitement in 2025, including the debuts of a series of commercial spacecrafts, such as the Haoloong space cargo shuttle, Qingzhou cargo spacecraft, launched aboard their respective carriers, the Zhuque-3 and Lijian-2 rockets. This year, China's Tiangong space station is expected to welcome two more crews of Shenzhou-20 and Shenzhou21, along with the Tianzhou-9 cargo spacecraft. The two crewed missions may be undertaken by China's fourth batch of taikonauts, which includes payload specialists from Hong Kong and Macao special administrative regions, China Central Television reported.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202502/1328259.shtml>

China's stratospheric airship can detect American F-35 fighter from nearly 2,000km: study

Stephen Chen

South China Morning Post, February 11, 2025

A stratospheric airship equipped with advanced infrared detection systems could identify stealth aircraft – such as the US-made F-35 fighter jet – from nearly 2,000km (1,240 miles), according to Chinese scientists. The findings suggest a potential vulnerability in America's fifth-generation stealth technology and mark a significant leap in China's pursuit of anti-access/area denial capabilities.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/science/article/3298181/chinas-stratospheric-airship-can-detect-american-f-35-fighters-1800km-study>

China's Long March 8A carrier rocket makes successful debut

Zhao Lei

China Daily, February 12, 2025

China conducted the debut flight of its Long March 8A carrier rocket, transporting a group of satellites to space, according to China Aerospace Science and Technology Corp. The launch marked the 559th flight mission of the Long March carrier rocket series. After the mission,

Long March 8A has become the 18th operating member in the Long March family, the pillar of China's space programs. The model is mainly tasked with deploying satellites to sun-synchronous orbits, and is capable of transporting payloads weighing as much as 7 tons to a typical sun-synchronous orbit with an altitude of 700 kilometers.

<https://www.chinadailyhk.com/hk/article/604319>

How Trump's air force picks signal blast-off in the US-China military space race

Hayley Wong

South China Morning Post, February 12, 2025

Competition in space between the US and China could be about to intensify, with US President Donald Trump's picks to lead the United States Air Force notable for their strong backgrounds in the field, according to analysts. Trump has nominated space and air force veteran Troy Meink for the post of secretary, with Matthew Lohmeier, former commander of the space force – which is overseen by the airborne service – expected to serve as deputy. Experts say the appointments will add to the already-tense US-China military competition in space. Both men have said space should be prioritised, a position also held by Frank Kendall, who was air force secretary in the Joe Biden administration.

https://www.scmp.com/news/china/military/article/3298178/how-trumps-air-force-picks-signalblast-us-china-military-space-race?module=top_story&pgtype=subsection

Chinese Foreign Ministry on the Typhon missile system in the Philippines

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the People's Republic of China, February 12, 2025

Regarding the U.S. deployment of Mid-Range Capability (MRC) missile system in the Philippines, China has made clear the grave harm of such deployment and stated our firm opposition to it on multiple

occasions. On this issue, the Philippines has gone back on its words again and again. The Philippines has explained itself multiple times regarding the introduction of the Typhon system, pledging that the deployment was "temporary," and that the system will be shipped out of the country after relevant military exercises. However, it has breached such commitments, claiming they would acquire its own midrange system and field these deterrent capabilities, and linking the South China Sea issue with the Typhon system. This is not only ridiculous but also extremely dangerous.

https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/xw/fyrbt/lxjzh/202502/t20250212_11553791.html

US think tank report urges setting up space hotline with China

Deng Xiaoci

Global Times, February 12, 2025

US think tank Council on Foreign Relations (CFR) has released a new report, urging Trump administration and US Congress to adopt a comprehensive strategy to maintain the country's leadership in space, while recommending the establishment of a direct communication hotline with China to reduce the risk of miscalculation in orbit. According to the Spacenews.com, the report titled "Securing Space: A Plan for US Action" was released on US local time Tuesday, and it highlights so-called "mounting threats, including anti-satellite weapons, the proliferation of space debris, and growing competition from China."

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202502/1328326.shtml>

Chinese Foreign Ministry on Chinese fighter jet's of unsafe conduct in the South China Sea

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the People's Republic of China, February 13, 2025

The Australian military airplane deliberately intruded into China's airspace over Xisha Qundao without China's

permission. Such a move violated China's sovereignty and undermined China's national security. The Chinese side took legitimate, lawful, professional and restrained measures to expel the airplane. China has lodged serious protests with Australia and urged it to stop infringing on China's sovereignty and making provocations and stop disrupting peace and stability in the South China Sea.

https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/xw/fyrbt/lxjzh/202502/t20250213_11554506.html

Philippines to bolster defence with subs and BrahMos missiles. Can it sustain this arsenal?

Jeoffrey Maitem

South China Morning Post, February 13, 2025

Manila's plan to acquire submarines and additional missiles to counter Beijing's military might in the South China Sea has been praised by observers as a strategic long-term measure, despite the high costs and questions about the country's readiness to maintain such technology. One analyst said the move was long overdue, since the Philippines discovered last year that its rival had used drones in mapping out the seabed in the disputed waters.

<https://www.scmp.com/week-asia/politics/article/3298573/philippines-bolster-defence-subsand-brahmos-missiles-can-it-sustain-arsenal>

China steps up planetary defence efforts amid asteroid impact concerns

Fan Anqi

Global Times, February 13, 2025

Recent reports of a potential asteroid impact have sparked widespread concern on Chinese social media, with many voicing safety worries. Amid the discussions, public attention has turned to China's recruitment of planetary defence experts. Media reported that Shan Zhongde, head of the China National Space Administration (CNSA), visited the Earth Observation and

Data Center - a move expert says highlights China's growing focus on this critical field. "The visit by the CNSA head to the Earth Observation and Data Center, along with the recent recruitment of talents in this field, indicates that China has placed heightened attention on asteroid impact monitoring," Kang Guohua, a senior member of the Chinese Society of Astronautics and professor of Aerospace Engineering at Nanjing University of Aeronautics and Astronautics, told the Global Times.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202502/1328387.shtml>

Beijing approves construction of first South China sea deepwater 'space station'

Stephen Chen

South China Morning Post, February 13, 2025

After years of debate and technical reviews, China has given the green light to a deep-sea research facility that could redefine marine exploration, while amplifying Beijing's geopolitical leverage in one of the world's most resource-rich areas. The "cold seep" ecosystem research facility will be anchored 2,000 metres (6,560 feet) below the surface of the strategically significant South China Sea, which is also subject to a number of competing territorial claims.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/science/article/3298328/beijing-approves-constructionfirst-south-china-sea-deepwater-space-station>

China military exercises near Taiwan could be used to conceal attack, US says

Demetri Sevastopulo

Financial Times, February 14, 2025

China's military exercises around Taiwan have become so extensive that they could soon be used as a "fig leaf" to conceal an attack on the island, according to the top

US military commander in the Indo-Pacific. Speaking at the Honolulu Defence Forum, US Navy Admiral Samuel Paparo also warned about rising co-operation between China, Russia and North Korea, describing it as an “emerging axis of autocracy”. “China, Russia and North Korea have formed a triangle of troublemakers,” Paparo told the event sponsored by the Pacific Forum think-tank.

<https://www.ft.com/content/3a31c037-f74c-4e33-9720-0fdc32f5133b>

China-Africa space co-op shows tech's multipolarisation, democratization trends

People's Daily Online, February 14, 2025

In recent years, cooperation between China and Africa in the space field has deepened. However, some Western media outlets have tried to distort the nature of this cooperation. Reuters reported that China is “building space alliances in Africa to enhance its global surveillance network and advance its bid to become the world’s dominant space power.” The article also cited remarks from the Pentagon, claiming that China’s space projects in Africa and other parts of the developing world are a “security risk.”

<http://en.people.cn/n3/2025/0214/c90000-20276761.html>

Chinese Defence Ministry on PLA Navy's task group visit to Pakistan to attend the multinational maritime exercise AMAN 2025

China Military Online, February 14, 2025

At the invitation of the Pakistani military, a PLAN task group comprising of the guided-missile destroyer PLAN Baotou and the comprehensive supply ship PLAN Gaoyouhu participated in the multinational maritime exercise AMAN 2025 from February 6 to 11. During the onshore phase of the exercise, the task group and other participating naval forces held planning conferences, professional exchanges and open ship events. During the maritime phase, drills were conducted on joint

counter-piracy operations, search and rescue and air defence.

<http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/VOICES/16370201.html>

FM responds to Trump's proposal to meet with Chinese, Russian leaders to discuss reducing nuclear weapons, cutting defence spending

Global Times, February 14, 2025

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Guo Jiakun responded to reports that US President Donald Trump said that he wants to meet with Chinese, Russian leaders to discuss reducing nuclear weapons and cutting defence spending. According to AP, Trump said that he wants to restart nuclear arms control talks with Russia and China and that eventually he hopes all three countries could agree to cut their massive defence budgets in half. Guo said that it is widely recognized around the world that the US and Russia possess over 90 percent of the world’s nuclear weapons, and the nuclear disarmament must adhere to fundamental principles such as maintaining global strategic stability and ensuring that the security of all countries is not compromised.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202502/1328451.shtml>

MI5 investigates use of Chinese green technology in UK

Jim Pickard, Rachel Millard, Simeon Kerr, Lucy Fisher and John Paul Rathbone

Financial Times, February 15, 2025

Britain’s security services are taking part in a review into China’s growing role in the UK’s energy system amid concerns over Beijing’s influence in strategic national infrastructure. MI5 is helping establish the extent to which the use of Chinese technology such as solar panels or industrial batteries could pose potential future security threats, according to people

close to the situation. Concern over Chinese companies' dominance of international supply chains for technologies crucial to decarbonisation is growing as the UK tries to shift away from fossil fuels.

<https://www.ft.com/content/534eef36-d9ad-4a03-afa1-f87ab03a9b18>

C. Pakistan

IAEA Director General meets Pakistan's prime minister to strengthen collaboration on energy, health and food

International Atomic Energy Agency, February 13, 2025

IAEA Director General Rafael Mariano Grossi met Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif in Islamabad on Wednesday, as part of his two-day visit to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. The two leaders discussed closer cooperation on the peaceful, safe and secure uses of nuclear technology and the importance of multilateralism. The Prime Minister's Office reaffirmed Pakistan's dedication to "further strengthening its collaboration with the IAEA", of which the country is a founding member. "With the IAEA's support, Pakistan has made significant progress in nuclear power generation, industrial development, healthcare, and agricultural advancements, contributing to the country's socio-economic growth" the statement read.

<https://www.iaea.org/newscenter/news/iaea-director-general-meets-pakistans-prime-minister-to-strengthen-collaboration-on-energy-health-and-food#:~:text=New%20Nuclear%20Reactor%20Under%20Construction&text=Pakistan%20operates%20six%20nuclear%20power,security%20and%20mitigating%20climate%20change>.

Pakistan to strengthen partnership with IAEA for peaceful use of nuclear technology

The Express Tribune, February 12, 2025

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday reiterated Pakistan's commitment to enhancing its collaboration

with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), aiming to harness the full potential of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes. This collaboration is intended to benefit both the people of Pakistan and the global community. The remarks came during a courtesy meeting with IAEA Director General Rafael Mariano Grossi at the Prime Minister's House. The two leaders discussed the peaceful applications of nuclear technology in various sectors, including cancer diagnosis and treatment, agriculture, food preservation, water management, and industry, according to the PM Office Media Wing. The prime minister praised the IAEA's efforts in promoting nuclear energy as a vital solution to combat climate change and reaffirmed Pakistan's dedication to using nuclear technology for sustainable development.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2528134/pakistan-to-strengthen-partnership-with-iaea-for-peaceful-use-of-nuclear-technology>

D. Russia

An Unreal Pain: Russia's new nuclear doctrine delivers headlines, but not change

William Alberque

Stimson, February 3, 2025

On November 19, 2024, Russian President Vladimir Putin signed a new nuclear doctrine governing the world's largest nuclear arsenal. Conjecture about this update had been underway for years, but for seasoned Russia watchers, it proved insignificant. Russia's new doctrine does not necessitate any significant changes to U.S. nuclear doctrine, force posture, or plans. Rather, Russia's doctrine aligns more closely to its observable force posture and Putin's use of coercive nuclear threats. Instead, the United States should continue to seek to deter Russia and limit its nuclear forces, while better understanding the implication of Russia's alliances. Does the U.S. need to embark on a series of radical changes to its nuclear doctrine or force

posture to respond to Russia's new nuclear doctrine? The answer is no. Note that this memo does not examine the implications of the changes in the nuclear doctrine or force posture of China, North Korea, or Iran, or their shifting relationships with Russia itself – all of which requires sober analysis. However, Russia's 2024 nuclear doctrine, which appears to lower the threshold for nuclear weapons use, does not by itself require the U.S. to change to its nuclear doctrine or force posture.

<https://www.stimson.org/2025/an-unreal-pain-russias-new-nuclear-doctrine-delivers-headlines-but-not-change/>

Chernobyl radiation shield hit by Russian drone, Ukraine says

Ian Aikman

BBC, February 14, 2025

A Russian drone has hit the protective shelter over Chernobyl's damaged nuclear reactor, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky has said. The overnight strike at the site of the world's worst nuclear accident caused a fire that has since been extinguished, he added. The UN's nuclear watchdog (the IAEA) said radiation levels inside and outside Chernobyl were normal and stable - but later the plant's chief engineer, Oleksandr Titarchuk, said the possibility of radioactive substances leaking "now exists". Russia has denied any claims it attacked Chernobyl, stating its military does not strike Ukrainian nuclear infrastructure and "any claims that this was the case do not correspond to reality". The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), which monitors nuclear safety around the world, said fire safety personnel and vehicles responded within minutes to an overnight explosion. No casualties were reported, the agency added. The agency remains on "high alert" after the incident, with its director general Rafael Grossi saying there is "no room for complacency".

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

Russia could use nuclear weapons in case of aggression against Belarus

Elena Teslova

Anadolu Ajansi, February 5, 2025

Russian nuclear weapons could be used in response to aggression against Russia or Belarus if their sovereignty or territorial integrity is threatened, according to a security agreement between the two countries, which President Vladimir Putin submitted on Wednesday to the parliament for ratification. According to the treaty, Russia's nuclear weapons can be deployed in response to the use of nuclear or other weapons of mass destruction against Russia or Belarus, read the document published on the website of the Russian lower chamber of parliament, the State Duma. Their use is also permitted in the event of conventional armed aggression against either country if it poses a critical threat to its sovereignty or territorial integrity. Last November, Putin signed a decree approving the country's updated nuclear doctrine, the Basic Principles of State Policy of the Russian Federation on Nuclear Deterrence.

<https://www.aa.com.tr/en/russia-ukraine-war/russia-could-use-nuclear-weapons-in-case-of-aggression-against-belarus/3473034#>

Earth to Mars in 30 days? Russia's plasma engine breakthrough sparks buzz

Yunus Dar

Business Standard, February 11, 2025

Russia's state-owned Rosatom has announced a breakthrough in the development of a plasma electric rocket engine that the company claims could reduce the travel time between earth and mars to just one to two months. The plasma rocket eliminates the need for traditional fuel combustion. Instead, the propulsion system utilises a magnetic

plasma accelerator, enabling unprecedented speeds in space and promising a significant reduction in travel time, Russia's Izvestia newspaper reported. "A plasma rocket motor is a type of electric motor. It is based on two electrodes. Charged particles are passed between them, and at the same time a high voltage is applied to the electrodes. As a result, the current creates a magnetic field that pushes the particles out of the engine. Thus, the plasma receives directional motion and creates thrust," Izvestia quoted Egor Biriulin, a junior researcher at Rosatom's scientific institute in Troitsk, as saying.

https://www.business-standard.com/world-news/earth-to-mars-in-30-days-russia-s-plasma-engine-breakthrough-sparks-buzz-nc-125021100828_1.html

Russia struggles to keep India dependent on its arms supplies

The Moscow Times, February 11, 2025

Russia's state-owned arms exporter Rosoboronexport revealed that total military exports to India have reached \$80 billion, marking a significant milestone in decades of defence cooperation. According to a statement by Rosoboronexport's director general ahead of India's Aero India defence expo, contracts signed between the two countries amounted to \$30 billion between 1947-2005 and \$50 billion between 2005-2025, underscoring Moscow's enduring role in equipping the Indian Armed Forces. Yet despite these figures, India's reliance on Russian military hardware is steadily eroding as geopolitical shifts, logistical challenges and diversification efforts reshape its defence strategy. A legacy of dependence facing disruptions. For decades, Russia has been India's primary defence supplier, providing everything from fighter jets and submarines to missile systems and helicopters.

<https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2025/02/11/russia-struggles-to-keep-india-dependent-on-its-arms-supplies-a87940>

Trump wants nuclear arms talks with Russia and China

Zeke Miller, The Associated Press and Michelle L. Price, The Associated Press

Defence News, February 14, 2025

President Donald Trump said February 13 that he wants to restart nuclear arms control talks with Russia and China and that, eventually, he hopes all three countries could agree to cut their massive defence budgets in half. Speaking to reporters in the Oval Office, Trump lamented the hundreds of billions of dollars being invested in rebuilding the nation's nuclear deterrent and said he hopes to gain commitments from the U.S. adversaries to cut their own spending. "There's no reason for us to be building brand new nuclear weapons, we already have so many," Trump said. "You could destroy the world 50 times over, 100 times over. And here we are building new nuclear weapons, and they're building nuclear weapons." "We're all spending a lot of money that we could be spending on other things that are actually, hopefully much more productive," Trump said.

<https://www.defencenews.com/pentagon/2025/02/13/trump-wants-nuclear-arms-talks-with-russia-and-china/>

E. United States of America

Modi, Trump commit to US-India partnership

World Nuclear News, February 14, 2025

In a joint statement issued during the official visit to the USA by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the two leaders agreed that energy security was fundamental to economic growth, social well-being and technical innovation in both countries and "re-committed to the US-India Energy Security Partnership, including in oil, gas, and civil nuclear energy". The joint statement paid particular attention to the two countries' view of the importance of hydrocarbons, and enhancing production

“to ensure better global energy prices and secure affordable and reliable energy access for their citizens” as well as the value of strategic petroleum reserves “to preserve economic stability during crises”. They also said they would increase energy trade, and “establish the United States as a leading supplier of crude oil and petroleum products and liquified natural gas to India”. Turning to nuclear, they “announced their commitment to fully realise the US-India 123 Civil Nuclear Agreement by moving forward with plans to work together to build US-designed nuclear reactors in India through large scale localisation and possible technology transfer”.

<https://www.world-nuclear-news.org/articles/modi-trump-commit-to-us-india-partnership>

US nuclear weapons agency hit by layoffs after DOGE exemption denied

Winkie Davis

USA Today, February 14, 2025

The semi-autonomous agency that oversees U.S. nuclear weapons production and stockpiling dismissed dozens of employees Thursday after the Trump administration denied a request for a national security exemption to stop the layoffs. Former NNSA administrator Jill Hruby, who led the organization from July 2021 through her Jan. 20 resignation, said the cuts originally impacted “over 300” of National Nuclear Security Administration’s approximately 1,900 federal employees before the agency began reversing layoffs. In a Friday evening statement, Department of Energy press secretary Ben Dietderich said, “Less than 50 employees were dismissed from the NNSA.” The targeted workers were relatively new employees in their probationary period, during which they don’t have civil service firing protections.

<https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/politics/2025/02/14/nuclear-weapons-agency-lays-off-hundreds-employees/78629362007/>

US Energy Secretary unleashes ‘Golden Era’

World Nuclear News, February 6, 2025

US Secretary of Energy Chris Wright’s first executive order outlines the initial actions the Department of Energy will take under his leadership - including the rapid deployment of next-generation nuclear technology, and a comprehensive review of the department’s R&D. “President Trump has outlined a bold and ambitious agenda to unleash American energy at home and abroad to restore energy dominance,” Wright says in the order, Unleashing the Golden Era of American Energy Dominance. To compete globally, the USA must expand energy production and reduce energy costs; lead the world in innovation and technology breakthroughs; and permit and build energy infrastructure as well as removing barriers to progress, he said.

