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मनोहर पर्रिकर रक्षा अध्ययन एवं विश्लेषण संस्थान

Armenia

India refused to sell arms to Azerbaijan

News.am, December 16, 2024

Against the backdrop of the ongoing conflict with Armenia, Azerbaijan has made it clear through a third country that it wants to buy weapons from India, writes Indian publication ThePrint. However, the request made through a very friendly country was ignored by India. New Delhi has made it clear to the friendly country that India will determine its own bilateral relations and priorities and does not want any other country to mediate. Sources familiar with the situation said Baku never directly raised the issue with New Delhi. Instead, India was approached by a third country, saying that if New Delhi wanted to export its arms and was looking for a long-term partner, it could look to Azerbaijan. Sources familiar with the situation said Azerbaijan is ready to conclude military agreements.

https://news.am/eng/news/857513.html#google_vignette

Armenia signs new defence cooperation deal with Greece, Cyprus

Alexander Pracht

CivilNet, December 20, 2024

Armenia, Greece, and Cyprus stepped up their defence collaboration following a series of consultations held in Athens. The meetings resulted in signing defence cooperation plans for 2025, covering a wide range of military projects, while the discussions addressed key areas like troop training, military education, joint exercises,

and advisory support, emphasizing long-term cooperation between the countries. “Collaboration has made considerable progress, covering essential areas that demand consistent, long-term efforts,” Armenia’s Defence Ministry stated, praising Greece and Cyprus for their role in bolstering Armenian military capabilities. Levon Ayvazyan, who heads the Defence Policy and International Cooperation Department at Armenia’s Defense Ministry, highlighted the ongoing armed forces reform and stressed the significance of partnerships with Greece and Cyprus. The consultations also reviewed the progress of 2024 initiatives and considered the impact of regional and global developments, aiming to enhance defence ties further in the coming years.

<https://www.civilnet.am/en/news/810237/armenia-signs-new-defence-cooperation-deal-with-greece-cyprus/>

What’s behind Armenia’s military reform?

Alexander Pracht

CivilNet, December 23, 2024

Recent statements made by Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev in an interview with Russian state media regarding French supplies of “offensive lethal weapons” to Armenia and Yerevan’s alleged inability to keep up in an arms race, even with Western support, reflect Baku’s growing unease. Behind the Azerbaijani leader’s public reaction lie lesser-known developments within the Armenian Armed Forces. Yerevan has disclosed very few details about its military modernisation, intensifying interest in the actual needs of

Armenia's military and the structural reforms required. This interest has been further heightened by Armenia's recent announcement of a 20% increase in its military budget for the upcoming year. While Aliyev accuses the EU monitoring mission in Armenia of hostility and Armenia of "militarisation," Armenian Defence Minister Suren Papikyan has been meeting with counterparts from the U.S. and France in recent weeks. Statements following these meetings often look nearly identical, briefly mentioning the "presentation of Armenian army reforms" to foreign defence officials.

<https://www.civilnet.am/en/news/810410/whats-behind-armenias-military-reform/>

Azerbaijan

Azerbaijan Airlines flight was downed by Russian air defence system, four sources say

The Economic Times, December 27, 2024

An Azerbaijan Airlines flight that crashed in Kazakhstan was downed by a Russian air defence system, four sources in Azerbaijan with knowledge of the investigation told Reuters. An Embraer passenger jet crashed near the city of Aktau in Kazakhstan, killing 38 people, after diverting from an area of Russia in which Moscow has used air defence systems against Ukrainian drone strikes in recent months. Azerbaijan Airlines flight J2-8243 had flown hundreds of miles off its scheduled route from Azerbaijan's Baku to Grozny, in Russia's Chechnya, to crash on the opposite shore of the Caspian Sea, after what Russia's aviation watchdog said was an emergency that may have been

caused by a bird strike. Officials did not immediately explain why it had crossed the sea, but the crash came after Ukrainian drone strikes this month hit the Chechnya region of southern Russia.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/international/global-trends/azerbaijan-airlines-flight-was-downed-by-russian-air-defence-system-four-sources-say/articleshow/116687812.cms?from=mdr>

