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मनोहर पर्रिकर रक्षा अध्ययन एवं विश्लेषण संस्थान

Armenia

Russian Foreign Ministry: Armenian statements speak of Yerevan's distancing from all CSTO formats

News.am, November 16, 2024

Armenian statements speak about Yerevan's distancing itself from all CSTO formats, Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Aleksandr Pankin told reporters when asked about the possibility of Armenia's participation in the CSTO summit on November 28, TASS reported. Pankin was asked whether there were chances for Armenia's participation in the upcoming CSTO events, including the leaders' meeting. "Address the question to the Armenian side," Pankin responded. - But judging by the statements of the Armenian side, it is distancing itself at this stage from participation in absolutely all formats of the CSTO activities at different levels."

<https://news.am/eng/news/852733.html>

AI, economy, finance and education: Yerevan hosts Silicon Mountains-2024 International Tech Summit

News.am, November 16, 2024

The 7th Silicon Mountains-2024 International Tech Summit was held in Yerevan on November 15. The main theme of this year was the role of artificial intelligence (AI). Three panel discussions were held as part of the event, during which speakers discussed the impact of AI on the economy, the financial sector, and social processes. The first Industry.ai panel discussed the development and application of artificial intelligence in various fields.

Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly of the Republic of Armenia Hakob Arshakyan noted that technological solutions and the connection of artificial intelligence with various sectors of the economy can bring serious benefits and advantages. He said that artificial intelligence is a priority direction of development in the high-tech sector in Armenia.

<https://tech.news.am/eng/news/4674/ai-economy-finance-and-education-yerevan-hosts-silicon-mountains-2024-international-tech-summit.html>

Armenia army participates in military exercises in Greece, France envoy informs

News.am, November 18, 2024

The Armenian armed forces are participating in the Olympic Cooperation - 24 military exercises in Greece. French ambassador to Armenia Olivier Decottignies informed about this on X. The armies of France and Armenia are participating—along with the armed forces of seven other nations—in the Olympic Cooperation - 24 military exercises being held in Greece, the French diplomat noted.

<https://news.am/eng/news/852905.html>

Armenia officially becomes 104th full member of International Solar Alliance

News.am, November 21, 2024

Armenia has officially become the 104th full member of the International Solar Alliance, the embassy of Armenia in India informed Armenian News-NEWS.am. The

Ambassador of Armenia to India, Vahagn Afyan, and the Head of the Economic Diplomacy and Multilateral Economic Relations Divisions of the Indian Ministry of External Affairs, Abhishek Singh, officially exchanged the instrument of ratification of the Framework Agreement on the Establishment of the International Solar Alliance (ISA), signed by the President of Armenia, and the receipt letter from the Ministry of External Affairs of the Government of India, as the Depository state for the same agreement.

<https://news.am/eng/news/853537.html>

First delivery of Pinaka MLRS to Armenia showcases India's rising defence exports

Army Recognition, November 25, 2024

In November 2024, India initiated exporting its domestically developed Pinaka multi-barrel rocket launcher (MBRL) systems to Armenia, marking a key moment in its defence export efforts, as reported by IDRW. This delivery, part of a contract finalized after two years of negotiations, highlights the strengthening defence partnership between the two nations and India's increasing prominence in the global arms market. The Pinaka MBRL, developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) in collaboration with private companies and public sector firms like Bharat Earth Movers Limited (BEML), is a mobile and versatile artillery system designed for rapid deployment and effective firepower. Primarily employed for bombardment, it targets enemy positions, infrastructure, and troop concentrations

with precision and range. Since its induction, Pinaka has undergone significant advancements, resulting in variants that enhance range, accuracy, and payload options to meet modern battlefield demands. The Pinaka Mk-I, the system's initial version, has a range of up to 40 kilometers and supports multiple warheads. It delivers high-explosive (HE) munitions for impactful blast and fragmentation effects, effective against personnel and lightly fortified targets.

<https://armyrecognition.com/news/army-news/army-news-2024/first-delivery-of-pinaka-mlrs-to-armenia-showcases-indias-rising-defence-exports>

Greece may hand over Russian air defence systems to Armenia – Enikos

Arka News Agency, November 26, 2024

Greece is preparing to transfer the S-300 and two other Russian-made air defense systems, previously used by the country, to Armenia. In exchange, Greece plans to replace them with Israeli-made systems, Russian TASS reports, citing the Greek portal Enikos. According to it, the leadership of the Greek Armed Forces is determined to withdraw Russian weapons systems from Greece's military arsenal and replace the old systems with new Western technologies. According to the portal, "The General Staff of Greece's National Defense is at an advanced stage of providing Armenia with Russian-made weapons systems." The portal notes that "it was previously assumed these systems could be transferred to Ukraine, but the General Staff is now considering other, equally advantageous alternatives. According to

available information, strengthening Armenia's defence is not solely a Greek initiative but a result of cooperation with France, which will also contribute to arming the country, the publication adds. For Athens, strengthening Yerevan instead of Kiev is a strategic choice for many reasons, the portal continues

<https://arka.am/en/news/politics/greece-may-hand-over-russian-air-defense-systems-to-armenia-enikos/>

Azerbaijan

COP29 Parliamentary Meeting concludes in Baku

Azertac, November 17, 2024

The COP29 Parliamentary Meeting, co-hosted by the Inter-Parliamentary Union and Azerbaijan's National Assembly, concluded on November 17 in Baku. Moderated by figures like Amongin Jacqueline of the East African Legislative Assembly, the event featured discussions on combating climate vulnerabilities and fostering inclusive climate action. Key speakers included Jan Beagle, Director-General of the International Development Law Organization (IDLO), and David Potter, leader of ICIMOD's Strategic Group for Regional Action and Global Advocacy. They emphasized the importance of fair policies that safeguard vulnerable groups and align local laws with global climate commitments. Fariz Ismayilzade, Milli Majlis member, led a session focusing on the role of technology, including artificial intelligence, in climate action. Discussions highlighted the need for equitable access to technology, especially in developing

countries, to advance climate solutions. Michal Nachmany, CEO of Climate Policy Radar, and Tatiana Estevez, founder of Permalution, spoke on how innovative tools can mitigate climate change impacts when applied responsibly.

https://azertag.az/en/xeber/cop29_parliamentary_meeting_concludes_in_baku-3286800

Chief of Azerbaijan Army's General Staff pays official visit to Pakistan

Farid Zohrabov

Trend News Agency, November 19, 2024

First Deputy Minister of Defence and Chief of the General Staff of the Azerbaijan Army, Colonel General Karim Valiyev visited Pakistan to attend the 12th International Defence Exhibition and Seminar (IDEAS 2024), Trend reports via the Azerbaijani Ministry of Defence. Valiyev and a high-ranking officer delegation from the Azerbaijan Air Force and Navy reviewed innovations in defence and security technologies with a wide range of weapon systems and equipment on display. Azerbaijan Army's Chief of the General Staff held meeting with Director General of the Strategic Plans Division (SPD) of Pakistan, Lieutenant General Yusuf Jamal. The meeting discussed military and military-technical cooperation. The exhibition at the Karachi Expo Center with 38 exhibiting countries and 350 foreign delegates involves conferences and seminars.

<https://en.trend.az/azerbaijan/society/3972491.html>

Bahrain

Bahrain and Leonardo announce advanced radar systems upgrade at Manama Airport

Tim Brownlee

Aerospace Global News, November 22, 2024

The Kingdom of Bahrain's Ministry of Transportation and Telecommunications has signed a contract with Leonardo to enhance air traffic control and radar systems at Bahrain International Airport. The three-year project, running until early 2027, is designed to improve aviation safety, airspace efficiency, and regional navigation services at the airport in Manama. The agreement includes the installation of Leonardo's ATCR 33S NG primary surveillance radar and SIR S/I secondary surveillance radar. These advanced systems will provide real-time, high-resolution monitoring of Bahrain's airspace, significantly enhancing its air traffic management capabilities. Comprehensive in-service support and remote services will ensure long-term operational effectiveness. Bahrain International Airport, a key hub in the Middle East, serves as a critical gateway for regional and international travel. With its modern facilities and growing passenger demand, the airport is a central pillar in Bahrain's aviation strategy.

