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मनोहर पर्रिकर रक्षा अध्ययन एवं विश्लेषण संस्थान

## Armenia

### Armenia-NATO military cooperation current programs discussed

News.am, May 1, 2024

An Armenian delegation led by Artur Yeroyan, Deputy Chief of the General Staff of the Armed Forces, took part in the annual discussions of the Armenian Ministry of Defence (MoD) and the NATO Defence Education Enhancement Program (DEEP), at NATO Headquarters in the Belgian capital of Brussels, on April 29 and April 30. The parties discussed the results of assistance provided to the military education institutions and training centers of Armenia within the framework of DEEP, and outlined the new domains of cooperation. They agreed on the cooperation program for 2024 and outlined the prospects for cooperation in 2025.

<https://news.am/eng/news/820941.html>

### Putin agrees to withdraw Russian forces from various Armenian regions, says Ifax

Reuters, May 9, 2024

President Vladimir Putin has agreed to withdraw Russian forces and border guards from various parts of Armenia at Yerevan's request, Putin's spokesman was cited as saying on May 9, by Russia's Interfax news agency. The announcement follows the departure of nearly 2,000 Russian peacekeepers from in and around the Nagorno-Karabakh region which Azerbaijan returned by force in September last year. Their exit ended a multi-year deployment which gave

Moscow a military foothold in the strategic South Caucasus region.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/putin-agrees-withdraw-russian-forces-various-armenian-regions-says-ifax-2024-05-09/>

### Armenian and Indian defence ministries hold first Defense consultations in Yerevan

MassisPost, May 15, 2024

Defence Ministries of Armenia and India held first defence consultations in Yerevan highlighting their growing military ties. The consultations were held under the chairmanship of Levon Ayvazyan, Head of the Defence Policy and International Cooperation Department at the Armenian Defence Ministry, and Shri Vishwesh Negi, Joint Secretary for International Cooperation of the Indian Defence Ministry. The Armenian Defence Ministry said senior military officials from the two states approved on May 14, a plan of joint actions for 2024 and 2025 and set up a “working group” tasked with coordinating them. Indian-Armenian military cooperation will involve not only arms supplies but also military education, “tactical training” and “exchange of experience,” it said without going into details.

<https://massispost.com/2024/05/armenian-and-indian-defense-ministries-hold-first-defense-consultations-in-yerevan/>

## Azerbaijan

### Azerbaijan military delegation visits Iran army NOHED brigade

Mehr News Agency, May 3, 2024

The military delegation of the Republic of Azerbaijan visited the Army's 65th

Airborne Brigade of the Special Forces (abbreviated as NOHED). During this visit, in the presence of the military delegation of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the employees of the 65th NOHED Brigade displayed their capabilities by performing various exercises in the field of combating terrorism, freeing hostages, etc.

<https://en.mehrnews.com/news/214668/Azerbaijan-military-delegation-visits-Iran-army-NOHED-Brigade>

### **Excalibur army to deliver 70 DITA Self-propelled howitzers to Azerbaijan**

Militaryleak, May 7, 2024

The Czech defence company Excalibur Army is set to deliver over 70 units of the DITA 155mm/L45 self-propelled howitzers to the nation. According to AZE. Media on May 6, 2024, the proposed delivery of howitzers to Baku was confirmed by Slovak parliamentarian Juraj Krupa. Azerbaijan's arsenal, as per the Military Balance 2022 report, encompasses a diverse array of artillery, totaling 630 units. This includes a variety of self-propelled artillery, with notable units such as the 122mm 2S1 Gvozdika, the 152mm 2S3 Akatsiya, and the Dana-M1M. Additionally, Azerbaijan possesses a mix of self-propelled howitzers, including the 155mm ATMOS 2000 and the 203mm 2S7 Pion. The primary focus of the Azerbaijani armed forces is territorial defense, exemplified by the recent conflicts with Armenia over Nagorno-Karabakh.

[https://militaryleak.com/2024/05/07/excalibur-army-to-deliver-70-dita-self-propelled-howitzers-to-azerbaijan/#google\\_vignette](https://militaryleak.com/2024/05/07/excalibur-army-to-deliver-70-dita-self-propelled-howitzers-to-azerbaijan/#google_vignette)

### **Azerbaijan to jointly produce weapons with Slovakia**

Report News Agency, May 8, 2024

Some of the projects related to the development of defense industry in Slovakia have been discussed in Baku, Prime Minister of the Slovak Republic Robert Fico said in an interview with AZERTAC and AzTV, Report informs. "I have supported the development of the defense industry in Slovakia. Mr. President (President of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev - ed.) and I have discussed some projects," Fico said. According to him, technology will come from Slovakia and finance from Azerbaijan. The prime minister added that the weapons to be produced will either be exported or remain in Azerbaijan.

