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Iran

Military Chief Voices Iran's Readiness to Cooperate with Pakistan in Anti-Terror Fight

Fars News Agency, October 1, 2023

Chief of Staff of the Iranian Armed Forces Major General Mohammad Baqeri strongly condemned a terrorist attack on a religious ceremony in Pakistan, and further expressed Tehran's readiness for collaboration with Islamabad in the fight against terrorism.

In a message to Pakistan's Chief of the Army General Asim Munir on Saturday, Maj. Gen. Baqeri deplored the "savage, anti-religious and anti-human" bombings at two mosques in Pakistan on Friday, which killed and injured dozens of people.

The top general expressed confidence that the perpetrators behind the crime would be identified, arrested and punished soon with the efforts of the Pakistani armed forces and the security and judicial bodies.

<https://www.farsnews.ir/en/news/14020709000185/Military-Chief-Vices-Iran's-Readiness-Cooperate-wih-Pakistan-in-Anti-Terr>

Iran to Enhance Naval Power with Another Advanced Indigenous Destroyer

Fars News Agency, October 1, 2023

Commander of the Iranian Navy Rear Admiral Shahram Irani said that his forces will soon receive a new domestically-manufactured destroyer, dubbed "Deylaman", which is more sophisticated than the military vessels already showcased.

Speaking at a ceremony in commemoration of the anniversary of the 1980-88 Iraq-imposed war on Saturday, Rear Admiral Irani stated Iran's naval fleet will take delivery of a new domestically-designed and developed destroyer, which is furnished with much more advanced and elaborate systems compared to "Dena".

<https://www.farsnews.ir/en/news/14020709000259/Iran-Enhance-Naval-Power-wih-Another-Advanced-Indigenous-Destroyer>

Navy Chief: 12 Anti-Ship Cruise Missiles Mounted on Iranian Destroyer

Fars News Agency, October 2, 2023

Commander of the Iranian Navy Rear Admiral Shahram Irani said that the Sabalan military vessel has become the first destroyer equipped with a dozen anti-ship cruise missiles. Rear Admiral Irani made the remarks in an interview with Tasnim news agency, stating that the Iranian Navy has furnished the Sabalan destroyer with 12 anti-ship cruise missiles, breaking the record for the number of guided missiles installed on Iranian vessels. He noted the missile-equipped destroyer will be unveiled soon.

<https://www.farsnews.ir/en/news/14020710000169/Navy-Chief-2-Anti-Ship-Cruise-Missiles-Mounted-on-Iranian-Destroyer>

IAEA has fully verified all Iran's nuclear activities, Iran tells US

Tehran Times, October 3, 2023

The U.S. government's allegations against Iran's nuclear program have been disputed by the Iranian mission to the United Nations, which emphasized that all of Iran's nuclear material and operations have been

fully disclosed to and confirmed by the International Atomic Energy Agency.

Releasing a statement on Monday, Iran's mission said Iran has an excellent record of cooperation with the IAEA, having had the most safeguards inspections of its civilian nuclear program.

<https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/48967/1/IAEA-has-fully-verified-all-Iran-s-nuclear-activities-Iran-tells>

Iranian Army Employs New Drone in War Game

Fars News Agency, October 3, 2023

The Iranian Army brought into operation a new homegrown drone, dubbed Kaman-19, in a military exercise underway across the country. The main stage of the drone drill, participated by troops from the four units of the Army, kicked off on Tuesday morning with around 200 various unmanned aircraft in attendance. The spokesperson for the exercise said the electronic warfare units have practiced a range of tactics in the drill. According to General Alireza Sheikh, the Kaman-19 drone has joined the Army's fleet and carried out combat sorties for the first time in the war game.

<https://www.farsnews.ir/en/news/14020711000394/Iranian-Army-Emplys-New-Drne-in-War-Game>

Nuclear Chief: Hostile Behaviors Reason for Iran's Barring of IAEA Inspectors

Fars News Agency, October 4, 2023

Head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) Mohammad Eslami said that Tehran has withdrawn the designation of a number of the UN nuclear agency's inspectors due to their "harsh and political

behaviors". Speaking to reporters on the sidelines of a cabinet meeting on Wednesday, Eslami stressed Tehran and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) have continuous interaction in accordance with the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and the Safeguards Agreement. He stated Iran has barred a few European inspectors with the IAEA from future activities in the country who have a history of "harsh and political behavior" against Tehran. The AEOI head put the number of the delisted inspectors at "three or four", explaining that the number is a tiny fraction of the total 127 approved inspectors.

<https://www.farsnews.ir/en/news/14020712000553/Nclear-Chief-Hsile-Behavirs-Reasn-fr-Iran's-Barring-f-IAEA-Inspeprs>

Iran Releases Footage Recorded from US Navy Ship by Indigenous Drone

Fars News Agency, October 4, 2023

Tehran on Tuesday released the footage that has been recorded by its domestically-developed drone from the Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer during a surveillance mission in the Indian Ocean.