<https://aerospaceglobalnews.com/news/bahrain-and-leonardo-announce-advanced-radar-systems-upgrade-at-manama-airport/>

Batelco signs up Almoayyed to build Bahrain's first white space data centre

Zawya, November 25, 2024

Batelco, part of the Beyon Group, has signed up Almoayyed Contracting Group to develop Bahrain's first-ever White Space Data Center. The new facility will be strategically located within the Beyon Data Oasis and adjacent to a scalable solar farm highlighting the project's emphasis on both sustainability and innovation. Batelco's new White Space Data Center will cater to a wide array of customers, including cloud providers, AI-driven platforms, content delivery networks, internet exchanges and global submarine cable systems, leveraging the latest technologies to meet their evolving needs, said Beyon in a statement. Once completed, the facility will stand as the largest and most power-dense in the kingdom, ensuring high availability, redundancy and industry-leading energy efficiency, it stated.

<https://www.zawya.com/en/business/technology-and-telecom/batelco-signs-up-almoayyed-to-build-bahrains-first-white-space-data-centre-ujefsg9>

Bahrain participates in chemical weapons convention conference

Bahrain News Agency, November 28, 2024

A Bahraini delegation, led by Brigadier Samir Ahmed Al Zayani, First Deputy Chairman of the National Committee on the Prohibition of Weapons of Mass Destruction and a representative of the Bahrain Defence Force, participated in the 29th Conference of the States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention, held in

The Hague, Netherlands, from November 25 to 29, 2024. The delegation included Shaikh Hamad bin Salman Al Khalifa, Assistant Undersecretary for Domestic and Foreign Trade at the Ministry of Industry and Commerce. Brigadier Samir Ahmed congratulated Ambassador Almir Šahović of Bosnia and Herzegovina on his election as Chair of the 29th session, wishing him success in managing the conference. He affirmed Bahrain's readiness to cooperate to ensure the session's success. Brigadier Samir commended the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) report, prepared by its Technical Secretariat, for enhancing the organisation's role in eliminating weapons of mass destruction and implementing the convention.

<https://www.bna.bh/en/news?cms=q8FmFJgiscL2fwIzON1%2BDs%2Bar4mpkCTcYn7ZSgRVOag%3D>

Cyprus

Cyprus may become NATO member when conditions permit, says country's Prez

Business Standard, November 29, 2024

Cyprus could apply to become a member of Nato once its armed forces receive the necessary training and equipment with US help to bring them up to the standards of the world's premier military alliance, the president of the Mediterranean island nation said Thursday. President Nikos Christodoulides put Cyprus on a trajectory for possible Nato membership, ending weeks of media speculation about his government's intentions following his

meeting with President Joe Biden in Washington last month. The development goes against Cyprus' long-held policy of neutrality harking back to the Cold War era, when it walked a political tightrope between Washington and Moscow. Christodoulides said that although Cyprus cannot join Nato at this time because of objections that alliance member Turkey would raise to its potential membership, the Cypriot National Guard shouldn't be denied the opportunity to upgrade its defensive capabilities with US assistance.

https://www.business-standard.com/world-news/cyprus-may-become-nato-member-when-conditions-permit-says-country-s-prez-124112900012_1.html

Iran

Iran says 'window of diplomacy' open to restore nuclear deal

Tehran Times, November 17, 2024

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi told a televised program on Saturday night that the Islamic Republic of Iran is "quite ready" for talks to revive the 2015 nuclear deal in its new form, noting that Tehran sees "window of diplomacy" open if the other parties show serious will. "We still see the window of diplomacy open provided that the other side have serious will," Araghchi told the "special talk" program. However, he said, if there is no such a determination Iran will normally adopt another policy. The chief diplomat told the West that Iran is ready both for "interaction" and "confrontation" in regard to its nuclear program. "We are completely ready for each path, as we announced we are ready

for every scenario in regard to the issue of the Zionist regime. Now we tell the Western side that we are ready for different scenarios. We are ready if we reach the point of confrontation. We are still ready if we also reach to the point of interaction," the foreign minister stated.

<https://tehrantimes.com/news/506363/Iran-says-sees-window-of-diplomacy-open-to-restore-nuclear-deal>

Iran, Russia call for developing North-South Corridor

Islamic Republic News Agency, November 17, 2024

The CEO of the Islamic Republic of Iran Railways, known as RAI, Jabbar Ali Zakeri, and his Russian counterpart Oleg Belozarov have emphasized enhancing cooperation on the North-South Corridor development. On the sidelines of the 81st meeting of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) Council for Railway Transport in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, Zakeri held discussions with Belozarov about enhancing cooperation and developing the North-South Corridor. Zakeri highlighted the strong ties between Iran and Russia, stating that their political relations are at their highest level, adding that Iranian Railways is eager to expand its collaboration with Russian Railways. He emphasized the importance of focusing on the North-South Corridor project, saying, "We must pursue this project more seriously and work to increase its capacity while utilizing existing resources." Meanwhile, Belozarov noted that one of the goals of Russian Railways is to develop the North-South Corridor, adding that 36

container trains have already been sent to the Persian Gulf to initiate transportation on this route.

<https://en.irna.ir/news/85662227/Iran-Russia-call-for-developing-North-South-Corridor>

The West's hypocrisy on Iran's nuclear program: a failure of diplomacy

Soheila Zarfam

Islamic Republic News Agency, November 18, 2024

The narrative surrounding Iran's nuclear program often leans on alarmist speculation, portraying Tehran as a regional aggressor while sidelining its legitimate security concerns and adherence to international agreements. These accounts obscure the broader geopolitical inequities that drive Iran's policies, perpetuating myths that derail meaningful dialogue. In an article published by Foreign Policy, Sina Azodi explores the complexities of Iran's nuclear program amid escalating regional tensions. However, the piece inadvertently highlights a recurring theme: the West's inability—or unwillingness—to uphold agreements, particularly the 2015 Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). At the heart of Azodi's analysis is Iran's growing debate over its nuclear stance. While much attention is given to Iran's "threshold" nuclear capability, it is essential to place this in the context of the West's handling of the JCPOA. The agreement, signed in 2015, was a landmark deal in which Iran made substantial concessions, reducing its stockpile of enriched uranium, limiting enrichment

activities, and subjecting its facilities to rigorous inspections by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

<https://tehrantimes.com/news/506454/The-West-s-hypocrisy-on-Iran-s-nuclear-program-a-failure-of>

Iran demands WMD-Free zone in response to Israeli actions in Gaza

Tehran Times, November 19, 2024

Iran's UN ambassador, Amir Saeid Iravani, asserted that Israel's actions in Gaza and its broader regional aggression highlight the urgent need for a West Asia zone free of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs). Speaking at the fifth session of the "Conference on the Establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction" on Monday, Iravani stated that the "genocidal war" in Gaza and Israel's aggression against other regional countries make the creation of a WMD-free zone more critical than ever. Iravani expressed deep disappointment that Israel has consistently opposed international calls for such a zone, a proposal first put forth by Iran in 1974. He voiced concern over Israel's accumulation of various WMDs without adhering to any binding international disarmament agreements or accepting verification mechanisms. He argued that Israel's opposition to a WMD-free zone serves to shield its own WMD program from accountability. Iravani condemned Israel's actions, including acts of terrorism and sabotage targeting civilian nuclear programs and scientists, citing Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu's nuclear threats against Iran at the 78th UN General

Assembly and an Israeli minister's proposal to use nuclear weapons in Gaza.