<https://report.az/en/military/azerbaijan-to-jointly-produce-weapons-with-slovakia/>

### **Azerbaijan considers procurement of JF-17 Fighter Jets from Pakistan**

Sheikh Akhter

Defencexp, May 13, 2024

The Centre for European Policy Analysis (CEPA) highlights the shift in Azerbaijan's arms procurement away from Russia, driven by global demand for replacements for ageing Soviet and Russian aircraft due to the Ukraine conflict. The JF-17 Block III (Thunder) is a collaborative effort between the China Aviation Industry Corporation (AVIC) and Pakistan Aeronautical Complex (PAC). Pakistan is pursuing a different strategy by developing a platform that allows for more customization, enabling countries that adopt the JF-17 Block III program to

utilize their existing missile systems. This aligns with Pakistan's non-aligned defence approach. On the other hand, Azerbaijan is breaking from tradition by acquiring a non-Russian platform for the first time, offering a cost-effective solution suitable for its operational needs. However, the significance of the JF-17 deal extends beyond the platform itself; it contributes to deepening the complex relationship within the emerging military-industrial cooperation between Pakistan, Turkey, and Azerbaijan.

<https://www.defencexp.com/azerbaijan-considers-procurement-of-jf-17-fighter-jets-from-pakistan/>

## Bahrain

### **BDF commander-in-chief receives Indian defence attaché**

Bahrain News Agency, May 9, 2024

Field Marshal Shaikh Khalifa bin Ahmed Al Khalifa, the Commander-in-Chief of Bahrain Defence Force (BDF), received the Navy Colonel Sandeep Singh, the newly appointed Defence Attaché at the Indian Embassy. The meeting discussed topics of common interest. The Commander-in-Chief praised the historic Bahrain-India relations and cooperation, particularly in the military field.

<https://www.bna.bh/en/news?cms=q8FmFJgiscL2fwIzON1%2BDr6ganlNQmFvYqGNV0gZCPs%3D>

### **Bahrain defence force conducts "Shield of the Nation 2024" drill**

Al Defaiya, May 15, 2024

Bahrain Defence Force (BDF) conducted the "Shield of the Nation 2024" drill.

Members of the National Guard and the Interior Ministry participated. The drill aims to promote advanced coordination and preparation between military forces and security bodies to ensure swift responses to threats. On May 14, Field Marshal Shaikh Khalifa bin Ahmed Al Khalifa, Commander-in-Chief of Bahrain Defence Force (BDF), inspected a "Shield of the Nation 2024" drill site. He was briefed on the objectives and phases of the drill, the joint training procedures and techniques, as well as the advanced command and control systems, Bahrain News Agency (BNA) reported.

<https://www.defaiya.com/news/Regional%20News/Bahrain/2024/05/15/bahrain-defence-force-conducts-shield-of-the-nation-2024-drill>

## Iran

### **AEOI chief confirms presence of 130 inspectors for Iran oversight**

Tehran Times, May 1, 2024

The Chief of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) has stated that more than 130 inspectors from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) are currently authorized to conduct inspections within the country. Mohammad Eslami, speaking at a cabinet meeting on May 1, emphasized that Iran has not imposed any restrictions on the entry of IAEA inspectors and continues to engage with the Agency on safeguard issues. He highlighted the upcoming visit of IAEA Director General Rafael Grossi to Iran as evidence of ongoing dialogue and cooperation between Iran and the IAEA. Eslami underscored Iran's commitment to transparency and adherence to established

inspection protocols. On April 17, Eslami highlighted the presence of IAEA's approved inspectors, some stationed within Iran while others conduct mobile inspections.

<https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/497955/AEOI-chief-confirms-presence-of-130-inspectors-for-Iran-oversight>

### **IRGC's indigenous Shahid Mahdavi warship sails into southern hemisphere**

PressTV, May 4, 2024

A domestically-developed oceangoing warship operated by Iran's Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) Navy has crossed the line of zero degrees latitude, the Equator, and sailed into the Southern Hemisphere. The Shahid Mahdavi, which is a multipurpose vessel designed for long-range operations, registered the achievement as Iran's naval forces are expanding their presence in the international waters and high seas. The oceangoing warship is equipped with a three-dimensional phased array radar, sea-to-sea and sea-to-air missiles, and sophisticated telecommunication systems for electronic warfare. The Shahid Mahdavi is capable of carrying various types of attack helicopters, combat drones as well as fast attack craft.

<https://www.presstv.ir/Detail/2024/05/04/724920/IRGC%E2%80%99s-homegrown-Shahid-Mahdavi-warship-sails-into-southern-hemisphere>

### **Iran claims 240 NATO fighter jets scrambled to shield Israeli bases during April 13 strike**

Defense Mirror, May 6, 2024

Major General Gholam-Ali Rashid has claimed that during Iran's retaliatory

strikes against Israel last month, 240 fighter jets from the U.S.-led NATO alliance were deployed to safeguard Israeli military installations under Iran's operation dubbed Operation True Promise. According to General Rashid, Iran's armed forces initiated a complex assault late on April 13, deploying drones and missiles against Israeli targets. This action was triggered by Israeli airstrikes in Damascus on April 1, resulting in the deaths of two Iranian Quds Force generals and several officers. General Rashid emphasized the extensive defensive measures taken by the U.S.-led NATO alliance to shield Israel during the Iranian offensive. Despite these efforts, Iranian missiles managed to breach the defence shields, striking and incapacitating two Israeli military centers. "Iran's powerful missiles passed through the missile defence shields and crushed the two Israeli military centers of Nevatim and Shalakhim.

