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Iran

Iran unveils new home-made defense systems

IRNA, February 17, 2024

The new systems were unveiled on Saturday in the presence of Defense Minister Brigadier General Mohammad Reza Gharaei Ashtiani.

The new anti-ballistic missile system is named “Arman” which means aspiration in English. The low-altitude air defense system is named “Azarakhsh” which means lightning. The newly unveiled systems will significantly boost Iran’s air defense capabilities once they are added to the country’s military fleet.

Arman has been developed in two versions, one with a passive radar, the other with an active radar.

<https://en.irna.ir/news/85389113/Iran-unveils-new-home-made-defense-systems>

Azarakhsh, Arman air defense systems destroy targets in shortest time: Minister

IRNA, February 17, 2024

Iran’s Defense Minister Brigadier General Mohammad Reza Gharaei Ashtiani has said that the newly unveiled Azarakhsh and Arman air defense systems can destroy their targets within the shortest time period and distance. The minister made the comment on Saturday as he attended the unveiling ceremony of the Arman anti-ballistic missile system and Azarakhsh low-altitude air defense system, both developed by experts of the Iranian Defense Ministry.

Ashtiani described the new systems as a great achievement in Iran’s defense industry, saying that his ministry has made

all of its efforts to meet the requirements of the defense sector, and supply equipment and weapons required by the armed forces. The Arman anti-ballistic missile system has a medium range and high altitude, which can detect targets at a 180-kilometer distance and destroy them in 120 km, he explained, adding that the system gets prepared for its operation in less than 3 minutes and boosts the country’s air defense.

<https://en.irna.ir/news/85389346/Azarakhsh-Arman-air-defense-systems-destroy-targets-in-shortest>

Iran’s nuclear activities transparent since day one: nuclear official

Tehran Times, February 19, 2024

In an exclusive interview with the Tehran Times, the Deputy head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) rejected claims that the country’s nuclear program is not fully transparent.

“We have made it clear since day one that our nuclear activities are nothing but peaceful. Every time the IAEA asked us for clarifications we provided them with answers. Nothing has changed. Tell us which part of our nuclear program is not transparent and we will prove that it is. As the Leader of the Islamic Revolution once said, ‘The West knows very well that it’s lying about our nuclear activities’,” Pejman Shirmardi stated.

The official made the remarks after the UN nuclear watchdog accused Iran of not being completely transparent with the International Atomic Energy Agency.

<https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/495124/Iran-s-nuclear-activities-transparent-since-day-one-nuclear>

IRGC Navy adds new home-made combat vessels to its fleet

IRNA, February 19, 2024

The two vessels, named Martyr Bagheri and Martyr Shirazi, joined the IRGC Navy's fleet during a ceremony held on Monday in the port city of Bandar Abbas, the capital of Hormuzgan province in southern Iran.

IRGC Navy Commander Commodore Alireza Tangsiri, who was present at the ceremony, said that the two vessels belong to Martyr Soleimani class of domestically-made advanced warships.

Martyr Bagheri and Martyr Shirazi vessels are each 67 meters in length and are equipped with home-made long and medium-range missiles, Tangsiri said, adding that they can navigate 5,500 nautical miles (9,500km).

<https://en.irna.ir/news/85391708/IRGC-Navy-adds-new-home-made-combat-vessels-to-its-fleet>

IRGC deploys Shahed-131 kamikaze and Ababil-5 combat UAVs

Tehran Times, February 20, 2024

The Islamic Revolution Guard Corps (IRGC) Ground Force has bolstered its capabilities with the integration of Shahed-131 kamikaze drones and Ababil-5 combat UAVs.

The act aimed at enhancing surveillance capabilities and countering threats posed by adversaries and terrorist organizations.

During the Great Prophet 15 military exercise in January 2021, the IRGC Aerospace Force unveiled footage showcasing the successful engagement of various targets by the Shahed-131 drone.

This marked the first public demonstration of the drone's effectiveness in combat scenarios.

The Shahed-131 drone further demonstrated its operational prowess during the Great Prophet 17 exercise, where it executed precision strikes on a simulated facility representing the Dimona nuclear power plant of the Israeli regime.