<https://www.world-nuclear-news.org/articles/us-energy-secretary-unleashes-golden-era>

Will Trump’s ‘Iron Dome’ missile defence make Americans safer? It’s complicated

Davis Winkie, Cybele Mayes-Osterman

USA Today, February 11, 2025

President Donald Trump’s flurry of executive orders to kick off his second term seeks to transform the United States – and to shield it from nuclear attacks. Although the U.S. has developed “limited” defences designed to stop a small missile attack from the likes of North Korea, the Jan. 27 order – “The Iron Dome for America” – directs the Pentagon to plan a “next generation missile defence shield” to guard against any threat from any foe. Trump’s order invokes former President Ronald Reagan’s Strategic Defence Initiative, which detractors labeled “Star Wars.” But much like Reagan’s push for total nuclear

defence, major technological and budgetary hurdles exist for Trump's vision, and policymakers and experts disagree on its feasibility and whether investing in homeland missile defence makes Americans safer at all.

<https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/politics/2025/02/11/trump-iron-dome-missile-defence-order/78389280007/>

Air Force set to launch ICBM in flex of US military muscle

Patrick Reilly

The New York Post, February 14, 2025

The US Air Force will launch an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) in Southern California next week to test and flex the military's readiness to use nuclear force. The unarmed Minuteman III will be fired from the Vandenberg Space Force Base, about 150 miles northwest of Los Angeles, sometime between 11 p.m. Tuesday and 5 a.m. Wednesday, Air Force Global Strike Command announced. "The purpose of the ICBM test launch program is to demonstrate the readiness of U.S. nuclear forces and provide confidence in the lethality and effectiveness of the nation's nuclear deterrent," the command said. The launch is routine and planned years in advance, the command said, saying it is to "validate and verify the effectiveness, readiness and accuracy of the weapon system."

<https://nypost.com/2025/02/14/us-news/air-force-test-launching-ballistic-missile-for-nuclear-readiness-drill/>

US arms shipments to Kyiv briefly paused before resuming over weekend, sources say

Mike Stone and Erin Banco

Reuters, February 6, 2025

U.S. shipments of weapons into Ukraine were briefly paused in recent days before resuming over the weekend as the Trump

administration debated its policy towards Kyiv, according to four people briefed on the matter. Shipments restarted after the White House pulled back on its initial assessment to stop all aid to Ukraine, two of the sources said. There are factions inside the administration that are at odds over the extent to which the U.S. should continue to aid Kyiv's war effort with weapons from U.S. stocks, said one of the people, a U.S. official. The White House did not immediately respond to a request for comment. Halting the flow of U.S. weapons would hinder Kyiv's ability to fight, and put it in a less advantaged negotiation position in peace talks. It is unclear if the Trump administration will formally acknowledge the pause and subsequent resumption of shipments.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/us-arms-shipments-kyiv-briefly-paused-before-resuming-over-weekend-sources-say-2025-02-03/>

Trump administration backs big arms sales to Israel, defying Congress

The Economic Times, February 8, 2025

U.S. President Donald Trump's administration announced on Friday that it had approved military sales to Israel worth some \$7.4 billion, despite a Democratic lawmakers' request that the sale be paused until he received more information. The Department of Defence announced that the State Department had approved a package for Israel worth an estimated \$6.75 billion that included munitions, guidance kits and fuses with Boeing Co among the principal contractors. It also detailed a deal estimated at \$660 million to sell Hellfire Missiles to Israel in which Lockheed Martin would be the principal contractor.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/defence/trump-administration-backs-big-arms-sales-to-israel-defying-congress/articleshow/118046650.cms?from=mdr>

Exclusive: Trump prepares to change US CHIPS Act conditions, sources say

Mike Stone, Fanny Potkin and Wen-Yee Lee

Reuters, February 14, 2025

Washington plans to renegotiate some of the deals after assessing and changing current requirements, according to the sources. The extent of the possible changes, and how they would affect agreements already finalized, was not immediately clear. It was not known whether any action has yet been taken. "The CHIPS Program Office has told us that certain conditions that do not align with President (Donald) Trump's executive orders and policies are now under review for all CHIPS Direct Funding Agreements," GlobalWafers (6488.TWO), opens new tab spokesperson Leah Peng said in a statement to Reuters. Taiwan's GlobalWafers, which said it has not been notified directly by Washington of any changes to the conditions or terms of their awards, is set to receive \$406 million in U.S. government grants for projects in Texas and Missouri. The company is currently set to receive subsidies only after it achieves specific milestones later in 2025.

<https://www.reuters.com/technology/trump-prepares-change-us-chips-act-conditions-sources-say-2025-02-13/>

F. Afghanistan

Taliban threaten to use US arms to thwart attempts to retake them

Ayaz Gill

Voice of America, February 4, 2025

The Taliban have warned that the military weapons left behind by the United States in Afghanistan now belong to them as "spoils of war" and will be utilized to defend against any attempts to reclaim them. The statement marks the first official response from the internationally unrecognized government in Kabul to President Donald Trump's pledge on the eve of his January 20 inauguration to retrieve U.S. arms from the de facto Islamist Afghan leaders. "The

weapons that America abandoned in Afghanistan, as well as those provided to the former Afghan regime, are now in the possession of the Mujahideen [or Taliban forces] as spoils of war," claimed Zabihullah Mujahid, the chief Taliban spokesperson, while participating in an X space session late on February 3. "The Afghan people now own these weapons and are utilizing them to defend their independence, sovereignty, and Islamic system. No external force can compel us to surrender these weapons, nor will we accept any demands for their surrender," Mujahid stated. "We will use these weapons to repel invaders who dare to seize them."

<https://www.voanews.com/a/taliban-threaten-to-use-us-arms-to-thwart-attempts-to-retake-them-/7962251.html>

G. Sri Lanka

Adani to withdraw from Sri Lanka wind power projects, open for future deals

The Economic Times, February 13, 2025

"Adani Green Energy has conveyed its Board's decision to respectfully withdraw from further engagement in the RE wind energy project and two transmission projects in Sri Lanka. However, we remain committed to Sri Lanka and are open to future collaboration if the Government of Sri Lanka so desires," a spokesperson at Adani Group said. Last month, the Sri Lankan government said it had started talks with the Adani Group to reduce the cost of electricity from the projects, which were estimated to cost a total of \$1 billion. "It was learnt that another Cabinet-appointed negotiations committee and Project Committee would be constituted to renegotiate the project proposal," the company wrote in a letter to the chairman of Sri Lanka's Board of Investment. A copy of the letter was seen by Reuters.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/energy/power/adani-says-to-withdraw-from-wind-power-projects-in-sri-lanka/articleshow/118205236.cms?from=mdr>

H. Bangladesh

CA Dr Yunus, Elon Musk hold talks to bring Starlink to Bangladesh

Dhaka Tribune, February 14, 2025

Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus on Thursday held an extensive video discussion with Elon Musk, the founder of SpaceX, and owner of Tesla and X, to explore future collaboration and to make further progress to introduce Starlink satellite internet service in Bangladesh. Dr Khalilur Rahman, High Representative for the Rohingya crisis and priority Issues, Lamiya Morshed, Principal Coordinator of SDGs Affairs, Lauren Dreyer, Vice President, and Richard Griffiths, Global Engagement Adviser on the Space X side were present. During their conversation, Prof Yunus and Elon Musk emphasized the transformational impact of Starlink's satellite communications, particularly for Bangladesh's enterprising youth, rural and vulnerable women, and remote communities, said Chief Adviser's Press Secretary Shafiqul Alam. They discussed how high-speed, low-cost internet connectivity could bridge the digital divide in Bangladesh, empowering education, healthcare, and economic development in underserved regions and giving its millions of small and micro-entrepreneurs access beyond the national boundary.

<https://www.dhakatribune.com/bangladesh/foreign-affairs/373669/ca-dr-yunus-elon-musk-hold-talks-to-bring>

Why nuclear energy makes sense for Bangladesh

Kazi Omar Farook Saneed

The Daily Star, February 12, 2025

Dhaka, often grappling with poor air quality, has earned the grim distinction of having the worst Air Quality Index (AQI) score worldwide on several occasions over the last few months. The smog serves as a reminder of the environmental degradation driven by fossil fuels, the primary source of energy. While solar and wind power dominate discussions about cleaner

alternatives, their limitations highlight the need for a more reliable solution. Nuclear energy, despite its efficiency and cleanliness, has been overshadowed by public fears and misconceptions. Regardless, nuclear power holds the potential to bridge the gap until solar and wind energy become more viable options in the long term or nuclear fusion is successfully achieved.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/opinion/views/news/why-nuclear-energy-makes-sense-bangladesh-3822211>

I. East Asia

Japan

French-Japanese MOX fuel recycling studies expanded

World Nuclear News, February 13, 2025

Japan's Federation of Electric Power Companies has announced that a total of 400 tonnes of used nuclear fuel, instead of the originally planned 200 tonnes, will now be transported to Orano in France for research on the reprocessing of used mixed oxide fuel. The Federation of Electric Power Companies (FEPC) announced in May 2023 that it will work with Orano on demonstration research and development for the reprocessing of used mixed oxide (MOX) fuel. At the time, FEPC said that in order for Japan to continue using nuclear power generation, it was necessary to safely and reliably process and dispose of fuel, including used MOX fuel that is removed from Japanese reactors that are implementing the use of MOX fuel. When originally announced, plans called for about 200 tonnes of used fuel (comprising about 10 tonnes of used MOX fuel and about 190 tonnes of used uranium fuel) to be sent from Kansai Electric Power Company's inventory of used fuel.

<https://www.world-nuclear-news.org/articles/french-japanese-mox-fuel-recycling-studies-expanded>

High wind halts dismantling of Fukushima nuclear plant's water tanks

The Japan Times, February 13, 2025

Gusty winds prevented the operator of the crippled Fukushima No. 1 nuclear plant from starting to dismantle treated water tanks on Thursday, a crucial step towards decommissioning the entire facility. The "water tank dismantling has been postponed because of strong winds," Tatsuya Matoba, a Tokyo Electric Power Company (Tepco) spokesperson, said. "The process could start from tomorrow depending on weather conditions," he added. The dismantling had been seen as a milestone in Tepco's decades-long project to decommission the stricken plant in northern Japan, which went into meltdown after it was hit by a catastrophic tsunami in 2011. Officials were to have started the process on 6 February to get rid of some of the tanks to clear space needed to store nuclear debris to be extracted from the plant's reactors.

<https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2025/02/13/japan/fukushima-nuclear-dismantling/>

'An act of betrayal': Japan to maximise nuclear power 14 years after Fukushima disaster

Justin McCurry

The Guardian, February 14, 2025

More than a decade after the triple meltdown at the Fukushima Daiichi power plant, Japan is again turning to nuclear power as it struggles to reach its emissions targets and bolster its energy security. In a draft strategic energy plan due to be approved by the cabinet this month, the trade and industry ministry signalled it was ditching attempts to lessen Japan's reliance on nuclear power in the wake of the Fukushima disaster – the world's worst nuclear accident since Chernobyl 25 years earlier. The document dropped a reference to "reducing reliance" on nuclear energy

that had appeared in the three previous plans, and instead called for a "maximisation" of nuclear power, which will account for about 20% of total energy output in 2040, based on the assumption that 30 reactors will be in full operation by then. The plan envisages a share of between 40% and 50% for renewable energy – compared with just under a third in 2023 – and a reduction in coal-fired power from the current 70% to 30-40%.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2025/feb/12/japan-nuclear-power-plan-emissions-targets-fukushima>

Japan to pick final disposal sites for crippled nuclear plant soil by 2030

Berk Kutay Gokmen

Anadolu Ajansi, February 12, 2025

Japan plans to decide by 2030 where to finally dispose of radioactive Fukushima soil removed during the decontamination process following the 2011 nuclear disaster, local media reported on Wednesday. The plan chalked out by the country's Environment Ministry aims to dispose of all irradiated soil in Fukushima prefecture by March 2045, local English daily The Japan Times reported. The plan, which was reportedly presented by the ministry in a panel, includes a process for selecting sites for the disposal of irradiated soil from fiscal 2025. By the end of December 2024, approximately 14 million cubic meters of such soil had been transferred to a storage facility in Fukushima Prefecture. Three-quarters of the soil had radiation levels of 8,000 becquerels per kilogram or lower and will be repurposed for public works, while the remaining soil will be disposed of permanently.

<https://www.aa.com.tr/en/asia-pacific/japan-to-pick-final-disposal-sites-for-crippled-nuclear-plant-soil-by-2030/3480144>

Japan accelerates production of improved Type 12 missile

Ridzwan Rahmat

Janes, February 14, 2025

Japan will begin mass production of its enhanced Type 12 surface-to-ship missile (SSM) earlier than projected and has allocated funds to procure the weapon in its defence budget for fiscal year (FY) 2025. In response to recent questions from Janes, a spokesperson from the country's Ministry of Defence (MoD) replied that "positive results" have been obtained in the ongoing research and development (R&D) effort to enhance the weapon type. No elaborations on these "positive results" were given but the spokesperson noted that as an outcome of this, the country is now poised to begin early mass production of the missile. In pursuit of this, the MoD has budgeted JPY16.8 billion (USD110.1 million) in its defence budget for FY 2025 to procure an undisclosed number of units of the missile, with all R&D projected to be completed by FY 2026, the spokesperson added.

[https://www.janes.com/osint-insights/defence-news/weapons/japan-accelerates-production-of-improved-type-12-missile#:~:text=Japan%20will%20begin%20mass%20production,fiscal%20year%20\(FY\)%202025](https://www.janes.com/osint-insights/defence-news/weapons/japan-accelerates-production-of-improved-type-12-missile#:~:text=Japan%20will%20begin%20mass%20production,fiscal%20year%20(FY)%202025)

Japan bolsters anti-air defence with \$900 million purchase of US missiles

Seth Robson

Stars and Stripes, February 5, 2025

The United States has approved a \$900 million missile sale to Japan, the third major arms purchase of its kind by the American ally in a little over a year. The State Department on Friday notified Congress that it had OK'd the sale of 150 Standard Missile 6 Block I weapons to Tokyo, according to a notice that day on the Defence Security Cooperation Agency's website. The Japan Maritime Self-Defence Force could deploy the missiles on its warships equipped with the Aegis Weapon System, according to the notice. "The proposed sale will further enhance Japan's capability to protect Japan

and local allied land forces and will significantly improve Japan's contribution to integrated air missile defence in the Indo-Pacific region," the notice states. The sale includes vehicle launch system canisters; parts and support equipment; engineering, integration and test support to produce the missiles; test and handling equipment; training aids; technical publications and data; and logistics support.

https://www.stripes.com/theaters/asia_pacific/2025-02-04/missile-sale-japan-china-16721543.html

North Korea

North Korea says US arms aid cannot 'save' S. Korea from strategic deficiency

The Korea Times, February 2, 2025

North Korea on Sunday accused the United States of stepping up weapons aid to allies in what it called an attempt to cement its hegemonic status, saying such weapons provisions are still not sufficient to "save" South Korea from a strategic deficiency. The North's state media made the accusation after the U.S. Defence Security Cooperation Agency recently announced proposed sales of weapons to South Korea, which will include BQM-177A subsonic sea-skimming aerial targets for Aegis-equipped destroyers and GQM-163 target drones. "The U.S., the world's biggest war merchant, is getting worked up, more than ever, on its weapons sales scheme to nations that follow (the U.S.)," the Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) said in a commentary, stressing that such sales to South Korea are increasingly becoming "persistent."

North Korean aviation officials tour leading Russian drone training center

Anton Sokolin

NK News, February 13, 2025

North Korean aviation officials toured a leading Russian drone training center in what experts described as a bid to acquire

technology for mass production of military unmanned aerial vehicles. A delegation from the DPRK's National Aviation Administration visited Russia from Feb. 3-11, touring Moscow State Technical University of Civil Aviation (MSTUCA) and taking part in a large-scale aviation expo, according to state media and a press release from the university. The officials, led by the head of the North Korean aviation authority Rim Kwang Ung, visited MSTUCA's "Technopark for Unmanned Aerial Vehicles" (UAV) where future drone pilots are being trained and the university's labs. Boris Eliseev, the university's rector who led the delegation on the tour, previously told Russian media that the Technopark is equipped with over "40 flight simulators, a training track for drone racing and lab stands for aircraft repair and diagnostics."

<https://www.nknews.org/2025/02/north-korean-aviation-officials-tour-leading-russian-drone-training-center/>

North Korea welcomes Trump back with 'strategic' cruise missile test: What's next?

Colin Clark

Breaking Defence, February 4, 2025

North Korea's test launch of a "strategic" underwater-launched cruise missile within a week of President Donald Trump's inauguration brought back into the spotlight a key geopolitical relationship from Trump's first term: How he will approach North Korean leader Kim Jong Un. The American president's relationship with Kim was a source of soundbites and drama between 2017 and 2021. It was the origin of "fury and fire" as a nuclear crisis between the two countries escalated in 2017. It was also the core of Trump's 2019 meeting at the DMZ, when Trump became the first US leader to step foot into North Korean territory. And this last week, Trump said he would reach back out to Kim, saying of the dictator, "He liked me." But while that relationship warmed over Trump's term, North Korea has a tendency to want to make sure it's seen on the world stage with proverbial fireworks – or as close to proverbial as one can get

when it involves missile launches. Which means the January 25 launch, which was "successful" according to the Korean Central News Agency, could very well have been timed to catch the attention of the newly-sworn-in American leader.

<https://breakingdefense.com/2025/02/north-korea-welcomes-trump-back-with-strategic-cruise-missile-test-whats-next/>

North Korea says its nuclear weapons designed for combat use, not 'bargaining items'

Islamuddin Sajid

Anadolu Ajansi, February 9, 2025

North Korea said Saturday its nuclear weapons have been designed for combat use, not "bargaining items" amid tension on the Korean Peninsula. Pyongyang said in a commentary published by the state-run Korean Central News Agency (KCNA), that its nuclear force is not for negotiations but for combat use, after the US said Washington would seek "complete denuclearization of North Korea," under President Donald Trump, "Our nuclear force is not something that can be advertised to earn recognition from anybody and not even bargaining items that can be exchanged for a few pennies," said KCNA. "Our country's nuclear forces are for constant combat use to quickly eliminate any invasion attempts by hostile forces that infringe upon the country's sovereignty and the safety of its people and threaten regional peace," it wrote in the Korean language.

<https://www.aa.com.tr/en/asia-pacific/north-korea-says-its-nuclear-weapons-designed-for-combat-use-not-bargaining-items/3475523>

North Korea to expand nuclear weapons programme, says Kim Jong-un

Oman Al Yahyai

Euro News, February 10, 2025

Kim Jong-un has said he will bolster North Korea's nuclear weapons programme, after calling a security alliance between the

United States, South Korea, and Japan a severe threat to his country. In a speech on Saturday marking the 77th anniversary of the Korean People's Army, Kim accused Washington of orchestrating a NATO-style military bloc in the region. Kim said the trilateral security arrangement between Washington, Seoul and Tokyo was "raising a grave challenge to the security environment of our state," according to the official Korean Central News Agency (KCNA). Amid stalled diplomatic efforts in recent years, Kim has prioritised the expansion and modernisation of North Korea's nuclear capabilities. In response, the US and South Korea have intensified their joint military exercises, including trilateral drills with Japan. Since assuming office on 20 January, Trump has expressed a willingness to re-engage with Kim, frequently referencing his previous summits with the North Korean leader.