[https://www.defensemirror.com/news/36725/Iran\\_Claims\\_240\\_NATO\\_Fighter\\_Jets\\_Scrambled\\_to\\_Shield\\_Israeli\\_Bases\\_During\\_April\\_13\\_Strike](https://www.defensemirror.com/news/36725/Iran_Claims_240_NATO_Fighter_Jets_Scrambled_to_Shield_Israeli_Bases_During_April_13_Strike)

### **Iran, U.A.E hold 10th joint consular commission meeting after decade-long pause**

Tehran Times, May 10, 2024

Iran and the United Arab Emirates have resumed their joint consular commission meetings in Abu Dhabi after a decade-long pause. Representatives from both nations tackled a range of topics, including consular affairs, legal issues, law enforcement collaboration, maritime transportation, and transit concerns. Chaired by Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Alireza Bikdeli and UAE's



Deputy Foreign Minister Sheikh Khaled Abdullah, the meeting was attended by officials from the judiciary, police, Iranian Red Crescent Society, and various related organizations.

<https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/49829/1/Iran-UAE-hold-10th-joint-consular-commission-meeting-after-decade-long>

### **Iran, Vietnam ink MoU on law enforcement cooperation**

Mehr News, May 14, 2024

Iran's Law Enforcement commander Brigadier General Ahmad Reza Radan and Vietnam Minister of Public Security General To Lam signed a memorandum of understanding on cooperation between the two agencies. Minister of Public Security General To Lam chaired an official welcome ceremony in Hanoi on May 14 for a high-ranking delegation from Iran's Law Enforcement Command, led by its commander Brigadier General Ahmad Reza Radan. Lam said that the delegation's working visit from May 13-16 is of important significance, contributing to consolidating the good friendship between Vietnam and Iran, and strengthening cooperation between the Vietnamese Ministry of Public Security and the Law Enforcement Command of Iran.

<https://en.mehrnews.com/news/215155/Iran-Vietnam-ink-MoU-on-Law-Enforcement-cooperation>

### **Iranian Navy aims enhanced ocean navigation capabilities**

Tehran Times, May 15, 2024

Iranian Navy Commander Rear Admiral Shahram Irani says Iran has made

remarkable advancements in propelling scientific knowledge forward, paving the way for enhanced ocean navigation capabilities. Admiral Irani made the remarks at a conference titled "Economy and Power in the Maritime Axis". He underscored Iran's enduring role in maritime economy, harking back to the era of the Sacred Defence and extending into the contemporary global oceanic landscape. The Sacred Defence refers to Iran's defence against the invading Saddam Hussein army in the 1980s officially known as the Iran-Iraq War. Irani emphasized the pivotal role of the Army's Navy in safeguarding the Persian Gulf since the dawn of the Islamic Revolution, citing persistent threats such as maritime piracy and terrorism, reaffirming Iran's unwavering commitment to protecting maritime interests.

<https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/49856/4/Iranian-Navy-aims-enhanced-ocean-navigation-capabilities>

### **Iran self-sufficient in drone, missile production: Defence official**

Islamic Republic News Agency, May 15, 2024

A senior Iranian defence official says the Islamic Republic has designed and produced highly advanced drones and missiles without reliance on any country and despite draconian sanctions imposed by the West. Brigadier General Afshin Khajefard, head of Iran's Aviation Industries Organization (IAIO) of the Defence Ministry, said on May 15, "We are affected by sanctions, and the enemy is trying to ensure that the Islamic

civilization is not prominent." "The field of science and technology is one of the areas that the enemy does not want to be developed in our country," he added. Despite the outside pressure, Iran has made significant progress in the defence industry, particularly in the production of various types of drones and missiles. The Iranian-made drones can fly for 6 to 7 hours depending on different situations to reach their targets, Khajefard said.

<https://en.irna.ir/news/85478315/Iran-self-sufficient-in-drone-missile-production-Defense-official>

## Iraq

### **Iraq requests end of UN assistance mission by end-2025**

Reuters, May 10, 2024

Iraq has requested that a United Nations assistance mission set up after the 2003 U.S.-led invasion of the country end its work by the end of 2025, saying it was no longer needed because Iraq had made significant progress towards stability. The mission, headquartered in Baghdad's heavily fortified Green Zone, was set up with a wide mandate to help develop Iraqi institutions, support political dialogue and elections, and promote human rights. Prime Minister Mohammed Shia al-Sudani said Iraq wanted to deepen cooperation with other U.N. organisations but there was no longer a need for the political work of the U.N. assistance mission, known as UNAMI.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/iraq-requests-end-un-assistance-mission-by-end-2025-2024-05-10/>

## Israel

### **Israel to decommission patriot missile systems due to disuse**

Defense Mirror, May 1, 2024

The Israeli Air Force (IAF) is preparing to phase out its aging Patriot missile defence systems in the coming months, citing limited operational use, the military announced. In February, the IAF disclosed plans to decommission several Patriot batteries, with personnel set to transition to operating the Iron Dome system instead. The Patriot array, known as Yahalom in Hebrew (meaning "diamond") within the IAF, is scheduled for permanent deactivation within two months, according to an article published on the Israeli military's website. "We are currently in the process of reducing the [number of] batteries until the entire system is closed," stated the head of the Aerial Defence Array's 138th Battalion, responsible for operating the Patriot.

