



Missile Defense Briefing Report: No. 333

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Related Categories: Missile Defense; Science and Technology

JAPAN AUGMENTS MISSILE RADARS

In response to North Korean bellicosity and an increasingly assertive China, Japan continues to edge closer to the United States on defense issues. The Japanese Ministry of Defense has partnered with the Pentagon to install a second unit of the Army Navy/Transportable Radar Surveillance (AN/TPY-2) system in the northern Japanese town of Kyogamisaki. An initial unit of the system, which is designed to track and detect ballistic missile threats, is already deployed and operational in Shakiri, also located in northern Japan. (UPI, December 29, 2014)

AN IRANIAN IRON DOME?

Israel's Iron Dome missile defense system has garnered significant accolades and attention for its effectiveness during last summer's Gaza War. But Israel might not be alone. Iran now claims to have a similar system in place. Mohammad Hassan Aboutorabifard, the deputy speaker of the Iranian parliament, has equated his country's air defenses with the Israeli system in terms of both reach and effectiveness. "[T]oday Iran's Air Defense System has provided our country with an Iron Dome in its real sense and Iran's airspace is the safest in the region," Aboutorabifard has boasted. Iranian regime officials additionally have claimed to have successfully developed "missile evading drones" and are now reportedly mass-producing their own fighter jets. (*Washington Free Beacon*, January 7, 2015)

THE S-300, BACK ON THE TABLE...

Increasingly isolated as a result of its policies toward Ukraine, Russia's government is seeking to expand its strategic partnership with Iran. As part of a deal recently inked in Tehran between Russian defense minister Sergei Shoigu and Iranian defense minister Brigadier General Hossein Meghan, the two countries have agreed to increase military cooperation, training, and exchanges. Additionally, according to Iranian press, the talks could have another outcome as well; Russia "may resolve" its long-running dispute with Iran over the S-300 air defense system in the near future. The system, which Moscow agreed to sell to Tehran in 2007, was never delivered as a result of international pressure on the Kremlin - a development that has been a significant irritant in relations between the two countries up until now. (RT, January 20, 2015)

...AS MOSCOW EYES THE ARCTIC

Meanwhile, Moscow is shoring up the protection of its own military. As part of its military push into the Arctic, the Kremlin has reportedly expanded the capabilities of its Northern Fleet through the deployment of the S-400 "Triumph" air defense system to defend deployed forces against ballistic and cruise missile attacks. (Moscow Sputnik, January 9, 2015)

FEAR AND LOATHING IN BEIJING

The Chinese government is once again voicing its concerns over the deployment of U.S. missile defenses in South Korea. Although U.S. cooperation with the Asian nation is aimed at mitigating the missile threat from North Korea, Beijing fears that the installation of the U.S. developed Terminal High-Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) system in South Korea - a move currently being planned by Washington and Seoul - will be destabilizing, and degrade China's own strategic deterrent. Which is why, in the wake of a recent meeting between Chinese defense minister Chang Wanquan and his South Korean counterpart, Han Min-koo, China's foreign ministry issued a formal statement warning that further missile defense cooperation between the ROK and the U.S. could undermine "bilateral relations" between South Korea and China. (Seoul Yonhap, February 5, 2015)

MISSILE DEFENSE OF THE FUTURE

The United States currently relies on a wide range of sensors and anti-missile systems as the primary means to protect the homeland, with these capabilities reinforced by a limited number of expensive missile interceptors. The U.S. Army is seeking to solve this problem with the creation of the Integrated Air and Missile Defense Battle Command System (IBCS). The IBCS will incorporate and unify control over a vast array of sensor and missile interceptor systems currently operated by the U.S. military. According to defense officials, the IBCS will also integrate several new directed energy missile defense systems now under development by U.S. Space and Missile Defense Command - including electromagnetic pulse weapons, lasers, and microwave weapons. (*Defense News*, February, 13, 2015)