The Iranian Army's unmanned aircraft conducted the operation against the Arleigh Burke-class destroyer in the Northern part of the body of water. The Ababil (Flock of Birds)-V drone managed to keep the US warship under surveillance for around 24 hours. The aerial vehicle reportedly took off from a base located on the Southern Iranian island of Jask before heading to conduct the surveillance mission against the US vessel.

<https://www.farsnews.ir/en/news/14020712000206/Iran-Releases-Fage-Recrded-frm-US-Navy-Ship-by-Indigens-Drne>

IAEA inspectors expelled for political behaviors: nuclear chief

Tehran Times, October 4, 2023

Mohammad Eslami, the head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI), said on Wednesday that the inspectors of the UN nuclear watchdog were expelled from Iran for their “hardline political behavior.”

Speaking to reporters on the sidelines of a cabinet meeting on Wednesday, Eslami said, “The dismissed inspectors were from three European countries that regularly demonstrated harsh political behaviors, and we removed the inspectors from those countries from the list.”

He also said that the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has dozens of designated inspectors in Iran. “The Agency has 127 approved inspectors in Iran, and the people who have been fired have not come to Iran for several years; on the other hand, this number [of dismissed inspectors] is not a [big] number compared to the number of official inspectors,” he said, according to state news agency IRNA.

<https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/48975/2/IAEA-inspectors-expelled-for-political-behaviors-nuclear-chief>

Iranian Suicide Drones Pound Ground, Naval Targets During Massive Drills

Fars News Agency, October 4, 2023

The Iranian Army continued its large-scale wargames to exercise tactical operations, using “Arash” suicide drones to smash the ground and naval targets.

Iran’s Army on Tuesday staged a wide-scale drone drill, which features hundreds of sophisticated reconnaissance and combat

drones. Almost 200 unmanned military aircraft have covered strategic waters of the Persian Gulf and the Sea of Oman, all four corners of the country and its central part.

The surveillance drones, operated by the four units of the Iranian Army, namely the Ground Force, Navy, Air Force and Air Defense Force, successfully carried out their intelligence-gathering and patrol missions on the first day of the 1402 joint drone military exercise.

<https://www.farsnews.ir/en/news/14020712000488/Iranian-Sicide-Drnes-Pnd-Grnd-Naval-Targes-Dring-Massive-Drills>

Iranian Drone Annihilates Another Pilotless Aircraft for First Time

Fars News Agency, October 4, 2023

An Iranian drone managed to target another unmanned aircraft with a missile during a large-scale maneuver – an unprecedented achievement for Iran’s Armed Forces which puts the country in the list of the limited number of states enjoys such capability.

On Wednesday, Commander of the Iranian Army’s Air Defense Force Brigadier General Alireza Sabahi Fard said, in an aerial battle, a drone targeted another with a missile and destroyed it.

“Only one or two countries have the ability to carry out this very complex and advanced operation, which of course they have not displayed yet,” he acknowledged.

<https://www.farsnews.ir/en/news/14020712000744/Iranian-Drne-Annihilaes-Anher-Piless-Aircraf-fr-Firs-Time>

IRGC Chief: AI-Powered Drones Capable of Wrecking Faraway Military Vessels

Fars News Agency, October 5, 2023

Commander of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) Major General Hossein Salami praised Iran's defense industry for developing various types of unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV), and said that domestically-developed drones equipping with artificial intelligence can hit any hostile naval targets sailing thousands of miles away.

Addressing a conference of medical students in Tehran on Wednesday, Maj. Gen. Salami stated that indigenous unmanned aerial vehicles, which are equipped with artificial intelligence, can intercept and destroy hostile naval targets sailing thousands of miles away.

<https://www.farsnews.ir/en/news/14020713000159/IRGC-Chief-AI-Pwered-Drnes-Capable-f-Wrecking-Faraway-Miliary-Vessels>

Iran Kicks Off Construction of New Reactor at Bushehr Nuclear Power Plant

Fars News Agency, October 9, 2023

Iran has started building a new reactor at the second unit of the Bushehr nuclear power plant. In a ceremony on Sunday, attended by Head of Iran's Atomic Energy Organization (AEOI) Mohammad Eslami, pouring concrete for the wall of the above-zero level reactor of the unit was kicked off.

"We took fundamental steps for faster implementation of units 2 and 3 of the Bushehr nuclear power plant, and in this regard, the obstacles ahead have been

removed," Eslami said. He said over 1.8 billion euros has been allocated for the project since last year, adding that the volume of activities in the project has increased 10-fold compared to last year.

<https://www.farsnews.ir/en/news/14020717000758/Iran-Kicks-Off-Cnsrcin-f-New-Reacr-a-Bshehr-Nclear-Pwer-Plan>

Iranian Coast Guards Hold Massive Naval Drills in Persian Gulf

Fars News Agency, October 11, 2023

Iran's Coast Guards launched a large-scale military exercise along the shores of the Persian Gulf, Sea of Oman and the Northern parts of the Indian Ocean.

The massive drill, dubbed Mohammad Rasulullah 2 (Prophet Mohammad 2), kicked off in the Southern Iranian port city of Bandar Abbas on Wednesday, with Iran's police chief Brigadier General Ahmad Reza Radan and several military commanders in attendance.