[https://www.defensemirror.com/news/36686/Israel\\_to-Decommission\\_Patriot\\_Missile\\_Systems\\_due\\_to\\_Disuse](https://www.defensemirror.com/news/36686/Israel_to-Decommission_Patriot_Missile_Systems_due_to_Disuse)

### **Israeli firms sold invasive surveillance tech to Indonesia: Report**

Al-Jazeera, May 3, 2024

An international investigation has found that at least four Israeli-linked firms have been selling invasive spyware and cyber surveillance technology to Indonesia, which has no formal diplomatic ties with Israel and is the world's most populous Muslim nation. The research by Amnesty International's Security Lab – based on open sources including trade records, shipping data and internet scans –

uncovered links between official government bodies and agencies in the Southeast Asian country and Israeli tech firms NSO, Candiru, Wintego and Intellexa, a consortium of linked firms originally founded by a former Israeli military officer, going back to at least 2017.

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2024/5/3/israeli-firms-sold-invasive-surveillance-tech-to-indonesia-report>

### **Israel asks Imco group to provide critical systems for armored personal carriers**

Defense Mirror, May 7, 2024

Israel's Ministry of Defence has signed an agreement with local company Imco Group to provide critical systems for its fleet of Armored Personnel Carriers (APCs). The agreement, valued at approximately NIS 376 million (\$101 million) over multiple years, marks the largest deal to date between the Ministry of Defence and Imco Group. This agreement follows lessons learned from the 'Iron Swords' conflict and supports the Ministry's priority to strengthen ground forces and enhance anti-tank capabilities under the leadership of Colonel (Ret.) Eyal Zamir, the Director General of the Ministry of Defence, the ministry said in an official release on May 5. The contract will cover the next four years and focuses on supplying critical systems and sub-systems for the Israeli Defence Forces' (IDF) fleet of armored vehicles, including the Merkava tank, Tiger, and Eitan APCs (Armored Personnel Carriers).

<https://www.defensemirror.com/news/36736/Israel-Asks-Imco-Group-to-Provide-Critical-Systems-for-Armored-Personal-Carriers>

### **Israeli armored vehicles to receive new electrical systems**

The Defense Post, May 8, 2024

The Israeli Ministry of Defence has signed a multi-year framework agreement with IMCO Group to supply electrical systems for its armored fighting vehicles. Advanced video management systems, power management systems, and harnesses will be among the systems delivered for the armored fighting vehicles, including the Merkava tank. The delivery period is scheduled from 2024 to 2030. The 377-million new Israeli shekel (\$102 million) contract expands the scope of a previous contract the Israeli firm signed with the defence ministry, whose delivery is expected in 2024-25.

<https://www.thedefensepost.com/2024/05/08/israel-imco-armored-vehicles/>

## **Jordan**

### **44th U.S.-Jordan joint military commission**

U.S. Department of Defense, May 2, 2024

U.S. Assistant Secretary of Defence for International Security Affairs Celeste Wallander and Chairman of the Jordanian Joint Chiefs of Staff Maj. Gen. Yousef Al-Hnaity co-chaired the 44th meeting of the U.S.-Jordan Joint Military Commission (JMC) from May 1-2, 2024 in Washington, D.C. The U.S. and Jordanian delegations reiterated their commitment to further advance their robust security partnership, which is a pillar of regional stability. They also acknowledged 20 years of defense cooperation through the National Guard State Partnership Program with Colorado. The delegations discussed



a broad range of issues that are vital to both countries' shared strategic interests, to include addressing the destabilizing impacts of ongoing conflicts within the region and countering the proliferation of Uncrewed Aerial Systems (UASs).

<https://www.defense.gov/News/Releases/Release/Article/3763868/44th-us-jordan-joint-military-commission/>

### **Jordan launches multinational 'Eager Lion' war games**

The Defense Post, May 13, 2024

The Jordanian military announced on May 12, the launch of the "Eager Lion" military exercise, with ground, naval and air forces from 33 countries represented including the United States, France, and Britain. The drills, set to end on May 23, include anti-terrorism and air defence training, army spokesman Colonel Mustafa al-Hiyari told a news conference. He said that "Eager Lion" is intended to help fight "terrorist organizations" and respond to "the proliferation of drones, and biological, chemical and nuclear weapons of mass destruction" as well as major disasters.