<https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/495177/IRGC-deploys-Shahed-131-kamikaze-and-Ababil-5-combat-UAVs>

AEOI chief says Iran among top 5 countries in nuclear industry

Tehran Times, February 21, 2024

The head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) has noted that despite years of Western sanctions, Iran's nuclear sector is among the top five in the world.

Speaking on Tuesday, Mohammad Eslami highlighted Iran's achievements in the peaceful nuclear energy program, including the production of high-quality heavy water.

"Iran is placed among the world's top five countries in many fields such as the nuclear industry," he said.

Eslami went on to add, "Today, we are at the top of the list in terms of the quality and purity of heavy water that is produced without foreign help on the back of research by the country's scientists. We have been able to have a share in the supply and export of heavy water at the global market."

<https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/495227/AEOI-chief-says-Iran-among-top-5-countries-in-nuclear-industry>

Iran calls for nuclear disarmament of Israel

Tehran Times, February 26, 2024

Iran has sounded the alarm bell over Israel's possession of deadly nuclear weapons, saying the regime's conduct shows its nuclear arsenal poses a threat to not only Palestinians but people across the world.

"The international community must take this threat seriously and make a decisive decision to confront the unprecedented threat posed by this occupying, apartheid, and discriminatory regime to global peace. This occupying regime has become so emboldened by the support of the United States and some Western countries that it shamelessly threatens both the oppressed people of Gaza and the countries of the region with nuclear weapons," warned Iran's Foreign Minister while addressing a high-level disarmament conference at the United Nations Office in Geneva, Switzerland.

<https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/49542/3/Iran-calls-for-nuclear-disarmament-of-Israel>

Iran uranium stock enriched to 60% shrinks: IAEA

Tehran Times, February 27, 2024

The UN nuclear watchdog issued a report on Monday alleging that Iran's stock of uranium has shrunk.

The report purportedly said that the stockpile has dwindled below the theoretical threshold at which it could produce three atom bombs.

According to two confidential quarterly reports to member states, the International

Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) said in the report that Tehran has diluted its enriched stockpile more than it produced over the last three months.

Surprisingly, the IAEA failed to cast light on the reasons for the so-called downblending of 31.8 kg of material enriched to up to 60%, after which the stock fell by an estimated 6.8 kg since the last such quarterly reports to 121.5 kg.

<https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/49547/0/Iran-uranium-stock-enriched-to-60-shrinks-IAEA>

Nuclear messages exchanged between Tehran, Washington: Iran FM

Tehran Times, February 28, 2024

Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian has noted that Tehran and Washington have exchanged messages regarding the stalled nuclear talks.

In an interview with Lebanon's Arabic-language al-Mayadeen television news network in the Swiss city of Geneva on Tuesday, he added that "letters are still being exchanged between Tehran and Washington regarding several topics."

"The American side sometimes hints at its desire for all participating parties to revert to their previous obligations as per the nuclear agreement. On our part, we frankly expressed our readiness to welcome recommendations that would allow reversion to previous commitments, but also annul the unilateral sanctions imposed on Iran," he clarified.

<https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/49552/3/Nuclear-messages-exchanged-between-Tehran-Washington-Iran-FM>

Israel

Israel Shipyards Unveil New 24-Meter Landing Craft

Israel Defense, February 19, 2024

Israel Shipyards unveiled a new landing craft, 24 meters in length, which it tailored for an “undisclosed yet esteemed customer,” according to the company. Israel Shipyards says that this craft, designed for a broad spectrum of missions, is ideal for nations aiming to enhance their operational capabilities on rivers and lakes.

Foreign sources have already reported in the past that the Israeli Navy has several such landing craft that are used by the 13th flotilla to transport commando vehicles.

<https://www.israeldefense.co.il/en/node/61264>

Report: Romania Purchased Spike LR2 Anti-Tank Missiles for \$92 Million

Israel Defense, February 20, 2024

The Romanian media reports that the Romanian Ministry of Defense recently purchased Spike LR2 anti-tank missiles with a total value of approximately \$92 million.

The Romanian website Profit.ro reports that the framework agreement for the supply of the anti-tank missiles was signed between the joint venture company Eurospike as the sole supplier and the Romanian national company Romtehnica, which deals in international defense trade.