Iran

Iran's Nuclear timetable: The weapon potential

Valerie Lincy

Iran Watch, December 18, 2024

This timetable estimates how soon Iran could enrich enough uranium to fuel a small nuclear arsenal. It assumes Iran would try to build an arsenal of five warheads of the implosion type – the goal Iran set for itself when it began to work on nuclear weapons decades ago. With its thousands of gas centrifuges, some operating and some in storage, Iran can enrich uranium to a grade suitable for nuclear reactor fuel or to a higher grade suitable for nuclear weapons. On January 5, 2020, Iran announced that it would no longer observe any limit (such as that set by the nuclear accord of 2015) on the use of its centrifuges, or on the possession of uranium they enrich. Since then, Iran has expanded its stockpile of enriched uranium, increased the enrichment level of that stockpile, and brought more advanced centrifuges into operation.

<https://www.iranwatch.org/our-publications/articles-reports/irans-nuclear-timetable-weapon-potential>

Iran on cusp of going nuclear-armed: Warns IAEA in the latest report

The Economic Times, December 18, 2024

IAEA's December report warns that Tehran likely had enough material to build four bombs. Director General Grossi says 'Iran set to produce 60%-enriched uranium at eight or more times the current rate'. UN's atomic regulator says 'there is little point in trying to revive the 2015 nuclear deal between Tehran and world powers'. Iran is already practically a nuclear threshold state, the IAEA feels. Under the 2015 Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, Iran was only permitted to enrich uranium to 3.68 per cent purity. This is a level consistent with civilian uses of nuclear technology. Iran had claimed that as its only pursuit, capping its stockpile at 300 kilograms. But IAEA reports Tehran is dramatically expanding its production of uranium enriched to near-weapons grade levels. It has collected enough material for several bombs already. 'The philosophy of the original accord with Iran can be use

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/international/world-news/iran-on-cusp-of-going-nuclear-armed-warns-iaea-in-latest-report/videoshow/116428230.cms?from=mdr>

Preserving space for a nuclear deal with Iran in 2025

Arms Control Association, December 18, 2024

In the wake of the November 2024 U.S. elections, Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian continues to express support for nuclear talks with the United States to address international concerns about Iran's

advancing nuclear activities. However, his administration's recent efforts to ramp up its uranium enrichment capacity, ostensibly to build leverage ahead of President-elect Donald Trump's return to the White House, threatens to derail the prospects for reaching a diplomatic arrangement. Tehran's recent acceleration of proliferation-sensitive activities increases the risk that the United States or Israel perceive its actions as a step toward weaponisation, which could trigger military action or prompt Washington to ratchet up economic and political pressure on Iran even further.

<https://www.armscontrol.org/issue-briefs/2024-12/preserving-space-nuclear-deal-iran-2025>

15th Khordad air defence systems: Iran's response to growing US-Israel strike threats

Army Recognition, December 18, 2024

According to information published by Russian sources on December 15, 2024, Iran has begun deploying its 15th Khordad air defence missile systems near critical nuclear facilities, a move aimed at countering escalating threats from the United States and Israel. The latest reports confirm the presence of these systems around the Shahid Ahmadi Roshan nuclear site in Natanz, a key location in Iran's uranium enrichment efforts situated in Isfahan Province. Iran fortifies its nuclear facilities with advanced 15th Khordad air defence systems, signalling preparedness against potential U.S. and Israeli strikes. The Natanz facility, one of Iran's key nuclear sites, has long been under international scrutiny due to allegations by the U.S. and Israel that it plays

a central role in Iran's uranium enrichment program. Both nations claim that Iran is pursuing nuclear weapons capabilities, a charge Tehran vehemently denies, asserting its nuclear program is solely for peaceful purposes.

<https://armyrecognition.com/news/army-news/army-news-2024/15th-khordad-air-defense-systems-irans-response-to-growing-us-israel-strike-threats>

Iran displays defence achievements at Vietnam Defence Expo

Mehr News Agency, December 19, 2024

Iran is showcasing its defence achievements at Vietnam International Defence Expo 2024, an international defence exhibition held in Hanoi from December 19 to 22. The Vietnam Defense Expo 2024 brings together approximately 200 companies from 27 countries, including the Islamic Republic of Iran, Vietnam, China, Russia, Turkey, the UK, and the US, to showcase their military equipment. The Iranian delegation, led by Brigadier General Seyyed Mehdi Farahi, Deputy Defense Minister for Industrial and Research Affairs, participated in the exhibition's opening ceremony on Thursday. The event was attended by Vietnamese Prime Minister Pham Minh Chinh and other senior Vietnamese officials. Iran's presence at this exhibition underscores the country's advanced defence industry capabilities and its commitment to presenting its cutting-edge military technologies to the global market.