<https://www.thedefensepost.com/2024/05/13/jordan-eager-lion-games/>

### **Kuwait**

#### **Turkey and Kuwait sign six deals as Erdogan hosts country's Emir**

Ezgi Akin

Al-Monitor, May 7, 2024

Turkey and Kuwait signed six cooperation deals aimed at strengthening their countries' ties, including in the fields of defence and diplomacy, as Turkish President Recep

Tayyip Erdogan hosted Kuwaiti Emir Sheikh Meshal al-Ahmad al-Sabah in Ankara on May 7. Following talks between the two leaders and Kuwaiti-Turkish delegations, Erdogan and the Kuwaiti leader oversaw the signing ceremony of six cooperation deals across various fields to strengthen their collaboration, including in diplomatic, defence and trade sectors. The two regional countries aim to increase their trade volume to \$1 billion, up from \$688 million in 2023, according to official Turkish data. The trade balance favors Turkey, with Turkish exports to the oil-rich country exceeding \$583 million last year. The Gulf country also signed a \$367 million agreement with Baykar, manufacturer of Turkey's Bayraktar drones, to purchase TB2 armed drones in 2023. Meanwhile, direct Kuwaiti investments in Turkey reached \$1.5 billion in 2024, according to figures from Turkey's Foreign Economic Relations Board (DEIK).

<https://www.al-monitor.com/originals/2024/05/turkey-and-kuwait-sign-six-deals-erdogan-hosts-countrys-emir>

#### **Kuwait's new 'executive protocol' with Turkey could mean new weapons, training**

Agnes Helou

Breaking Defense, May 15, 2024

A new defence cooperation agreement between Kuwait and Turkey is expected to help the small Gulf monarchy better equip and train its armed forces, while giving Ankara another foothold in the lucrative Gulf market, experts told Breaking Defence. Last week Kuwaiti Emir Shiekh Meshal Al-Ahmed Al-Jaber Al-Sabah met with Turkish President Recep Tayyip

Erdogan, where the two leaders oversaw the signing of several agreements, including one described as an “executive protocol” between the countries’ defense ministries related to government defense industry purchases, according to Kuwaiti state media.

<https://breakingdefense.com/2024/05/kuwa-its-new-executive-protocol-with-turkey-could-mean-new-weapons-training/>

## Lebanon

### Lebanon’s military stagnates amid economic turmoil, Hezbollah influence

Agnese Stracquadanio

Defense News, May 1, 2024

The Lebanese militant group Hezbollah has exchanged near-daily strikes with Israeli forces near the border region for almost seven months in the wake of Israel’s war against Hamas in Gaza. And while Lebanon’s national military is working closely with a United Nations-led force to deescalate tension and improve border security, economic and political factors are hindering these efforts, analysts have told Defense News. The Lebanese Armed Forces, or LAF, is struggling to fulfill its mission due to Hezbollah’s “position in national politics, the spillover effects of the Syrian and Gazan conflicts, the severe and prolonged economic depression and an ongoing governance crisis,” according to the International Institute for Strategic Studies, a London-based think tank.

<https://www.defensenews.com/global/mid-east-africa/2024/05/01/lebanons-military-stagnates-amid-economic-turmoil-hezbollah-influence/>

### Israeli entity renews targeting of southern regions of Lebanon

The Peninsula, May 5, 2024

Israeli entity renewed on May 5, its targeting and bombing of the southern regions of Lebanon. Field sources reported that Israeli warplanes launched air strikes with missiles on the towns of Meiss El Jabal and the outskirts of the towns of Aitaroun, Khiam, and Dhahirah, causing several injuries, while the occupation army artillery targeted Al-Labounh area, south of the town of Naqoura, and Kfarkela. The Israeli entity continues its escalation against the towns and villages of southern Lebanon, in conjunction with its brutal and continuous aggression against the Gaza Strip since Oct. 7, 2023, killing and injuring tens of thousands of civilians, and forcing hundreds of families to flee their homes.

<https://thepeninsulaatar.com/article/05/05/2024/israeli-entity-renews-targeting-of-southern-regions-of-lebanon>

## Oman

### Oman civil defence conference kicks off

Oman News Agency, May 6, 2024

The second edition of “Oman Civil Defence and Ambulance Conference and Exhibition” kicked off on May 6. The two-day event, titled “Security and Safety of Establishments” discussed the latest studies and research in the field of security and safety of establishments. The opening ceremony was held under the auspices of Lt. Gen. Hassan Mohsin Al Shuraiqi, Inspector General of Police and

Customs. The conference is organized by the Authority for Civil Defence and Ambulance (ACDA) in cooperation with strategic partners, institutions and companies. It included a presentation on innovative equipment, services and technologies used in civil defence and ambulance services.

<https://omannews.gov.om/topics/en/79/show/116852/>

## Palestine

### Israel orders Palestinians to evacuate from more areas of Gaza's Rafah

Nidal Al-Mughrabi and Maytaal Angel

Reuters, May 12, 2024

Israel called on May 11, for Palestinians in more areas of Gaza's southern city of Rafah to evacuate and head to what it calls an expanded humanitarian area in Al-Mawasi, in a further indication that the military is pressing ahead with its plans for a ground attack on Rafah. The Israeli military also called on residents and displaced people in the Jabalia area of northern Gaza to clear out, saying it was returning to operate there after it noticed Hamas trying to re-establish its control of the area. The Palestinian health ministry said at least 37 Palestinians, 24 of them from central Gaza areas, were killed in overnight airstrikes across the enclave, including in Rafah, the Strip's southernmost city bordering Egypt. It does not distinguish how many were civilians or militants.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/israel-orders-people-more-areas-gazas-rafah-evacuate-2024-05-11/>

### Gaza civil defence loses 80 percent of its capability amid Israeli bombing

The New Arab, May 14, 2024

Gaza's Civil Defence says it has lost at least 80 percent of its capability following over seven months of ferocious and indiscriminate Israeli bombing. Mahmoud Basal, a Civil Defence spokesperson said their teams are receiving constant calls for help from wounded civilians, but have not been able to respond to them. Basal added that Civil Defence teams are now largely unable retrieve civilians trapped under the rubble due to the intensity of Israeli bombing and direct attacks on them. He said the Israeli army was using "all possible means" to kill Palestinians and are targeting civilians without any regard for international law.