<https://tehrantimes.com/news/506508/Iran-demands-WMD-Free-zone-in-response-to-Israeli-actions-in>

West's nuclear blackmail

Mona Hojat Ansari

Tehran Times, November 20, 2024

The already strained relationship between Iran and Europe seemed destined for a further deterioration Wednesday, as the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) director-general held a press conference in Vienna following his return from Iran, and in advance of a critical IAEA Board of Governors vote scheduled for Thursday. Rafael Grossi seemed to carry a cautious glimmer of hope in his remarks. While acknowledging some remaining hurdles, he reported "concrete results" from his talks with Iranian officials, suggesting a shift towards "less confrontational and more constructive" relations. Grossi highlighted a willingness to engage: "What I see is a disposition to engage and to work with us—not only with the president but also with the foreign minister," he stated, adding that he'd been in "intense" contact with Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi even the night before. The IAEA chief revealed that Iran had agreed to cap its stockpile of 60%-enriched uranium and accept new inspectors. He, however, quickly tempered his optimism: "I cannot exclude the possibility that this commitment might falter as a result of further developments," he said without mentioning that a looming anti-Iran Board

of Governors resolution was among those “further developments”.

<https://tehrantimes.com/news/506562/West-s-nuclear-blackmail>

Iranian defence minister in Caracas for talks on closer military cooperation

Tehran Times, November 20, 2024

Iranian Defence Minister Brigadier General Aziz Nasirzadeh has called for a significant expansion of collaboration between Iran and Venezuela, highlighting untapped opportunities that could bolster ties between the two nations. Speaking upon his arrival in Caracas on Wednesday, Nasirzadeh stressed the importance of activating the “inactive capacities” in their bilateral relationship to achieve mutual growth. Leading a high-level delegation, Nasirzadeh is in Venezuela to attend the 10th meeting of the Iran-Venezuela Joint Economic Cooperation Commission. The commission is a key platform for advancing the 20-year strategic agreement signed by both nations, which seeks to deepen their partnership across various sectors.

<https://tehrantimes.com/news/506558/Iranian-defence-minister-in-Caracas-for-talks-on-closer-military>

Iran calls on IAEA board members to resist E3 moves

Tehran Times, November 21, 2024

Iran’s Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi calls on certain countries member to the IAEA Board of Governors to stand against the moves by the European trio (Britain, France and Germany) who are trying to turn the board into a tool into the hands of few

nuclear armed Western countries to advance their political greed. Araghchi contacted the foreign ministers of Brazil, South Africa, Bangladesh, Algeria, Burkina Faso, Pakistan and France on Wednesday night and the need to guard the technical and independent status of this body. The telephone conversations came as the 35-member board plans to vote on an anti-Iran resolution drafted by the European trio, also known as E3. The Iranian foreign minister called the moves the European trio “unjustifiable” that can undermine the IAEA in conducting its technical and professional duties. Denouncing the “unconstructive” measures by the E3, Araghchi said the three European countries are not paying attention to the fruitful talks between Iran and IAEA Director General Rafael Grossi during his visit to Tehran last week.

<https://tehrantimes.com/news/506564/Iran-FM-calls-on-IAEA-board-members-to-resist-E3-moves>

Iran, Russia determined to develop relations at highest level

Mehr News Agency, November 22, 2024

Iran’s Vice President Mohammad Reza Aref stated that Iran's determination and the Russian Federation is based on developing relations at the highest level. In a meeting with Sergey Tsivilev, Russia's Minister of Energy and head of the Russian side of the Joint Commission, Iran's First Vice President Mohammad Reza Aref highlighted the significant potential for expanding economic relations between the two countries. He emphasized the importance of leveraging these capacities to

increase the volume of trade and economic exchanges between Iran and Russia, stressing the need to implement the agreements reached in their bilateral relations. Emphasizing the importance of continuous consultations between the two countries, especially in the current regional and global context, Aref noted that the meetings between high-ranking officials of Iran and Russia indicate the two countries' determination to elevate their relationship.

<https://en.mehrnews.com/news/224760/Iran-Russia-determined-to-develop-relationships-at-highest-level>

Iran to deploy new advanced centrifuges in response to 'unjust' IAEA resolution

Tehran Times, November 22, 2024

Iran has decided to activate new advanced centrifuges, rejecting an International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Board of Governors resolution that rebuked Tehran despite its offer of new concessions. The Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) and the Iranian Foreign Ministry released a joint statement early Friday, criticizing the IAEA's resolution as politically driven, unrealistic, and unjust. A significant number of advanced centrifuges will be deployed in response to the unconstructive move, the statement read. The resolution, passed by the IAEA's Board of Governors with a vote of 19 to 3 and 12 abstentions, accused Iran of "insufficient cooperation" and demanded a comprehensive report on its nuclear activities by spring 2025. The statement added that despite taking new measures to accelerate its nuclear program, Iran will maintain its technical cooperation with the

IAEA based on previous agreements. Referring to the IAEA chief's recent trip to Iran, the statement explained that Rafael Grossi's meetings with senior Iranian officials and his subsequent visits to the Fordow and Natanz nuclear sites showed a solid foundation for enhanced collaboration between Iran and the nuclear agency.

<https://tehrantimes.com/news/506614/Iran-to-deploy-new-advanced-centrifuges-in-response-to-unjust>

ICC arrest warrants against Netanyahu, Gallant hailed by Iran foreign ministry spokesman

Tehran Times, November 23, 2024

Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesperson Esmail Baqaei welcomed the International Criminal Court's decision to issue arrest warrants for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and former War Minister Yoav Gallant. In a Friday night post on X, Baqaei declared, "Fourteen long months into the occupying regime's genocidal campaign in Gaza, marked by the most harrowing atrocities, the ICC Pre-Trial Chamber I finally issued arrest warrants for the two top criminals Netanyahu and Gallant. Of course, their indictment should have included 'genocide' which is manifest." Baqaei said the warrants were a positive step towards justice. "We welcome any step to serve justice and end the Israeli regime's impunity for genocide, war crimes, and crimes against humanity committed in occupied Palestine and elsewhere," he stated. He directly attributed the delay in holding Israel accountable to the United States. "Chronic procrastination in holding Israel

accountable – mainly due to the US's covert and overt obstructions and bullying – has allowed atrocity crimes to persist in occupied Palestine,” Baqaei added.

<https://tehrantimes.com/news/506661/ICC-arrest-warrants-against-Netanyahu-Gallant-hailed-by-Iran>

Iran to expand enrichment capacity after IAEA censure: AEOI

Islamic Republic News Agency, November 23, 2024

Iran will significantly accelerate its uranium enrichment activities by installing thousands of new advanced centrifuges over the next few months, following the Western-backed censure at the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Behrouz Kamalvandi, a spokesman for the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI), made the remarks in an article published by IRNA on Saturday. He said the window of opportunity for cooperation still remained open if the other side reversed course. “There is still an opportunity for interaction and cooperation, setting aside the approach of pressure and threats. While Iran has prepared itself to confront threats, it prefers interaction over confrontation.” Kamalvandi pointed out that the Western sponsors of the resolution, which was passed by the IAEA’s Board of Governors on Thursday night, had prepared the draft of the censure even before IAEA chief Rafael Grossi departed for Tehran for high-level talks with Iranian officials aimed at resolving outstanding issues surrounding Iran’s nuclear program. The AEOI spokesman said that Grossi, during his visit,

had proposed that Iran halt enriching uranium above 60 percent purity to create a positive atmosphere for continued cooperation in resolving outstanding safeguards issues.