<https://en.mehrnews.com/news/225711/Iran-displays-defence-achievements-at-Vietnam-Defense-Expo>

Iraq

Iraq to acquire Korean utility helicopters for \$93.7M

Defense Mirror, December 24, 2024

Korea Aerospace Industries (KAI) announced that it has signed a 136 billion won (\$93.7 million) contract to export Korean Utility Helicopters (KUH) to Iraq. According to the company's regulatory filing, the helicopters will be supplied to the Iraqi government by March 2029, South Korean media report. The KUH, also known as Surion, is a medium-sized utility helicopter that has been part of the South Korean Army's fleet since 2012. Over 200 Surion helicopters are currently in service in South Korea, supporting air assault, cargo airlift, and other operations.

<https://www.defensemirror.com/news/38471>

Israel

With Donald Trump's backing will Benjamin Netanyahu strike Iran's nuclear facilities?

The Economic Times, December 17, 2024

Benjamin Netanyahu may be counting on Donald Trump's support when it comes to attacking Iran's nuclear facilities and establishments, according to reports. This may be the next agenda on Netanyahu's list after the Israeli air force and navy reportedly destroyed 80% of the military establishments of the Syrian military after Bashar Al-Assad' regime collapsed, and insurgents took over Damascus. Israel has been voicing their opinions strongly about Iran's nuclear projects, which are reportedly

backed by Russia. Trump, although, is quite a diplomatic leader, and does not believe much into long-drawn conflicts, and has even been advocating for the resolution of the Ukraine and Russia conflict through diplomatic talks. Therefore, it is still not known what Trump's exact stand is going to be on attacking Iran's nuclear facilities by Israel, when he takes over the reigns from Joe Biden at the start of the coming year. Netanyahu, for a long time, has been trying hard to get the US' attention to Iran's nuclear facilities and projects, but has been halted at every turn, not only by the White House, but his own colleagues and military officials.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/international/us/unique-window-of-opportunity-has-opened-up-for-israel-with-donald-trumps-backing-will-benjamin-netanyahu-strike-irans-nuclear-facilities/articleshow/116382018.cms?from=mdr>

Evidence shows US knew about Israeli nuclear program in 1960s

Yana Suryadnaya

i24 News, December 18, 2024

The National Security Archive of the United States declassified a series of documents from the 1960s and 1970s on Tuesday, which pertained to the Israeli nuclear program and US conduct on the matter. The release of documents is the first time written proof has shown that the US knew Israel was producing nuclear weapons in Dimona, which Israel has never publicly admitted. An intelligence report dated to December 1960 clearly determines

that Israel's nuclear project in Dimona is linked to weapon development. Other documents revealed that in February 1967, a number of Israeli sources informed the US embassy that Israel "either has or is about to complete" a processing facility in Dimona, and that "the Dimona reactor has been operated at full capacity." The report said Israel was "six to eight weeks" away from manufacturing a bomb. While the intelligence arm of the State Department could not prove or refute the allegations at that time, it considered some of them as "probabilities," and urged the inspection team in April 1967 to investigate them.

<https://www.i24news.tv/en/news/international/americas/artc-evidence-shows-us-knew-about-israeli-nuclear-program-in-1960s>

Israel strikes Yemen ports, power stations in retaliation against Houthis

Rina Bassist

Al-Monitor, December 19, 2024

The Israeli Air Force carried out a series of airstrikes on the western coast of Yemen and deeper in the country, targeting military positions and infrastructure belonging to the Houthis. The Israeli attacks coincided with the Houthis, an Iranian-backed militant group, firing a ballistic missile at central Israel. The Israeli military said the long-range Arrow air defence system intercepted the missile outside Israeli airspace. Still, falling shrapnel damaged a school in the city of Ramat Gan. The Houthi attack was the second ballistic missile fired from Yemen this week toward central Israel. A drone attack two weeks ago

damaged a house in the town of Yavne. An Israeli man was killed last July when the Houthis fired a ballistic missile at Tel Aviv.