<https://www.newarab.com/news/gaza-civil-defence-loses-80-percent-its-capability>

### OIC: repercussions of the nakba continue to unfold

Tehran Times, May 15, 2024

The Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) issued a statement on the 76th anniversary of the Nakba when Palestinians were violently expelled from their lands to make way for the formation of the Israeli regime. The statement said the Nakba continues today "through crimes of murder, destruction, forced displacement, and genocide as a result of the continuing Israeli aggression against the Palestinian people," Al Jazeera reported. "The OIC reaffirms the responsibility of the international community towards the necessity of

putting an end to the Israeli occupation and activating international justice mechanisms to hold Israel, the occupying power, accountable for the crimes it has committed against humanity, and to rectify the historical injustice that continues to befall the Palestinian people,” the statement added.

<https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/498554/OIC-Repercussions-of-the-Nakba-continue-to-unfold>

## Qatar

### Iran, Qatar urge expanding economic, investment ties

Tehran Times, May 1, 2024

Iran's Minister of Industry, Mining, and Trade Abbas Aliabadi, and Assistant Undersecretary for Commerce Affairs at the Ministry of Commerce and Industry of Qatar Saleh bin Majed Al-Khulaifi have stressed broadening economic and investment ties between the two countries. Aliabadi met and held talks with Al-Khulaifi at the 6th Export Potential Exhibition of the Islamic Republic of Iran, also known as Iran Expo 2024, in Tehran. Describing the presence of Qatar in Iran Expo 2024 as an opportunity to learn more about Iran's export capabilities, Aliabadi highlighted Iran's significant progress in technical and engineering services, which could potentially aid Qatar with repairing turbines and complex machinery. Additionally, Aliabadi expressed Iran's willingness to cooperate with Qatar in various industrial, agricultural, and industrial fields. Iran and Qatar signed a comprehensive cooperation document at the end of the ninth Iran-Qatar Joint

Economic Committee meeting in Tehran on December 11, 2023.

<https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/497920/Iran-Qatar-urge-expanding-economic-investment-ties>

### Chief of staff attends opening of defense services asia, national security asia exhibition

Qatar News Agency, May 7, 2024

Chief of Staff of Qatar Armed Forces Staff Lieutenant-General (Pilot) Salem bin Hamad bin Aqeel Al Nabit participated in the opening of Defense Services Asia and National Security Asia Exhibition 2024 (DSA & NATSEC 2024), held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The exhibition is one of the most important defense events in the region, as it brings together 1,200 international companies specialized in the field of defense and security from more than 60 countries to display the latest products, technologies, and solutions in this field.

<https://www.qna.org.qa/en/News-Area/News/2024-05/07/0060-chief-of-staff-attends-opening-of-defense-services-asia,%C2%A0national-security-asia-exhibition>

### Qatar participates in international conference of heads of civil defense agencies in Riyadh

Qatar News Agency, May 8, 2024

The State of Qatar is participating in the International Conference of Heads of Civil Defense Agencies organized by the International Civil Defense Organization (ICDO) in partnership with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia from May 6 to 9, 2024 in

Riyadh. Qatar's delegation is headed by Director of the Operations Department at the General Directorate of Civil Defense Lt. Col. Khaled Nasser Al Otaibi. The conference will exchange experiences in civil defense systems and disaster risk management, and its agenda will include a presentation on crowd management, the Hajj situation, and the regional strategy of the ICDO.

<https://www.qna.org.qa/en/News-Area/News/2024-05/08/0057-qatar-participates-in-international-conference-of-heads-of-civil-defense-agencies-in-riyadh>

## Saudi Arabia

### US and Saudi Arabia nearing agreement on security pact, sources say

Humeyra Pamuk, Alexander Cornwell and Matt Spetalnick

Reuters, May 3, 2024

The Biden administration and Saudi Arabia are finalizing an agreement for U.S. security guarantees and civilian nuclear assistance, even as an Israel-Saudi normalization deal envisioned as part of a Middle East “grand bargain” remains elusive, according to seven people familiar with the matter. A working draft lays out principles and proposals aimed at putting back on track a U.S.-led effort to reshape the volatile region that was derailed by Hamas’ Oct. 7 attack on Israel and the outbreak of war in Gaza, according to two sources who have seen the document. That part of the plan is likely to call for formal U.S. guarantees to defend the kingdom as well as Saudi access to more advanced U.S. weaponry

in return for halting Chinese arms purchases and restricting Beijing’s investment in the country, according to foreign diplomats in the Gulf and sources in Washington.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/us-saudi-arabia-nearing-agreement-security-pact-sources-say-2024-05-02/>

### Saudi Arabia, Turkey and Pakistan discuss enhancing defence cooperation

Arab News, May 5, 2024

Saudi Arabia, Turkiye and Pakistan’s tripartite committee held its third meeting recently in Istanbul to discuss ways to enhance defence cooperation. Saudi Assistant Minister of Defence Talal bin Abdullah Al-Otaibi, Turkish Deputy Minister of National Defence Bilal Durdali, and Lt. Gen Mohammed Owais from Pakistan were among the officials present at the meeting, the Defence Ministry said in a report on May 4. The meeting focused on joint cooperation in defence, the transfer and localization of technology, and the development of scientific research in accordance with Saudi Vision 2030, the ministry stated.