<https://en.irna.ir/news/85668537/Iran-to-expand-enrichment-capacity-after-IAEA-censure-AEOI>

Iran condemns UK, US ‘hypocrisy’ in blaming others for regional instability

Tehran Times, November 23, 2024

Iran's UN Ambassador Amir Saeed Iravani has dismissed U.S. and UK accusations of Iranian involvement in “regional destabilization” and the Ukraine conflict as unfounded. In a letter to the UN Security Council's rotating president, Barbara Woodward, Iravani rejected the allegations made during a November 18th Security Council meeting. “At this meeting, the U.S. representative, in collaboration with the Israeli regime, made an unconvincing effort to shift blame for their shared involvement in Israel's ongoing violent actions in Gaza and its war crimes in Lebanon by alleging that Iran is destabilizing the region to further its political interests. These claims against the Islamic Republic of Iran are firmly rejected,” his letter read. Iravani directly accused the U.S. and UK of hypocrisy, citing their unwavering support for Israel as the primary driver of regional instability and a direct contravention of the Security Council's mandate to maintain international peace and security.

<https://tehrantimes.com/news/506662/Iran-condemns-UK-US-hypocrisy-in-blaming-others-for-regional>

Iran self-sufficient in naval equipment: Cmdr

Islamic Republic News Agency, November 25, 2024

Iran's Navy Commander Rear Admiral Shahram Irani has said that it is an honor for the country to be self-sufficient in providing equipment for its naval forces. The commander made these remarks at a military ceremony held in the coastal city of Noshahr in northern Iran on Monday, on the eve of Navy Day. Their powerful presence in countering the criminal US is shining like a jewel in the Navy's history, the commander said in his remarks. He further described such self-sufficiency as an indication of the naval strength of the Islamic Republic of Iran. This powerful determination of the naval commanders and staff will continue to intimidate the enemies, Admiral Irani stressed. Navy Day in Iran commemorates the resistance of the Iranian forces in November 1980 during the Iran-Iraq war, which lasted for eight years. This year, the day falls on November 27.

<https://en.irna.ir/news/85670398/Iran-self-sufficient-in-naval-equipment-Cmdr>

Iran's IRGC, Azerbaijan's Army hold 2nd day of joint military drill

Islamic Republic News Agency, November 25, 2024

The second day of the joint military exercise between the special units of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) Ground Force and the ground forces of the Republic of Azerbaijan began on Monday with a ceremonial salute and tribute to the flags of both nations. The four-day drill,

codenamed "Aras Joint Exercise," commenced on Sunday in the mountainous terrain of Iran's northwestern province of Ardebil. Senior military commanders from Iran and Azerbaijan convened on Sunday to discuss the objectives of the drill and the operations conducted. During the ceremony on Monday, Major General Farid Aliyev, Deputy Chief of Staff of Azerbaijan's Armed Forces, stated that elite Iranian and Azeri forces are sharing military experiences and tactics during the exercise. Brigadier General Vali Madani, Deputy Chief of Operations for the IRGC Ground Force, noted that the joint exercise aims to strengthen bilateral relations, enhance cooperation in combating organized armed groups, improve the security of shared borders, and expand defense collaboration at operational and tactical levels.

<https://en.irna.ir/news/85670687/Iran-s-IRGC-Azerbaijan-s-Army-hold-2nd-day-of-joint-military>

Iran has transparent nuclear program under IAEA supervision

Islamic Republic News Agency, November 27, 2024

Iran's top nuclear official has said that the country has been transparent in its nuclear program under the supervision of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Mohammad Eslami, the head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI), made the remarks on the sidelines of the cabinet session in Tehran on Wednesday. Iran has started feeding gas into several thousands of modern centrifuges to put them in operation, Eslami said, stressing that the move is in line with

the development of Iran's nuclear program to ensure the sustainability of its outcomes in the lives of its citizens. The Islamic Republic of Iran has always demonstrated that it is willing to engage in interaction; meanwhile, the country will not forfeit its rights in the face of pressure, illegitimate behavior, and bullying, the AEOI head said. "Iran's nuclear program is fully transparent and for peaceful purposes," he said, adding that if unilateral pressure is exerted on Tehran through baseless accusations, it will not receive the proper response.

<https://en.irna.ir/news/85672715/Iran-has-transparent-nuclear-program-under-IAEA-supervision>

Israelis rebuke Netanyahu over his 'war victory' claims

Mehr News Agency, November 27, 2024

Israelis have reacted harshly and argued aggressively to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's latest statements claiming the success of his military adventurism in the besieged Gaza Strip and Lebanon. On Tuesday, Netanyahu was overjoyed while claiming that "he achieved great victories in the war, dealt heavy blows to Hezbollah, continued efforts to completely destroy Hamas, and changed the face of the Middle East". However, there were not many takers of the Zionist premier's achievement claims in the regime's bloodshed in Gaza and Lebanon rather these statements sparked reactions among Israeli officials. Avigdor Lieberman, Israeli politician who served in the past as the regime's foreign minister as well as war minister was first to react and wrote by saying that Netanyahu spoke of a final and absolute victory, but

did not utter which side win; a ceasefire means surrendering to Hezbollah. Merav Michaeli, a Knesset member and leader of the Labor Party, said that Netanyahu's words are many, but in the end, 101 Israeli captives are still in Gaza, and a good agreement is the one that helps return of the prisoners.

<https://en.mehrnews.com/news/224968/Israelis-rebuke-Netanyahu-over-his-war-victory-claims>

Iran urges UNSC sanctions on Israel over use of chemical weapons

Islamic Republic News Agency, November 27, 2024

Iran's Deputy Minister for Legal and International Affairs Kazem Gharibabadi has called on the UN Security Council to impose sanctions on the Israeli regime for its use of banned chemical weapons in Gaza and Lebanon. Gharibabadi made the appeal in an address at the 29th Session of the Conference of the States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention (CSP-29) in The Hague, Netherlands, on Wednesday. He condemned Israel's use of chemical weapons and other hazardous materials, including white phosphorus and depleted uranium, against defenseless populations in Palestine and Lebanon. "The UN Security Council must take effective measures to impose sanctions against the Israeli regime in accordance with Chapter VII of the UN Charter," he stated. Gharibabadi called on the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) to conduct a thorough investigation into the use of chemical weapons by Israel and

implement necessary measures to protect the victims.

<https://en.irna.ir/news/85673183/Iran-urges-UNSC-sanctions-on-Israel-over-use-of-chemical-weapons>

IRGC military advisor martyred in Syria: Statement

Islamic Republic News Agency, November 28, 2024

Iran's Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) announced that its senior military advisor Kioumars Pourhashemi has been martyred in Syria. Brigadier General Kioumars Pour Hashemi, known as Haji Hashem, was martyred in Aleppo late on Wednesday, the IRGC said in a statement on Thursday. Iranian military advisor lost his life in an attack by Zionist terrorists on the suburbs of Aleppo, added the statement. Since the Zionists had failed to achieve their objectives in wars against Gazans and the Lebanese, the statement noted, adding that the regime has resorted to waging war against Syrians. The funeral procession of the martyred advisor will be informed later on, the statement further noted.

<https://en.irna.ir/news/85673978/IRGC-military-advisor-martyred-in-Syria-Statement>

Iran could change nuclear doctrine if West reimposes sanctions on Tehran: FM

Islamic Republic News Agency, November 28, 2024

Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi says that the nuclear debate inside Iran is likely to shift towards the possession of its

own weapons if the west goes ahead with a threat to reimpose all UN sanctions. Araghchi told reporters in Lisbon before a meeting between Iranian and European negotiators in Geneva on Friday, the Guardian reported on Thursday. He described talks in Geneva as a brainstorming session to see if there was a way out of their impasse. He admitted he was pessimistic about the meeting, saying he was not sure Iran was speaking to the right party. Iran already had the capability and knowledge to create nuclear weapons, but said they did not form part of its security strategy, he said. There is a debate right now in Iran that it was perhaps a wrong policy. Why? Because it proved we did whatever they wanted and when it was their turn to lift sanctions, in practice, they didn't happen. So maybe something is wrong in our policy, he added.