The drill involves naval units from the country's Southeastern province of Sistan-Baluchestan, as well as the Southern provinces of Bushehr and Hormuzgan.

<https://www.farsnews.ir/en/news/14020719000719/Iranian-Cas-Gards-Hld-Massive-Naval-Drills-in-Persian-Glf>

Iraq

Launching new security operation to purge the urban desert south west of Nineveh: PMF

Iraqi News Agency, October 4, 2023

The Popular Mobilization Forces-PMF announced on Wednesday, the launch of a

security operation to purge the urban desert south west of Nineveh. PMF said in a statement received by the Iraqi News Agency- INA that " Nineveh Operations Command units at the Popular Mobilization Forces represented by the operations, intelligence and media departments, PMF support directorates and the two brigades 44, 60 began at dawn today to carry out a 3-pronoged large-scale security operation to track down terrorist cells and raid and search a number of areas and villages located in the urban desert southwest of Nineveh Governorate”.

<https://ina.iq/eng/29003-launching-new-security-operation-to-purge-the-urban-desert-south-west-of-nineveh-pmf.html>

Iraqi defence minister arrives in Turkey after PKK bomb attack in Ankara

Reuters, October 5, 2023

Iraqi Defence Minister Thabet al-Abbasi arrived in Ankara on Wednesday, Iraqi state news agency (INA) said, and Turkish media said he would meet his Turkish counterpart, Yasar Guler.

Turkey carried out [air strikes](#) in northern Iraq on targets belonging to the outlawed Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) after it said it orchestrated the first bomb attack in Ankara in years.

On Sunday morning, two attackers detonated a bomb near government buildings in Ankara, killing them both and wounding two police officers. The PKK claimed responsibility. Iraq denounced the Turkish air strikes and Iraqi President Abdul-Latif Rashid said he hoped to come

to an agreement with Ankara to try to solve the problem.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/iraqi-defence-minister-visit-turkey-after-bomb-attack-ankara-media-2023-10-04/>

Israel

IAI to Exhibit at AUSA 2023, Unveil Latest Defense System

Israel Defense, October 1, 2023

Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI) will exhibit at the prestigious AUSA 2023 Annual Meeting & Exposition, taking place October 9-11th in Washington, DC. IAI's booth will showcase some of its leading systems such as the flagship Barak MX air and missile defense system, advanced technologies and solutions for the future armored fighting vehicle and multi-mission unmanned land vehicle, the unmanned aerial vehicle Heron MKII, gunfire detection system Othello P, leading loitering munition systems (Rotem, Roc X, Mini Harpy), and more.

AUSA is the Army's premier professional association and host of the largest land power exposition in the United States.

<https://www.israeldefense.co.il/en/node/59743>

Saudi Arabia Determined to Secure US Defense Pact in Exchange for Normalization with Israel

Israel Defense, October 1, 2023

Saudi Arabia is determined to secure a military agreement with the United States, which will require the U.S. to defend the

kingdom in exchange for forging ties with Israel. Saudi Arabia will not abandon this agreement even if Israel does not offer concessions to the Palestinians seeking statehood, as several sources told Reuters over the weekend.

According to their accounts, such an agreement between Saudi Arabia and the United States is almost like security guarantees in a NATO-style format, as Saudi Arabia has demanded since the beginning of discussions, between Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman and President Biden during his visit to Riyadh in July 2022.

<https://www.israeldefense.co.il/en/node/59746>

IAI's BlueWhale ASW Makes Debut in Dynamic Messenger 2023 Exercise

Israel Defense, October 2, 2023

Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI) announced that its BlueWhale ASW unscrewed submarine has participated, for the first time, in NATO's Dynamic Messenger exercise, which took place in September.

BlueWhale ASW, developed by IAI subsidiary ELTA, is an autonomous submarine that can conduct some of the missions of manned submarines, without the need for operators at sea. It can operate for several weeks at a time and has minimal operating costs.

The uncrewed submarine is equipped with a variety of sensors, including a telescopic mast with radar and electro-optical sensors, and Atlas Elektronik's towed array sonar.

<https://www.israeldefense.co.il/en/node/59756>

Oshkosh to Design, Build the US Army's Future Robotic Combat Vehicle

Israel Defense, October 3, 2023

American defense giant Oshkosh Defense announced that it was selected by the U.S. Army, through the Ground Vehicle Systems Other Transaction Agreement (GVS OTA), to participate in Phase I, Platform Prototype Design and Build, of the Robotic Combat Vehicle (RCV) program.

In May 2023, Oshkosh Defense and Pratt Miller Defense – both Oshkosh Corporation subsidiaries – alongside Qinetiq, a British defense tech manufacturer, submitted a proposal for the US Army's future RCV.

Oshkosh will deliver two platform prototypes for testing in August 2024. The Army has announced the intent to select one vendor for Phase II, Full-System Prototype Design and Build, in FY24.