<https://www.euronews.com/2025/02/10/north-korea-to-expand-nuclear-weapons-programme-says-kim-jong-un>

South Korea

South Korea increases support for domestic nuclear industry

World Nuclear News, February 10, 2025

The Ministry of Trade, Industry and Energy has announced KRW150 billion (USD103 million) of financial support this year to companies within South Korea's nuclear power industry - an increase of KRW50 billion compared with last year. "The government is moving forward with large-scale policy fund support to enhance the competitiveness of domestic companies and support the continuous growth of the nuclear power industry," the ministry said. It will begin selecting companies to benefit from the Nuclear Power Plant Ecosystem Financial Support Project, which will provide low-interest loans for facility investment and operating funds for small and medium-sized nuclear power companies. The Ministry of Trade, Industry

and Energy (MOTIE) noted that since the financial support project was launched in 2024, it has successfully provided about KRW100 billion in loans to 69 companies. It said this year's budget has been increased "considering the recent acceleration of construction of Shin Hanul units 3 and 4, and the expansion of overseas orders (Egypt, Romania, etc)".

<https://www.world-nuclear-news.org/articles/south-korea-increases-support-for-domestic-nuclear-industry>

Korean SMR-powered container ship design revealed

World Nuclear News, February 10, 2025

South Korea's HD Korea Shipbuilding & Offshore Engineering has unveiled a nuclear-powered container ship model utilising small modular reactor technology. The design was revealed on 12 February at the New Nuclear for Maritime Houston Summit, held at the Asia Society Texas Center in Houston, USA. Previously, HD Korea Shipbuilding & Offshore Engineering (HD KSOE) obtained Approval in Principle (AIP) from the American Bureau of Shipping (ABS) for a 15,000 TEU-class container ship design model applying small modular reactor (SMR) technology. HD KSOE - a subsidiary of HD Hyundai - says the newly unveiled design model features enhanced economic efficiency and safety by incorporating actual equipment and safety design concepts. Unlike conventional ships, nuclear-powered vessels do not require engine exhaust systems or fuel tanks. The company has optimised the space previously occupied by large engine room equipment to accommodate additional containers, enhancing economic efficiency. It has also applied a marine radiation shielding system using a double-tank method with stainless steel and light water to ensure safety.

<https://www.world-nuclear-news.org/articles/korean-smr-powered-container-ship-design-revealed>

South Korea backs nuclear industry with \$100 Million of financial support for 2025

David Dalton

Nucnet, February 11, 2025

South Korea will provide more than \$100m (•96m) worth of financial support this year to businesses in the nuclear power plant industry to encourage development of the sector, the industry ministry said on 10 February. The fund will be used to support the local nuclear power plant industry with the aim of strengthening the competitiveness of South Korean companies, the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Energy said. The move comes amid growing demands for electricity sparked by a boom in the AI sector and calls for carbon neutrality. The ministry said it has increased this year's budget by about \$35m from 2024 to respond to increasing demand for investment in the sector on the back of nuclear power plant exports in recent years and the move to build new power plants in South Korea. Companies selected for support can receive loans of up to about \$7.5m at a low interest rate of 1-2%. The funding will be provided through eight commercial banks. Following his election 2022 president Yoon Suk Yeol* reversed previous president Moon Jae-in's policy of phasing out nuclear power. In July 2022, Yoon said he wanted to restore the country's nuclear power plant ecosystem and backed plans by ministers to resume work on Shin-Hanul-3 and Shin-Hanul-4. Work on those two units was halted by Moon's administration.

<https://www.nucnet.org/news/south-korea-backs-nuclear-industry-with-usd100-million-of-financial-support-for-2025-2-2-2025>

J. Southeast Asia

Indonesia

Indonesia says UAE firm to explore clean energy, amending statement on nuclear power

Reuters, February 16, 2025

Emirates Global Aluminium plans to explore alternative clean energy development in

Indonesia, Jakarta said, amending a statement denied by the company that EGA planned to build a nuclear power plant in the Southeast Asian country. Indonesia's economic affairs ministry issued a statement late on Saturday, replacing one that had said EGA planned to build a nuclear plant of up to 5 gigawatts in an attempt to remedy a shortage of low-carbon power bedeviling efforts to boost capacity at an aluminium smelter in North Sumatra.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/energy/indonesia-says-uaes-emirates-global-aluminium-plans-nuclear-power-plant-2025-02-13/#:~:text=Indonesia%20has%20no%20nuclear%20power,state%20Downed%20Indonesia%20Asahan%20Aluminium.>

Indonesia pursues nuclear power for energy needs, not weapons

Antara News, February 8, 2025

Indonesia is pursuing the development of nuclear energy with the sole purpose of supporting energy self-sufficiency, with no intention of using it for weapons, according to a minister. "Our focus is on energy self-sufficiency, not offensive expansion," National Development Planning Minister (PPN) Rachmat Pambudy said as quoted in a statement from the PPN Ministry on Saturday. Pambudy highlighted this objective during a meeting with ministry officials to explore the potential of nuclear power plants in supporting national development. "We need concrete steps to ensure that this nuclear development is not only technically successful but also beneficial for the Indonesian people," he affirmed. To this end, Pambudy urged his team to formulate a strategic and comprehensive plan for building nuclear power plants.

<https://en.antaranews.com/news/344173/indonesia-pursues-nuclear-power-for-energy-needs-not-weapons>

RI Govt to form working group on nuclear power plant development

Antara News, February 11, 2025

Indonesia's National Development Planning Ministry (Bappenas) will help

form a working group tasked with revising institutional issues for the development of nuclear power plants. "We must not go beyond our limits in planning. Because this is the moment, it cannot be repeated. If we miss it, we will continue to be trapped in discussions like this without real action," Deputy Minister of National Development Planning Febrian Alphyanto Ruddyard said. He made the remarks during a meeting with the Nuclear Energy Research Organization of the National Research and Innovation Agency (ORTN BRIN) and PT Industri Nuklir Indonesia (Persero) in Jakarta on Monday. For the development of nuclear power plants, Indonesia has yet to fulfill three things: national position, organizational readiness, and mapping of stakeholders.

<https://en.antaranews.com/news/344421/ri-govt-to-form-working-group-on-nuclear-power-plant-development>

Malaysia

Nuclear Energy in Southeast Asia: A New Era?

Fox Chen

ARC Advisory Group, February 12, 2025

Nuclear energy development in Southeast Asia is back in the spotlight. Vietnam has recently unveiled a nuclear power development plan, with the goal of getting its first reactor online in the next decade. This aligns with the country's efforts to strengthen energy security and drive economic growth. The government is working on establishing a regulatory framework, developing the necessary human resources, and building research infrastructure for nuclear energy by 2030. The revised Vietnam Power Development Plan VIII (PDP8) suggests having at least one operational nuclear plant between 2031 and 2035. Vietnam is already in talks with foreign partners for its first two nuclear plants, targeting a combined capacity of 4 GW by 2031. Interest in nuclear energy in Southeast Asia isn't new. However, after the 2011 Fukushima disaster, nuclear projects were put on hold due to safety concerns and public

resistance. Today, rising energy demands, climate goals, and sustainability efforts are prompting the region to reconsider nuclear power. The increasing focus on AI since the launch of ChatGPT in 2022 has further highlighted the need for reliable power to support energy-intensive infrastructure such as data centers.

<https://www.arcweb.com/blog/nuclear-energy-southeast-asia-new-era>

Royal Malaysian Navy LMS Batch II to use ROKETSAN'S ATMACA anti-ship missiles

Defence Security Asia, February 8, 2025

The "ATMACA" missile, which ranges in length from 4.3 to 5.2 meters and weighs 750 kg, can target up to 250 km away, compared to the 130 km range of the American-made "Harpoon Block II" anti-ship missile. Malaysia has become the second Southeast Asian nation to adopt the "ATMACA" anti-ship missile, through the acquisition of three Littoral Mission Ships (LMS) Batch 2 for the Royal Malaysian Navy (RMN), which will be constructed by the Turkish company Savunma Teknolojieri Muhendiskil (STM). Developed by ROKETSAN, the "ATMACA" missile is capable of hitting targets up to 250 km away. STM's general manager, Ozger Guleryuz, stated recently that the construction and outfitting of the LMS Batch 2 vessels will take place in Turkey, involving close collaboration with various firms from the Turkish defence sector.

https://defencesecurityasia.com/en/malaysias-lms-batch-ii-to-use-roketsans-atmaca-anti-ship-missiles/#google_vignette

Malaysia fleet grows, 30 F/A-18s may sync with Sukhoi Su-30s

Boyko Nikolov

Bulgarian Military, February 3, 2025

The Malaysian Air Force is preparing to significantly bolster its combat power with a major deal for 30 F/A-18C/D fighter jets. These aircraft will be provided by

Kuwait, which is replacing them with Eurofighter Typhoons as part of its modernization of air forces. The value of the deal for the new jets is substantial, and the transaction is expected to be finalized in 2025. Approval has already been granted by Kuwait, but U.S. authorization for re-export remains the final step. The process for securing the F/A-18s began with an inspection by a Malaysian delegation in October 2024. Malaysia is already familiar with these jets, having operated 8 of them since 1997, and they know exactly what to look for. The aircraft are maintained in-country, which gives confidence that the deal will be a sound one.

<https://bulgarianmilitary.com/2025/02/03/malaysia-fleet-grows-30-f-a-18s-may-sync-with-sukhoi-su-30s/>

Philippines

Exclusive: India expects \$200 million missile deal with Philippines this year, sources say

Shivam Patel

Reuters, February 13, 2025

India expects to sell short-range missiles to the Philippines this year in a deal worth more than \$200 million, Indian sources told Reuters, for New Delhi's second major defence export contract with Manila as tension grows with China. The Akash missile system developed by India's defence research body has drawn interest from the Philippines, which has told New Delhi it would make an order in the fiscal year that begins in April, said three sources.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/india/india-expects-200-million-missile-deal-with-philippines-this-year-sources-say-2025-02-13/>

Southeast Asia looks to nuclear power to supercharge its energy transition

The Associated Press

The Asahi Shimbun, February 3, 2025

Southeast Asia's only nuclear power plant, completed four decades ago in Bataan,

about 40 miles from the Philippine capital Manila, was built in the 1970s but left idle due to safety concerns and corruption. It has never produced a single watt of energy. Now the Philippines and other countries in fast-growing Southeast Asia are looking to develop nuclear energy in their quest for cleaner and more reliable energy. Nuclear energy is viewed by its proponents as a climate solution since reactors don't emit the plant-warming greenhouse gases released by burning coal, gas or oil. Advances in technology have helped reduce the risks from radiation, making nuclear plants safer, cheaper to build and smaller. "We see multiple signs of a new era in nuclear power across the world," said Faith Birol, executive director of the International Energy Agency, adding that it expects 2025 to be a historical high for nuclear-generated electricity because of new plants, new national plans and interest in smaller nuclear reactors. Nuclear energy has been used for decades in wealthier nations like the U.S., France and Japan. It produces about 10% of all electricity generated worldwide, with 413 gigawatts of capacity operating in 32 countries, according to the IEA. That is more than Africa's entire generating capacity. The IEA says construction of new nuclear power plants needs to "accelerate significantly" in this decade to meet global targets for ending emissions of greenhouse gases.

<https://www.asahi.com/ajw/articles/15610827>

Advisory on the long march 8A rocket launch

Philippine Space Agency, February 11, 2025

The Philippine Space Agency (PhilSA) confirms the launch of the Long March 8A rocket from the People's Republic of China. Expected debris from the rocket launch was projected to have fallen within the identified drop zones approximately ~85 NM away from Rozul Reef, 40 NM away from Puerto Princesa, Palawan, and ~33 NM away from Hadji Muhtamad, Basilan. The Long March 8A rocket was launched

from the Wenchang Spacecraft Launch Site in Wenchang, Hainan at around 5:30 PM PhST on 11 February 2025. Details of the rocket drop zone were disclosed through a Notice to Airmen (NOTAM) warning of an “aerospace flight activity.” PhilSA has disseminated a pre-launch report to relevant government agencies and authorities prior to the launch

<https://philisa.gov.ph/news/advisory-on-the-long-march-8a-rocket-launch/>

Philippines to procure submarines for archipelagic defence

Aaron-Matthew Lariosa

Naval News, February 13, 2025

Manila announced that the Navy will receive two submarines for the defence of the country’s archipelago in the largest and final stage of its military modernization program. “Hopefully, it’s a dream for us, to get at least two submarines,” stated Armed Forces of the Philippines Chief of Staff, Gen. Romeo Brawner, at a Management Association of the Philippines meeting on Wednesday. The Southeast Asian nation, which has never operated a submarine and only began operating modern warships in the 2010s, has grappled with the procurement of attack boats amid its ongoing confrontation with Beijing in the South China Sea. Composed of around 7641 islands and a vast exclusive economic zone, the country’s Navy and Coast Guard have been stretched thin. Frigate, corvette, and offshore patrol programs have taken precedence in the Navy’s procurement since it kicked off modernization in 2016.

<https://www.navalnews.com/naval-news/2025/02/philippines-to-procure-submarines-for-archipelagic-defence/>

Singapore

India seeks to push pace of defence cooperation with South-east Asia

Nirmala Ganapathy

The Straits Times, February 6, 2025

India is ramping up the pace of defence cooperation with South-east Asia – a region

it increasingly views through a defence and security lens – from offering weapons to Indonesia to exploring joint defence production with Thailand and Malaysia.

This is in line with India’s growing ambitions, which have gathered pace of late, to increase influence beyond its immediate neighbourhood of South Asia and grow its global footprint. Analysts noted that India sees an opening in enhancing its presence through defence and security ties in a region where China already has large pockets of economic and strategic influence.

<https://www.straitstimes.com/asia/south-asia/india-seeks-to-push-pace-of-defence-cooperation-with-south-east-asia>

Data centres in Singapore exploring clean energy options, including nuclear reactors

Nasyrah Abdul Rohim

CNA, February 4, 2025

Data centres in Singapore are ramping up demand for renewable energy. Such facilities that store and process vast volumes of digital data guzzle large amounts of electricity to operate servers and cooling systems. Each centre can use up to 33 gigawatts of energy annually – enough to power 900,000 households.

Technology giants in the United States like Amazon and Meta are investing in nuclear energy to power their data centres and support a growing demand for artificial intelligence. In Singapore, many operators are exploring hydrogen and solar power for their increasing needs and to cut carbon emissions. Some are also looking at the option of nuclear reactors, but industry watchers said there is still some distance to go before realising the ambition. For a start, they are pushing for an advisory framework that conducts feasibility studies and grows technical expertise in the field.

<https://www.channelnewsasia.com/singapore/data-centres-singapore-exploring-clean-energy-options-including-nuclear-reactors-4914581>

Singapore raises emissions targets in 2035 to achieve net-zero emission by 2050

Rajah and Tann Asia, February 14, 2025

On 10 February 2025, the National Climate Change Secretariat ("NCCS") unveiled its 2035 emissions targets in Singapore's Second Nationally Determined Contribution and Accompanying Information ("2035 NDC") submitted to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Singapore commits to reduce emissions to between 45 to 50 million tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent ("MtCO₂e") in 2035. Under the Paris Agreement, countries are required to submit their climate targets every five years from 2020 onwards. Singapore's 2035 NDC was prepared as informed by the outcomes of the first global stocktake that concluded in 2023, Singapore's long-term low emissions development strategy, as well as related technical studies and technology roadmaps, while also considering stakeholders' feedback (including feedback from the public). Please refer to our Client Update here for details on NCCS' public consultation on Singapore's decarbonisation journey that was held between 8 October 2024 and 5 November 2024. The 2035 NDC follows up on Singapore's ambition to reduce emissions to 60 MtCO₂e in 2030 as announced in Singapore's Second Update of its First Nationally Determined Contribution and Accompanying Information ("2030 NDC"). With these progressively ambitious targets, Singapore sends a strong signal of its dedication towards the long-term goal of achieving net-zero emissions by 2050.

<https://www.rajahtannasia.com/viewpoints/singapore-raises-emissions-targets-in-2035-to-achieve-net-zero-emission-by-2050/>

K. Central Asia

Kazakhstan

UN pays Kazakhstan \$2.6 million annually for military equipment in golan heights

The Times of Central Asia, February 12, 2025

The United Nations pays Kazakhstan \$2.6 million per year for the lease of military

equipment and weapons used in its peacekeeping mission in the Golan Heights, Kazakhstan's Deputy Defence Minister Shaykh-Khasan Zhazykbayev announced at a Mazhilis meeting. On February 12, Mazhilis deputies ratified a memorandum with the UN outlining the terms of Kazakhstan's contribution to the mission. Since March 2024, 139 Kazakhstani servicemen have been deployed to the region, supported by 26 units of military equipment. Under the agreement, UN payments are divided into two categories: approximately \$2.4 million per year is allocated for personnel maintenance, while \$2.6 million covers the lease of military equipment, weapons, and other resources. Each Kazakhstani peacekeeper receives a monthly salary of \$1,448, along with additional payments for leave and out-of-pocket expenses. A separate agreement between Kazakhstan and the UN regulates financial transactions.

<https://timesca.com/un-pays-kazakhstan-2-6-million-annually-for-military-equipment-in-golan-heights/>

Baikonur Cosmodrome: celebrating 70 Years of launching humanity into space

Aiman Nakispekova

The Astana Times, February 12, 2025

In addition to its wealth of historical monuments that transport visitors to past eras, Kazakhstan is home to a site that tells a different kind of story – one rooted in the technological leaps of the 20th century. This is Baikonur, the world's first and largest cosmodrome, from which humanity took its first steps into space. This year, the cosmodrome marks the 70th anniversary of its establishment. Baikonur's origins trace back to Feb. 12, 1955, when the Soviet government issued a decree establishing Scientific Research Test Site No. 5 in the vast Kazakh steppe. Construction began in secrecy, with military trains arriving at Tyuratam station under the cover of misleading rumors – some even believed a grand stadium was being built. To maintain this illusion, a

wooden sports facility was erected, concealing the actual launch complex. The entire facility was divided into numbered sites, a system that remains in use today – Baikonur itself being designated as Site No.10.

<https://astanatimes.com/2025/02/baikonur-cosmodrome-celebrating-70-years-of-launching-humanity-into-space/>

Nuclear power in Central Asia: The New “New Thing”?

Andrew Kuchins

Center for the National Interest, February 12, 2025

The Central Asian states of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan are exploring the development of nuclear power. Last fall, Kazakhstan passed a controversial referendum to build a nuclear power plant. In 2024, both Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan signed memorandums of understanding with Rosatom to construct smaller plants. Despite the region’s ample hydrocarbons and hydroelectric resources, the Central Asian states continue to experience regular power shortages. How could nuclear power factor into longer-term energy strategies in Central Asia? How does Rosatom view these markets? And how do local and international politics influence these decisions?

<https://cftni.org/recent-events/nuclear-power-in-central-asia-the-new-new-thing/#:~:text=The%20Central%20Asian%20states%20of,Rosatom%20to%20construct%20smaller%20plants.>

Kazakhstan trains a thousand specialists for future nuclear power plants

Dmitry Pokidaev

The Times of Central Asia, February 4, 2025

Six universities in Kazakhstan are currently training personnel for the nuclear and atomic industries. According to Gulzhan Dzharasova, Deputy Chairman of the Committee of Higher and Postgraduate Education at the Ministry of Science,

approximately 1,000 students are pursuing engineering degrees related to the nuclear sector. Kazakhstan’s decision to build its first nuclear power plant (NPP) was made last fall following a referendum, in which more than 70% of the population voted in favor of nuclear energy. The first plant is set to be built in the Almaty region and is expected to be operational by 2035, as the country anticipates an energy shortage by that time. The plant will require a workforce of at least 2,000 employees, and the Ministry of Energy aims to train specialists domestically to meet this demand. To support this initiative, local colleges will introduce training programs for key technical roles, including dosimetrists, steam turbine equipment repair specialists, nuclear power plant maintenance and mechanical repair specialists, and IT professionals specializing in nuclear energy.