<https://en.irna.ir/news/85673935/Iran-could-change-nuclear-doctrine-if-West-reimposes-sanctions>

Tehran, Baku conduct military drill to boost defence cooperation

Islamic Republic News Agency, November 28, 2024

Iran has conducted a joint military drill in northwestern Ardabil Province with Azerbaijan to further expand defense cooperation. The Aras joint exercise took place in Iran's northwestern county of Aslanduz, near the Azerbaijan border, IRNA reported on Thursday. The four-day drill, involving special units and elite divisions from both nations, featured six specialized stages. Drones, in the first phase of the event, identified planned targets and

sent their photos to Iranian commanders. State-of-the-art technologies, systems, and helicopters used during the exercise and both countries showed their combat preparedness.

<https://en.irna.ir/news/85673861/Tehran-Baku-conduct-military-drill-to-boost-defense-cooperation>

Iran capable of building destroyers, submarines: Army cmdr.

Islamic Republic News Agency, November 29, 2024

Deputy Coordinator of the Iranian Army Rear Admiral Habibollah Sayyari has said that the Islamic Republic of Iran is currently capable of building destroyers, guided-missile destroyers, and submarines equipped with domestically-produced weapons and smart ammunition. Rear Admiral Sayyari made the remarks while addressing the Friday prayer sermons in Mashhad, located in the Razavi Khorasan province of northeastern Iran. He emphasized that all the equipment used by the country's navy is domestically-produced, stating that Iran is at the forefront of technology for manufacturing naval equipment. He further asserted that security, supported by indigenous and domestic resources, is firmly established in the country's maritime activities, adding that the path to sea-based development is secure across all of Iran's waters, as well as on land, in the sky, and throughout the entire territory.

<https://en.irna.ir/news/85674433/Iran-capable-of-building-destroyers-submarines-Army-cmdr>

Iranian forces chased away US troops on high seas

Mehr News Agency, November 29, 2024

Iranian Navy Commander Rear Admiral Shahram Irani has hailed his forces' achievements, saying they managed to repel US troops on the high seas. "Without personnel and equipment, we approached the core of the Great Satan at the depth of the oceans and drove them away and cheered the name of Iran with authority," Irani said during Friday prayers in Tehran. He also noted that the popular Islamic Republic of Iran Army has an effective presence worldwide relying on its high knowledge and capabilities. Meanwhile, he referred to Operation Morvarid (Pearl) in November 1980, which resulted in a decisive victory for the Iranian Navy during the Iraqi-imposed war. The operation, he added, permanently maintained Iran's authority in the Persian Gulf. November 27 marks the Iranian Navy Day in remembrance of the bravery of the Iranian naval forces in the face of former Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein.

<https://en.mehrnews.com/news/225038/Iranian-forces-chased-away-US-troops-on-high-seas>

Iraq

Abu Ghraib case casts spotlight on Iraq's private security firms

Shelly Kittleson

The New Arab, November 27, 2024

Impunity for alleged past crimes and a lack of avenues for legal recourse, as well as the question of whether high levels of private

security are still needed in Iraq, remain issues that many in the country feel should be addressed with greater urgency. As the country's private security industry shifts ever more into local hands, with a focus on protecting energy installations in the southern part of the country, a case involving incidents from over 20 years ago has now resulted in millions being awarded to survivors of abuse. A 12 November landmark ruling found Virginia-based US government contractor CACI International liable for its role in torture at the Abu Ghraib prison near Baghdad during the Iraq war and ordered it to pay \$42 million in damages.

<https://www.newarab.com/analysis/abu-ghraib-case-casts-spotlight-iraqs-private-security-firms>

Trade gap focus in first visit to Spain by Iraq PM

Al-monitor, November 28, 2024

Spain and Iraq on Thursday strengthened economic ties as Mohammed Shia al-Sudani became the first Iraqi prime minister to visit the European country. Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez hosted his Iraqi counterpart in Madrid where they signed memorandums of understanding on "financial cooperation and justice", the Spanish government said in a statement. Spanish trade organisations penned agreements on "industrial and business cooperation" with the aim of increasing Spain's business in Iraq in sectors such as defence, infrastructure, transport, food and water management, the statement added.

<https://www.al-monitor.com/originals/2024/11/trade-gap-focus-first-visit-spain-iraq-pm>

Israel

IDF downs drone from Iraq fired toward Eilat

Times of Israel, November 18, 2024

The Israel Defence Forces says it shot down a UAV fired "from the east," after sirens were activated in the Red Sea resort city of Eilat. The IDF generally uses "from the east" to denote projectiles launched from Iraq. The military says the air force downed the drone before it entered Israeli territory. It does not comment on videos appearing to show a failed interceptor rocket falling in the city. The United Hatzalah rescue service says it is treating a number of people seeking help for acute anxiety following a drone alert that sounded in Eilat. The Magen David Adom rescue service says it is also responding to a call related to the attack, but that it does not yet have any details on possible casualties. The launch is claimed by the Islamic Resistance in Iraq, an Iran-backed militia, which claims it targeted a "vital asset" in the Eilat area.

https://www.timesofisrael.com/liveblog_entry/idf-downs-drone-from-iraq-fired-toward-eilat/

Israel insists on right to act against Hezbollah in any deal to end fight

Business Standard, November 20, 2024

Israel's defence minister says his country insists on the right to act militarily against Hezbollah in any agreement to end the fighting in Lebanon. Lebanon's government is likely to view any such demand as an infringement on its sovereignty, complicating efforts to end more than a

year of fighting between Israel and Hezbollah that erupted into all-out war in September. Defence Minister Israel Katz said in a statement Wednesday that the condition for any political settlement in Lebanon is the preservation of the intelligence capability and the preservation of the (Israeli military's) right to act and protect the citizens of Israel from Hezbollah. Lebanese officials mediating between Israel and Hezbollah have called for a return to United Nations Security Council Resolution 1701, which ended the 2006 war between the sides. It calls for Hezbollah militants and Israeli forces to withdraw from a buffer zone in southern Lebanon patrolled by UN peacekeepers and Lebanese troops. US envoy Amos Hochstein, who has spent months trying to broker a cease-fire, held a second round of talks on Wednesday with Lebanon's parliament speaker, Nabih Berri, an ally of Hezbollah who has been mediating on their behalf.

https://www.business-standard.com/external-affairs-defence-security/news/israel-insists-on-right-to-act-against-hezbollah-in-any-deal-to-end-fight-124112000948_1.html

Israel likely partner for Greece as it looks for integrated air defence systems

Seth J. Frantzman

Breaking Defense, November 21, 2024

Greece is kicking the tires on Israeli-made air defense systems, as the NATO nation seeks to build a multi-layered air defence system capable of countering both enemy jets and low-level drones, sources confirm to Breaking Defence. News of Greece's

interest was first reported by Reuters, with the Greek daily Ekathimerini reporting that the multi-layered systems could surpass \$2 billion in cost. "The defenses would likely mimic Israel's Iron Dome and other systems that intercept short- and long-range missiles launched during strikes from its neighbors amid the ongoing conflicts in Gaza and Lebanon," per Ekathimerini. A pair of sources told Breaking Defence that Greece is in the fact-finding process of what systems Israeli might be willing to sell, and while it appears Athens plans to cast a wide net as it looks for options, the two are a clear match: Israel, which has grown closer to Greece in recent years, already possesses a multi-layered air defense system, all parts of which are in varying states of being sold or used by other countries. Rafael Advanced Defence Systems makes the short-range Iron Dome system, used primarily against rockets and small drones; that system is soon to incorporate laser air defenses as well. Rafael also makes the medium-range system David's Sling, which was jointly developed with the US and has been sold to Finland, as well as the Spyder, which can defend against aircraft and other threats.