<https://www.israeldefense.co.il/en/node/59759>

IAI Announces Agreement with Azerbaijan Space Agency

Israel Defense, October 3, 2023

Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI) and Azerbaijan's space agency Azercosmos, have announced a cooperation agreement for the sale of two of IAI's cutting-edge multispectral electro-optical satellites, better-than-0.5-meter-native-resolution, with a long life span and high imaging performance.

This deal represents a significant step forward in space technology and cooperation between the two companies. Under the terms of the agreement, IAI will

provide Azercosmos with two satellites within the Azersky -2 program, technology, and knowledge for the construction and operation of the satellites.

The agreement includes a long-term business partnership between IAI and Azercosmos, reflected in the establishment of innovation, entrepreneurship, academic, and study ecosystems in the field of space in Azerbaijan over the years.

<https://www.israeldefense.co.il/en/node/59768>

Aeronautics Secures New Contracts Totaling \$60 Million from Int'l Clients

Israel Defense, October 3, 2023

Aeronautics Ltd., an Israeli designer, developer, and manufacturer of unmanned aerial systems (UAS) for the global defense and HLS markets, announced it has secured several contracts, for a total sum of \$60 million, to supply advanced ground control stations (GCS) for its Orbiter UAV systems. The contracts also include essential maintenance.

In the framework of one of the new contracts, Aeronautics will provide two types of ground control stations to complement the Orbiter UAS operations. The first is the portable ground control station (PGCS), which features flight- and mission-operation software, video-tracker software, and payload sensor data. According to the company, the PGCS provides flexibility and mobility for tactical deployments and caters to dynamic mission requirements in various environments.

<https://www.israeldefense.co.il/en/node/59758>

Swords of Iron: US Deploys USS Gerald R. Ford Carrier Strike Group to Eastern Mediterranean

Israel Defense, October 9, 2023

US Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin has directed the movement of the USS Gerald R. Ford Carrier Strike Group to the Eastern Mediterranean, as part of the US efforts to strengthen regional deterrence efforts in the region and provide support to Israel following Hamas' devastating surprise attack.

The deployment includes US Navy aircraft carrier USS Gerald R. Ford, the Ticonderoga-class guided missile cruiser USS Normandy, the Arleigh-Burke-class guided missile destroyers USS Thomas Hudner, USS Ramage, USS Carney, and USS Roosevelt. The strike group, carrying some 5,000 troops, is already in the Mediterranean and has begun movement towards Israeli shores.

<https://www.israeldefense.co.il/en/node/59822>

Israel Purchases 10,000 Locally Manufactured Rifles

Israel Defense, October 11, 2023

Israel will purchase over 10,000 locally manufactured rifles, intended for distribution to Border Police civilian security teams in approximately 400 communities across the country, with an emphasis on those close to the border, mixed Jewish-Arab cities, and West Bank settlements.

As the first step, 4,000 rifles have already been purchased and will be immediately distributed to the teams. Simultaneously,

the Ministry of National Security has procured additional combat gear, including helmets and protective vests, which will be distributed alongside the Tavor rifles. According to the ministry, a shipment of thousands of helmets and vests is currently en route to Israel.

<https://www.israeldefense.co.il/en/node/59853>

Hamas Used Kamikaze Drones During Attack on Israel

Israel Defense, October 11, 2023

Hamas used suicide drones in the attack they carried out on the morning of October 7th in the Gaza Strip. According to the Defense Blog, the Palestinian terror organization claims to have launched more than 25 loitering munitions (suicide, or kamikaze drones), including the al-Zuwari winged drone, which targeted Israeli assets, including vehicles and equipment.

Hamas distributed videos on social media showing suicide drones being launched during the morning attack on the Gaza Strip, with a drone seen flying in the skies over Sderot."

<https://www.israeldefense.co.il/en/node/59859>

Report: Hamas Uses Home-made Short-Range Air Defense Systems

Israel Defense, October 12, 2023

Hamas is reportedly using Palestinian homemade short-range air defense systems. A Russian Twitter site published video footage made by Hamas of the operation of the Mubar-1 rocket system of its own design which is presented as a short-range air defense system.

Mubar-1 is a Palestinian-developed air defense system designed to combat low-flying air targets, including unmanned aerial vehicles and helicopters. Hamas forces are said to have managed to shoot down four Israeli AH-64 Apache helicopters with such a system.

<https://www.israeldefense.co.il/en/node/59872>

Israel at War: "Ofek" Heavy Armored Personnel Carriers Partake in the Fighting

Israel Defense, October 12, 2023

IDF's new heavy armored personnel carrier, "Ofek," ("horizon" in Hebrew) is currently participating in the fighting in the Gaza Strip. According to the Army Recognition website, together with Merkava Mark 4 tanks that were brought down as reinforcements to the Gaza Strip, vehicles of this type based on the Merkava Mark 2 tank chassis were also identified.

The Ofek is an armored command and control that primarily supports select forces within the IDF, including medical, logistical, and rescue units, complementing the use of Namer and Achzarit (based on a T-55 tank) heavily armored personnel carriers primarily utilized by infantry units.