<https://www.arabnews.com/node/2504696/saudi-arabia>

### Saudi Arabia launches bid for region’s largest shipyard

Patrick Rhys Attack

Ship Technology, May 7, 2024

Saudi Arabia’s government has revealed its intention to attract the world’s biggest players in ship building and bulk carrying to a new Special Economic Zone (SEZ) on the Persian Gulf coast. The new SEZ



will be hosted in Ras al-Khair, just north of Jubail. It will encompass the King Salman International Complex for Maritime Industries and Services, which will be 12 million square metres when complete, making it the largest in the region. Four joint venture holding companies have been set up in advance of the shipyard's opening, including International Maritime Industries (IMI) owned by The Arabian American Oil Company (Aramco), Lamprell, Bahri (Saudi's major shipping carrier), and Hyundai Heavy Industries (HHI).

<https://www.ship-technology.com/news/saudi-arabia-launches-bid-for-regions-largest-shipyard/?cf-view>

### **France, UK, US to compete Saudi fighter requirement**

Janes, May 7, 2024

France, the United Kingdom, and the United States are to bid on Saudi Arabia's pending combat aircraft requirement, with the Middle East country holding a full and open competition for the first time. A senior industry official with knowledge of the requirement told Janes and other defence media in late April of Riyadh's decision to hold a competition between the Dassault Rafale, the Boeing F-15EX Eagle II, and the Eurofighter Typhoon respectively, when previously, political considerations would be uppermost in its considerations for such high-end military hardware.

<https://www.janes.com/osint-insights/defence-news/defence/france-uk-us-to-compete-saudi-fighter-requirement>

## **Syria**

### **War on Gaza strains relations between Iran, Syria**

Asharq Al-Awsat, May 7, 2024

It appears that the war on Gaza has impacted Iran's military deployment in Syria. Local sources said Tehran has started to put in place plans for the relocation of Iranian Revolutionary Guards (IRGC) headquarters from the Damascus countryside to regions close to the border with Lebanon after the killing of several of its prominent members in Israeli strikes in recent months. Syria has notably taken "neutral" and even "cold" stances towards Iran in wake of these developments, amid Iranian suspicions that Syrian security agencies could have leaked information about its officers who were later targeted by Israel.

<https://english.aawsat.com/features/5004396-war-gaza-strains-relations-between-iran-syria>

### **Syria shoots down Israeli missiles fired from Golan Heights towards Damascus outskirts**

Tala Ramadan

Reuters, May 9, 2024

Syrian air defences on May 9, shot down Israeli missiles fired from the Golan Heights towards Damascus' outskirts targeting a building in the countryside, Syria's defence ministry said. Israel has been carrying out strikes against Iran-linked targets in Syria for years but has ramped up such raids since the Oct. 7 attack by Palestinian armed group Hamas on Israeli territory.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/syria-shoots-down-israeli-missiles->

[fired-golan-heights-towards-damascus-2024-05-09/](https://www.al-monitor.com/originals/2024/05/turkey-launches-fresh-airstrikes-iraq-erdogan-renews-threats-offensive)

## Turkiye

### **Turkiye launches fresh airstrikes in Iraq as Erdogan renews threats for offensive**

Ezgi Akin

Al-Monitor, May 6, 2024

Turkiye launched new airstrikes against the positions of Kurdish militants in northern Iraq, the Turkish Defense Ministry said on Monday, as Ankara ramps up its threats of a fresh military operation in the region. The Turkish Defense Ministry said 16 members of the outlawed Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) were killed in the strikes conducted in the northern Iraqi regions of Hakurk, Metina and Gara. Headquartered in Iraqi Kurdistan, the PKK has been fighting for Kurdish self-rule inside Turkey since 1984 and is considered a terror organization by Turkey, the United States and the European Union.

<https://www.al-monitor.com/originals/2024/05/turkey-launches-fresh-airstrikes-iraq-erdogan-renews-threats-offensive>

### **Turkiye claims new KAAN fighter jets 'better than' America's F-35s**

The Defense Post, May 15, 2024

Turkish Aerospace Industries (TAI) General Manager Temel Kotil has made bold claims about the country's new KAAN fighter jet, including saying the fifth-generation aircraft is better than US-made F-35s. The statement was made

following the aircraft's much-anticipated second flight test earlier this month at a military base in Ankara. "This aircraft is better than the F-35," Kotil told *Turkiye Newspaper*. "The F-35 carries six tons, [the KAAN] carries 10 tons of ammunition." He further stated that the Turkish fighter jet has two engines compared to its American counterpart, which is powered by a single engine. "Having two engines means more energy and radars illuminating a greater distance," he said.