<https://timesca.com/kazakhstan-trains-a-thousand-specialists-for-future-nuclear-power-plants/>

Kazakhstan plans to accelerate construction of first nuclear power plant

Dmitry Pokidaev

The Times of Central Asia, February 4, 2025

Kazakhstan’s Energy Minister, Almasadam Satkaliyev, has announced that the selection of a contractor for the country’s first nuclear power plant (NPP) will be finalized in the first half of 2025. The government is awaiting proposals from bidders that focus on shortening construction timelines and reducing project costs. This follows President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev’s directive to expedite the implementation of the nuclear power plant project. “The commission will do everything possible to advance this process and make a decision on the contractor in the first half of 2025,” Satkaliyev told reporters. The shortlist for the potential builders includes four companies: China’s CNNC, Russia’s

Rosatom, South Korea's KHNP, and France's EDF. Kazakh authorities have also indicated that a consortium involving multiple countries might be formed to leverage diverse technological solutions. Deputy Prime Minister Roman Sklyar highlighted the benefits of such collaboration, where different countries could contribute specific components, such as nuclear islands, turbines, or distribution systems. Satkaliyev emphasized the need for faster construction solutions, citing a precedent where China's national nuclear company built a power unit in Pakistan in six years. "In today's world, there are possibilities for expedited solutions," he stated.

<https://timesca.com/kazakhstan-plans-to-accelerate-construction-of-first-nuclear-power-plant/>

Kyrgyzstan

Kasymaliyev: Kyrgyzstan to focus on hydropower and economic growth

Sergey Kwan

The Times of Central Asia, February 12, 2025

As a small, landlocked country in the heart of Central Asia, Kyrgyzstan is prioritizing the expansion of its hydropower potential, enhancing transit opportunities, and digitalizing public administration, Chairman of the Cabinet of Ministers Adylbek Kasymaliyev said at the World Governments Summit in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, on February 11. According to Kasymaliyev, Kyrgyzstan's position as an "upstream country" in the region largely shapes its water policy. The country's total hydropower potential is estimated to exceed 140 billion kilowatt-hours per year. While Kyrgyzstan's abundant water resources meet domestic needs, they also supply irrigation water to large farmland areas in downstream Central Asian countries such as Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan.

<https://timesca.com/kasymaliyev-kyrgyzstan-to-focus-on-hydropower-and-economic-growth/>

Kyrgyzstan and China sign investment agreements for 600 MW wind and solar power projects

Qazaqgreen Magazine, February 6, 2025

On February 5, Kyrgyzstan and China signed investment agreements in the energy sector during a ceremony in Beijing. The agreements were formalized as part of the state visit of Kyrgyz President Sadyr Zhaparov to the People's Republic of China, according to the Ministry of Energy of Kyrgyzstan. Under the agreements, two major renewable energy projects will be developed in Kyrgyzstan: a 300 MW wind farm and a 300 MW solar power plant. The deals were signed between the Cabinet of Ministers of Kyrgyzstan and the Chinese energy company Shenzhen Energy Group Co., Ltd. Kyrgyz Minister of Energy Taalaibek Ibrayev and Shenzhen Energy Vice President Li Zhuoge signed the documents on behalf of their respective parties. This partnership marks a significant step in advancing Kyrgyzstan's renewable energy sector, attracting foreign investment, and strengthening the country's energy security. Shenzhen Energy is one of the largest power producers in Shenzhen and a key investor in energy infrastructure. The company develops and operates both traditional and renewable energy projects and invests in initiatives aimed at improving energy efficiency.

<https://qazaqgreen.com/en/news/central-asia/2545/>

Tajikistan

Kazakhstan, Tajikistan strengthen strategic partnership

Dana Omirgazy

Astana Times, February 12, 2025

President of Kazakhstan Kassym-Jomart Tokayev underscored the stable and positive growth of bilateral relations

between Kazakhstan and Tajikistan and emphasized the importance of enhancing their strategic partnership during a Feb. 12 meeting with Minister of Foreign Affairs of Tajikistan Sirojiddin Muhridin. Sirojiddin Muhridin and Kassym-Jomart Tokayev. Photo credit: Akorda. He commended the Treaty on Allied Relations signed the previous year, which he described as a significant milestone in the cooperation between Astana and Dushanbe. He expressed Kazakhstan's deep respect for the fraternal ties with Tajikistan, emphasizing the longstanding mutual support between the two nations. "We highly value friendly relations with Tajikistan, with which we have no unresolved questions. Kazakhstan has special feelings for the brotherly Tajik people. Our countries have always supported each other, and today this is reflected in our desire to develop bilateral ties," Tokayev said.

<https://astanatimes.com/2025/02/kazakhstan-tajikistan-strengthen-strategic-partnership/>

Latest baikonur space launch helps to set a record

The Times of Central Asia, February 12, 2025

It seemed almost routine: One American astronaut and two Russian cosmonauts traveling to the International Space Station in a Soyuz MS-26 spacecraft from the Baikonur Cosmodrome in Kazakhstan. After all, the Russian-run facility in a remote, barren part of the Central Asian country has been a mainstay of travel to the station for many years. But the three-hour trip on the Soyuz on Wednesday made some space history, increasing the total number of people currently in Earth's orbit to a record of 19. The previous record of 17 was set last year. The trip brings the number of people currently on the International Space Station to 12, including seven Americans and five Russians, according to NASA. The group will get a little smaller on Sept. 23, when one American and two Russians are scheduled to depart. There are also three people on China's space station and four

people led by billionaire Jared Isaacman on the five-day Polaris Dawn mission, for a total of 19.

<https://timesca.com/latest-baikonur-space-launch-helps-to-set-a-record/>

Tajikistan's CBRN agency designated as new IAEA collaborating centre for nuclear security

Zoe Rutherford

CBRNe World, February 3, 2025

The Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear Safety and Security Agency of Tajikistan joins IAEA's network to strengthen nuclear security in Central Asia and beyond through enhanced cooperation and capacity-building initiatives. Tajikistan's Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear Safety and Security Agency (CBRN SSA) has been designated as a new IAEA Collaborating Centre, marking a significant step towards bolstering nuclear security in Central Asia. The official designation was announced during a signing ceremony held in Vienna, underscoring the growing cooperation between Tajikistan and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Lydie Evrard, IAEA Deputy Director General and Head of the Department of Nuclear Safety and Security, emphasized the importance of this collaboration, noting that the designation will enhance nuclear security efforts in the region. "The designation of CBRN SSA as an IAEA Collaborating Centre will strengthen the cooperation between Tajikistan and the IAEA to efficiently support regional activities in key areas of nuclear security," Evrard said. "This will contribute to enhancing nuclear security in Central Asia and internationally," she added.

<https://cbrneworld.com/news/tajikistans-cbrn-agency-designated-as-new-iaea-collaborating-centre-for-nuclear-security>

World's Tallest Dam rising in Tajikistan, will generate power of 3 nuclear reactors

Christopher Gomez

Greek Reporter, February 13, 2025

Tajikistan is fully investing in hydropower by building the Rogun Dam, the world's tallest upon completion. The move could reshape the energy balance in Central Asia and reduce its reliance on imported energy. Typically, a customer of Russia for fossil fuels, the currently under-construction Rogun Dam, could completely transform their economy by positioning them as a key energy player in the region. Tajikistan's Rogun Dam will be the tallest in the world. The Rogun Dam is projected to produce 36,000 megawatts of energy, equivalent to the power provided by three nuclear reactors. The project is viewed as the crucial ace up Tajikistan's sleeve to become completely energy-independent. It could turn the nation into the primary energy supplier for its neighbors Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan, facilitating their transition from gas to electricity.

<https://greekreporter.com/2025/02/13/tajikistan-world-tallest-dam-nuclear-reactors/>

Russia advances uranium cleanup in Central Asia

Nuclear Engineering International, February 5, 2025

Russia is continuing remediation of former uranium mining sites in central Asia with a new project in Tajikistan. Central Asia was an important source of uranium in the former Soviet Union. A large amount of radioactively contaminated material was placed in mining waste dumps and tailing sites and now poses a threat to the environment and the health of the population. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, radioactive waste dumps remained a major environmental problem in some cities and regions of Tajikistan's Sughd region, and a number of tailings still need to be reclaimed. One of these sites, which will be mothballed with Russian funding, is the

Taboshar-3 training ground in Istiklol, the Chairman of the city, Kayum Mahmoudzoda, told a press conference. He said design work is currently underway. "Recently, Rosatom representatives came on a working trip. It is planned that by the end of this year both the Taboshar-3 test site and the existing landfill in the city of Adrasman will be reclaimed at Russia's expense, he said.

<https://www.neimagazine.com/news/russia-advances-uranium-cleanup-in-central-asia/>

L. West Asia

Armenia

Armenia, India discuss avenues for expansion of defence cooperation

Horizon, February 11, 2025

On a working visit to India, Armenian Defence Minister Suren Papikyan held a meeting with the Minister of Defence of India, Rajnath Singh. The parties commended the current state of bilateral cooperation and explored avenues for further expansion of defence cooperation between Armenia and India. Additionally, the Ministers exchanged views on regional and international security issues. The Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Armenia to India Vahagn Afyan and the Chairman of the Military-Industrial Committee of the Ministry of High-Tech Industry Aram Jivanyan attended the meeting.

<https://horizonweekly.ca/en/armenia-indiadiscuss-avenues-for-expansion-of-defencecooperation/>

Armenian, Belgian defence ministers discuss bilateral cooperation

Armenpress, February 14, 2025

On February 14, in the framework of his working visit to the Federal Republic of Germany, the Minister of Defence of the Republic of Armenia Suren Papikyan met

with the Minister of Defence of the Kingdom of Belgium Theo Francken, the Defence Ministry of Armenia said in a press release. Minister Papikyan congratulated his counterpart on assuming office, wished him success, and expressed hope that Armenia-Belgium cooperation in the defence sector would continue to develop and expand. The Defence Ministers discussed topics related to bilateral cooperation. During the meeting, it was emphasized that the partnership holds significant potential, and an agreement was reached to continue efforts toward its further development.

<https://armenpress.am/en/article/121207>

Ministers of defence of Armenia and Estonia discussed prospects for cooperation

News.am, February 15, 2025

On February 15, the Minister of Defence of the Republic of Armenia Suren Papikyan met with the Minister of Defence of the Republic of Estonia Hanno Pevkur. This is reported by the Armenian Ministry of Defence. The parties discussed prospects for Armenia-Estonia cooperation in the defence sector. Notably, they agreed to initiate defence cooperation, identifying cybersecurity as a particularly promising area of cooperation.

<https://news.am/eng/news/866874.html>

Armenia's high-tech minister, World Bank representatives discuss prospects of enhanced cooperation

Armenpress, February 15, 2025

Armenia's high-tech minister, World Bank representatives discuss prospects of enhanced cooperation. Minister of HighTech Industry of the Republic of Armenia Mkhitar Hayrapetyan received representatives of the World Bank, led by the World Bank Regional Director for the South Caucasus, Rolande Pryce. The meeting was attended by First Deputy Minister Gevorg Mantashyan, Deputy Minister Gevorg Meliksetyan, Country Manager of the World Bank (WB) for Armenia, Carolin Geginat, and other

representatives. According to the Ministry of High-Tech Industry, Minister Hayrapetyan presented the strategic directions and priorities of the Government of Armenia, highlighting the importance of the "Crossroads of Peace" project, which aims to promote regional connectivity.

<http://armenpress.am/en/article/1212111>

Cyprus

Greece, Cyprus discuss defence upgrade Iole Damaskinos

Cyprus Mail, February 5, 2025

The Greek defence minister met with his counterpart in Cyprus to discuss bilateral cooperation and upgrading the Republic's defence infrastructures. The meeting came in the wake of a European Council resolution taken on Monday to boost defence spending across the bloc, over which President Nikos Christodoulides had expressed "absolute" satisfaction. Greek Defence Minister Nikos Dendias' meeting with his counterpart Vassilis Palmas, preceded a meeting at the presidential palace with Christodoulides. "Cyprus and Greece are pillars of security, stability and peace in the Mediterranean, demonstrating an indisputable respect for the UN charter, international law and the Law of the Sea," Palmas said after the meetings.

<https://cyprusmail.com/2025/02/05/greece-cyprusdiscuss-defence-upgrade>

Iran

Iran advances in air defence technology with Zoubin missile system amid tensions with Israel

Army Recognition, February 3, 2025

According to a recent video published by Iran National TV, the Iranian defence industry has made significant strides in enhancing its air defence capabilities, showcasing the development of the locallymade Zoubin air defence missile system. This new system comes amid

rising tensions in the region, particularly after Israel's reported airstrikes on Iranian military sites. In response to these growing threats, Iran has ramped up its efforts to bolster the protection of its critical infrastructure with advanced mobile air defence systems. Following an escalation in tensions with Israel, which included reported strikes on Iranian military sites, Iran is focusing its efforts on improving the protection of its key infrastructure and defence assets. The Zoubin system is a direct response to the growing need for modern, mobile, and versatile air defence solutions capable of countering a variety of aerial threats, including cruise missiles, drones, and low-flying aircraft.

<https://armyrecognition.com/news/armynews/2025/iran-advances-in-air-defencetechnology-with-zoubin-missile-systemamid-tensions-with-israel>

Iran displays Russian-made defence systems in military exercise

The Economic Times, February 5, 2025

Iran used Russian-made long-range air defence systems in a military exercise following Israeli strikes last October which Israel said had seriously weakened Tehran's defensive capabilities. The exercise took place one day after Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu met U.S. President Donald Trump to discuss regional topics including Iran's nuclear programme. Both leaders said Iran could not be allowed to develop nuclear weapons, with Trump announcing earlier the resumption of his "maximum pressure" campaign on Iran to drive its oil exports down to zero in order to stop it from obtaining a nuclear weapon. On Oct. 26, Israeli war planes hit missile factories and other sites near Tehran and in western Iran, the Israeli military had said. This followed an Iranian attack on Israel on Oct. 1 involving about 200 ballistic missiles.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/defence/iran-displays-russian-made-defencesystems-in-militaryexercise/articleshow/117950314.cms?from=mdr>

Iran air defence systems work in tandem in war game

Mehrnews, February 5, 2025

The Iranian military forces employed the homegrown Bavar 373 and the S-300 air defence missile systems in an exercise to bring down high-altitude targets. On the final day of the second stage of the largescale war game on Wednesday, the Iranian air defences utilized the Bavar 373 and the S-300 missile systems integrated into the nationwide air defence network. Operating in tandem, the two air defence missile systems detected and detonated highaltitude targets. On February 2, the Defence Ministry unveiled an upgraded version of 'Bavar 373' air defence missile system, whose launcher stations have been equipped with separate radar sets that provide detection and tracking of targets as well as fire control, allowing each launcher to act independently without reliance on a central radar.

<https://en.mehrnews.com/news/227957/Iran-air-defence-systems-work-in-tandem-inwar-game>

Iran to unveil new defence systems

Mehrnews, February 5, 2025

Iran's Defence Minister Brigadier General Aziz Nasirzadeh announced that the country is set to unveil new defence systems in the near future. Iranian Minister of Defence and Armed Forces Logistics stated that Iran's defence industry achievements will increasingly benefit other sectors of the country. Speaking on the sidelines of the cabinet meeting, he emphasized that over 7,000 knowledgebased companies are currently collaborating with the defence sector. He further announced that Iran is set to export all its defence industry products, adding that a significant portion of the country's military production is already being exported. Regarding upcoming military drills, Minister Nasirzadeh confirmed that the ongoing exercises are

expected to continue until mid-March, with the unveiling of new defence systems.

<https://en.mehrnews.com/news/227961/Iran-to-unveil-new-defence-systems>

Iran says Trump's concern about nuclear weapons can be resolved

The Economic Times, February 5, 2025

U.S. concerns about Iran developing nuclear weapons are not a complicated issue and can be resolved given Tehran's opposition to weapons of mass destruction, Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi. U.S. President Donald Trump restored his "maximum pressure" campaign on Iran, that includes efforts to drive its oil exports down to zero in order to stop Tehran from obtaining a nuclear weapon. "If the main concern is that Iran should not pursue nuclear weapons, this is achievable and not a complicated issue. Iran's position is clear: it is a member of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, and the Supreme Leader's fatwa has already clarified our stance [against weapons of mass destruction]," Araqchi said. "Maximum pressure is a failed experience and trying it again will lead to another failure." Trump initiated the "maximum pressure" campaign on Iran during his first term, after exiting a nuclear pact between Tehran and world powers which had lifted international sanctions in exchange for limits on Iran's nuclear programme.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/defence/iran-says-trumps-concern-about-nuclear-weapons-can-be-resolved/articleshow/117944616.cms?from=mdr>

Iran claims to have integrated S-300 components with indigenous Bavar-373

Jeremy Binnie

Janes, February 6, 2025

An S-300 launcher and a 64N6E2 radar are seen behind the Bavar-373 TELAR during the air-defence exercise. The Islamic Republic of Iran Air Defence Force (IRIADF) has successfully integrated its Bavar-373

indigenous long-range air defence system with its Russian-made S300, it was claimed on 5 February. In a report on the second phase of an ongoing air-defence exercise, Iranian television news showed the new transporter erector launcher and radar (TELAR) version of the Bavar-373 deployed with the system's search radar and a launcher from the S-300 system at a location that could be identified as an air-defence base south of Tehran's Imam Khomeini International Airport.

<https://www.janes.com/osintinsights/defence-news/weapons/iranclaims-to-have-integrated-s-300-components-with-indigenous-bavar-373>

Iran's nuclear program achieving world class advancements, declares AEOI chief

Tehran times, February 7, 2025

Iran has achieved full mastery of nuclear science and is now ranked among the 18 countries with a recognized nuclear industry, according to Mohammad Eslami, head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI). During a one-day visit to the city of Qom on Thursday, Eslami met with senior religious scholars and clerics to discuss the country's latest advancements in nuclear technology and its broader applications in various fields. Speaking at the meeting, Eslami emphasized that Iran's nuclear energy program has reached the level of developed nations, despite ongoing opposition from global powers. "Today, the Islamic Republic of Iran has full mastery of nuclear science and is among the select group of 18 countries with an established nuclear industry," he stated. Eslami highlighted that Iran's progress in nuclear technology has been achieved despite resistance from "hegemonic powers." He noted that the country remains under some of the strictest monitoring measures imposed by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) due to its nuclear advancements.

<https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/509523/Iran-s-nuclear-program-achieving-world-class-advancements-declares>

Iran to inaugurate several nuclear technology projects

Mehr news, February 8, 2025

Several nuclear projects are set to be inaugurated inside the Islamic Republic of Iran's soil. Coinciding with the Ten-Day Dawn celebrations of the Islamic Revolution, several nuclear technology projects are set to be inaugurated and put into operation during the visit of Mohammad Eslami, the Head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI), to Isfahan Province. According to reports, on Saturday, February 08, in the presence of Mohammad Eslami, multiple nuclear-related projects will be inaugurated at the Shahid Raeisi Nuclear Site (UCF) in Isfahan. The projects include a comprehensive technical safety test facility, a semi-continuous/ semi-industrial scale fuel pellet sintering furnace, and a Resistance Welding (RW) Machine.