The Romanian website says that in 2018, Romtehnica purchased Spike ER anti-tank missiles from Rafael Systems with a total

value of approximately \$65 million, intended for installation on IAR-30 SOCAT helicopters.

<https://www.israeldefense.co.il/en/node/61277>

Elbit to Supply \$300 Million Armored Vehicle Systems to a European Customer

Israel Defense, February 21, 2024

Israeli Elbit Systems announced that it was awarded a contract for approximately \$300 million to supply weapon, reconnaissance, driving, and situational awareness systems for approximately 230 armored vehicles, to an undisclosed European customer. The contract will be performed over six years and includes custom design, production, lifecycle maintenance, and complete in-country support.

In this context, it is worth paying attention to the purchase by the Austrian MoD of 225 Pandur 6x6 EVO armored vehicles made by GDELS worth 1.8 billion Euros, which are known to carry a UT-30 turret made by Elbit Systems equipped with a 30 mm caliber automatic cannon.

<https://www.israeldefense.co.il/en/node/61291>

Major Austrian Defense Acquisition: GDELS Secures €1.8 Billion Contract for 225 PANDUR EVO Vehicles

Israel Defense, February 21, 2024

General Dynamics European Land Systems - Steyr (GDELS) will deliver an additional 225 PANDUR 6x6 EVO wheeled armored vehicles to the Austrian Armed Forces, worth €1.8 billion.

It appears that these vehicles carry Israeli systems. The German site Soldat & Technik reported in August 2023 that the GDELS revealed for the first time the model in question in this article and it carries a UT-30 turret manufactured by Israeli Elbit Systems equipped with a 30 mm caliber automatic cannon.

<https://www.israeldefense.co.il/en/node/61292>

IDF's "Star" Drone Squadron: Eliminating Any Threat That Disrupts the Gaza Maneuver

Israel Defense, February 22, 2024

On Saturday morning, October 7th, the holiday of Simchat Torah, Lieutenant Colonel O was at his home. Very quickly, he arrived at the airbase in Palmachim for takeoffs and initial attacks. Lieutenant Colonel O calls this stage the suppression phase. "We helped regain control of our forces in the Israeli communities surrounding the Gaza Strip." Then, he moved on to planning the maneuvering phase.

Lt. Col. O commands the 166 Squadron, which comprises Hermes 900 UAVs (the "Star"), manufactured by Elbit Systems. The "Star" is the second largest unmanned aircraft in the Air Force after the "Eitan," roughly equivalent in size to the Heron-1 "Shoval". Both the latter UAVs are products of IAI (Israel Aerospace Industries). Another participant in the array is the "Zik" - the Hermes 450, also manufactured by Elbit Systems.

<https://www.israeldefense.co.il/en/node/61296>

Hermes™ 650 Spark Unveiled: Elbit Systems Launches a New State-of-the-Art UAS

Israel Defense, February 25, 2024

Elbit Systems unveiled its latest addition to its market-leading Hermes family. According to the company's announcement, this Next Generation Unmanned Aerial System (UAS) boasts outstanding endurance, versatility, and cost-effective performance across land, air, and sea operations.

The Spark's key benefits and features include autonomous operation; a unique wide-flight envelope; high payload capacity; minimum life cycle cost (LCC), top safety, survivability, and immunity standards; increased range, flight speed, and efficiency; and NATO STANAG 4671 compliance.

<https://www.israeldefense.co.il/en/node/61326>

Indian Navy, Coast Guard to Equip with Israeli Elbit's Heavy Machine Gun Systems

Israel Defense, February 26, 2024

Indian media reported in Mid-February that the Indian Ministry of Defense has signed a contract with Advanced Weapon Equipment India for the manufacturing and supply of 463 indigenously manufactured 12.7 mm Stabilized Remote Control Guns (SRCG) for the Indian Navy and Indian Coast Guard. Ofer Shmueli, the founder of Defense Beacon, says that Israeli Elbit Systems won in December 2013 the Indian MoD 12.7mm Stabilized Remote Control Guns (SRCG) tender worth over \$211 million for the purchase of 621 x SRCG

along with transfer of technology. The tender included 74 SRCGs in semi-knock-down (SKD) condition, and 74 SRCGs in complete knock-down (CKD) condition while the remaining 463 guns are indigenously produced in India.