<https://www.al-monitor.com/originals/2024/12/israel-strikes-yemen-ports-power-stations-retaliation-against-houthis>

Israel vows to target Houthi leaders, ratcheting up threat after missile fire

Lazar Berman

Times of Israel, December 24, 2024

Israel will begin targeting leaders of Yemen's Houthi rebel group, Defence Minister Israel Katz said Tuesday, vowing that Israel will not allow missile and drone fire on Israel to continue unchecked. Firing at Houthi leaders would seem to mark an escalation by Israel, which has so far targeted port infrastructure and military sites in a handful of sorties in response to repeated launches of drones and ballistic missiles from Yemen. A missile fired early Tuesday was shot down, but sirens in the Tel Aviv area caused widespread panic and a rush to shelter left one woman seriously injured. It was the fourth drone or missile attack within a week from Yemen. "Just as we took care of (Yayha) Sinwar in Gaza, (Ismail) Haniyeh in Tehran and (Hassan) Nasrallah in Beirut, we will deal with the heads of the Houthis in Sana'a or anywhere in Yemen," Katz said, referring to the leaders of terror group Hamas and Hezbollah killed by Israel. "We will act both against their infrastructure and against them to remove the threat," he added while visiting an Arrow air defence system

battery used to shoot down the Houthi missile overnight.

<https://www.timesofisrael.com/israel-vows-to-target-houthi-leaders-ratcheting-up-threat-after-missile-fire/>

Israel's MoD signs deal with IAI for additional Arrow-3 missile interceptors

Airforce Technology, December 26, 2024

The Israel Ministry of Defense (MoD) has finalised a contract with Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI) to increase the production of Arrow-3 interceptors. The agreement, led by the Israel Missile Defence Organisation (IMDO) and the Directorate of Defence Research & Development (DDR&D), entails the provision of Arrow-3 interceptors to the Israel Defence Forces (IDF). The multi-billion-dollar contract was formalised at the Ministry's headquarters in Tel Aviv, with defence and industry figures in attendance. The Arrow system, a collaborative effort between the Israeli and US governments, is used to neutralise long-range ballistic missile threats. This Arrow 3 component of the Arrow Weapon System (AWS) is said to be the first fully operational, national, stand-alone anti tactical ballistic missiles (ATBM) defence system.

<https://www.airforce-technology.com/news/israels-mod-arrow-3-missile-interceptors/>

Israel and Slovakia sign €560m defence contract for BARAK MX system

Army Technology, December 27, 2024

The International Defense Cooperation Directorate of the Israel Ministry of

Defence (IMOD), SIBAT, has concluded a defence deal with Slovakia, marking the largest such agreement between the two nations. Valued at around €560m (\$582.96m), the contract is expected to bolster Slovakia's defence capabilities through the acquisition of IAI's BARAK MX Integrated Air Defense System. The agreement was formalised in Tel Aviv by IMOD director general Eyal Zamir, alongside key figures. The BARAK MX is developed through close collaboration with IAI's in-house strike systems and loitering munitions teams, drawing on the company's expertise in the Offensive Domain to "effectively" counter enemy threats. This system is equipped to neutralise a range of aerial threats, including fighter jets, helicopters, UAVs, cruise missiles, and ballistic missiles. With its network-centric architecture, the BARAK MX enhances real-time combat response and coordination with other defence systems.

<https://www.army-technology.com/news/israel-slovakia-barak-mx-system/>

In a first, Israel uses America's 'THAAD' system to intercept a missile fired by the Houthis in Yemen

The Economic Times, December 30, 2024

The U.S. Terminal High Altitude Area Defence (THAAD) system was used for the first time in Israel to intercept a missile, a source familiar with the matter confirmed on Friday. This marks a key moment since President Joe Biden deployed the advanced anti-missile system in Israel in October. The THAAD system, built by Lockheed

Martin, was activated to intercept a projectile from Yemen within the last 24 hours. The source, who requested anonymity, stated that an analysis would determine whether the interception was successful. The Pentagon has yet to comment on the incident. The deployment of THAAD is part of an effort to bolster Israel's air defence systems, adding to the country's already advanced missile defence capabilities. The system's activation comes amid growing tensions in the region, particularly with Yemen's Houthi movement.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/defence/in-a-first-israel-uses-americas-thaad-system-to-intercept-a-missile-fired-by-the-houthis-in-yemen/articleshow/116739222.cms?from=mdr>