<https://en.mehrnews.com/news/228030/Iran-to-inaugurate-several-nuclear-projects>

IAEA seeking agreement to rein in Iran's nuclear programme

Reuters, February 14, 2025

Time is running out to secure an accord to rein in Iran's nuclear programme as Tehran continues to accelerate its enrichment of uranium to near weapons grade, U.N. nuclear watchdog chief Rafael Grossi. Iran has stepped up nuclear work since 2019, after U.S. President Donald Trump in his first term abandoned a 2015 agreement reached under predecessor Barack Obama. So far there has been little clear policy on the issue, and Iran has continued to advance its nuclear programme, accelerating enrichment of uranium to up to 60% purity, close to the roughly 90% of weapons grade. Grossi said Iran was in the process of increasing around sevenfold its monthly production of uranium enriched to up to 60%. He said Iran would likely have about 250 kg of uranium enriched to up to 60% by the time of the agency's next report in the coming weeks. That is enough in principle,

if enriched further, for six nuclear bombs, according to an IAEA yardstick.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/energy/iaea-chief-sees-time-running-out-reviveiran-nuclear-deal-2025-02-14/>

Iraq

Turkey, Iraq, Syria, Jordan aims to jointly tackle Islamic State, Ankara says

Reuters, February 5, 2025

Turkey, Iraq, Syria and Jordan will take steps toward jointly combating Islamic State in the region and they aim to hold a first meeting on the issue in Jordan, Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan. Since the ousting of former Syrian President Bashar al-Assad in December, Western and regional countries have warned of a possible resurgence of Islamic State. Thousands of members of the militant Islamist group are being held in prison camps in northeast Syria. Fidan told Turkey's state-owned Anadolu news agency that the four countries had reached a preliminary agreement for closer cooperation involving their foreign and defence ministries and intelligence agencies.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/middleeast/turkey-iraq-syria-jordan-aim-jointly-tackle-islamic-state-ankara-says-2025-02-05/>

NATO chief hails strong partnership with Iraq, praises mission's progress

Beyza Binnur Donmez

Anadolu Agency, February 5, 2025

NATO Secretary General Mark Rutte reaffirmed the military alliance's strong partnership with Iraq during his two-day visit to Baghdad, where he met top officials to discuss regional security and the evolving role of the organization's mission in the country. Rutte, who was joined by US Army Gen. Christopher Cavoli during the Feb. 4-5 visit, highlighted the mission's

success since 2018. "I congratulate our Iraqi partners and NMI's (NATO Mission Iraq) leadership and personnel for the excellent level of cooperation developed, in several domains, including security education, logistics, cyber defence, and good governance,". Rutte emphasized that NATO's work in Iraq, based on mutual respect for sovereignty, has been crucial in strengthening the country's security forces and institutions.

<https://www.aa.com.tr/en/middleeast/nato-chief-hails-strong-partnership-with-iraq-praises-missions-progress/3473049>

Iraqi Air Force Strikes ISIL Hideout in Kirkuk

Mehr news, February 10, 2025

Iraq's Air Force launched a precision airstrike on an ISIL hideout in Kirkuk, targeting terrorist remnants based on intelligence reports. The Iraqi Air Force has conducted a new airstrike against ISIL hideouts. According to Iraq's Security Media Cell, the F-16 fighter jets carried out the attack in Kirkuk based on accurate intelligence and special operations efforts. The statement emphasized Iraq's ongoing counterterrorism operations, vowing to eliminate ISIL remnants wherever they operate. In 2017, Iraq declared victory over the ISIL terrorist group after three years of fighting with this group. Despite the Iraqi declaration of victory over ISIL, remnants of ISIL terrorists are still active in some areas of Diyala, Kirkuk, Nineveh, Saladin, Anbar, and Baghdad provinces.

<https://en.mehrnews.com/news/228121/Iraqi-Air-Force-Strikes-ISIL-Hideout-in-Kirkuk>

Israel

Defence Ministry carries out tests on new anti-drone systems in development

Emanuel Fabian

Times of Israel, February 5, 2025

The Defence Ministry's Directorate of Defence Research & Development said

Wednesday that it had completed a series of tests on new anti-drone defence systems that are still in development. Arms contractors Elbit Systems, Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI), Rafael, and six smaller companies – Airobotics, Tamar, Xtend, General Robotics, SMARTSHOOTER, and Robotican – presented different solutions for the unmanned aerial vehicle threat, with the first tests being carried out in October and a final test. The systems that did well in the tests would move on with development with full Defence Ministry funding. The ministry said that during final tests at a firing zone in southern Israel, each of the nine companies "displayed interception capabilities of UAVs of different ranges, speeds, and altitudes."

<https://www.timesofisrael.com/defenceministry-carries-out-tests-on-new-antidrone-systems-in-development/>

IDF confirms SPYDER air-defence system was rushed into service

Yaakov Lappin

Janes, February 6, 2025

The Israel Defence Forces (IDF) has confirmed that it has operationally deployed the Rafael SPYDER air-defence system during the war with Hamas and Lebanese group Hizbullah since October 2023. "Prior to the war, the SPYDER system was not integrated due to the prioritisation of other interception means within the constraints of available resources," the IDF Spokesperson's Unit told Janes. "It was decided [during the war] to acquire the system in accordance with the urgent operational need, after an operational and professional analysis. The process of its integration was carried out in an orderly manner and with the approval of all relevant authorities. "The SPYDER system represents a new concept for the Air Defence Wing of the Israeli Air Force," it added, referring to the IDF branch that operates all its air-defence systems. Unlike Israel's existing air-defence systems, the SPYDER is mobile, rather than operated from fixed sites. It can use Python-5, IDerby, and I-Derby ER

missiles, with all three types available with additional boosters for the longer range versions of the system.

<https://www.janes.com/osintinsights/defence-news/weapons/idfconfirms-spyder-air-defence-system-wasrushed-into-service>

Iran May Be on the Verge of a Nuclear Weapon; Will Israel and the United States Act?

Andrea Stricker

Foundation For Defence of Democracies, February 6, 2025

US President Donald Trump and Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu just met in Washington — and not a moment too soon. A team of scientists in Iran is reportedly working to short-cut Tehran's route to nuclear weapons in case the Iranian leadership orders their complete construction. Trump and Netanyahu have a narrow window to stop Iran if it opts to build those weapons. The US and Israel must urgently review and revamp their intelligence gathering and sabotage capabilities; while preparing military options to jointly destroy Iran's nuclear facilities should it sprint for atomic weapons. According to current and former US officials who spoke to The New York Times on February 3, during the waning months of Joe Biden's administration, unnamed countries — likely the United States and Israel — gathered intelligence indicating "a secret team of [Iranian] scientists is exploring a faster, if cruder, approach to developing an atomic weapon if Tehran's leadership decides to race for a bomb."

https://www.fdd.org/analysis/op_ed/2025/02/06/iran-may-be-on-the-verge-of-a-nuclear-weapon-will-israel-and-the-united-states-act/

India, Israel holds 13th round of Staff Talks, focus on improving defence cooperation

The Economic Times, February 7, 2025

India and Israel successfully held the 13th round of Staff Talks from February 3 to 6 in New Delhi, which focused upon improving

several areas of defence cooperation such as joint training, technology sharing, and regional security. The Additional Directorate General of Public Information of the Indian Army shared details of the talks on X, stating, "The 13th India-Israel Staff Talks were successfully conducted from 03 to 06 February at New Delhi, India. The discussions focused on enhancing defence cooperation, joint training, technology sharing and regional security." Highlighting the importance of the dialogue, the Indian Army added, "This strategic dialogue reaffirms the commitment to mutual growth in defence capabilities, fostering deeper bilateral ties between the two nations united by shared interests and trust."

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/defence/india-israel-hold-13th-round-of-staff-talks-focus-on-improving-defence-cooperation/articleshow/117998600.cms>

US intelligence warns of potential Israeli strike on Iran's nuclear sites by mid-year

Fatma Zehra Solmaz

Anadolu Agency, February 13, 2025

US intelligence officials warned that Israel is likely to launch a pre-emptive strike on Iran's nuclear program by midyear, aiming to exploit Iran's perceived weakness, according to multiple intelligence reports, according to The Washington Post. Intelligence assessments from the former Biden administration and the current Trump administration suggest that such an attack would delay Iran's nuclear program by only weeks or months, while greatly escalating regional tensions and increasing the risk of a broader conflict. White House National Security Council spokesperson Brian Hughes told The Washington Post that President Donald Trump "will not permit Iran to get a nuclear weapon" and emphasized that while Trump prefers a peaceful resolution with Iran, he will not wait indefinitely for negotiations. The most detailed intelligence assessment, issued in early January by the Joint Chiefs of Staff's

intelligence directorate and the Defence Intelligence Agency, warned that Israel is likely planning an attack on Iran's Fordow and Natanz nuclear sites, the report added.

<https://www.aa.com.tr/en/americas/usintelligence-warns-of-potential-israelistrike-on-iran-s-nuclear-sites-by-mid-yearreport/3480960>

As Israel fields Iron Beam, Gulf states are pining for the technology

Elisabeth Gosselin-Malo

Defence News, February 14, 2025

Interest in direct-energy weapons is rising in the Gulf region, a technology in which Israel has proclaimed itself a leader with the fielding of the Iron Beam. Absent the breakthrough capability, militaries in the region are stuck with the costly proposition of shooting interceptor missiles at incoming threats, an economic calculus untenable for some. Sasha Bruchmann, a research fellow at the Bahrain office of the International Institute for Strategic Studies think tank, explained that while there is a common allure among Gulf states to directed-energy weapons, there is no joint initiative in place dedicated to researching or developing such systems. "There has been a shared interest in so far as most would want to have them, they are high on the priority list of most regional states – however, there is no common Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) approach or umbrella that I am aware of to foster this cooperatively or even bilateral cooperation," he said.

<https://www.defencenews.com/global/mid-east-africa/2025/02/14/as-israel-fields-iron-beam-gulf-states-are-pining-for-the-technology/>

Jordan

Jordan's King Abdullah, Iraq's president discuss regional developments

Arab news, February 7, 2025

Jordan's King Abdullah II on Friday spoke on the phone with Iraqi President Abdul Latif Rashid. During the call, the two leaders discussed the latest regional developments

and ongoing coordination between their countries. During the call, King Abdullah emphasized the need to intensify Arab efforts in supporting the Palestinian people in securing their full legitimate rights. He reiterated Jordan's firm rejection of any attempts to annex land or forcibly displace Palestinians in Gaza and the West Bank. The King also stressed the importance of maintaining the ceasefire in Gaza, increasing humanitarian aid, and preventing further escalation in the West Bank. In addition to Palestinian concerns, the conversation highlighted the necessity of continued coordination between Jordan and Iraq in response to regional challenges. The two leaders reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening bilateral ties and addressing shared security and political priorities.

<https://www.arabnews.com/node/2589386/middle-east>

Kuwait

Egypt, Kuwait sign military agreement for cooperation, exchange of expertise

Ibrahim Khazen

Anadolu Agency, February 2, 2025

The agreement came during a meeting between Egyptian Defence Minister Abdel Majeed Saqr and his Kuwaiti counterpart Sheikh Fahad Youssef Saud Al-Sabah, at the Defence Ministry headquarters in Cairo, according to a statement from the Egyptian army. The meeting addressed "the latest developments on both the regional and international fronts and their impact on security and stability in the region amid current circumstances and challenges." They also discussed ways to enhance military relations between the two sides. The Egyptian minister expressed commitment to supporting the prospects of military cooperation between the armed forces of both sides.

<https://www.aa.com.tr/en/middleeast/egypt-kuwait-sign-military-agreement-for-cooperation-exchange-of-expertise/3469749>

U.S. Approves \$1B Military Construction Sale to Kuwait

Defence Mirror, February 7, 2025

The U.S. State Department has approved a potential \$1 billion Foreign Military Sale to Kuwait for design and construction services to enhance its military infrastructure. The Defence Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA) has notified Congress of the possible sale. Kuwait has requested support for maritime and land facility development at Mohammed Al Ahmed Naval Base, Ras Al Ard Naval Base, and an alternate logistics station. The package includes construction of a headquarters complex and various services such as engineering studies, technical support, infrastructure assessments, and project management. The U.S. government states that the proposed sale aligns with its foreign policy objectives by strengthening the defence infrastructure of Kuwait, a key non-NATO ally in the Middle East.

https://www.defencemirror.com/news/38777/U_S_Approves_1B_Military_Construction_Sale_to_Kuwait

Kuwait thwarts large-scale cyberattacks on telecom towers, banks

Middle East Monitor, February 13, 2025

Kuwait said that it had foiled large-scale cyberattacks targeting telecom towers and banks in the Gulf country. An Interior Ministry statement said that the attacks were orchestrated by an international cybercrime ring of Chinese nationals. The ministry said the suspects behind the attacks were arrested and affirmed its commitment to safeguarding national security and strengthening cybersecurity measures to protect the country. It, however, did not specify how many individuals were arrested. According to the statement, the perpetrators used sophisticated electronic devices and advanced data analysis techniques to send fraudulent messages impersonating banks and telecom companies in a bid to carry out phishing scams. The ministry said the

suspects were referred to the relevant authorities for legal action.

<https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20250213-kuwait-thwarts-large-scalecyberattacks-on-telecom-towers-banks/>

Lebanon

Lebanon official media report Israeli drone strike in south

The Economic Times, February 15, 2025

The Israeli military said that it has launched airstrikes on Hezbollah targets in eastern and southern Lebanon. Lebanese official media said an Israeli drone struck the country's south on Saturday, without reporting casualties, days before a deadline in a fragile ceasefire between Israel and Hezbollah. "An Israeli enemy drone carried out a strike" targeting the outskirts of the town of Ainata, the staterun National News Agency (NNA) said, adding that "nobody was hurt" and that "drones and surveillance aircraft are still flying over the area at low altitude". The ceasefire between Israel and Hezbollah came into effect on November 27 after more than a year of hostilities including two months of all-out war. Under the deal, Lebanon's military was to deploy in the south alongside United Nations peacekeepers as the Israeli army withdrew over a 60-day period, and Hezbollah was also to vacate its positions near the border during that timeframe.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/defence/lebanon-official-media-reportisraeli-drone-strike-insouth/articleshow/118279547.cms?from=mdr>

Oman

Oman launches first electronic Drone management platform

Zawya, February 6, 2025

The Civil Aviation Authority (CAA), in collaboration with SIRB Company, has officially launched the 'Sirb Platform', the

first electronic system in the Sultanate of Oman dedicated to the regulation and management of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), commonly known as drones. The inauguration ceremony was held under the patronage of Sayyid Dr Kamil bin Fahd al Said, Secretary-General of the General Secretariat of the Council of Ministers, in the presence of senior officials, aviation sector specialists, and drone enthusiasts. Malik bin Mohammed al Nabhani, cofounder and CEO of Sirb, provided an overview of the platform, highlighting its role in streamlining drone registration and licensing. He noted that the platform will provide detailed guidance on permitted and restricted flight zones, contributing to the safe and structured development of the drone industry in Oman.

<https://www.zawya.com/en/business/aviation/oman-launches-first-electronicdronemanagementplatform-hyocxpko>

Qatar, Turkiye sign defence agreements

Gulf Times, February 4, 2025

HE the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Defence Affairs Sheikh Saoud bin Abdulrahman bin Hassan al-Thani met with the visiting Turkish Minister of National Defence Yasar Guler, and his accompanying delegation. An official reception ceremony was held for the Turkish defence minister. During the meeting, the two sides discussed topics of common interest and ways to enhance and develop them. A number of agreements were also signed between Barzan Holding owned by the Ministry of Defence and Turkish MKE and ISFALT companies, owned by the Turkish Ministry of Defence; with the aim of co-operation in defence technology and military manufacturing fields. The meeting and signing ceremony were attended by a number of senior officials and officers from both sides.

<https://www.gulftimes.com/article/699699/qatar/qatarturkiye-sign-defence-agreements>

Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia increases defence spending to \$78B in 2025

Breaking Defence, February 3, 2025

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has allocated \$78 billion for defence spending in 2025, up from \$75.8 billion spent in 2024, Governor of the General Authority for Military Industries (GAMI) Ahmad Al-Ohali said in a statement. "The Kingdom allocated approximately \$78 billion to the military sector in the 2025 budget, which constitutes 21% of total government spending and 7.1% of Saudi Arabia's gross product," he said, according to the statement. The statement further noted that the Kingdom has witnessed a 4.5 percent annual defence growth since 1960, adding that it has become the fifth largest defence spender worldwide and the largest in the Arab world.

<https://breakingdefence.com/2025/02/saudi-arabia-increases-defence-spending-to78b-in-2025/>

Saudi Arabia to invest \$5b in AI data centre

The Jordan Times, February 12, 2025

A Saudi company will invest \$5 billion to build an artificial intelligence data centre in the futuristic city of NEOM. The agreement, signed between DataVolt and NEOM, would fund the creation of a fully sustainable AI data centre with a 1.5 gigawatt capacity. The project will be located in Oxagon, an industrial city within NEOM, which the kingdom aims to transform into the world's largest floating industrial complex. The NEOM project, unveiled by Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, features a mirrored building dubbed The Line stretching 170 kilometres (105 miles) across the desert from the Gulf of Aqaba. When announcing The Line in 2022, Prince Mohammed said it would house more than one million residents by 2030 and nine million by 2045. But developers

have since revised those projections to 300,000 residents by the end of the decade, according to Bloomberg.

<https://jordantimes.com/news/business/saudi-arabia-invest-5b-ai-data-centre>

Syria

Satellite images show Israel building military bases in Syria buffer zone

Al-Jazeera, February 3, 2025

Israel is building military bases in the demilitarised buffer zone with Syria, according to satellite images seen by Al Jazeera's Sanad verification unit. The images were taken between December 19, 2024, just 11 days after Syria's deposed President Bashar Al-Assad fled to Moscow, and February 1, 2025. They show six sites constructed in that time inside the buffer zone. Another is being constructed outside the buffer zone and inside Syrian territory.

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2025/2/3/satellite-images-show-israel-building-military-bases-in-syria-buffer-zone>

Armed groups in Syria must lay down arms to take part in National Dialogue Conference

Muhammed Karabacak

Anadolu Agency, February 13, 2025

Armed groups in Syria that resist disarming and reject the authority of the Defence Ministry will not be invited to the National Dialogue Conference, said Hassan alDughaim, spokesman for a Preparatory Committee for the conference. Talking to reporters in the capital Damascus, Hassan al-Dughaim added that the PKK/YPG terror group does not represent the Syrian people. "The conference is a patriotic platform that rejects sectarian and ethnic divisions. The conference is a national dialogue, not a demonstration of military power. "Those who do not surrender their weapons to the Ministry of Defence will definitely not be invited. Armed groups and military formations will not participate in the conference as they are against the nature of

the dialogue," he added. Since the fall of the Assad regime, the PKK/YPG has attempted to exploit regional instability to create a "terror corridor" along the border with Türkiye.

<https://www.aa.com.tr/en/middleeast/armed-groups-in-syria-must-laydown-arms-to-take-part-in-national-dialogue-conference/3481519>

From rebuilding the armed forces to selling drones, how Turkey can enhance Syria's defence

Breaking Defence, February 13, 2025

As the new administration in Syria takes control, experts are looking at the role Ankara may play to help boost the Syrian defence sector — starting with rebuilding the armed forces which disassembled after the fall of the Bashar al-Assad regime in December. And if Turkey and Syria truly strengthen their ties, analysts say, expect Syria to emerge as a market for Turkish made weapons and security systems. Syrian transitional president Ahmad Al-Sharaa and Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan met Feb. 4, during which the two men announced the relationship between the two nations would be elevating to a "strategic level." More concretely, Reuters reported the two men also discussed creating a defence pact that would could include establishing Turkish military bases inside Syria.