<https://www.israeldefense.co.il/en/node/61336>

MCTECH Delivers Dozens of Vehicle-Jamming Systems to a Southeast Asian Country

Israel Defense, February 26, 2024

Israeli company MCTECH RF Technologies recently supplied dozens of MC-2000 VRF-5G jamming systems to the military in a Southeast Asian country. These systems are designed to protect convoys from various RF threats, including remotely operated explosive devices (RCIED), drones, and more.

The significant feature of these systems is their ability to disrupt numerous communication channels simultaneously while opening discreet communication windows for maneuvering forces, enabling coordination on the move.

<https://www.israeldefense.co.il/en/node/61337>

Elbit Awarded \$600 Million Contract to Supply Redback IFV Systems

Israel Defense, February 27, 2024

Elbit Systems announced that it was awarded a contract worth approximately \$600 million to supply systems to Hanwha Defense Australia for the Australian Land 400 Phase 3 Project. This project aims to deliver advanced protection, fighting

capabilities, and sensors suite to the Redback Infantry Fighting Vehicles (IFV) for the Australian Army. The contract will be performed over five years.

Bezhael (Butzi) Machlis, President and CEO of Elbit Systems: “This milestone reaffirms our commitment to delivering advanced, mission-critical solutions to the Australian Army. Elbit Systems is dedicated to supplying cutting-edge defense technologies that will safeguard troops on the modern battlefield.”

<https://www.israeldefense.co.il/en/node/61354>

Steadicopter Presents Unmanned Helicopters with Extended Weapon Range at Singapore Airshow

Israel Defense, February 28, 2024

At the Singapore Airshow held last week, the Israeli company Steadicopter announced improvements and upgrades to its two unmanned helicopters, the Black Eagle and Golden Eagle, and is offering them to the market in the Asia-Pacific region.

Steadicopter CEO, Itai Toren, told Janes that the company has extended the range of the weapon installed on the unmanned Golden Eagle helicopter, which is defined as a light tactical attack helicopter.

The Black Eagle is an electric motor helicopter. Its 25E model can stay in the air for up to an hour with a communication range of about 50 km. The larger 50H model has a communication range of approximately 150 km.

<https://www.israeldefense.co.il/en/node/61361>

Saudi Arabia

Report: Saudi Arabia Interested in Acquiring Russian Rockets with Thermobaric Warheads

Israel Defense, February 19, 2024

From the Russian perspective, the use of thermobaric warheads integrated into rocket ammunition such as the TOS-1A system (the Russian equivalent of the MLRS) manufactured by Omsktransmash, has been highly successful on the battlefield in Ukraine.

The system can launch two projectiles simultaneously. Both projectiles are equipped with thermobaric warheads, which, although not precise, cause significant damage due to the thermobaric effect. The advanced ammunition, along with the thermobaric warheads, "set Ukraine on fire," according to the Russian description.

<https://www.israeldefense.co.il/en/node/61265>

Türkiye

Turkish engine maker says fighter jet power unit almost ready

Daily Sabah, February 20, 2024

Türkiye's top engine manufacturer on Tuesday said a unit that will power the nation's first domestically developed fighter jet is almost ready, in what will mark the industry's latest advancement in a homegrown drive to curb external dependency on critical equipment.

The fifth-generation combat aircraft, KAAN, seeks to upgrade Türkiye's air force and replace its aging F-16 fleet. Officials

have said it is expected to perform an inaugural flight soon.

<https://www.dailysabah.com/business/defense/turkish-engine-maker-says-fighter-jet-power-unit-almost-ready>

Türkiye says ready to sell once-embargoed drone cameras to Canada

Daily Sabah, February 20, 2024

Türkiye's pioneering defense manufacturer, Aselsan, has said it is ready to sell Canada drone optical technology that has been developed domestically after Ottawa placed an embargo on arms exports years ago.