Ex-UK defence chief: 'We've all gained from Israel's experience'- Interview

Shmuel Elmas

The Jerusalem Post, December 30, 2024

The British government's decision last September to suspend 30 of 350 arms export licenses to Israel raised a troubling question: had we lost British support? Did Israel, in the current climate, let relations with a vital ally slip through its fingers? But feelings are one thing. Numbers are another: according to a report by the Campaign Against Arms Trade (CAAT) organisation, defence exports to Israel approved by the UK government in 2023 totalled £17 million (\$23 million). The basis of cooperation between the two countries is not the arms trade but the

coordination between their militaries in training exercises and in moments of truth. Such a moment came when the Iranians carried out their threat and attacked Israel directly in April and October. British forces assisted Israel in intercepting the missiles. The cooperation proved itself once more.

<https://www.jpost.com/israel-news/article-835352>

Jordan

Arab conference advocates expanding peaceful uses of nuclear energy

Jordan News Agency, December 18, 2024

The 16th Arab Conference on the Peaceful Uses of Atomic Energy, hosted at the Dead Sea and organised by the Arab Atomic Energy Agency (AAEA) in cooperation with the Jordan Atomic Energy Commission (JAEC), concluded on Wednesday with a call to bolster Arab collaboration in nuclear sciences. The conference emphasised creating partnerships and knowledge networks among research, technical, and educational institutions while advancing scientific research linked to development. The conference recommended broadening nuclear energy applications in medicine, agriculture, industry, water resources, and food security to enhance Arab citizens' lives and promote sustainable development. It urged the AAEA to adopt joint research projects, leveraging Arab expertise and fostering synergy between member states.

https://www.petra.gov.jo/Include/InnerPage.jsp?ID=66671&lang=en&name=en_news

Kuwait

India, Kuwait upgrade ties to strategic partnership on Modi visit

Sanjay Kumar

Arab News, December 22, 2024

India and Kuwait upgraded bilateral ties to a strategic partnership on Sunday as their leaders eye stronger cooperation in “key sectors” ranging from pharmaceuticals to security. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi signed a strategic partnership agreement with Emir of Kuwait Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah during his trip to the Gulf state, the first visit by an Indian leader in 43 years. “We have elevated our partnership to a strategic one and I am optimistic that our friendship will flourish even more in the times to come,” Modi said in a statement. “We discussed cooperation in key sectors like pharmaceuticals, IT, fintech, infrastructure and security.”

<https://www.arabnews.com/node/2584021/world>

Kuwait's foreign minister visits Damascus calls for lifting Syria sanctions

Mohammad Sio

Anadolu Agency, December 30, 2024

Kuwaiti Foreign Minister Abdullah Al-Yahya confirmed on Monday that his visit to Damascus is a “message of Gulf solidarity” with Syria, calling for the removal of international sanctions on the country. Speaking at a press conference in Damascus with Syrian Foreign Minister Asaad Al-Shaibani and Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Secretary-General Jassim Al-Budaiwi, Al-Yahya emphasized that his

visit is part of the GCC's efforts to strengthen ties with Syria. He said the visit follows a mandate from the GCC, which is currently chaired by Kuwait and stems from the outcomes of the Gulf ministerial meeting held in Kuwait City on Dec. 26 to discuss the developments in Syria.

<https://www.aa.com.tr/en/middle-east/kuwaits-foreign-minister-visits-damascus-calls-for-lifting-syria-sanctions/3438256>

GCC Emergency head calls for stronger ties with IAEA to tackle regional crises

Times Kuwait, December 31, 2024

The GCC Emergency Management Center, alongside the IAEA, met with Gulf emergency representatives to coordinate joint exercises over the next three years, completing the Gulf emergency project in collaboration with Atomic Energy. The Emergency Center coordinates GCC efforts, develops studies, and provides solutions for regional emergencies, aiming to anticipate issues, create solutions, and activate early warning systems for timely responses. Brigadier General Dr. Rashed Mohammed Al Marri, Director of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Emergency Management Center in Kuwait, emphasised the need to strengthen cooperation between Gulf emergency organisations and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to effectively address regional emergencies, including radiological and nuclear incidents, as reported by Al Jarida newspaper.