<https://breakingdefence.com/2025/02/from-rebuilding-the-armed-forces-to-selling-drones-how-turkey-can-enhance-syriasdefence/>

Türkiye

Turkish defence company Aselsan opens office in Oman

Mucahithan Avcioğlu

Anadolu Agency, February 5, 2025

Aselsan, one of Türkiye's leading defence companies, has opened an office in the Gulf nation of Oman. "The new office opened in Muscat, the capital of Oman, will be part of Aselsan's efforts to strengthen its presence in the Middle East and Gulf region, which currently has

offices and subsidiaries in Qatar, the UAE, Saudi Arabia, and Jordan,” said a statement released by the firm. The Oman office will contribute to Aselsan’s global advancement as it produces the best products in its field, develops gamechanging technologies, and expands its exports, according to the statement. “Aselsan’s presence in Oman will offer new opportunities for knowledge transfer and capacity-building activities between the two countries,” it noted. “This expansion is a testament to our commitment to providing advanced defence solutions and developing partnerships in the Gulf region. Our Muscat office will focus on marketing and trade,” said Ahmet Akyol, Aselsan’s CEO and president.

<https://www.aa.com.tr/en/sciencetechnology/turkish-defence-companyaselsan-opens-office-in-oman/3472969>

Turkish defence industry makes technology transfer to Germany

Goksel Yildirim

Anadolu Agency, February 7, 2025

The capabilities of the Turkish defence industry will benefit Germany in a new technology transfer, as Turkish-based Repkon signed a deal with a leading German artillery maker to produce and deliver ammunition to the German Army in a 155-millimeter explosive filling facility. The demand for artillery ammunition has risen significantly since the start of the Russia-Ukraine war, as many countries have been making investments to boost their production capacities. Germany is one of the countries that supplies military aid to Ukraine. Turkish firm Repkon came into the spotlight with its artillery production capabilities, as the company has so far signed contracts to install production facilities for the US, Pakistan, and Azerbaijan. Repkon signed a high-volume contract with a German company to establish a turnkey facility, which will boost the country’s 155-millimeter artillery production capacity. The facility is set to be operational in early 2027.

<https://www.aa.com.tr/en/europe/turkishdefence-industry-makes-technologytransfer-to-germany/3475289>

Turkiye ‘neutralizes’ 15 PKK/YPG terrorists in northern Iraq, Syria

Muhammed Enes Calli

Anadolu Agency, February 9, 2025

Turkish security forces “neutralized” 15 PKK/YPG terrorists in northern Iraq and northern Syria, Türkiye’s National Defence Ministry. Seven PKK terrorists were “neutralized” in the Gara region and four others in the Hakurk region through air operations carried out in northern Iraq between Jan. 29 and Feb. 7, the ministry said on X. “The Turkish Armed Forces continue to take preventive and destructive measures against terrorist organizations for our sacred homeland,” it added. A total of 4 PKK/YPG terrorists were “neutralized” in the Operation Peace Spring zone in northern Syria, the ministry said in a separate statement. “We will continue to respond to terrorist harassment and attack attempts with retaliation,” the ministry said. The term “neutralize” is used by Turkish authorities to indicate that the terrorists were killed, captured, or surrendered.

<https://www.aa.com.tr/en/turkiye/turkiyeneutralizes-15-pkk-ypg-terrorists-in-northern-iraq-syria/3476454>

United Arab Emirates

Federal Authority for Nuclear Regulation to launch transformational projects in 2025

Emirates News Agency, February 4, 2025

UAE’s Federal Authority for Nuclear Regulation (FANR) will further launch a number of transformational projects to support the UAE Government in achieving the vision “We the UAE 2031” to make the UAE ‘the most secure and safe country in the world’, covering radiation safety and safeguards. “We plan to expand our international cooperation by exporting the UAE’s expertise to nuclear newcomer countries to learn about the UAE’s journey of building and operating a four-unit nuclear power plant. We will host the 8th International Symposium on

the System of the Radiological Protection, to be held in October 2025 in Abu Dhabi where almost 600 experts will discuss recent trends and developments in radiation protection and applications, among other aspects," Christer Viktorsson, Director-General of FANR, told a press briefing in Abu Dhabi today.

<https://www.wam.ae/en/article/bi17ejwfederal-authority-for-nuclear-regulationlaunch>

For more than 30 years, the UAE's defence shows have represented the country's ambitions

Nasser Humaid Al Nuaimi

The National News, February 10, 2025

With steady strides, the UAE continues to solidify its position as a global leader in industrial and technological innovation, particularly in the sectors of defence and security. The Tawazun Council stands as one of the strategic pillars driving this vision forward, empowering national industries and enhancing their position within the global framework. These efforts are complemented by a comprehensive system that includes leading national companies, advanced infrastructure, and supportive legislation aligned with global transformations. This integrated system fosters synergy between national security objectives and sustainable development, positioning the UAE as an attractive destination for advanced defence and technology industries.

<https://www.thenationalnews.com/opinion/2025/02/10/idex-navdex-2025-defencemilitary-exhibition-abu-dhabi-uae/>

UAE Energy Minister says Chinese AI app DeepSeek will not affect demand for nuclear energy

Zawya, February 12, 2025

The United Arab Emirates Energy Minister Suhail Mohamed Al Mazrouei he does not think Chinese AI app DeepSeek will affect demand for nuclear energy. Chinese startup DeepSeek has developed AI models that

achieve similar results with significantly less computing power, leading to substantial energy savings.

<https://www.zawya.com/en/specialcoverage/ai-shaping-digital-future/uaeenergy-minister-says-chinese-ai-appdeepseek-will-not-affect-demand-for-nuclear-energy-k5sqgjre>

UAE firm rules out role in nuclear power plant flagged by Indonesia

Stefanno Sulaiman

Zawya, February 13, 2025

Emirates Global Aluminium is not in the nuclear business, a spokesman said on Thursday, describing as "inaccurate" an Indonesian government statement that the company plans to build a nuclear power plant in the Southeast Asian nation. Indonesia has been trying to develop its mineral processing industry by attracting investment on the basis of its rich reserves of minerals such as nickel, copper and bauxite. Its economic affairs ministry said the plant, with capacity of up to 5 gigawatts, was aimed at remedying a shortage of lowcarbon power that bedevils an effort to boost capacity at an aluminium smelter in North Sumatra. "EGA is not in the nuclear power business so, with all respect, the account of this aspect ... is inaccurate," the company's spokesperson said in an email on Thursday, while reiterating its interest in other sectors in Indonesia.

<https://www.zawya.com/en/business/energy/indonesia-says-uaes-emirates-globalaluminium-plans-nuclear-power-plantnvc5w7hm>

Yemen

Yemen's Houthis warn they are ready to attack Israel if Gaza war resumes

Al-Jazeera, February 11, 2025

Yemen's Houthis have announced they are ready to attack Israel if it reneges on its ceasefire deal with Hamas and resumes its assault on Gaza. Leader Abdel-Malik

alHouthi said in a televised speech on Tuesday that the group was “ready to launch a military intervention at any time in case of escalation against Gaza”. The Houthis, who control most of western Yemen, including capital city Sanaa, have launched attacks throughout the Gaza war in stated solidarity with Palestinians in Gaza. Since November 2023, the group has carried out more than 100 attacks on commercial and military ships in the Red Sea and launched missiles and drones towards Israel. It said it would limit attacks after Israel and Hamas reached a ceasefire deal aimed at ending the war last month.

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2025/2/11/yemens-houthis-warn-they-are-ready-to-attack-israel-if-gaza-war-resumes>

Yemeni military ready to confront US, Israeli armies

Mehr News, February 14, 2025

Mohammed Nasser al-Atifi, Defence Minister Yemen said Friday that the Yemeni armed forces are ready to confront the United States and Israeli regime. Speaking in a massive rally in the Yemeni capital of Sanaa on Friday which was held to show solidarity with Palestine, Major General al-Atifi said that the armed forces of Yemen are ready to confront the US and Israeli regime in line with the order of the Ansarullah movement Abdul Malik alHouthi. “We will carry out painful military attacks against the enemies in support of our brotherren in Gaza and in confronting displacement of the Palestinians with God’s support,” said the minister. The demonstrators in the huge rally in the Yemeni capital waved flags of Palestine and Yemen, while chanting slogans in denunciation of Donald Trump’s Gaza displacement scheme. They also chanted slogans in support of the Yemeni Ansarullah movement and other forces of the Axis of Resistance.

<https://en.mehrnews.com/news/228331/Yemeni-military-ready-to-confront-US-Israeli-armies>

M. Europe

Bulgaria

Ukraine’s parliament approves reactor equipment purchase from Bulgaria

World Nuclear News, February 12, 2025

Ukraine’s parliament, the Verkhovna Rada, has backed the plan to purchase unused equipment from Bulgaria’s cancelled Belene nuclear power plant project to complete Khmelnitsky nuclear power plant’s units 3 and 4. Khmelnitsky’s first reactor was connected to the grid in 1987, but work on three other reactors was halted in 1990, at a time when unit 3 was about 80% complete and unit 4 about 25%. Work on the second reactor restarted and it was connected to the grid in 2004, but units 3 and 4 remain uncompleted. The Belene project in northern Bulgaria was for the construction of two 1000 MWe units, using Russian VVER-1000 designs. Preliminary site works began in 2008, and contracts for components including large forgings and I&C systems were signed with suppliers, but the project was stymied by financing problems. Equipment for the nuclear island had been paid for and was manufactured and delivered in 2017 and has since been kept in storage - the then government formally ended plans for the project in 2023

<https://www.world-nuclear-news.org/articles/ukraines-parliament-approves-reactor-equipment-purchase-from-bulgaria>

Finland

ESA and Finland pave the way towards a supersite for Earth observation

The European Space Agency, February 4, 2025

ESA, the Finnish government and the Finnish Meteorological Institute took the initial steps towards establishing a

'supersite' for Earth observation calibration and validation in Sodankylä in Finnish Lapland. Envisaged as a joint investment, this world-class site would bring benefits to both ESA, by helping to further ensure satellites deliver accurate data over high latitude environments, and to Finland by providing Finnish businesses with new opportunities to develop and test environmental sensors and technology. Finland became ESA's 14th Member State in January 1995 and has participated in a wide range of ESA programmes and activities over the past 30 years, including Earth observation, space science, navigation and satellite communications. Without a national space agency of its own, Finland relies on ESA as the foundation for its space activities. In recent years, Finland has also seen a surge in commercial companies in the space sector. This growing interest is evident in the Philab Finland innovation scheme launched by ESA in January 2025 – which focuses on commercialising space technology and funding new startup projects.

https://www.esa.int/Applications/Observing_the_Earth/FutureEO/ESA_and_Finland_pave_the_way_towards_a_supersite_for_Earth_observation

Slovenia and Finland strengthen defence cooperation with acquisition of AMV XP armored vehicles

Army Recognition, February 14, 2025

On February 13, 2025, Finnish Minister of Defence Antti Häkkinen and Slovenian Minister of Defence Borut Sajovic officially signed a Letter of Intent (LOI) in Brussels, marking the commitment of both nations to support Slovenia's acquisition of 8x8 Modular Armored Vehicles (AMV) from Patria, a leading defence and technology company. The letter was jointly prepared by the ministries of defence of Slovenia and Finland, highlighting the intention of both countries to enhance their defence cooperation. This agreement represents a collaborative approach to defence acquisitions, with Finland offering its support to Slovenia for the purchase of

Patria's 8x8 vehicles. Known for their modularity, mobility, and robust protection, Patria's AMV XP 8x8 vehicles are among the best in the global market. They provide superior firepower, protection, and agility, making them ideal for a variety of operational environments.

<https://armyrecognition.com/focus-analysis-conflicts/army/defence-security-industry-technology/slovenia-and-finland-strengthen-defence-cooperation-with-acquisition-of-amv-xp-armored-vehicles>

France

France tempts AI firms with its nuclear electricity

World Nuclear News, February 11, 2025

UK-based AI cloud provider Fluidstack has signed a memorandum of understanding with the French government to construct one of the world's largest decarbonised AI supercomputers in France. Meanwhile, utility EDF has identified four sites on its own land that it will offer for data centres. Announced at the AI Action Summit in Paris, under the leadership of President Emmanuel Macron, the memorandum of understanding was signed by the French Minister of Economy, Finance, and Industrial and Digital Sovereignty, Eric Lombard, the French Minister for Industry and Energy, Marc Feracci, and Fluidstack co-founder and President, César Maklary. With strong interest already secured from its financial partners, Fluidstack's Phase 1 of the project will be supported by an initial investment of EUR10 billion (USD10 billion) and is set to become operational in 2026. The facility's Phase 1 will ultimately host about 500,000 next-generation AI chips.

<https://www.world-nuclear-news.org/articles/france-tempts-ai-firms-with-its-nuclear-electricity>

France's 2025 budget unveils post-ARENH scheme for historical nuclear

Enerdata, February 10, 2025

The French Parliament has finally adopted the state's 2025 budget. Most notably, it

includes a new scheme to redistribute the income generated by the operation of historical nuclear power plants to consumers, replacing the regulated access to historical nuclear electricity (ARENH) mechanism which ends on 31 December 2025. The new mechanism introduces a tax on the use of nuclear fuel for electricity production, applied when the income from the operation of EDF's nuclear plants exceeds a certain threshold. If the income exceeds this "taxation threshold," 50% of the revenue above this threshold will be collected. If the income surpasses a second, higher threshold, called the "capping threshold," 90% of the revenue above this second threshold will also be collected. In addition, it creates a scheme to reduce electricity prices by lowering any price previously agreed between suppliers and their customers, or, if applicable, the price resulting from regulated electricity tariffs (TRVE). In addition, the French 2025 budget adjusts standard excise rate following the end of the tariff shield to ensure a 9% reduction in the regulated electricity price for consumers starting from 1 February 2025.

<https://www.enerdata.net/publications/daily-energy-news/frances-2025-budget-unveils-post-arenh-scheme-historical-nuclear.html>

First MAST-F missile firing successfully performed

Occar, February 5, 2025

The first long range MAST-F missile (named AKERON LP) firing was successfully performed at the DGA - Direction générale de l'armement French Firing Center DGA Essais de Missile. A prototype missile, including a telemetry system to collect large amounts of data, was launched from a crane launcher towards the sea. This trial was completed to validate the overall behaviour of the missile for a typical trajectory and to validate the tube for future safe platform separation. This first firing exercise enabled to consolidate the aerodynamics and guidance of the missile. Additionally, it confirmed the thrust of the booster, which provides the initial acceleration for separation and the thrust of the main

propulsion system, which provides the energy to ensure a range of eight (8) km from the ground. Wing and fin opening systems to validate the safety barriers were also confirmed. This successful firing is a great achievement for the MAST-F Programme managed by OCCAR for France. Thanks to the great cooperation and close involvement of all key stakeholders (MBDA and its subcontractors, DGA and OCCAR), this success is an important step forward for the development of this new battlefield system.

<https://www.occar.int/news/first-mastf-missile-firing-successfully-performed->

French space propulsion firm ThrustMe expands U.S. footprint

Sandra Erwin

Space News, February 4, 2025

ThrustMe, a satellite propulsion company based in France, is making a strategic push into the U.S. space market, securing a roster of new American customers. The company announced Feb. 4 it has signed deals with a diverse set of U.S. firms, including Starfish Space, Astro Digital, Magellan Aerospace, Lumen Orbit, Oligo Space, Turion Space, and Terran Orbital, a subsidiary of defence giant Lockheed Martin. Founded in 2017, ThrustMe specializes in miniaturized, iodine-fueled electric propulsion systems for small satellites. The company in 2021 performed the first on-orbit tests of an iodine-fueled electric propulsion system. The demonstration proved that iodine could be a viable propellant for electric propulsion systems, leading ThrustMe to begin the commercialization of the system. ThrustMe began industrial-scale production in mid-2023. Since then, the company has delivered more than 150 propulsion systems, with 67 already operational in orbit, according to Ane Aanesland, ThrustMe's co-founder and chief executive.

<https://spacenews.com/french-space-propulsion-firm-thrustme-expands-u-s-footprint/>

France unveils 109-billion-euro AI investment as Europe looks to keep up with U.S.

Ryan Browne

CNBC, February 10, 2025

France's artificial intelligence sector will receive 109 billion euros (\$112.6 billion) of private investment in the "coming years," President Emmanuel Macron announced Sunday ahead of the country's global AI summit. Speaking with French broadcaster TF1, Macron described the multibillion-euro pledge as "the equivalent for France of what the United States announced with Stargate," referring to U.S. President Donald Trump's massive \$500 billion private AI investment project. The U.S. joint venture, dubbed Stargate, will see OpenAI, Oracle and SoftBank spend up to \$500 billion on AI infrastructure in America over the next four years. Meanwhile, the French financing will include commitments from the United Arab Emirates, American and Canadian investments funds and French companies like telecommunications firms Iliad and Orange, and aerospace and defence group Thales. A few days before France's AI Action Summit, which kicked off on Monday, the UAE said it would invest between 30 billion euros and 50 billion euros in the construction of a one-gigawatt AI data center in France as part of a campus focused on the technology's development.

<https://www.cnb.com/2025/02/10/frances-answer-to-stargate-macron-announces-ai-investment.html>

Germany

Germany election brings nuclear power back into spotlight

Nuclear Newswire, February 12, 2025

It's been less than two years since Germany shuttered its three remaining nuclear plants on April 15, 2023—the culmination of a decision reached during the backlash following the Fukushima Daiichi accident in Japan in 2011. Now, Germany's conservative Christian Democratic Union (CDU) is leading a charge to revive nuclear

power ahead of the national election on February 23, which the party is expected to win, according to Politico. When energy supply in the region was constricted as a result of the Russia-Ukraine conflict, German officials opted to keep the country's last nuclear plants on line throughout the winter of 2022 to shore up supplies. Since then, surging energy prices in the country (largely due to its dependence on stilted Russian fuel supplies) have taken a toll on Germany's industrial competitiveness and pressured companies to move elsewhere, Politico reports.

<https://www.ans.org/news/2025-02-11/article-6755/germany-election-brings-nuclear-power-back-into-spotlight/>

EU project seeks to develop new research reactor fuel

World Nuclear News, February 7, 2025

A new European research project, named EU-CONVERSION, has been launched with the aim of accelerating the conversion of high-performance research reactors by testing candidate low-enriched uranium fissile materials. EU-CONVERSION is considering the conversion of Germany's FRM-II research reactor and the proposed French material test reactor Jules Horowitz (JHR), whose first criticality is expected in the 2030s. EU-CONVERSION builds on three previous projects, namely EU-QUALIFY, LEU-FOR EVER and HERACLES-CP. FRM-II currently uses fuel enriched to over 95% uranium-235 to generate its dense neutron flux - and such high-enriched uranium (HEU) is seen as a nuclear proliferation risk. TUM has agreed with the German government and the Bavarian State - who finance the reactor - to work towards converting it to fuel with lower enrichments when a suitable fuel is available. This is also a condition of the reactor's operating licence, which was issued in 2003.

<https://www.world-nuclear-news.org/articles/eu-project-seeks-to-develop-new-research-reactor-fuel>

German rocket artillery pick tests the waters on US arms dependence

Sebastian Sprenger and Linus Höller

Defence News, February 11, 2025

Germany's adoption of the Israeli-designed PULS rocket artillery weapon is set to emerge as a test case for European nations diversifying their arms suppliers away from American contractors that have dominated the market for decades. Leaders in Berlin formalized the decision in favor of the Precise and Universal Launching System, or PULS, made by Elbit, last week, as the contractor announced a \$57 million contract. German lawmakers had approved the funds late last year, with an initial five systems to be procured. For Germany, a key PULS feature is that it can fire rockets of various calibers, ranging from 122mm to 370mm, produced by different manufacturers. On its website, Elbit claims the system "can fire a variety of ammunition types to various ranges from the same position, to ranges of up to 300 [kilometers]."

