



GRYPHON GROWL

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go.intelink.sgov.gov/CPI6RmN
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INDOPACOM

THEWARZONE: CHINA'S J-36 TAILLESS STEALTH FIGHTER SEEN FLYING FOR SECOND TIME



The largest of China's two new tailless stealth fighters has flown again on 17 March. This is just the second time we have evidence of it in the air, the first coming on 26 December 2024, presumably during its inaugural flight. That day Beijing's two new and previously never seen before heavy fighter designs were photographed and recorded in the sky.

First off, there is the side view seen to the left, which gives us a better look at the dorsal inlet and canopy. These are two unique features on the type. The canopy is very much streamlined with the top mold line of the forward fuselage. The idea that this aircraft leverages a side-by-side crew seating concept remains strong, especially given its very broad nose section. We also get more evidence that the dorsal intake uses a diverterless supersonic inlet (DSI) design, with the prominent hump and forward-raked upper area seen in this profile shot.

Just as with pretty much all new Chinese military hardware of great interest, the quality and quantity of 'candid' images of them undergoing testing will ramp up as trials commence. So, we should see much more of the J-36, and in the process, we should be able to answer additional lingering questions about the enigmatic jet.

DEFENSENEWS: CHINA DEMONSTRATED 'SATELLITE DOGFIGHTING'

On 18 March, a top Space Force general said that commercial systems have observed Chinese satellites rehearsing "dogfighting" maneuvers in low Earth orbit — the U.S. adversary's latest show of tactical and technological advancement in space capabilities.

"With our commercial assets, we have observed five different objects in space maneuvering in and out and around each other in synchronicity and in control," Vice Chief of Space Operations Gen. Michael Guetlein said during the McAleese Defense Programs Conference in Washington. "That's what we call dogfighting in space. They are practicing tactics, techniques and procedures to do on-orbit space operations from one satellite to another."

These behaviors indicate the space capability gap between the U.S. military and its closest enemies is shrinking, a concern Space Force leaders have been raising for years. "The purpose of the Space Force is to guarantee space superiority for the joint force — not space for space's sake. Space [operations] guarantee that, just like all the other domains, we can fight as a joint force and we can depend on those capabilities," Guetlein said.



ASIATIMES: CHINA'S QUANTUM SATELLITE LINK A HACK-PROOF LEAP FORWARD

China's first quantum-encrypted link with South Africa marks a breakthrough in ultra-secure communications with far-reaching military and geopolitical implications.

The South China Morning Post (SCMP) reported that China has established its first hacker-resistant quantum communication link with South Africa, a milestone in ultra-secure communications.

The project exemplifies China's strategy to lead in emerging technologies, aligning with its broader innovation and technological self-reliance goals, as emphasized in its 2025 economic plan.

China's breakthroughs in quantum technology underline its pursuit of global leadership in disruptive technologies, positioning quantum communications as a strategic asset in national defense and economic security.