<https://timeskuwait.com/gcc-emergency-head-calls-for-stronger-ties-with-iaea-to-tackle-regional-crisis/>

Oman

Omani-Saudi joint military exercise “Solidarity 1” concludes

Oman News Agency, December 25, 2024

The Omani-Saudi Joint Military Exercise “Solidarity 1” concluded in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA). The drill saw the participation of a force from the Oman Coast Regiment of the 23rd Infantry Brigade, Royal Army of Oman (RAO), and a force from the 2nd regiment of the 20th Brigade of the Royal Land Forces of the KSA. Implementation of the drill was part of a training plan adopted by the RAO to maintain a high level of performance and the combat ability of its units. It was also in pursuance of an annual training programme implemented in cooperation with GCC, Arab and friendly countries to serve the overall national objectives.

<https://omannews.gov.om/topics/en/79/show/120285>

Lebanon

Turkey ready to supply power to Syria and Lebanon, energy minister says

Nevzat Devranoglu

Reuters, December 30, 2024

Turkey is ready to supply electricity to Syria and Lebanon and a team of government officials is already in Syria working on how to resolve its energy issues, Turkish Energy Minister Alparslan Bayraktar said. Turkey, which backed rebels in neighbouring Syria who toppled Bashar al-Assad this month after a 13-year civil war, has reopened its embassy in Damascus and already conducted high-

level contacts with new de-facto leader Ahmed al-Sharaa."Maybe the electricity that Syria and Lebanon need will initially be met by exporting it from Turkey, and of course, we can see the picture a little more after seeing the situation in the transmission network," Bayraktar told reporters in Turkey's southeastern city of Sanliurfa.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/turkey-ready-supply-power-syria-lebanon-energy-minister-says-2024-12-30/>

Palestine

What will Palestine's future be in 2025?

Michael Lynk

Anadolu Agency, December 25, 2024

In 2024, there were a host of startling developments occurring in the Middle East and the wider world that impacted Palestine, most of them unforeseen 12 months ago: the continuation of the unrelenting Israeli genocide in Gaza, the battlefield defeat of Hezbollah and the devastation in Lebanon, the overthrow of Bashar Assad in Syria, the isolation of Iran, the election of Donald Trump, and a series of seminal rulings by the International Court of Justice (ICJ) and the International Criminal Court (ICC). All of these seismic events make the assignment of imagining what Palestine's future will be in 2025 a precarious task. Yet, with caution thrown to the wind, we can make some educated guesses on six leading features. Donald Trump's return to the US presidency will certainly encourage Israel's accelerating subjugation of the Palestinians. His major appointments on the Middle East –

including his secretary of state, his ambassador to Israel, and his two regional envoys – are all diplomatic gifts to Israel's far-right nationalist government.

<https://www.aa.com.tr/en/opinion/opinion-what-will-palestines-future-be-in-2025/3433824>

Qatar

New unit to help detect nuclear radiation, issue early warnings

Qatar Tribune, December 27, 2024

Assistant Undersecretary for Environmental Affairs Abdulhadi Al Marri explained that this unit is a crucial tool for detecting nuclear radiation and issuing early warnings of any cross-border radioactive contamination, enabling the ministry and relevant authorities to take preventive measures before radioactive clouds reach populated areas. He also mentioned that the team overseeing the unit had undergone advanced technical training, including office-based exercises and participation in "Watan 2024" field drill in collaboration with relevant agencies, demonstrating its capability to handle any radiation emergency. Director of Radiation Protection Department Engineer Abdulrahman Al Abduljabar stated that the new system for monitoring ionising radiation includes advanced marine stations, which are floating buoys with robust aluminium towers.