<https://www.defencenews.com/global/europe/2025/02/11/german-rocket-artillery-pick-tests-the-waters-on-us-arms-dependence/>

ELSA Missiles: What are The European long-range strike missiles that Germany Is keenly awaiting to boost Its might?

Ashish Dangwal

The Eurasian Times, February 12, 2025

Germany is reportedly considering the acquisition of American BGM-109 Tomahawk land-attack cruise missiles as a temporary solution while it awaits the completion of the European Long-Range Strike Approach (ELSA) missiles. German media outlet Hartpunkt first reported the news, citing "well-informed" sources within the German defence ministry. Germany's interest in Tomahawk missiles is driven by the weapon's ground-based long-range

strike capability, which allows precision attacks on targets over 2,000 kilometers away. This includes strategic enemy positions such as command centers, ammunition depots, and air bases. The acquisition of these missiles would act as a "stopgap solution" while Germany and its European allies work on ELSA, a project focused on developing non-nuclear long-range strike systems.

<https://www.eurasiantimes.com/as-european-long-range-elsa-missiles-not-comin/>

Germany considers acquiring land-based Tomahawk cruise missiles

Defence Industry Europe, February 2, 2025

Germany is evaluating the potential procurement of Tomahawk cruise missiles from the United States as a temporary measure to strengthen its long-range strike capabilities, according to a report by Hartpunkt, citing well-informed sources. The move is being considered as Germany works towards acquiring a European-developed system in the future. The Tomahawk, which remains in active production, meets Germany's operational requirements with a range exceeding 2,000 kilometres. The war in Ukraine has underscored the importance of long-range precision weapons, particularly in striking key military infrastructure such as command centres, ammunition depots, and airbases. Several European NATO members are also pursuing their own long-range strike capabilities. In July 2024, defence ministers from France, the United Kingdom, Poland, Germany, Italy, and Sweden signed the European Long-Range Strike Approach (ELSA) agreement. The initiative aims to develop a European-produced land-based missile system with a range of 1,000 to 2,000 kilometres.

https://defence-industry.eu/germany-considers-acquiring-land-based-tomahawk-cruise-missiles-media-reports/#google_vignette

German company atmos launching 1st cargo-return capsule on upcoming SpaceX mission

Mike Wall

Space.com, February 5, 2025

Atmos' first Phoenix capsule will fly on the Bandwagon 3 rideshare mission this spring. A European company will give its cargo-return tech its first in-space test this spring, if all goes according to plan. Germany's Atmos Space Cargo announced today (Feb. 5) that its first Phoenix reentry capsule will fly on SpaceX's Bandwagon 3 rideshare mission. A Falcon 9 rocket will launch Bandwagon 3 no earlier than April, according to Atmos representatives. "Our first test flight is what the team at Atmos has been working towards relentlessly," Atmos CEO and Co-founder Sebastian Klaus said in an emailed statement. "I am proud to lead this mission at such a crucial moment for Europe. Our space industry needs disruptive innovation to compete on a global scale."

<https://www.space.com/space-exploration/launches-spacecraft/german-company-atmos-launching-1st-cargo-return-capsule-on-upcoming-spacex-mission>

Germany Commits Additional •870k to Offshore Launch Facility

Andrew Parsonson

European Spaceflight, February 10, 2025

Germany's Federal Ministry for Digital Affairs and Transport has committed an additional •870,000 to support the development of an offshore launch platform that will operate from the North Sea. The North Sea launch platform is being developed by the German Offshore Spaceport Alliance (GOSA), a joint venture formed in December 2020 by Tractebel DOC Offshore, MediaMobil, OHB, and Harren Shipping Services. The platform will be constructed on the 170-metre-long Combi Dock I vessel and will accommodate launchers with a mass of between 36 and 52 tonnes. A 2020 feasibility study stated that the development and operation of the North Sea launch platform would cost between •22 and •30 million over six years.

In September 2023, the German government committed an initial •2 million to the project. A month later, a GOSA spokesperson told European Spaceflight that its first launch from the North Sea was expected in April or May 2024. In April 2024, the company announced that it would support the launch of four small rockets ranging from 15 to 52 kilograms from the floating platform between 16 and 30 June. The launches were postponed to July, after which no further updates were provided.

<https://europeanspaceflight.com/germany-commits-additional-e870k-to-offshore-launch-facility/>

Hungry

NASA approves HUNOR mission: Hungary's big space moment is here!

Martin Nemeth

Daily News Hungary, February 2, 2025

NASA and its international partners have officially approved the fourth mission of Axiom Space, which will launch Hungarian explorer Tibor Kapu to the International Space Station (ISS) in the spring of 2025. The launch from Kennedy Space Center in Florida will open a new chapter not only in the history of Hungarian space exploration but also in our participation in international space programmes. This success of the HUNOR (Hungarian to Orbit) programme is not only symbolic but also serves concrete scientific purposes. According to Portfolio, the official mission patch and the flight suit the crew will wear to the space station were unveiled at the first press conference on Thursday. The crew of the Ax-4 mission is an international one, including US commander Peggy Whitson, Polish mission specialist Sławosz Uznański-Wiceniowski and Indian pilot Shubanshu Shukla. At the briefing, they all described their training process and the mission's objectives, which include scientific research and international cooperation.

<https://dailynewshungary.com/hunor-nasa-space-hungary-mission/>

United Kingdom

Government rips up rules to fire-up nuclear power

Government of United Kingdom, February 6, 2025

More nuclear power plants will be approved across England and Wales as the Prime Minister slashes red tape to get Britain building - as part of his Plan for Change. Reforms to planning rules will clear a path for smaller, and easier to build nuclear reactors - known as Small Modular Reactors - to be built for the first time ever in the UK. This will create thousands of new highly skilled jobs while delivering clean, secure and more affordable energy for working people. This is the latest refusal to accept the status quo, with the government ripping up archaic rules and saying no to the NIMBYs, to prioritise growth. It comes after recent changes to planning laws, the scrapping of the 3-strike rule for judicial reviews on infrastructure projects, and application of common-sense to environmental rules.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-rips-up-rules-to-fire-up-nuclear-power>

Britain supplies Ukraine with new missile system - hidden inside shipping containers

Akhtar Makoi

The Telegraph, February 14, 2025

Britain has started supplying Ukraine with surface-to-air missiles that can be launched from shipping containers. The new missile defence system, named Gravehawk, converts Soviet-era weapons into ground-based air defences. It disguises Cold War-era Vympel R-73 missiles, originally designed for Soviet fighter jets, inside standard shipping containers that can be covertly transported by lorries. Jimmy Rushton, a Kyiv-based foreign policy and security analyst, said it would cause confusion on the battlefield for the Russian army. "Russia has to contend with a scenario where any shipping container in Ukraine - and there are tens of thousands - could potentially be concealing one of these systems," he said.

He added: "That's also why we got a very detailed look at this system; the MoD were generous with media access compared with similar systems in the past."

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/world-news/2025/02/14/britain-ukraine-war-gravehawk-missiles-russia-air-defence/>

UK-India defence agreements boost 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' ambition

Government of United Kingdom, February 10, 2025

The UK-India strategic partnership has taken another major step forward with the formal launch of Defence Partnership - India (DP-I) and the signing of several defence agreements at Aero India 2025. Announcing DP-I, UK Defence Minister Lord Vernon Coaker opened the UK-India Defence Partnership Pavilion, establishing a dedicated programme office within the UK's Ministry of Defence that will serve as a one-stop shop for strengthening bilateral defence collaboration between the two countries. The UK and India have today agreed to expand their collaboration on next-generation weapons with Thales and Bharat Dynamics Limited (BDL). Thales and BDL have signed a contract that will deliver Laser Beam Riding MANPADs (LBRM), with an initial supply of High Velocity Missiles (STARStreak) and launchers to be delivered this year.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-india-defence-agreements-boost-atmanirbhar-bharat-ambition>

£16 million for new projects to boost UK benefits of satellite constellations

Government of United Kingdom, February 3, 2025

The funding will enable UK industry to capture a greater portion of the satellite mega-constellation market by developing technology that improves their efficiency and capability. It comes from the UK Space Agency's Connectivity in Low Earth Orbit

(C-LEO) programme, which will invest up to £160 million in UK expertise in this area over the next four years. Satellite constellations are enhancing global connectivity by providing high-speed internet access to remote and underserved areas, bridging the digital divide. These constellations are set to transform markets in maritime and aviation connectivity, changing how people communicate as they live and work in some of the remotest places on Earth.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/16-million-for-new-projects-to-boost-uk-benefits-of-satellite-constellations>

Airbus to build radar imaging satellites for U.K. military

Jeff Foust

Space News, February 11, 2025

Airbus Defence and Space won a contract to build a pair of synthetic aperture radar (SAR) imaging satellites as part of an effort by the United Kingdom to build up its military space reconnaissance capabilities. The U.K. Ministry of Defence (MoD) announced Feb. 10 it awarded a contract to Airbus to build Oberon, a pair of SAR imaging satellites, under a contract valued at 127 million pounds (\$157 million.) The contract covers the development of a pair of 400-kilogram satellites equipped with SAR payloads. Airbus will build the satellites at facilities in the U.K. and Oxford Space Systems, a British company that develops deployable structures, will produce the antennas that will unfurl after launch for use transmitting and receiving the radar signals. Oberon is part of a larger MoD initiative called ISTARI, with an estimated cost of 986 million pounds, to develop a constellation of reconnaissance satellites.

<https://spacenews.com/airbus-to-build-radar-imaging-satellites-for-u-k-military/>

UK announces planning reforms to speed up nuclear projects

World Nuclear News, February 6, 2025

The UK government has announced plans

to reform planning requirements and regulatory rules as part of measures to streamline the process of constructing new nuclear power plants in England and Wales, including small modular reactors. "More nuclear power plants will be approved across England and Wales as the prime minister slashes red tape to get Britain building - as part of his Plan for Change," the government said. "Reforms to planning rules will clear a path for smaller, and easier to build nuclear reactors - known as small modular reactors (SMRs) - to be built for the first time ever in the UK." The reforms include allowing new plants to be built anywhere across England and Wales, not just in the eight existing nuclear sites specified in current planning rules. However, the government said there will "continue to be robust criteria for nuclear reactor locations, including restrictions near densely-populated areas and military activity, alongside community engagement and high environmental standards".

<https://world-nuclear-news.org/articles/uk-announces-planning-reforms-for-nuclear-projects>

Ukraine

British innovation and Soviet-designed missiles help Ukraine take the fight to Russia

Simon Newton

BFBS Forces News, February 12, 2025

A new British-built surface-to-air missile system is being supplied to Ukraine which it's hoped could be a solution to one of Kyiv's biggest problems - a lack of air defence. Gravehawk has been developed from scratch in just 18 months and will be used to combat Russian aircraft, missiles and drones. It's highly innovative, relatively cheap - and deadly. Defence Secretary John Healey, who was visiting Nato headquarters in Brussels, said the system was proof of Britain's long-term commitment to Ukraine in its war with Russia. The system is housed inside an

ordinary ISO shipping container, meaning it can be quickly deployed on the back of a lorry, known as a Drops vehicle. Once on the ground, the roof of the container can be rolled back to reveal the missile system inside, which is made up of two weapons rails taken from Soviet-era fighter jets such as the Sukhoi Su-27 Flanker. And that part of the design is key because it allows the system to fire Cold War-designed Vympel R-73 missiles, known to Nato as the AA-11 Archer.

<https://www.forcesnews.com/ukraine/british-innovation-and-soviet-designed-missiles-help-ukraine-take-fight-russia>

UK unveils Gravehawk air defence system for Ukraine

Colton Jones

Defence Blog, February 13, 2025

The United Kingdom has officially introduced the Gravehawk air defence system, a newly developed surface-to-air missile system specifically designed to enhance Ukraine's capabilities against aerial threats. The system was unveiled by UK defence officials, with its first images published by Forces News. Developed in just 18 months at a cost of £6 million, Gravehawk is designed to counter a range of airborne threats, including drones, cruise missiles, and enemy aircraft. The system is equipped with two modified R-73 infrared-guided air-to-air missiles, repurposed for ground-based deployment. Mounted on a military truck chassis, Gravehawk offers mobility and rapid deployment for frontline air defence operations. According to UK defence sources, Gravehawk's infrared (IR) targeting system provides a distinct operational advantage. Unlike radar-based systems that emit signals detectable by enemy forces, IR tracking allows Gravehawk to engage targets without revealing its position, making it significantly harder to counter.

https://defence-blog.com/uk-unveils-gravehawk-air-defence-system-for-ukraine/#google_vignette

Are nuclear weapons an option for Ukraine?

Alexander K. Bollfrass

IISS, February 7, 2025

Ukrainian leaders have declared the need for either NATO membership or possession of nuclear weapons for security from Russia but would face several technical and political challenges in acquiring such weapons. Even before the full-scale Russian invasion of 2022, leading Ukrainian government officials had declared that the only mechanisms for security from Russia were NATO membership or nuclear-weapons possession. As its position on the battlefield deteriorates, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy reiterated the call in October 2024: 'Either Ukraine will have nuclear weapons and that will be our protection or we should have some sort of alliance', indicating that protection under the Alliance's Article 5 remains the preferred path. Even as the official Ukrainian position has walked back these comments, and should NATO membership remain elusive, how realistic would an independent Ukrainian nuclear capability be?

<https://www.iiss.org/online-analysis/online-analysis/2025/02/are-nuclear-weapons-an-option-for-ukraine/>

Ukraine's robotic army is bringing the fight to Russia

David Kirichenko

The Kyiv Independent, February 4, 2025

Ukraine has become a war lab for the future since the onset of Russia's full-scale invasion. Driven by necessity, it has had no choice but to rely on rapid innovations to fight back. As a result, Ukraine is at the forefront of military technology, leveraging robotics and automation to redefine modern warfare and serve as a testing ground for future combat technologies. As

it continues to develop and deploy cutting-edge unmanned systems, the world is closely watching how these advancements shape the battlefield. Given that Ukraine is already using AI-enabled drones, the deployment of autonomous ground robots may become a reality sooner than expected. Now, Ukraine is building a robotic army, aiming to have more than 200 uncrewed ground vehicles (UGVs) in operation by the end of the year. As it continues deploying these robots, it is gathering valuable data and insights that will shape the development of future autonomous systems.

<https://kyivindependent.com/ukraines-robotic-army-is-bringing-the-fight-to-russia/>

N. Africa

Algeria

Algeria and Slovenia Strengthen Space Technology Cooperation

Mustapha Iderawumi

Space in Africa, February 13, 2025

The Algerian Space Agency (ASAL) and the Slovenian Space Office held a bilateral meeting on Wednesday in Algiers to establish a framework for collaboration in space technologies and applications. Many dignitaries from both countries attended the meeting, including ASAL Director General Azzedine Oussedik, Slovenian Space Office Director Tanja Permozer, and Slovenia's Ambassador to Algeria, Urska Kramberger Mendek. In his opening remarks, Oussedik highlighted that the Slovenian delegation's visit to Algeria from February 11 to 13 aligns with President Abdelmadjid Tebboune's directives following his meeting with Slovenian Prime Minister Robert Golob in May 2024. He emphasised that the objective is to create optimal conditions for cooperation in space technologies and applications. Oussedik noted that these fields, particularly when integrated with artificial intelligence, offer reliable insights into national natural resources, including groundwater potential, strategic agricultural assets, and mining resources.

This aligns with the joint declaration signed between the Republic of Slovenia and the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria in August 2024. Additionally, space applications play a crucial role in disaster prevention and management.

<https://spaceinafrica.com/2025/02/13/algeria-and-slovenia-strengthen-space-technology-cooperation/>

Algeria Confirms Purchase of Russian Su-57 Fighter Jets

Aero News Journal, February 13, 2025

In a substantial increase in air defence capabilities, Algeria has confirmed the purchase of Russian-made Sukhoi Su-57 fighter jets, making history as the first foreign customer for this advanced fifth-generation aircraft. This move was announced through Algerian state television, which revealed that Algerian pilots are currently in Russia undergoing training, with the first deliveries expected to commence later this year. The Su-57, also known as the "Felon" by NATO, represents the pinnacle of Russian aerospace technology, featuring stealth capabilities, advanced avionics, and a highly versatile weapons suite that can engage both aerial and ground targets. This acquisition not only enhances Algeria's military prowess but also signals a deepening of military ties between Algiers and Moscow, continuing a long-standing tradition of defence cooperation.

<https://www.aeronewsjournal.com/2025/02/algeria-confirms-purchase-of-russian-su.html>

Egypt

Egypt receives J-10C with PL-15 air-to-air missile

Boyko Nikolov

Bulgarian Military, February 10, 2025

The Egyptian Air Force may have just taken delivery of its first batch of Chinese-made J-10CE fighter jets, now equipped with the advanced air-to-air missiles

capable of engaging targets beyond visual range. This revelation comes courtesy of Húrin, who shared a photo on his X profile showing two of the J-10CEs in action. Húrin's post isn't entirely new territory for keen observers. Last year, he dropped hints about Egypt's potential acquisition of the J-10CE, referencing a photo from a Chinese defence exhibition. At the time, China had displayed a fully operational J-10CE designed for export, sparking speculation about its availability to foreign buyers like Egypt. Egypt's decision to acquire Chinese J-10CE fighter jets marks a significant shift in its military procurement strategy, reflecting a broader trend of diversifying its defence partnerships away from traditional Western suppliers, particularly the United States.

https://bulgarianmilitary.com/2025/02/10/breaking-egypt-receives-j-10c-with-pl-15-air-to-air-missile/#google_vignette

US clears major upgrade for Egypt's four fast missile craft

Boyko Nikolov

Bulgarian Military, February 5, 2025

The U.S. has approved a \$625 million upgrade for Egypt's Fast Missile Craft [FMC], a deal set to significantly enhance the Egyptian Navy's combat capabilities. The State Department gave the green light, and the Defence Security Cooperation Agency [DSCA] has officially notified Congress of the potential sale. The modernization package includes the installation of COMBATSS-21 combat management systems on Egypt's four FMCs, along with a suite of advanced upgrades — air and surface surveillance radars, electronic warfare systems, electro-optical and infrared sensors, communication intelligence systems, and fire control enhancements for their 76mm guns. These improvements will allow the ships to better detect, track, and engage threats in a complex operational environment.

<https://bulgarianmilitary.com/2025/02/05/us-clears-major-upgrade-for-egypts-four-fast-missile-craft/>

Kenya

Kenya accompanied Phyllis Omido and CJGEA cautiously celebrate halt to proposed nuclear power plant

Brent Patterson

PBI, February 5, 2025

On January 24, 2025, The Star reported: "On Tuesday, President William Ruto chaired the first Cabinet meeting of 2025 [and] a [State House statement to newsrooms announced] the Cabinet approved a series of recommendations [including that the] Nuclear Power and Energy Agency [Nupea would be dissolved]." That Nairobi-based newspaper article continues: "According to environmental lobby group, Center for Justice Governance and Environmental Action [CJGEA], the decision to dissolve Nupea is a significant step in Kenya's just energy transition journey. CJGEA has been at the forefront to oppose the plan by Nupea to set up a Sh500 billion nuclear power plant at Uyombo, in Matsangoni, Kilifi North." That article further notes: "In a statement, CJGEA executive director Phyllis Omido [said] 'The Nuclear Energy sector as currently constituted is a form of imperialist agenda. A technology that you buy yet never own, does not deserve the hard-earned money from Kenyans and the yoke of debt that spans generations to come.'"

