



PROPHETIC TIMES

January, 1998

Weekly World News Briefs

December 22, 2018

U.S. approves sale of Patriot missiles to Turkey

December 20, 2018 Arutz Sheva 7 reported: "The United States on Wednesday approved the sale of \$3.5 billion in missiles to Turkey, offering an ultimatum after US outrage over the NATO ally's plans to buy from Russia, AFP reports.

The State Department said it had informed Congress of plans to sell Turkey a package that includes 80 Patriot missiles, 60 PAC-3 missile interceptors and related equipment.

'The proposed sale will increase the defensive capabilities of the Turkey military to guard against hostile aggression and shield NATO allies who might train and operate within Turkey's borders,' a statement quoted by AFP said.

The move is seen as a counter move to Turkey's purchase of S-400 anti-ballistic missile defense systems from Russia, which has long been an issue of contention between Turkey and its allies, particularly the United States.

Military experts are concerned that the deployment of S-400s would put the security of allied weapon systems, particularly F-35 aircraft and radar facilities, in danger..."

Russia says will build up Arctic military presence

December 20, 2018 spacedaily.com reported: "Russia will build up its military presence in the Arctic over the next year, the defence minister said Tuesday, as Moscow seeks to assert its influence in the strategic region.

The announcement comes after years of increased activity in the Arctic, which Moscow has declared a top priority due to its mineral riches and military importance.

'We'll finish building infrastructure in 2019 to accommodate air defence radar units and aviation guidance points on the Sredny and Wrangel Islands, and on Cape Schmidt' in the Russian Arctic, Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu said.

He said accommodation for military personnel and further aviation infrastructure had been completed elsewhere in the Arctic, at a defence ministry meeting also attended by President Vladimir Putin..."

China warns U.S. against 'weaponising' space

December 19, 2018 France24.com reports: "China said Wednesday it opposed the 'weaponisation' of space as it criticised US President Donald Trump's orders to create a new command centre for controlling military space operations.

'China has consistently proposed the peaceful usage of space, and opposes the weaponisation of space and a space arms race,' said Chinese foreign ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying at a press briefing.

'We oppose even further turning space into the new battleground,' she added.

On Tuesday, Trump ordered the creation of 'Space Command', a new organisational structure within the Pentagon that will have overall control of military space operations.

SpaceCom, as it will inevitably come to be known, will be onequal footing with other US military commands, such as Central Command in the Middle East or Indo-Pacific Command in Asia, and will require a new head quarters as well as a commander and deputy commander who will need Senate approval..."

Japan to get first post-WWII aircraft carriers

December 18, 2018 spacewar.com reported: "Japan will get its first aircraft carriers since World War II and buy dozens of fighter jets under a new defence plan approved Tuesday that is intended to counter China's growing military power.

The new five-year defence plan calls for the upgrade of two existing helicopter carriers so that they can launch fighters, and is the latest in a series of steps under Prime Minister Shinzo Abe to boost Japan's military.

Abe's government argues the efforts are necessary given growing defence challenges in the region, including tensions with North Korea, and particularly "strong concerns" about the expansion of China's military footprint.

But the move is controversial, with critics arguing it shifts Tokyo further away from its commitment to strictly defensive capabilities under Japan's post-World War II pacifist constitution.

"We will secure both the quantity and quality of defence capability that is necessary... to meet the rapidly changing security environment," Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshihide Suga told a regular press briefing on Tuesday.

"We believe this is within... what is allowed under the constitution."

The five-year plan approved Tuesday assumes record defence spending of 27.47 trillion yen (\$244 billion) through March 2024. It calls for the defence ministry to upgrade two flat-top Izumo-class destroyers to enable them to launch fighters with short take-off and vertical landing abilities, like the F-35B stealth fighter.

In a separate plan also endorsed by the cabinet Tuesday, Japan said it would buy 42 F-35s over the next decade, with the F-35B variant widely considered the likeliest candidate.

It also plans over the same period to buy 105 F-35As, a variant of the advanced jet which performs conventional takeoffs and landings and cannot be used on the retrofitted destroyers...