<https://www.israeldefense.co.il/en/node/59871>

German Press: Berlin Clears Israeli Use of Two Heron TP Combat Drones

Israel Defense, October 13, 2023

According to reports in the media reports, German Minister of Defense, Boris Pistorius, has given Israel the green light to

use two Heron TP drones for the purpose of attacking Hamas in the Gaza Strip.

The Heron TP (Eitan) drones are High-Altitude Long-Endurance (HALE) drones produced by the Israeli Aerospace Industry (IAI). In June 2018, Germany leased several drones for an extended period of time, in a \$3 billion deal. The deal included the leasing of seven HALE drones, training, and certification of German operators, and the use of relevant Israeli Air Force infrastructure. A joint German-Israeli squadron, named The Red Baron Squadron was established at Israel's Tel Nof Airbase for the training of German pilots.

<https://www.israeldefense.co.il/en/node/59887>

Israeli Navy Fires Spike NLOS Missiles at Gaza Coastline Targets

Israel Defense, October 13, 2023

The Israeli Navy attacked Hamas targets on the Gaza Strip coastline using Spike NLOS maritime missiles. According to a report in Navy Recognition, an IDF spokesperson confirmed that the Israeli Navy carried out an attack on coastal targets and estimated that it was conducted using Spike NLOS maritime missiles.

The Spike NLOS maritime missile is the naval version of the Spike NLOS land-based missile system, part of the missile family by this name produced by Rafael.

The missile has the capability to engage maritime and coastal targets during day and night, in all weather conditions, and at ranges beyond the line of sight, up to a distance of 32 kilometers.

<https://www.israeldefense.co.il/en/node/59890>

Boeing to Equip Israel with Smart Bombs

Israel Defense, October 15, 2023

Boeing has started supplying smart munitions to Israel. Bloomberg's website quotes an American military official, Brad Bowman, who reports that an Israeli Air Force transport plane recently flew with GBU-39/B 250-pound (113 kilograms) bombs from the United States to Israel.

In 2021, Israel purchased 1,000 GBU-39/B Small Diameter Bombs (SDB) for \$735 million. The SDB (small diameter bomb) is an air-launched bomb capable of hitting a target from a range of 40 miles (64 kilometers) and provides the means for precise targeting of militants in Gaza while minimizing civilian casualties, Bowman said.

<https://www.israeldefense.co.il/en/node/59912>

Meet Duvdevan: The Elite Counter-Terrorism Commando Unit

Israel Defense, October 15, 2023

"I am the commander of the Duvdevan Unit. The IDF combat units, and Duvdevan in particular, never take a moment's rest and are fighting nonstop and in every arena."

These words were spoken by Lieutenant Colonel D, the commander of the Duvdevan Unit, just a few months ago, when he was given the honor of lighting a torch during Israel's 75th anniversary celebrations.

Lieutenant Colonel D, whose full name or photo cannot be disclosed, had his face covered by a mask when he lit the torch. The operations of his unit are also mostly carried out in absolute secrecy.

<https://www.israeldefense.co.il/en/node/59919>

Reports: Hamas Uses North Korean Weapons Systems

Israel Defense, October 15, 2023

Hamas is using North Korean-made weapons systems. South Korean media reports that Hamas possesses Katyusha rockets with calibers of 107mm and 122mm, as well as communication equipment, which were acquired by Hamas from North Korea in 2014.

Additionally, South Korean media notes that Hamas also possesses several Bulsae-2 guided missile systems. These are replicas of the 9K111 Fagot anti-tank guided missile system, originally developed by the Soviet Union in the early 1960s. The 9K111 system is designed for mobile tank destruction on the battlefield, with a range of 1.2 miles, and it can penetrate 19 to 23 inches of steel armor.

<https://www.israeldefense.co.il/en/node/59913>

Analysis: The IDF Didn't Invest in the Border Defense Force Due to the Fence

Israel Defense, October 15, 2023

The border defense system surrounding Gaza included approximately one hundred Rafael-made sniper positions, each with a 0.3 mm machine gun with radar and optics installed. These positions were connected to Elbit's MARS system, with female observers working in a concrete reinforced war room. When movement was detected close to the border, the observer would conduct a 'suspicious arrest' procedure using announcement equipment installed on the tower that saw the terrorist and - if necessary - shoot. On Saturday at approximately 6:30 a.m., Hamas launched,

according to reports, about 140-150 drones with bombs and simultaneously managed to disable all the firing positions in the line.

<https://www.israeldefense.co.il/en/node/59929>

Oman

Oman to acquire 301 TOW missiles in possible US\$70m deal

Defense Connect, October 4, 2023

The Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA) notified the US Congress of the potential sale of 301 tube-launched, optically-tracked, wireless-guided (TOW) 2B, radio frequency missiles (BGM-71F-7-RF) on 3 October.

The sale, if approved, would also comprise the 301 TOW missiles including seven fly-to-buy missiles, technical, logistics, and engineering support.

TOW missile systems have been used extensively around the world since the 1970s as an anti-armour and anti-fortification weapon mounted on ground and rotary-wing vehicles. The system is still in service with the US Army, US Marines, and international forces.