<https://pbicanada.org/2025/02/05/pbi-kenya-accompanied-phyllis-omidu-and-cjgea-cautiously-celebrate-halt-to-proposed-nuclear-power-plant/>

Morocco

Morocco takes a giant leap with first Akinci drones arrival

Boyko Nikolov

Bulgarian Military, February 5, 2025

Morocco has just received its first batch of Bayraktar Akinci drones from Turkish defence giant Baykar, sending a clear

message that the kingdom is doubling down on its military modernization. The announcement came through the Far Maroc Forum on Facebook, marking a major leap forward in Morocco's defence ambitions. These drones are not your average UAVs. Designed for high-precision operations, the Akinci boasts dual AI systems that enable them to stay airborne for up to 24 hours, while simultaneously tracking and engaging multiple targets. This makes them a lethal asset for any military force. The delivery signals more than just a transaction—it's part of a growing military partnership between Morocco and Turkey, one that's reshaping the region's power dynamics. With its new fleet of Akinci drones, Morocco is not only boosting its air force's capabilities but also sending a signal to neighboring powers about its increasingly sophisticated defence posture.

https://bulgarianmilitary.com/2025/02/05/morocco-takes-a-giant-leap-with-first-akinci-drones-arrival/#google_vignette

Nigeria

Firm converts N150m private jet to event space

Arinze Nwafor

The Punch, February 7, 2025

A Lagos-based company, Upfront and Statistics, has transformed a private jet worth N150m into a luxury event space, offering a premium setting for various social and corporate gatherings. At the unveiling of the facility in Lagos, the firm's Chief Executive Officer, Tony Eboh, said the repurposed aircraft would serve multiple functions, including wedding photoshoots, music video productions, dinner dates, and business meetings, according to a statement. "This is the first of its kind in Nigeria. We have created a space that caters for various services, whether it's a romantic dinner, a podcast recording, or a high-end business meeting. It's a real business opportunity, not just a luxury experience," Eboh stated. The CEO explained that he drew inspiration from a similar concept in Los Angeles and decided to introduce it to the Nigerian market, which he described as having a

growing appetite for high-end lifestyle experiences.

<https://punchng.com/firm-converts-n150m-private-jet-to-event-space/>

Sudan

Sudan says plan for first Russian naval base in Africa will go ahead

Faisal Ali

The Guardian, February 13, 2025

A plan for Russia to establish its first naval base in Africa will go ahead, Sudan's foreign minister has confirmed, after years of delays over the Red Sea military port. If the agreement is implemented, Russia would join the US and China in the region; they have bases to the south in Djibouti. The announcement came during a visit by the foreign minister, Ali Youssef Ahmed al-Sharif, to Moscow where he met his Russian counterpart, Sergei Lavrov. After their meeting, Sharif said the two countries were in "complete agreement" on establishing a Russian base "and there are no obstacles". The Red Sea is one of the world's most strategically important waterways, connecting the Suez Canal to the Indian Ocean. About 12% of global trade passes through it. Sudan first floated the idea of allowing Russia to have a naval facility on its coast in 2017 during a trip to Sochi by Omar al-Bashir, the then president, who was ousted in a 2019 coup.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2025/feb/13/sudan-first-russian-naval-base-in-africa-go-ahead>

South Africa

South Africa launches the PRIME telescope to advance exoplanet discovery

Samuel Nyangi

Space in Africa, February 3, 2025

The South African Astronomical Observatory (NRF-SAAO) has launched the PRime-focus Infrared Microlensing Experiment (PRIME) telescope, designed

to advance South Africa's capabilities in exoplanet discovery and advance research in time-domain astronomy. The Department of Science, Technology and Innovation Minister Professor Blade Nzimande and other dignitaries participated in the unveiling ceremony on 31 January at the Sutherland Telescope Site in the Northern Cape. The PRIME telescope is a joint initiative of NRF-SAAO, Osaka University, NASA's Goddard Space Flight Centre, the University of Maryland, and the Astrobiology Centre of Japan. The Sutherland site is already home to many cutting-edge telescopes, including the South African Large Telescope (SALT), the largest single optical telescope in the southern hemisphere.

<https://spaceinafrica.com/2025/02/03/south-africa-launches-the-prime-telescope-to-advance-exoplanet-discovery/>

Is South Africa assisting Iran on the nuclear front?

Antoinette Slabbert

Money Web, February 13, 2025

In all the noise surrounding US President Donald Trump's executive order issued on 8 February "addressing egregious actions of the Republic of South Africa" related to the Expropriation Act, his accusation that South Africa is assisting Iran to develop "nuclear arrangements" has gone largely unnoticed in mainstream debates. His order regarding to the latter reads: "South Africa has taken aggressive positions towards the United States and its allies, including accusing Israel—not Hamas—of genocide in the International Court of Justice, and reinvigorating its relations with Iran to develop commercial, military, and nuclear arrangements. "This accusation may however be at the heart of Trump's issue with South Africa and ties the country to his concern about Iran developing nuclear weapons, something he has in the last day or so vowed to stop "with bombs or with a written piece of paper". It is well-known that South Africa has an established nuclear industry spanning energy, medicine, and, before the dawn of democracy, weaponry. The country, however, voluntarily

dismantled its nuclear weapons, as was confirmed by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in 1993.

<https://www.moneyweb.co.za/news/south-africa/is-south-africa-assisting-iran-on-the-nuclear-front/>

Denel launches new missiles and UAS

Times Aerospace, February 12, 2025

South African defence conglomerate Denel has announced significant developments in two of its business areas – uncrewed vehicles and air-to-air missiles. Denel has unveiled a rotary-wing uncrewed air system (RW-UAS) suitable for operating from either land or naval vessels. The helicopter-like craft is designed for the surveillance role, with a variety of sensors. According to local reports, these include a high-definition colour television camera, together with a thermal imaging camera, plus a laser rangefinder and designator, making it suitable for finding and targeting enemy assets. Denel failed to respond to African Aerospace enquiries about the new system, but according to specialist South African defence website Defence Web, the RW-UAS is 5.9m long, with a five-bladed rotor diameter of 6m, a choice of turbocharged petrol or diesel engines giving it a maximum speed of 200km/h and a maximum endurance, in standard configuration, of up to 10 hours.

<https://www.timesaerospace.aero/features/defence/denel-launches-new-missiles-and-uas>

Tunisia

US senator calls for cutting aid to Tunisia, Saied to suffer Assad's fate

Middle East Monitor, February 3, 2025

US Senator Joe Wilson has called on America to cut aid to Tunisia, warning President Kais Saied of a fate "similar" to that of former Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad, London-based Al-Quds Al-Arabi reported. Wilson, a member of the Republican Party, wrote on X: "I warned

years ago about Kais Saied's authoritarian takeover of Tunisia. Today sadly, Tunisia is a full rule of gun police state working with the CCP, War Criminal Putin, and the Iranian regime. We must cut aid & impose sanctions. Trump will fix it." He also shared an old photo of Saied shaking hands with Al-Assad. "Tunisian dictator Kais Saied was a major supporter of the brutal Assad regime in Syria. Assad is not laughing anymore, and Saied will go the way of Assad," Wilson added.

<https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20250203-us-senator-calls-for-cutting-aid-to-tunisia-saied-to-suffer-assads-fate/>

O. The Americas

Argentina

Fewer countries build new nuclear reactors in 2024

World Nuclear Industry Status Report, February 12, 2025

The number of countries building new nuclear plants declined in 2024, with projects underway in 13 states, a decrease of two from the year prior, according to the World Nuclear Industry Status Report (WNISR). As of 1 January 2025, there were 61 units under construction in 13 countries, WNISR said. Almost half (29) are under construction in China, including four implemented by Russia. Nuclear facilities are also being built by Moscow in its own country (6), Bangladesh (2), Egypt (4), India (4), Iran (1), and Turkey (4). "Almost all constructions (over 93%) are implemented either in Nuclear Weapon States (NWS) or by companies controlled by NWS in other countries. The only exceptions are building sites in Argentina (a 25-MW unit with uncertain construction status), Japan (a 1300-MW unit with uncertain construction status), and South Korea (two 1300-MW units)," said WNISR.

<https://www.worldnuclearreport.org/Fewer-countries-build-new-nuclear-reactors-in-2024>

Argentina's provinces deepen relations with China

Javier Lewkowicz

Dialogue Earth, February 7, 2025

While diplomatic relations between Argentina's national government and China remain ambiguous, provincial leaders have been bypassing Buenos Aires to bolster links with Beijing. These subnational efforts are mobilising investment opportunities in natural resources, energy, infrastructure and trade expansion. They have been yielding varying degrees of success as the provinces navigate several challenges, including a lack of China knowledge among provincial leaders, as well as preparation on the part of trade missions headed to China. Economic constraints at the national level also continue to cast a shadow. An ambiguous relationship During his 2022-2023 election campaign, Argentina's president Javier Milei said he would not maintain diplomatic ties with China, dismissing it as "business with communists". Upon assuming the presidency in December 2023, Milei cancelled Argentina's entry into the Brics bloc (made up of 10 countries including Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) at the eleventh hour. As Milei's term has progressed, however, pragmatism has recomposed the China-Argentina relationship.

<https://dialogue.earth/en/business/argentinas-provinces-deepen-relations-with-china/>

Argentina may buy three German 209NG submarines - sources

Boyko Nikolov

Bulgarian Military, February 6, 2025

The Argentine Navy may acquire three new German-made 209NG submarines with a financial guarantee from Berlin worth approximately \$4.3 billion, according to sources cited by Reuters.

"Long-term loans would be ideal for the struggling Argentine fleet," insiders say. In addition to Germany, France, along with its local manufacturer, also intends to propose a similar deal to Argentina, sources report. The offer involves French Scorpène-class submarines. Germany is offering not only the production and delivery of the submarines but also crew training and spare parts. Reports indicate that the German shipbuilder TKMS is already negotiating directly with the Argentine Navy. The German Type 209 submarines and their upgraded 209NG version are among the most successful conventional submarines manufactured by Germany for export. They share fundamental characteristics but have significant differences in terms of technology, capabilities, and combat effectiveness.

<https://bulgarianmilitary.com/2025/02/06/argentina-may-buy-three-german-209ng-submarines-sources/>

Brazil

Brazil's INB gets approval to seek export of enriched uranium

World Nuclear News, February 10, 2025

The National Nuclear Energy Commission has given authorisation for Indústrias Nucleares do Brasil to seek an international buyer for 5.7 tonnes of U3O8 enriched to 3.2% uranium-235. The material was imported in 2016 and has been stored at the Resende Nuclear Fuel Factory. However, Indústrias Nucleares do Brasil (INB) says, "due to its operational unsuitability for fuel manufacturing and the economic unfeasibility of its internal use, the sale will free up space for raw material essential to supply Angra's nuclear plants, in addition to generating revenue for new investments by the state-owned company". Following the decision of the commission (CNEN) the plan is to stage an open competition to achieve the highest price "positioning the state-owned company in new markets and expanding its business opportunities in the global nuclear sector", according to the state-owned company's announcement. Once the potential buyer is

confirmed, INB will need to obtain an export licence from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

<https://www.world-nuclear-news.org/articles/brazils-inb-gets-approval-to-seek-export-of-enriched-uranium>

Eletronuclear cost-savings, plans for Angra 3 operation in 2031

World Nuclear News, February 10, 2025

Brazil's nuclear power plant operator Eletronuclear has announced cost-saving measures which it says are aimed at improving the current governance model and enabling the continuation of strategic projects such as Angra 3. Brazil has two operating reactors - Angra 1 and Angra 2 - which generate about 3% of the country's electricity. Work on the Angra 3 project - to feature a Siemens/KWU 1405 MW pressurised water reactor - began in 1984 but was suspended two years later, before construction began. The scheme was resurrected in 2006, with first concrete in 2010. However, amid a corruption probe into government contracts, construction of the unit was halted for a second time in 2015, when it was 65% complete. The project resumed again in November 2022 - at the time of the project's revitalisation, Eletronuclear's aim was to start operations by the end of 2026. However, work halted again in April 2023 after disputes with the municipality of the City of Angra dos Reis over agreements relating to "environmental compensation" payments and also changes relating to the granted planning permission.

<https://www.world-nuclear-news.org/articles/eletronuclear-cost-savings-plans-for-angra-3-operation-in-2031>

Canada

Canada keen to assist RI in nuclear energy development

Antara News, February 14, 2025

Canada's Minister of International Development, Ahmed Hussen, expressed his country's willingness to help Indonesia

develop nuclear energy as an alternative resource to deal with climate change. "Canada has extensive experience and expertise related to nuclear resources, and we want to share it with Indonesia," he said during a special interview with ANTARA in Jakarta on February 14. According to Hussen, his party acknowledges Indonesia's efforts to use nuclear power as an alternative to meet the increasing national energy demand while maintaining emission levels amid climate change. Since the development of nuclear resources in Indonesia is still in its early stages, Canada is ready to assist it in developing a nuclear energy ecosystem, regulations, and funding, he said. Meanwhile, cooperation in the nuclear technology aspect can be carried out at a later stage, he added. "We must understand that besides technology, there are funding, technical, and other aspects to be prepared," Hussen said.

<https://en.antaranews.com/news/344933/canada-keen-to-assist-ri-in-nuclear-energy-development>

Canada and Poland sign nuclear energy cooperation agreement

Nuclear Engineering International, February 4, 2025

During an official visit to Warsaw, outgoing Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk signed a nuclear energy co-operation agreement. "Once in force, the Agreement will deepen ties between Canadian and Polish energy sectors, enabling Canadian companies to apply their nuclear expertise to support Poland's energy transition and enhance energy security for Poland and the region," according to a statement on the website of the Canadian Prime Minister. "It will create good well-paying jobs and opportunities for people on both sides of the Atlantic, while reinforcing Canada and Poland's shared commitment to nuclear co-operation, non-proliferation, safety, and security. This collaboration will help Poland enhance its clean energy sector and accelerate its efforts

to phase out coal from its energy mix." The statement said the agreement complements other initiatives to strengthen Canada and Poland's bilateral relationship, including the General Security of Information Agreement (GSOIA) signed earlier in January.

<https://www.neimagazine.com/news/canada-and-poland-sign-nuclear-energy-cooperation-agreement/>

Canada willing to join US 'Iron Dome' missile shield, defence minister says

South China Morning Post, February 7, 2025

'Frankly, an integrated missile defence system for all of North America is the thing that makes sense to everybody,' said Bill Blair. Canada is prepared to join US President Donald Trump's proposed development of an "Iron Dome" missile defence shield, Defence Minister Bill Blair said on February 6. Blair, in a call with reporters at the end of a trip to Washington, said Canada was already an "essential partner" in the joint protection of North America, through Nato and the Norad joint air defence programme. "Frankly, an integrated missile defence system for all of North America is the thing that makes sense to everybody," he said, rather than having it stop at the US-Canada border. "And we've been able to demonstrate that we are a ready and willing partner, and that we have a great deal to contribute to the alliance." Trump last week signed an executive order to start planning for an "Iron Dome" air defence system for the United States, like the one Israel has used to intercept thousands of rockets.'

<https://www.scmp.com/news/world/united-states-canada/article/3297695/canada-willing-join-us-iron-dome-missile-shield-defence-minister-says>

P. Oceania

Australia

Nuclear plants could use three times more water than current coal plants

Jake Evans

Australian Broadcasting Corporation, February 13, 2025

The Coalition's promised nuclear power plants could consume as much as three times more water than existing coal sites, posing a question of where that water would come from. The Coalition has promised to begin work from "day one" to build seven nuclear power plants across regional Australia if they win the coming federal election. A 2018 Australian National University study found nuclear power consumes about 1.4 times more water than coal to produce the same amount of electricity, and that they consume more water than any other power source aside from hydropower. If the proposed nuclear plants were to produce as much energy as the aging coal plants they are expected to replace, it would require 235,000 megalitres of water annually, about 67,000ML above current consumption at the seven coal sites. And if those sites were to produce the full 104,000 GWhs by 2050 as modelled by Frontier Economics, which is the foundation of the Coalition's policy, it would require more than 500,000 megalitres of water annually – about three times what is currently used.

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2025-02-13/coalition-nuclear-plants-water-use-three-times-more-coal/104927368>

New UK data sends nuclear warning for Australia

Tristan Edis and Johanna Bowyer

Institute for Energy Economics and Financial Analysis, February 3, 2025

The UK's Financial Times has recently reported that the 3,260-megawatt Sizewell C project – expected to be the UK's next nuclear power plant – is now likely to cost

around GBP40 billion, or \$80 billion in Australian dollars, to construct. That equates to \$24,540 per kilowatt of capacity. Sizewell C's latest cost blow-out offers further confirmation that the opposition Liberal-National Coalition's costing for its proposal to build nuclear power plants in Australia is far too low at \$10,000 per kilowatt, and completely unrealistic. It supports IEEFA's findings on the cost of construction for other nuclear power plants, detailed in our September 2024 report *Nuclear in Australia* would increase household power bills. The Sizewell C reactor's newly estimated capital cost is about 2.5 times the capital cost used in the Frontier Economics modelling that has underpinned the Coalition's plans. At present the UK Government is yet to commit to construction of Sizewell C and an official costing for the project is yet to be released.

<https://ieefa.org/resources/new-uk-data-sends-nuclear-warning-australia>

Australia acquires more long-range anti-radiation missiles

Jr Ng

Asian Military Review, February 6, 2024

Australia is acquiring more Northrop Grumman AGM-88G Advanced Anti-Radiation Guided Missile-Extended Range (AARGM-ER) missiles worth up to A\$650 million via the US Foreign Military Sales (FMS) mechanism, the Australian Department of Defence (DoD) announced on 30 January. "This is to increase the warstock of the Australian Defence Force and its ability to deter Australia's potential adversaries to keep Australians safe," the DoD stated, adding that the missiles will equip the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF)'s Boeing F/A-18F Super Hornet and EA-18G Growler aircraft and subsequently its Lockheed Martin F-35A Lightning II aircraft.

<https://www.asianmilitaryreview.com/2025/02/australia-acquires-more-long-range-anti-radiation-missiles-foc/>

Australia invests in local radars to support Army's maritime strike

Naval News, February 12, 2025

The Australian Government is investing an additional \$272 million to support local defence industry and Australian jobs, through the procurement of up to 14 multi-mission phased array radars (MMPARs) for the Australian Army. Canberra-based CEA Technologies will produce the phased array radars, which will support Army's long-range fires capability and provide greater monitoring of potential threats, across an integrated, focused Defence Force. This investment by the Albanese Government is another example of our commitment to building a defence future made in Australia and will sustain over 700 local jobs in Canberra and across the country. Once built, the radars will be based at the Edinburgh Defence precinct in South Australia as part of the 10th Fires Brigade. Delivery of the first radars is expected from 2027.

<https://www.navalnews.com/naval-news/2025/02/australia-invests-in-local-radars-to-support-armys-maritime-strike/>

China drops flares ahead of RAAF plane, sends ships to Australia's northern approaches

Malcolm Davis

The Strategist, February 14, 2025

Highly provocative and unprofessional action by the Chinese military has again put the Albanese government's approach to relations with Beijing under pressure. So has

deployment of a powerful Chinese naval flotilla close to Australia. China's aggressive actions in the South China Sea and beyond make it much harder for the government to stabilise the relationship with Beijing—under its formula of 'cooperate where we can, disagree where we must, and engage in the national interest'. On 11 February, a Chinese air force J-16 fighter released flares just 30 metres in front of an Australian P-8A Poseidon surveillance aircraft, in what the Department of Defence has described as an 'unsafe and unprofessional' interaction. Such interactions with China's military are now becoming normal. The flare release, reported on 13 February, was the fifth known incident of unsafe behavior by the Chinese military towards the Australian Defence Force since 2022. It should reinforce the need for caution by the current, and indeed any future Australian government, in approaching its relationship with China.

<https://www.aspistrategist.org.au/china-drops-flares-ahead-of-raaf-plane-sends-ships-to-australias-northern-approaches/>

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