Beijing has already expressed its "strong dissatisfaction and opposition" and "urges Japan to adhere to a purely defensive policy", she added at a regular press briefing. "..."

Trump orders US military to create 'Space Command'

December 18, 2018 spacedaily.com reported: US President Donald Trump on Tuesday ordered the creation of "Space Command," a new organizational structure within the Pentagon that will have overall control of military space operations.

The command will be separate from Trump's goal to build an entirely new branch of the military called "Space Force," which has not received approval from Congress.

"I direct the establishment, consistent with United States law, of United States Space Command as a functional Unified Combatant Command," Trump said in a memo to Defense Secretary Defense Jim Mattis.

Speaking at the Kennedy Space Center in Florida's Cape Canaveral, Vice President Mike Pence said Space Command would integrate space capabilities across all branches of the military.

"It will develop the space doctrine, tactics, techniques and procedures that will enable our war fighters to defend our nation in this new era," Pence said.

SpaceCom, as it will inevitably come to be known, will be the Pentagon's 11th combatant command. America's vast military divides the globe into various commands, such as Central Command in the Middle East or Indo-Pacific Command in Asia. The new Space Command would be on equal footing with these. It will require a new headquarters, as well as a commander and deputy commander who will need Senate approval.

Trump in June said he wanted to create a "Space Force," which would be a sixth and entirely new branch of the military alongside the Navy, Marine Corps, Army, Air Force and Coast Guard. He insists such a move is necessary to tackle vulnerabilities in space and assert US dominance in orbit.

But its creation is not a done deal, as it needs to be approved by Congress, and the concept has met with some skepticism from lawmakers and defense officials wary of the cost and added bureaucracy.

The creation of a new Space Force would also set off a turf war within the Pentagon, particularly with the Air Force, which currently is responsible for most space operations."..."

No measures exist to counter Russian, Chinese hypersonic weapons

December 17, 2018 spacedaily.com reported: "No countermeasures or effective defence exists against the new generation of hypersonic weapons being developed by both Russia and China, the US Government Accountability Office (GAO) said in a report.

"China and Russia are pursuing hypersonic weapons because their speed, altitude, and maneuverability may defeat most missile defence systems, and they may be used to improve long-range conventional and nuclear strike capabilities," the report said on Thursday.

"There are no existing countermeasures."..."

Israel said 'disappointed' by Australia's recognition of West Jerusalem only

December 15, 2018 timesofisrael.com reported: "Israel's Foreign Ministry on Saturday evening issued a positive yet decidedly tempered response to Australia's decision to recognize West Jerusalem as the nation's capital.

In a short statement, the ministry — which, due to the lack of a foreign minister, is directly under the authority of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu — did not comment on the recognition itself, but called Canberra's decision to open a defense and trade office in Jerusalem 'a step in the right direction.'

It also welcomed Australia's stance on 'sanctions against Iran and its steadfast position in support of Israel at the UN and against anti-Semitism.'

Meanwhile a senior Israeli official told Hebrew media anonymously that Israel was disappointed by Australia's decision to stress that its recognition only pertained to West Jerusalem."..."



Middle Eastern Women Share Chilling Sharia Law Stories: 'Silence Is Killing Us'

December 14, 2018 Breitbart.com reported: "Rabia Kazan has witnessed first-hand the mistreatment and abuse of women in Iran who live under Sharia law, and she knows millions more are suffering and even dying from honor killings, female genital mutilation, child sex trafficking, and child marriage across the Middle East.

Kazan and almost two dozen other women from or with roots in the Middle East spent two days in Washington, DC. to share their stories and to take their message directly to President Donald Trump and Congress.

They said they are grateful for Trump's willingness to confront these issues and will do their part to help him get elected to a second term in 2020.

'Unfortunately, the whole world ignores our pain,' Kazan said on Tuesday at the National Press Club. 'They torture our girls; they stone women; kill our women in the name of Sharia law under the Islamic regime.'

'We have to thank President Trump because in two years, finally, we're getting help,' said Kazan, a native of Turkey and founder of the Middle East Women's Coalition, the group that came to the nation's capital to get their message out.

'We're going to give a voice and endorse President Trump because silence is killing us,' Kazan said..."

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