<https://www.defenceconnect.com.au/land/12905-oman-to-acquire-301-tow-missiles-in-possible-us-70m-deal>

Qatar

Qatar intensifies call for global oversight of Israel's nuclear activities

Doha News, October 1, 2023

Qatar has intensified its call for Israel to subject all its nuclear facilities to International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards and join the Treaty on

the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) as a non-nuclear state.

The amplified appeal came in a statement delivered by Abdulaziz Al-Jabri, Chairman of Qatar's National Committee for the Prohibition of Weapons, at the General Conference of the IAEA in Vienna.

Expanding on previous demands, Al-Jabri reasserted the need for immediate action based on "international legitimacy resolutions" that date back half a century. These resolutions include those from the UN General Assembly since 1974 and Security Council Resolutions 487 of 1981 and 687 of 1991.

<https://dohanews.co/qatar-intensifies-call-for-global-oversight-of-israels-nuclear-activities/>

Saudi Arabia

In nuclear push, Saudi Arabia could play US, China off each other

Breaking Defense, October 2, 2023

With Saudi Arabia making clear its desire for nuclear power, the Middle East could find itself on the edge of a potential nuclear arms race — one in which the Kingdom attempts to play the great powers off each other in order to achieve its goals.

Right now, the Kingdom is nowhere near having a operative nuclear program. But Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman raised eyebrows in a late September interview when he said that if Iran were to get a nuclear weapon "we will have to get one." The timing of MBS' statement was noteworthy for many analysts who believe it reflected a growing concern of the advancement of the Iranian

nuclear program to capitalize on the push by Washington and Tel Aviv to normalize relations with Riyadh by making the establishment of a Saudi nuclear program with full fuel cycle as a conditional step.

<https://breakingdefense.com/2023/10/in-nuclear-push-saudi-arabia-could-play-us-china-off-each-other/>

IDF said to study security implications of possible Saudi normalization deal

Times of Israel, October 2, 2023

The Israel Defense Forces have reportedly begun studying the range of ramifications for Israel on a military level should a normalization deal with Saudi Arabia be achieved.

The study will look at the possible consequences of the deal, including the options for partnerships and cooperation, along with risks involved for Israel's security, the Walla news site reported Sunday.

The work is being done by a range of IDF branches, including intelligence, strategic planning, the Iran department, the Air Force and others. It will also look at the different kinds of nuclear programs that Saudi Arabia could set up.

The findings will be presented to Chief of Staff Herzi Levi and then to Defense Minister Yoav Gallant, before being brought to the cabinet, the unsourced report said, noting there was currently no timeframe for the study.

<https://www.timesofisrael.com/idf-said-to-study-security-implications-of-possible-saudi-normalization-deal/>

Iran Makes This the Moment for a US-Israel-Saudi Grand Bargain

Bloomberg, October 6, 2023

While Americans are rightly focused on Russia's invasion of Ukraine and the global challenge posed by China, we must not forget the insidious threat Iran poses to the Middle East and globally. This ranges from its sponsorship of Hezbollah, the best-armed terrorist organization in the world, to its support of Houthi rebels in Yemen, its continuing attempts to develop unauthorized nuclear weapons, and the recent swap of billions of dollars in sanctioned funds for five American hostages.

But two recent diplomatic initiatives may come together to help create a strong coalition against the rotten theocracy in Tehran. There are serious conversations about formal security pacts between the US and both Saudi Arabia and Israel.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/opinion/articles/2023-10-06/deal-between-us-saudi-israel-uae-can-contain-iran-nuclear-program#xj4y7vzkg>

Saudi Arabia seeks to study small nuclear reactor technology

The Japan Times, October 8, 2023

Saudi Arabia said it's interested in studying technology for small modular nuclear reactors, as the Middle East's largest oil producer looks to diversify its energy sources and generate cleaner power for domestic use and export.

The kingdom is "a late-comer" to nuclear power and aims to study all types and applications of atomic generation, Prince

Abdulaziz bin Salman, the Saudi energy minister, said Sunday at a climate conference in the capital, Riyadh. Saudi Arabia has been building a test reactor and is seeking U.S. assistance as it looks to develop a nuclear program.

<https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2023/10/08/world/saudi-arabia-nuclear-reactor/>

IAEA Mission Recognizes Saudi Arabia's Commitment to Radiation Safety, Identifies Areas for Further Improvement

IAEA, October 10, 2023

An International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) mission said the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has demonstrated commitment to safety for all applications and occurrences of radiation sources in the country. The team recommended actions for improvement, including the establishment of a national strategy for radioactive waste management.

The Integrated Regulatory Review Service (IRRS) mission, the first to Saudi Arabia, was conducted at the request of the Government of Saudi Arabia and hosted by the Nuclear and Radiological Regulatory Commission (NRRC). The ten-day mission took place from 1 to 10 October 2023.

Using IAEA safety standards and international good practices, IRRS missions are designed to strengthen the effectiveness of the national regulatory infrastructure while recognizing the responsibility of each country for nuclear, radiation, radioactive waste and transport safety.