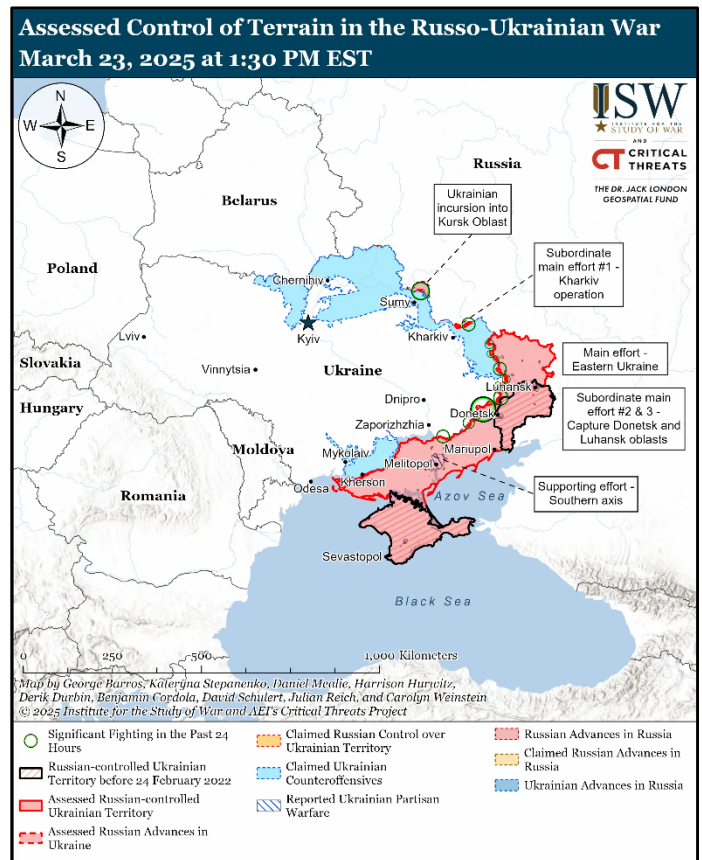


EUCOM

ISW: RUSSIA-UKRAINE UPDATE

Key Takeaways:

- On 23 March, U.S. and Ukrainian officials met in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia to discuss the contours of the temporary moratorium on long-range strikes and a possible temporary maritime ceasefire in the Black Sea.
- Unconfirmed reports suggest that there is tension between Russian Central Bank Chairperson Elvira Nabiullina and the Kremlin over Russia's high interest rate and wartime monetary policies.
- Ukrainian forces recently advanced near Borova, and Russian forces recently advanced near Toretsk and Pokrovsk.



DEFENSENEWS: PUTIN AGREES TO CEASEFIRE ON ENERGY INFRASTRUCTURE TARGETS IN UKRAINE

On 18 March, President Donald Trump and Russian President Vladimir Putin agreed to an immediate pause in strikes against energy and infrastructure targets in the Ukraine war, but the Russian leader stopped short of backing a broader 30-day pause in fighting that the U.S. administration is pressing for.

The White House described it as the first step in a “movement to peace” it hopes will eventually include a maritime ceasefire in the Black Sea and a full and lasting end to the fighting.

It was not immediately clear whether Ukraine is on board with the limited ceasefire plan.

Ukrainian officials had proposed a ceasefire covering the Black Sea and long-range missile strikes and the release of prisoners at their meeting with the U.S. delegation in Saudi Arabia earlier this month.

“We agreed to an immediate Ceasefire on all Energy and Infrastructure, with an understanding that we will be working quickly to have a Complete Ceasefire and, ultimately, an END to this very horrible War between Russia and Ukraine,” Trump posted on social media following his call.

The engagement is just the latest turn in shifting U.S.-Russia relations as Trump made quickly ending the conflict a top priority.



APNEWS: MILITARY LEADERS DISCUSS UKRAINE PEACEKEEPING FORCE AS PARTIAL CEASEFIRE PLANS ARE WORKED OUT



On 20 March, Senior military officers from countries across Europe and beyond met outside London to flesh out plans for an international peacekeeping force for Ukraine as details of a partial ceasefire are worked out.

“We’re further forward this week than we were last week, and we were further forward last week than we were the week before,” he said before the meeting of military planning chiefs from more than two dozen countries. “I hope, I want, those talks to succeed. What I do know is if they do succeed, then we need to be able to defend the deal.”

If peace comes to Ukraine, the number of troops that would help enforce it is vague. Officials have cited figures of between 10,000 and 30,000 troops.

Only Britain and France have said they are willing to send troops, though countries including Australia, Canada, France and Finland say they are open to being involved in some way.

Around 30 leaders were involved in a video meeting on 15 March including Macron, Zelenskyy, Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni, leaders from Australia, Canada and New Zealand and officials from NATO and the European Union.

Russia has said it will not accept any troops from NATO countries being based on Ukrainian soil. And Trump has given no sign the U.S. will guarantee reserve firepower in case of any breaches of a truce.