<https://www.thedefensepost.com/2024/05/15/turkey-kaan-better-f35/>

## United Arab Emirates

### **Emirati F-35 prospects languish amid high-stakes Chinese, US courting**

Elisabeth Gosselin-Malo

Defensenews, May 1, 2024

As the United Arab Emirates seeks closer defence ties with the United States and China alike, the prospects of exporting the F-35 fighter to Abu Dhabi anytime soon may be getting slimmer, according to experts. On April 23, the chief of joint operations for the U.A.E Armed Forces met with the commander of the Chinese Air Force in Beijing to discuss options for strengthening collaboration between their services. The meeting served as the Gulf nation's most recent overture to China, signaling a particular interest in warplane cooperation.

<https://www.defensenews.com/global/mid-east-africa/2024/05/01/emirati-f-35-prospects-languish-amid-high-stakes-chinese-us-courting/>

## U.S, U.A.E, and Saudi forces begin Exercise Native Fury 2024

Army Technology, May 6, 2024

The Native Fury series of exercises aim to enhance interoperability and collective power projection capabilities of US and partner nations. Armed forces from the U.S, the United Arab Emirates (U.A.E) and Saudi Arabia have launched Exercise Native Fury 2024 (NF24) at the Saudi Naval Port. The multi-domain training is facilitated by the U.S. Army's 1st Theater Sustainment Command (1 TSC). It commenced on 5 May and marks the eighth iteration of the Native Fury series. NF24 is conducted to enhance the interoperability of military forces and demonstrate the collective ability of the partner nations forces to conduct complex operations. The exercise will utilise strategic locations across Saudi Arabia and the U.A.E, mainly including the Prince Sultan Air Base, a Saudi port facility on the Red Sea, Al Dhafra Air Base in the U.A.E, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) Prince Sultan Air Base, and a U.A.E port facility on the Gulf of Oman.

<https://www.army-technology.com/news/us-uae-saudi-native-fu>

## U.A.E enhances defence arsenal with HARM missile upgrade

Harry McNeil

Airforce Technology, May 8, 2024

The United Arab Emirates has aligned with the United States to upgrade its High-Speed Anti-Radiation Missiles (HARM) and strengthen its military capabilities.

Amidst escalating tensions and increasing geopolitical uncertainties in the Middle East, the United Arab Emirates (U.A.E) has taken a stride towards enhancing its defence capabilities with the approval of a \$144m (Dh528.5m) arms deal by the United States. The agreement includes the acquisition of 149 WCU-33/B High-Speed Anti-Radiation Missile (HARM) Control Section Modification (HCSM) upgrade kits.

<https://www.airforce-technology.com/news/uae-enhances-defence-arsenal-with-harm-missile-upgrade/#>

## U.A.E releases new AI model to compete with big tech

Reuters, May 13, 2024

A government research institute in the United Arab Emirates on may13, released a new open source Gen AI model, which could rival the ones from big technology companies. Abu Dhabi's Technology Innovation Institute (TII) said it was releasing the Falcon 2 series: Falcon 2 11B, a text-based model, and Falcon 2 11B VLM, a vision-to-language model that can generate a text description of an uploaded image. The U.A.E, a major oil exporter and influential Middle East power, is making huge investments in artificial intelligence. But that bet has also drawn scrutiny from the U.S. officials who last year issued an ultimatum: American or Chinese technology.

<https://www.reuters.com/technology/uae-releases-new-ai-model-compete-with-big-tech-2024-05-13/>

## Yemen

### **‘Yemen at a crossroads’: Nearly 200 aid groups issue urgent funding appeal**

Al-Jazeera, May 6, 2024

Dozens of aid groups have called for more donor funding to meet the urgent humanitarian needs of Yemen, warning that inaction would lead to “catastrophic consequences” for people in the war-ravaged country. In a joint statement released on May 6, 188 humanitarian organisations including United Nations agencies said they had secured only \$435m of the \$2.7bn required to provide crucial assistance, warning of threats such as food shortages and diseases.

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2024/5/6/yemen-at-a-crossroads-nearly-200-aid-groups-issue-urgent-funding-appeal>

### **UKMTO receives report two explosions south of Yemen's Aden**

Reuters, May 7, 2024

The United Kingdom Maritime Trade Operations (UKMTO) said on May 7, two explosions were reported in the proximity of a merchant vessel 82 nautical miles south of Yemen's Aden. UKMTO reported that the vessel and all crew are safe and that authorities are investigating. The Houthi militia that controls the most populous parts of Yemen and is aligned with Iran have staged attacks on ships in the waters off the country for months in solidarity with Palestinians fighting Israel in Gaza. The Houthi militants have launched repeated drone and missile

strikes in the Red Sea, Bab al-Mandab Strait and Gulf of Aden since November.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/ukmto-receives-report-maritime-incident-south-yemens-aden-2024-05-07/>

# NUCLEAR AND ARMS CONTROL CENTRE

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