<https://www.iaea.org/newscenter/pressreleases/iaea-mission-recognizes-saudi-arabias-commitment-to-radiation-safety-identifies-areas-for-further-improvement>

Saudi Arabia puts Israel deal on ice amid war, engages with Iran, sources say

Reuters, October 13, 2023

Saudi Arabia is putting U.S.-backed plans to normalise ties with Israel on ice, two sources familiar with Riyadh's thinking said, signalling a rapid rethinking of its foreign policy priorities as war escalates between Israel and Palestinian group Hamas.

The conflict has also pushed the kingdom to engage with Iran. Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman took his first phone call from Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi as Riyadh tries to prevent a broader surge in violence across the region.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/saudi-arabia-puts-israel-deal-ice-amid-war-engages-with-iran-sources-say-2023-10-13/>

Syrian Arab Republic

Wagner fractures in Syria, Libya amid conflict with Russia's Defense Ministry

Al-Monitor, October 1, 2023

"Prigozhin is alive." The phrase remains among the most popular queries in Russia's Yandex search engine a month after the crash of the Embraer Legacy jet on Aug. 23 that killed Wagner boss Yevgeny Prigozhin. Russian media outlets are also speculating about why nothing much is happening with Prigozhin's foreign and Russian assets so far. Moreover, thousands of Wagner's mercenaries, despite the legislative and unofficial demands of the Russian Ministry of Defense to move under the control of the agency, continue to conduct combat operations abroad. Some

doubt his demise because Wagner continues to survive. Its mercenaries are most active in Mali, the place where Prigozhin recorded his last address on the eve of the plane crash. Wagner's affiliated Telegram channels are quite full of new photos of Wagner fighters "on a raid," "in convoys" or "landing from a helicopter."

<https://www.al-monitor.com/originals/2023/09/wagner-fractures-syria-libya-amid-conflict-russias-defense-ministry>

US downs Turkish drone as Turkey bombs infrastructure in Syria's Kurdish zone

Al-Monitor, October 5, 2023

A US F-16 fighter jet has downed an unmanned Turkish drone close to a coalition facility in northeastern Syria, where 900 US special operation forces are deployed, a move that is likely to escalate tensions between the two NATO allies, the Pentagon has confirmed.

Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin spoke with his Turkish counterpart Yasar Guler to discuss the matter on Thursday, Pentagon press secretary Brig. Gen. Pat Ryder told reporters. Ryder called the shootdown of the Turkish drone near the Syrian town of al-Hasakah "a regrettable incident." He added that no US forces were injured and that there were "no indications that Turkey was intentionally targeting US forces," but that Turkish drones had been "conducting airstrikes inside a declared US-restricted operating zone" prior to the shoot-down.

<https://www.al-monitor.com/originals/2023/10/us-downs-turkish-drone-turkey-bombs-infrastructure-syrias-kurdish-zone>

US fails to deter Turkey's bombardment of Syria's Kurdish enclave

Al-Monitor, October 5, 2023

Turkish drones conducted multiple strikes within a kilometer of a US base in northeast Syria on Thursday, causing US troops to take shelter in bunkers in the hours before an American commander ordered one of the unmanned aircraft to be shot down, the Pentagon said. Pentagon press secretary Brig. Gen. Pat Ryder described the shoot-down — the first of its kind between the two NATO allies — as a “regrettable incident” carried out in self-defense. He said that a subsequent phone call between the Turkish and US defense chiefs and an after-action review determined no evidence of hostile intent by the Turkish forces towards US troops.

“US commanders on the ground did assess that there was a potential threat, and so they took prudent action,” Ryder said, before describing the call between Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin and his Turkish counterpart Yasar Guler as “fruitful.”

<https://www.al-monitor.com/originals/2023/10/us-fails-deter-turkeys-bombardment-syrias-kurdish-enclave>

Turkey expands strikes as Fidan, Blinken discuss deconfliction, 'terrorist threats'

Al-Monitor, October 6, 2023

Turkey expanded its air campaign against Kurdish autonomous zones in Syria and Iraq on Friday, even as senior Biden

administration officials held calls with their counterparts in Ankara to discuss deconfliction and counter-terrorism mechanisms.

The Turkish defense ministry said on Friday that its air forces destroyed 15 new targets on the second day of the operation in northern Syria. The new statement brings the total number of strikes to 45 in the last 48 hours. The ministry didn't provide details on Friday's strikes, but according to local sources, Manbij, Kobane were among the targets.

On Thursday, the ministry said 30 targets were hit in Tell Rifaat, Derik and Jazeerah regions, “including an oil well and an oil storage facility ... used by terrorists.”

<https://www.al-monitor.com/originals/2023/10/turkey-expands-strikes-fidan-blinken-discuss-deconfliction-terrorist-threats>

Turkey's Erdogan says 'first phase' of Syria operation has concluded

Al-Monitor, October 9, 2023

Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said on Monday that his country concluded the first phase of its operations in northern Syria and northern Iraq, while insisting that Ankara will not forget Washington's downing of its drone during the operation last week.