Canada suspended drone technology sales to Türkiye in 2020 after concluding its optical equipment attached to Turkish-made drones had been used by Azerbaijan while fighting illegally occupying Armenian forces in Karabakh, the Azerbaijani enclave Baku has since liberated.

<https://www.dailysabah.com/business/defense/turkiye-says-ready-to-sell-once-embargoed-drone-cameras-to-canada>

Türkiye's 5th-generation fighter jet completes first flight

Daily Sabah, February 21, 2024

The Turkish public on Wednesday witnessed another defense industry milestone as the nation's first indigenously developed fighter jet completed its first flight, part of the country's efforts to upgrade its air force and curb external dependency.

Named KAAN, the fifth-generation warplane took off in the early hours on

Wednesday and stayed in the air briefly before returning to an air base in north Ankara, according to a video shared by its developer, the Turkish Aerospace Industries (TAI).

<https://www.dailysabah.com/business/defense/turkiyes-5th-generation-fighter-jet-completes-first-flight>

US co-ops with Türkiye on ammunition shell production: Pentagon

Daily Sabah, February 22, 2024

The U.S. Department of Defense plans to produce metal parts for 155 mm shells with Turkish subcontractors at ammunition facilities in the U.S. state of Texas by the end of 2025, the Pentagon's spokesperson said Thursday.

"U.S. Army is building three 155 mm projectile metal parts lines in Texas," Pentagon spokesperson Jeff Jurgensen said at the news conference in response to a question passed by Anadolu Agency (AA), explaining the scope of cooperation between Türkiye and the U.S. in the facility.

<https://www.dailysabah.com/business/defense/us-co-ops-with-turkiye-on-ammunition-shell-production-pentagon>

Türkiye's new, advanced drone camera undergoes 1st test

Daily Sabah, February 23, 2024

Türkiye on Thursday announced it had successfully tested a new domestically developed drone optical technology, the latest advancement in the critical system that had been for years imported from abroad.

The ASELFLIR-500 electro-optical reconnaissance, surveillance and targeting system, developed by Aselsan, was tested by the Bayraktar Akıncı unmanned combat aerial vehicle, which struck a moving target at sea, according to a video shared by the drone developer, Baykar.

<https://www.dailysabah.com/business/defense/turkiyes-new-advanced-drone-camera-undergoes-1st-test>

Baykar's most powerful Akıncı UCAV yet makes debut flight

Daily Sabah, February 25, 2024

The latest variant of the Turkish drone magnate Baykar's pioneering unmanned combat aerial vehicle has completed its debut flight with new and more robust engines, the company announced on Saturday.

The Akıncı drone, powered by two engines with 850 horsepower each, took off from a flight training and test center in the northwestern Tekirdağ province for an hourlong stay in the air, Baykar said.

<https://www.dailysabah.com/business/defense/baykars-most-powerful-akinci-ucav-yet-makes-debut-flight>

Newest addition to wrap up Türkiye's end-to-end air defense chain

Daily Sabah, February 27, 2024

Türkiye is preparing to incorporate into the inventory this year a new homegrown system with long-range high-altitude air defense capabilities, an addition that senior industry officials say will mark the last link in the country's defense chain.

Momentum over the recent years has seen Türkiye developing and producing its own domestic missile-defense technology, from short-range to long-range systems, after Ankara repeatedly sought to secure the equipment from Western partners.

<https://www.dailysabah.com/business/defense/newest-addition-to-wrap-up-turkiyes-end-to-end-air-defense-chain>

Türkiye expects 'positive approach' from Germany to buy Eurofighters

Daily Sabah, February 29, 2024

Sources from the Defense Ministry said Thursday that Türkiye was pursuing a deal to obtain Eurofighter jets from a European consortium. They stated that technical talks were underway with the United Kingdom and representatives of the jet's manufacturer and awaited "a positive approach" from Germany, a member of the European consortium behind the production.

A prolonged process of Türkiye's request to buy F-16 jets, which tested ties between Ankara and Washington, led the nation to begin discussions to buy Eurofighters.

<https://www.dailysabah.com/politics/turkiye-expects-positive-approach-from-germany-to-buy-eurofighters/news>

NUCLEAR AND ARMS CONTROL CENTRE

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