<http://breakingdefense.com/2024/11/israel-likely-partner-for-greece-as-it-looks-for-integrated-air-defense-systems/>

How Israel can fight back against ICC's arrest warrants for its leaders – opinion

Eytan Gilboa

Jerusalem Post, November 26, 2024

The arrest warrants which the International Criminal Court in The Hague issued against Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and

former defence minister Yoav Gallant are ridiculous, absurd and baseless. They stem from the lawfare and diplomatic campaigns the Palestinians have been waging against Israel for the past two decades, and from the ICC's clear-cut anti-Israel bias. The legal debate on the warrants is too narrow. Israel should employ political, diplomatic and economic tools to cancel them. There are several steps that the Israeli government must take, both in the international and the domestic arenas, and there are some that must be avoided. What to do in the international arena: In light of the ongoing bias in the ICC's activity – which rejected all the Israeli claims before it, made a shocking parallel between Israel's leaders and the Hamas terrorist leaders, and after their assassination, did not see fit to indict any of their heirs – there is no room to cooperate with the Court, or to appeal the warrants before ICC's higher chamber.

<https://www.jpost.com/opinion/article-830712>

IMOD to acquire Reshef missile ships from Israel Shipyards

Naval Technology, November 26, 2024

This decision follows interim recommendations from the Nagel Committee, which was established to examine the defence budget and force buildup. Following the events of 7 October 2023 when the Israel-Hamas War began between Israel and Palestinian militants, and the ongoing conflict, the Nagel Committee was established to review defence acquisitions and force buildup. According to a GlobalData report, Israel's defence budget, including US aid, is

projected to grow at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of more than 2% from 2024 to 2028. Under the latest agreement, the IMOD will acquire five advanced Reshef missile ships from Israel Shipyards. Israel Shipyards is said to have been the first in the Western world to design and build a fast-attack missile boat, the Reshef Class SAAR 4, in the late 1960s.

<https://www.naval-technology.com/news/imod-acquire-reshef-missile-ships/>

Israel says it struck Hezbollah weapons smuggling sites in Syria, testing a fragile ceasefire

Economic Times, November 30, 2024

Israel says it struck Hezbollah weapons smuggling sites in Syria, testing a fragile ceasefireAP Israeli aircraft struck Hezbollah weapons smuggling sites along Syria's border with Lebanon, the Israeli military said Saturday, testing a fragile, days-old ceasefire that halted months of fighting between the sides but has seen continued sporadic fire. The military said it struck sites that had been used to smuggle weapons from Syria to Lebanon after the ceasefire took effect, which the military said was a violation of its terms. There was no immediate comment from Syrian authorities or activists monitoring the conflict in that country. Hezbollah also did not immediately comment. Israeli aircraft have struck Hezbollah targets in Lebanon, citing ceasefire violations, several times since the ceasefire began on Wednesday. The ceasefire between Israel and Hezbollah does not address the war in Gaza, where fighting rages on. On Saturday, an Israeli

strike on a car killed five people, according to Muneer Alboursh, a senior Palestinian health official, who said the toll included three employees of the charity World Central Kitchen.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/defence/israel-says-it-struck-hezbollah-weapons-smuggling-sites-in-syria-testing-a-fragile-ceasefire/articleshow/115842040.cms?from=mdr>

Israel says it struck Hezbollah weapons smuggling sites in Syria, testing a fragile ceasefire

Economic Times, November 30, 2024

Israel says it struck Hezbollah weapons smuggling sites in Syria, testing a fragile ceasefireAP

Displaced residents drive past destroyed buildings as they return to Nabatiyeh, Lebanon, after a ceasefire between Israel and Hezbollah went into effect on Wednesday, Nov. 27, 2024. Israeli aircraft struck Hezbollah weapons smuggling sites along Syria's border with Lebanon, the Israeli military said Saturday, testing a fragile, days-old ceasefire that halted months of fighting between the sides but has seen continued sporadic fire. The military said it struck sites that had been used to smuggle weapons from Syria to Lebanon after the ceasefire took effect, which the military said was a violation of its terms. There was no immediate comment from Syrian authorities or activists monitoring the conflict in that country. Hezbollah also did not immediately comment. Israeli aircraft have

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<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/defence/israel-says-it-struck-hezbollah-weapons-smuggling-sites-in-syria-testing-a-fragile-ceasefire/articleshow/115842040.cms?from=mdr>

Kuwait

Kuwait calls for stronger military coordination to boost Gulf stability

Times kuwait, November 27, 2024

Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef Al-Sabah, Acting Prime Minister, Minister of Defense, and Minister of Interior, called for stronger joint defense strategies to enhance regional stability, hoping the meeting would achieve the GCC's goals, and prayed for the continued security, stability, and prosperity of our homelands. Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef Al-Sabah, Acting Prime Minister, Minister of Defense, and Minister of Interior, led Kuwait's delegation on Tuesday at the 21st Joint Defense Council meeting of GCC Defense Ministers in Doha, Qatar, according to Al Rai newspaper. He expressed his pride and gratitude to the State of Qatar, under the leadership of His Highness Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad, Amir of Qatar, for its commendable efforts during its presidency of the previous session. He also praised the warm reception and hospitality extended to the Kuwaiti delegation. At the start of his speech, Al-Yousef congratulated Sheikh Saud bin Abdulrahman on assuming the role of Minister of State for Defense Affairs in

Qatar and the presidency of the current session of the Joint Defence Council, wishing him success in his duties.

<https://timeskuwait.com/kuwait-calls-for-stronger-military-coordination-to-boost-gulf-stability/>

Lebanon

Hezbollah-Israel ceasefire proposal says only 'official' forces may carry arms in Lebanon

Economic Times, November 27, 2024

A ceasefire proposal agreed to by Lebanon and Israel stipulates that only "official military and security forces" in Lebanon are authorised to carry arms there, according to a copy of the deal dated on Tuesday and seen by Reuters on Wednesday. The proposal refers to both sides' commitment to fully implementing United Nations Security Council Resolution 1701, including provisions that refer to the "disarmament of all armed groups in Lebanon".

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/defence/hezbollah-israel-ceasefire-proposal-says-only-official-forces-may-carry-arms-in-lebanon/articleshow/115728218.cms?from=mdr>

Oman

Oman Participates in Meeting of GCC Joint Defence Council in Qatar

Oman News Agency, November 26, 2024

The Sultanate of Oman took part today in activities of the 21st session of the GCC Joint Defence Council, held in the State of

Qatar. Oman's delegation was headed by HH Sayyid Shihab bin Tarik Al Said, Deputy Prime Minister for Defence Affairs. The meeting discussed a spectrum of topics on the agenda of the 21st session which were submitted by the Supreme Military Committee of GCC Chiefs of Staff. It also highlighted several achievements and outcomes in the joint military fields. Moreover, the meeting reviewed several military matters of mutual interest in a bid to boost the march of military cooperation. During the meeting, HH Sayyid Shihab was accompanied by Vice Admiral Abdullah Khamis Al Raisi, Chief of Staff of the Sultan's Armed Forces and several SAF senior officers.