“As in every operation, we experienced the biggest problem with our ally,” Erdogan said, referring to the US downing of the drone last Thursday in northern Syria. “There is no doubt that this incident has

been noted in our national memory and the necessary action will be taken when the time comes,” Erdogan said without elaborating.

He added that his country couldn't prevent the “unpleasant” incident, reiterating Ankara's previous warning to third countries to stay clear of Turkey's targets.

<https://www.al-monitor.com/originals/2023/10/turkeys-erdogan-says-first-phase-syria-operation-has-concluded>

Suspected Israeli airstrikes hit Syria for first time since Hamas war began

Al-Monitor, October 12, 2023

Suspected Israeli airstrikes hit Syria on Thursday, the first such attacks since the ongoing war between Israel and Hamas began.

SANA, Syria's official news outlet, reported airstrikes hitting the Damascus and Aleppo airports around 1:50 pm local time. The attacks damaged the airports' landing strips, putting them out of service, according to the outlet.

The UK-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights reported that Syrian air defenses had responded to the strikes. Neither the observatory nor SANA immediately reported any casualties.

Israel did not immediately comment.

<https://www.al-monitor.com/originals/2023/10/suspected-israeli-airstrikes-hit-syria-first-time-hamas-war-began>

Türkiye

Türkiye's defense giant Aselsan introduces 3 new marine systems

Daily Sabah, October 1, 2023

Defense giant Aselsan has introduced three new marine systems during this year's third edition of Teknofest, Türkiye's renowned technology and aerospace event held in the Aegean city of Izmir.

Speaking to Anadolu Agency (AA), Ahmet Akyol, the company's general manager said the new systems will be added to the Turkish Naval Forces inventory this year with the fifth ship in the national ship project MILGEM. Noting that the GÖKDENİZ close air defense system was recently integrated into the fifth MİLGEM ship, Akyol said to date they have signed export contracts with three countries. Explaining that the ship also boasts the new CENK radar system, Akyol said, "It is extremely high tech and will allow the detection and identification of all aircraft, missiles and surface vehicles approaching the ship."

<https://www.dailysabah.com/business/defense/turkiyes-defense-giant-aselsan-introduces-3-new-marine-systems>

Türkiye's 1st aircraft factory to reopen with Gökbey, Hürkuş production

Daily Sabah, October 2, 2023

Türkiye's first aircraft factory, the reestablished TOMTAŞ Aviation and Technology facility, will restart its production by manufacturing parts for the

multipurpose Gökbey helicopter and Hürkuş trainer aircraft, according to a board member announcement during the recently held Teknofest in Izmir.

“Hopefully, we will be issuing our first invoice in October,” Ali Ekşi, a board member at TOMTAŞ, told Anadolu Agency (AA) on the sidelines of Türkiye’s premier technology and aerospace event. Teknofest held in the Aegean city of Izmir marked this year’s third edition of the festival that gathered some 1.1 million visitors at Çiğli Airport between Sept. 27 and Oct. 1.

<https://www.dailysabah.com/business/defense/turkiyes-1st-aircraft-factory-to-reopen-with-gokbey-hurkus-production>

Türkiye plans commissioning of Akkuyu NPP's 1st reactor next year

Daily Sabah, October 5, 2023

The commissioning of the first reactor of Türkiye’s first nuclear power plant is expected next October, Energy and Natural Resources Minister Alparslan Bayraktar said Thursday, adding that talks on second and third plants are underway.

Discussing Türkiye’s energy agenda in a televised interview with private broadcaster NTV, Bayraktar replied to questions regarding the commissioning of the Akkuyu Nuclear Power Plant (NPP), built in the southern city of Mersin, which received the initial batch of nuclear fuel in a ceremony earlier this year. “We have a target date, hopefully, next year, which is the 101st anniversary of our republic. We

have a target date of Oct. 29, 2024. For this purpose, approximately 30,000 workers, subcontractors and the Russian company are working intensively day and night,” Bayraktar said.

<https://www.dailysabah.com/business/energy/turkiye-plans-commissioning-of-akkuyu-npps-1st-reactor-next-year>

In global 1st, Turkish naval drones sink ship in UAV-backed trial

Daily Sabah, October 9, 2023

A fleet of Türkiye’s homegrown kamikaze sea drones successfully struck a target in a sea trial featuring a joint operation with the country’s unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), the Defense Ministry said in a statement on Monday.

Developed by a pioneering defense contractor, Aselsan, a swarm of Albatros-S unmanned surface vessels (USVs) consisting of eight kamikaze sea drones engaged in a test targeting a 22-meter (72.18-foot) ship off the coast of Mersin province in the Eastern Mediterranean, the statement said. Detected by the famed Bayraktar TB2 unmanned aerial vehicle, the target ship sank within minutes after being approached and hit by one of the USVs equipped with a warhead produced by another top local defense manufacturer, Roketsan.

<https://www.dailysabah.com/business/defense/in-global-1st-turkish-naval-drones-sink-ship-in-uav-backed-trial>

NUCLEAR AND ARMS CONTROL CENTRE

*Sylloge on West Asia is compiled by Mr. Kushal Agrawal
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