<https://www.qatar-tribune.com/article/156019/nation/new-unit-to-help-detect-nuclear-radiation-issue-early-warnings>

Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia seeks to buy 100 Turkish fighter jets

Middle East Monitor, December 31, 2024

Saudi Arabia is seeking to buy 100 Kaan fighter jets from Turkiye as part of its Vision 2030 plan, Turkish newspaper Milliyet has reported. The fifth-generation Kaan fighter jet was developed by Turkish Aerospace Industries (TUSAS), and can perform air-to-air combat missions, as well as conduct precision air to ground strikes at supersonic speeds. The head of the Turkish Defence Industries Directorate, Haluk Gorgun, met with Saudi Assistant Defence Minister Khalid Bin Hussein Al-Bayari last week, along with the Commander of the Royal Saudi Air Force, Turki Bin Bandar Al-Saud. The meeting was in Istanbul. Israel's Maariv newspaper quoted senior officials as saying that "the move could change the regional balance of power and strengthen the Sunni alliance." It added that Saudi Arabia's move comes in light of the US refusal to provide the Kingdom with the advanced F-35 aircraft and may demonstrate to Washington that Riyadh has other alternatives.

<https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/2024/12/31/saudi-arabia-seeks-to-buy-100-turkish-fighter-jets/>

Syria

Israel strikes missile depots, air defences in Syria's Tartous region

Al-Jazeera, December 16, 2024

Israel launched overnight attacks on Syrian air defence systems and

ammunition depots in its ongoing bid to disable the country's military capability following the recent removal of President Bashar al-Assad. War monitor, the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights (SOHR), said on Monday that Israel targeted military sites in Syria's coastal Tartous region, including air defence units and "surface-to-surface missile depots", saying the attack featured "the heaviest strikes" in the area in more than a decade. "The explosions in Tartous were extremely loud," said Al Jazeera's Resul Serdar, reporting from the Syrian capital, Damascus. "Some experts are saying that might probably mean it was a chemical weapons production house."

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2024/12/16/israel-strikes-missile-depots-air-defences-in-syrias-tartus-region>

Russia pulling back but not out of Syria, sources say

The Economic Times, December 16, 2024

Russia is pulling back its military from the front lines in northern Syria and from posts in the Alawite Mountains but is not leaving its two main bases in the country after the fall of President Bashar al-Assad, four Syrian officials told Reuters. The ousting of Assad, who along with his late father, former President Hafez al-Assad, had forged a close alliance with Moscow, has thrown the future of Russia's bases - the Hmeimim airbase in Latakia and the Tartous naval facility - into question. Satellite footage from Friday shows what appeared to be at least two Antonov AN-124s, among the world's largest cargo planes, at the Hmeimim base with their

nose cones open, apparently preparing to load up.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/defence/russia-pulling-back-but-not-out-of-syria-sources-say/articleshow/116322308.cms?from=mdr>

Turkiye

A global brand: Turkish defence industry

Deniz Istikbal

Daily Sabah, December 23, 2024

The Turkish defence industry has become one of the most prominent brands of recent times. It has made significant contributions to the battlefield victories of the Turkish Armed Forces (TSK), attracting the attention of various countries. Developments in regions like Azerbaijan, Ukraine, Libya, Iraq and Syria have brought more visibility to this process, globalising the Turkish defence industry. According to international institutions, the Turkish defence industry is the 11th largest in the world, offering substantial opportunities to friendly and allied countries through its diverse production model. Unlike its Western counterparts, Türkiye focuses on technology sharing and self-reliance. This policy has led to increased interest in Turkish defence products, making the Turkish Armed Forces a global model for transformation in weapons technologies.

<https://www.dailysabah.com/opinion/op-ed/a-global-brand-turkish-defense-industry>

Turkiye prioritizes defence cooperation with new Syrian administration

Merve Berker

Anadolu Agency, December 26, 2024

Turkiye sees defence cooperation with the new Syrian administration as an “important” step in the interest of both countries as well as regional stability, the Turkish National Defence Ministry said. In the ministry’s last weekly press briefing this year, spokesperson Zeki Akturk said bilateral cooperation with Syria is a priority for Türkiye in terms of both national and regional stability. Akturk, stressing that a new chapter has been opened in post-Assad Syria after a dark era, stated: “We support steps toward peace, tranquillity, and stability, and we affirm the necessity of preserving the territorial integrity and unitary structure of our southern neighbour. He added: “We reiterate our support for the new Syrian administration's call and efforts for a unified army, as well as our desire to work jointly with the Syrian administration on combating terrorism.”