<https://www.omannews.gov.om/topics/en/79/show/119817/ona>

Palestine

UN Security Council warns against attempts to dismantle UNRWA

Michelle Nichols

Reuters, October 30, 2024

The United Nations Security Council on Wednesday "strongly warned against any attempts to dismantle or diminish" the operations and mandate of the U.N. Palestinian refugee agency UNRWA after Israel passed a law banning its operations. In a statement adopted by consensus, the 15-member body expressed grave concern over the legislation adopted by the Israeli parliament on Monday, which is due to come into effect in 90 days and has sparked international condemnation. The council urged Israel "to abide by its international obligations, respect the privileges and

immunities of UNRWA and live up to its responsibility to allow and facilitate full, rapid, safe and unhindered humanitarian assistance in all its forms into and throughout the entire Gaza Strip." U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has said Israel's ban on UNRWA, if implemented, would violate international law, the founding U.N. Charter and a 1946 U.N. convention on the diplomatic privileges and immunities granted to U.N. operations. UNRWA head Philippe Lazzarini warned that the organization's aid operations in the Israeli-occupied West Bank and the Gaza Strip were now at risk of collapse because of the new law.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/un-security-council-warns-against-attempts-dismantle-unrwa-2024-10-30/>

Qatar

Qatar launches 11th National Cyber Drill to give national cyber resilience a boost

Khalid Tawalbeh

Zawya, November 20, 2024

The National Cyber Security Agency (NCSA) has unveiled the eleventh edition of its highly anticipated annual event, the National Cyber Drill, under the theme 'Zero-Day Survival'. Spanning from November 17 to November 28, the event seeks to fortify Qatar's cyber defence capabilities by engaging more than 170 critical entities from across the nation in a comprehensive and high-stakes simulation. Announced during a press conference on Tuesday, the launch event was attended by

notable media representatives and cybersecurity specialists. This year's drill represents a significant expansion in scope, marking a milestone in the agency's ongoing mission to safeguard Qatar's digital infrastructure. The central aim of the 2024 National Cyber Drill is to measure and enhance the response readiness of participating entities to zero-day vulnerabilities — security flaws that attackers exploit before developers become aware of them or issue patches.

<https://www.zawya.com/en/economy/gcc/qatar-launches-11th-national-cyber-drill-to-give-national-cyber-resilience-a-boost-xo2zlkua>

Qatar Armed Forces Join OCC Program for NATO Partner Countries

Qatar News Agency, November 27, 2024

The decision to join the OCC was made following the completion of the evaluation process under the patronage of HE Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Defense Affairs, Sheikh Saoud bin Abdulrahman Al-Thani, and in the presence of HE Chief of Staff of Qatar Armed Forces, Lt Gen. (Pilot) Jassim bin Mohammed Al Mannai. The State of Qatar is the only country from the Middle East to join this program, having successfully completed all evaluation levels in a record time, in comparison to other NATO partner countries, which can take a period of up to four years to obtain the recognition certificate. In a statement, the Directorate of Moral Guidance announced that the Qatar Armed Forces successfully completed the evaluation process for joining the OCC

within 18 months, after the 101 Air Transport Squadron of the Amiri Air Force successfully passed all evaluation levels and was granted the OCC certificate of accession.

<https://www.qna.org.qa/en/News%20Area/News/2024-11/27/0069-qatar-armed-forces-join%20occ-program-for%20nato-partner-countries>

Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia, Iraq, and Russia reaffirm OPEC+ production cuts commitment

Arab News, November 26, 2024

Saudi Arabia, Iraq and Russia on Tuesday emphasized the importance of fully committing to the OPEC+ oil supply agreement, including voluntary production cuts agreed by eight member states and measures to compensate for any increases in production, the Saudi Press Agency reported. According to SPA, a trilateral meeting was held this morning in Baghdad, Iraq's capital, which was attended by Saudi Energy Minister Prince Abdulaziz bin Salman, Russian Deputy Prime Minister Alexander Novak and Ali Maarij Al-Bahadli, Iraq's director of distribution affairs at the Ministry of Oil. The participants reaffirmed the significance of continued cooperation among OPEC+ countries and their full commitment to the voluntary agreements and production cuts, including those agreed upon by the eight countries, as well as compensating for any production increases. Al-Bahadli reiterated Iraq's determination to fully adhere to the agreement, voluntary cuts, and compensation for any production increase,

in line with the updated schedule submitted by Iraq to the OPEC Secretariat.

<https://www.arabnews.com/node/2580834/business-economy>

Saudi Arabia abandons pursuit of US defence treaty over Israel stalemate

Samia Nakhoul

Reuters, November 29, 2024

Saudi Arabia has abandoned its pursuit of an ambitious defence treaty with Washington in return for normalising relations with Israel and is now pushing for a more modest military cooperation agreement, two Saudi and four Western officials told Reuters. In a drive to get a wide-ranging mutual security treaty over the line earlier this year, Riyadh softened its position on Palestinian statehood, telling Washington that a public commitment from Israel to a two-state solution could be enough for the Gulf kingdom to normalise relations. But with public anger in Saudi Arabia and the wider Middle East at fever pitch over Israel's military actions in Gaza, Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman has again made recognition of Israel conditional on it taking concrete steps to create a Palestinian state, two Saudi and three Western sources said. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is still eager to secure normalisation with the Saudi powerhouse as a historic milestone and a sign of broader acceptance in the Arab world, Western diplomats said.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/saudi-arabia-abandons-pursuit-us-defence-treaty-over-israel-stalemate-2024-11-29/>

Syria

US base in Syria comes under missile attack

Mehr News Agency, November 26, 2024

Local sources reported that several explosions were heard from inside the US occupation military base in the al-Shaddadi area located in the southern suburbs of al-Hasakah, Syria. There were no immediate reports of possible damage or casualties. No group has claimed responsibility for the missile attack as of yet. The Islamic Resistance in Iraq has been launching attacks on Israeli targets ever since the occupying regime started the genocidal war on Gaza in early October. The Resistance has also been hitting American military bases in Iraq and neighboring Syria in retaliation for Washington's support for the Israeli genocide in Gaza. Israel has been waging an atrocious onslaught against the Gaza Strip, targeting hospitals, residences, and houses of worship after Palestinian Resistance movements launched a surprise attack, dubbed Operation Al-Aqsa Storm, on October 7.

<https://en.mehrnews.com/news/224910/US-base-in-Syria-comes-under-missile-attack>

Rebels take control of Aleppo, igniting new phase of war

Ali Harb

Aljazeera, November 30, 2024

Rebels with the group Hay'et Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) have seized control of large parts of Aleppo, one of Syria's largest cities, after a surprise offensive this week.

The renewed fighting in Aleppo marks a new phase in Syria's long-running civil war, which began in 2011 during the Arab Spring protests. The forces of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad had previously held Aleppo, with the support of allies in Iran, Russia and Lebanon's Hezbollah. Russia has responded to the rebel offensive with air strikes, though its military resources are expected to be stretched thin due to its continuing war in Ukraine.

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/liveblog/2024/11/30/syria-war-live-rebels-take-control-of-aleppo-igniting-new-phase-of-war>

Türkiye

Türkiye-Finland defence industry co-op expected to grow: Envoy

Daily Sabah, November 24, 2024

Defence industry cooperation between Türkiye and Finland is expected to expand, along with other fields, within NATO's framework, according to Turkish Ambassador to Helsinki Deniz Çakar recently. Çakar stated that the tech startup conference Slush 2024, held in Helsinki on Wednesday and Thursday, was one of the most comprehensive events in its field. She noted that Turkish tech startups have been growing in number each year, with around 40 participants during the event's inaugural year. "This year, the number of participants from Türkiye reached around 400, including students and entrepreneurs, and this was made possible by the support of the Turkish government and its development agencies," Çakar told Anadolu Agency

(AA). She also highlighted the trade relations between Türkiye and Finland, noting that the trade volume between the two countries reached 2.1 billion euros (\$2.2 billion) in 2023. "The figure for the first eight months of this year was around 1.2 billion euros, and we estimate it will reach 2 billion euros by the end of the year, so we expect a similar figure to last year," the ambassador added.

<https://www.dailysabah.com/business/defense/turkiye-finland-defense-industry-co-op-expected-to-grow-envoy>

Turkiye announces 'security loop' closed against PKK in Iraq

Daily Sabah, November 26, 2024

An almost three-year-long operation launched to eradicate PKK terrorist targets in northern Iraqi districts close to the Turkish border has concluded in the Zap region, defense chief Güler announces, assuring operations will continue until terrorism is eliminated for good. The Turkish Armed Forces (TSK) have closed the security loop in northern Iraq's Zap region where the PKK terrorist group had a bastion, Defense Minister Yaşar Güler announced Tuesday. "Türkiye continues to take every measure and retaliate in fold to attempts to attack its troops in northern Iraq and Syria and most recently closed the loop in Zap," Güler told a parliamentary budget committee, referring to Operation Claw-Lock. "Our operations in the region will continue with the same pace and determination," he said, adding that every measure is taken to prevent any civilian deaths. Ankara Launched Operation Claw-

Lock in April 2022 to target PKK hideouts in Iraq's northern Metina, Zap and Avasin-Basyan regions near the Turkish border. It was preceded by two operations – Claw-Tiger and Claw-Eagle – launched in 2020.

<https://www.dailysabah.com/politics/war-on-terror/turkiye-announces-security-loop-closed-against-pkk-in-iraq>

Turkish firm signs deal to provide military vehicles worth \$912M to Romanian Defence Ministry

Gokhan Ergocun

Anadolu Agency, November 28, 2024

A Turkish vehicle and defence firm, Otokar, has signed an agreement with the Romanian Defense Ministry company Romtehnica to provide military vehicles worth 4.3 billion Romanian ron (approximately \$912.5 million). According to a press release from Otokar, the company will provide the Romanian Defense Ministry with 1,059 units of 4x4 tactical wheeled light armored vehicles known as Cobra II under the agreement signed on Wednesday. The first delivery of 278 vehicles will be made in Türkiye, with the remainder manufactured in Romania. Deliveries are scheduled to begin in the last quarter of 2025 and will be completed in batches over the next five years. The contracting authority invited the company to negotiate on Oct. 4, following the completion of the technical evaluation, field tests, and commercial evaluation processes. More than 20 users in 13 countries are currently using the Cobra II 4x4 tactical wheeled armored vehicle, said the statement. Otokar has been supplying

military vehicles to NATO and the UN since the 1980s. Cobra II, which was added to the company's product family in 2013, has been designed and produced in more than 30 different versions in line with the requests and needs.

<https://www.aa.com.tr/en/economy/turkish-firm-signs-deal-to-provide-military-vehicles-worth-912m-to-romanian-defense-ministry/3407621>

Turkiye reduces F-16 purchase deal with US, eyes F-35 re-entry

Airforce Technology, November 29, 2024

Turkiye has scaled back its planned \$23bn (T1798bn) acquisition of F-16 fighter jets from the US, cancelling the purchase of 79 modernisation kits for its existing fleet, according to Defence Minister Yasar Guler. Earlier in 2024, the US State Department approved Türkiye's request to acquire 40 F-16s and 79 modernisation kits for its current F-16s, after a lengthy negotiation process. The total cost for the new Lockheed Martin-made F-16s and associated munitions is approximately \$7bn, Guler confirmed. Turkiye placed its order in October 2021. The request came two years after the US removed Turkiye from the F-35 fighter jet programme. This expulsion was due to Turkiye's purchase of Russian-made S-400 air defence systems, which led to sanctions under the Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act.

<https://www.airforce-technology.com/news/turkiye-reduces-f-16-purchase-deal/>

United Arab Emirates

UAE, Indonesia sign agreements across various sectors

Murat Basoglu

Anadolu Agency, November 24, 2024

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Indonesia signed several agreements on Saturday, along with memoranda of understanding, to expand cooperation in the public and private sectors. The UAE's state news agency, WAM, said a ceremony was held at the Qasr Al Watan Palace in Abu Dhabi during a visit by Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto. UAE Energy Minister Suhail Al Mazrouei and Indonesian Foreign Minister Sugiono signed agreements covering technology, renewable energy, health, culture, tourism, mining, infrastructure, investments, international maritime cooperation, and government modernization. The ceremony was attended by UAE President Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan and Subianto, who also held a bilateral meeting. Al Nahyan highlighted Subianto's visit as one of his first official international trips underscoring their shared focus on strengthening ties for the benefit of both nations and their people. He noted the deep and historic relationship between the two countries, emphasizing significant progress in development in recent years.

<https://www.aa.com.tr/en/asia-pacific/uae-indonesia-sign-agreements-across-various-sectors/3402538>

BrahMos for UAE, 6th-Gen GCAP for Saudi: Middle East nations expand suppliers for military hardware

Ashish Dangwal

Eurasian Times, November 28, 2024

The BrahMos supersonic cruise missile, developed by India in collaboration with Russia, is gaining traction among global buyers. According to reports, Vietnam, Indonesia, and the United Arab Emirates are the latest prospective customers. This development was revealed by Alexander Maksichev, Co-Director of BrahMos Aerospace, during a statement to the Russian news agency TASS on November 27. "Talks are being held with Indonesia, Vietnam, and the UAE," Maksichev stated, adding that these nations are at the forefront of discussions for potential contracts. He refrained from providing further details about the ongoing negotiations but confirmed their active interest in the missile system. The BrahMos missile, currently operational in the Indian Armed Forces, has already found international buyers. The Philippines was the first to sign a deal. In January 2022, the Southeast Asian nation secured a US\$375 million contract for three batteries of the shore-based anti-ship variant of the BrahMos. The first batch was successfully delivered earlier this year, cementing BrahMos's entry into the global defense market.

<https://www.eurasiantimes.com/brahmos-for-uae-6th-gen-gcap-for-saud/>

Khalifa University, Lockheed Martin sign deal to enhance collaboration on aerospace, defence technologies

Zawya, November 29, 2024

Khalifa University of Science and Technology and Lockheed Martin, a leader in global security and aerospace, today announced the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to broaden their collaboration in advancing aerospace and defense technologies and fostering human capital development in the UAE. The MoU was signed by Prof. Ebrahim Al Hajri, President Khalifa University, and Frank St. John, Chief Operating Officer, Lockheed Martin, in Abu Dhabi. Senior officials from both partners were present on the occasion. As a first step under the agreement, Lockheed Martin will expand its Center for Innovation and Security Solutions (CISS) to Khalifa University's Main Campus, creating a platform for long-term innovation, training, and technological leadership, thereby strengthening the UAE's position as a global leader in aerospace and defense capabilities. Prof. Ebrahim Al Hajri said: "The agreement is part of Khalifa University's continued commitment to developing national competencies and supporting innovation in aerospace and defense technologies. It also stands as a testament to the confidence that global industries have in the university's capability to provide innovative solutions to their challenges. This agreement by Lockheed Martin, a global defense industry leader, is the result of a strategic cooperation with Khalifa University that

began several years ago and culminates in the university's selection as a partner to host the expanded research centre."

<https://www.zawya.com/en/business/technology-and-telecom/khalifa-university-lockheed-martin-sign-deal-to-enhance-collaboration-on-aerospace-defence-technologies-y3pjo5bz>

Yemen

Is Russia helping the Houthis in Yemen? If it's true, it could lead to a major problem for shipping

Economic Times, November 21, 2024

Concerns have grown over Russia's involvement with the Houthi rebels in Yemen, a group that has long received significant support from Iran. Recent statements from U.S. officials indicate that Russia may be aiding the Houthis, particularly in enhancing their targeting capabilities against U.S. and other vessels in the region. U.S. Special Envoy for Yemen, Tim Lenderking, highlighted that there is increasing evidence of Russia's serious engagement with the Houthis. This involvement is believed to include providing the rebels with valuable targeting data and possibly small arms, which could enable more precise attacks on military and civilian ships, particularly in key shipping lanes like the Red Sea. The potential for Russian assistance to the Houthis raises significant concerns for global shipping security. Over the past year, the Houthis have launched numerous missile and drone attacks on vessels

transiting the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden. U.S. military forces, including Navy destroyers, have been actively involved in defending these crucial maritime routes. The involvement of Russia could complicate efforts to safeguard these lanes.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/international/us/is-russia-helping-the-houthis-in-yemen-if-its-true-it-could-lead-to-a-major-problem-for-shipping/articleshow/115534358.cms?from=mdr>

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Sylloge on West Asia is compiled by Ms. Bhawna

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