<https://www.aa.com.tr/en/turkiye/turkiye-prioritizes-defense-cooperation-with-new-syrian-administration/3434795>

Turkish defence industry reaches 70% domestic production capacity

Middle East Monitor, December 28, 2024

Turkiye’s defence industry has reached 70% domestic production capacity in 2024, according to the Independent Industrialists and Businessmen’s Association (MUSIAD)’s Türkiye

Defence Industry 2024 report released Friday, Anadolu reports. It discusses the current situation and future projections of the domestic defence industry and states that significant successes have been achieved in strategic products, with an increase in domestic production capacity to 70%. The report includes an evaluation by the MUSIAD Defense Industry Board, which suggests that foreign dependency in engines and power transmission systems should be reduced.

<https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/2024-12-28-turkish-defense-industry-reaches-70-domestic-production-capacity/>

Turkey's Baykar to buy Piaggio aerospace: Italy

The Defence Post, December 28, 2024

Italy's government gave the green light Friday for Turkish drone producer Baykar to buy Piaggio Aerospace, which was placed under state administration in 2018. Commissioners managing the Italian firm, which builds and supports aircraft and engines for the private sector and the military, chose Baykar out of three international bidders, Italy's ministry of Enterprise said. Baykar's offer was considered "the most suitable to guarantee the interests of the employees and creditors of Piaggio Aero and Piaggio Aviation and to relaunch the group's industrial prospects," it said in a statement. No figure for the sale was given. "After six years of waiting we are giving a future to Piaggio Aerospace, a strategic asset for our country," Enterprise Minister Adolfo Urso said in the statement. The deal will

safeguard jobs and provide a "long-term production perspective," he added.

<https://thedefensepost.com/2024/12/28/turkeys-baykar-piaggio-aerospace-italy/>

Turkiye plans to build three nuclear power plants by 2035

Alimat Aliyeva

Azer News, December 29, 2024

Turkish authorities plan to build three nuclear power plants in the country by 2035, Azernews reports. "We need two more large nuclear power plants: one in Sinop and the other in Thrace. The year 2025 will be a turning point for us, as we will determine the technology and models for these stations," said Alparslan Bayraktar, Turkiye's Deputy Minister of Energy and Natural Resources. Turkiye's first nuclear power plant, Akkuyu, is set to begin generating electricity in 2025. The first reactor is expected to produce 1,200 MW of electricity, which will meet approximately 2.5 per cent of Turkiye's energy needs. Once all four reactors are operational, Akkuyu will have a total capacity of 4,800 MW, providing around 10 per cent of the country's total energy consumption.

<https://www.azemews.az/region/235816.html>

United Arab Emirates

EWEC gains four new sites for 4.6GW clean power projects

Power Technology, December 26, 2024

Emirates Water and Electricity Company (EWEC) has received approval to develop

four new renewable energy sites in Abu Dhabi, UAE. The four sites, covering an area of around 75km², will accommodate solar photovoltaic (PV) and wind energy projects. This includes three solar PV plants in Al Faya, Al Khazna, and Al Zarraf, along with a wind farm in Sila. The projects will contribute 4.5GW (AC) of solar PV capacity and up to 140MW of wind capacity. The solar PV developments are crucial for EWEC's goal to achieve 10GW of installed solar PV capacity by 2030 and 18GW by 2035. This initiative is a key step towards meeting Abu Dhabi's strategic clean energy targets.

<https://www.power-technology.com/news/ewec-clean-power-projects/>

Yemen

Israel struggles to counter Houthi attacks

Zein Khalil

Anadolu Agency, December 21, 2024

Israeli military forces have faced significant challenges in countering Houthi missile and drone attacks since the beginning of the war on Gaza in October 2023, according to Israeli newspaper Maariv. The latest incident occurred earlier Saturday when a ballistic missile launched by the Houthis struck the Israeli capital Tel Aviv, injuring 20 people, according to local sources. The Houthi group claimed responsibility for the strike. Maariv's report said that the Houthis have launched over 200 ballistic missiles and 170 drones at Israeli targets, severely testing Israel's

defence capabilities. It added that Israel's defence mechanisms, particularly the Iron Dome and other air defence systems, have struggled to cope with the evolving threat posed by the Houthis.

<https://www.aa.com.tr/en/middle-east/israel-struggles-to-counter-houthi-attacks-report/3430801>

NUCLEAR AND ARMS CONTROL CENTRE

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