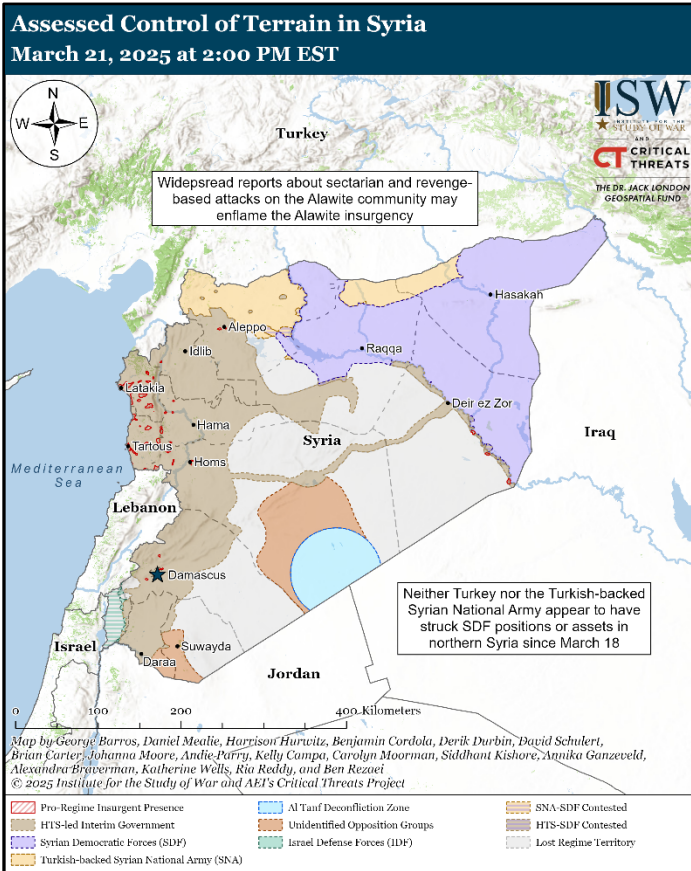
In addition to the meeting in England, EU leaders in Brussels planned to discuss Ukraine’s security needs with Zelenskyy during a meeting about ramping up defense spending after the Trump administration signaled Europe must take care of its own security.

CENTCOM

ISW: CENTCOM UPDATE

Key Takeaways:

- Iran and the Axis of Resistance:** Senior Iranian officials are trying to obfuscate Iran's role in leading the Axis of Resistance by denying that Iran exerts direct control over groups like the Houthis, likely to avoid escalation with the United States. Khamenei and Salami's remark echo Iranian statements in early 2024 that came amid US threats to target Iran or key Iranian assets in the region.
- Houthis in Yemen:** The United States deployed another U.S. aircraft carrier to the Red Sea, according to an anonymous official talking to the Associated Press on 21 March. The U.S. Secretary of Defense also extended the *Truman* group's deployment by one month, which will enable CENTCOM to maintain at least one carrier in the Red Sea without gaps in coverage.
- Maritime Shipping in the Red Sea:** Shipping companies are set to avoid the Red Sea transit route until a more comprehensive peace agreement is reached, according to the *New York Times*.
- Alawite Insurgency in Syria:** Widespread reports about likely Sunni-perpetrated sectarian and revenge-based attacks targeting the Alawite community threaten to fuel the Alawite insurgency in western Syria. Alawite media has widely reported on instances of violence committed against the Alawite community by Sunnis and government forces.
- Other Insurgent Elements in Syria:** Syrian government forces continued raids and arrests targeting elements of nascent insurgent networks elsewhere in Syria. Government forces arrested a Deir ez Zor City-based insurgent cell affiliated with the U.S.-sanctioned Qaterji Company on 20 March that was planning an attack on a security headquarters.



APNEWS: WHAT TO KNOW ABOUT WHY ISRAEL LAUNCHED DOZENS OF ATTACKS ACROSS GAZA, RAISING FEARS OF ALL-OUT WAR

The relative calm of a ceasefire between Israel and HAMAS ended abruptly on 18 March when Israel launched dozens of attacks on targets across the Gaza Strip. Palestinian medical officials say more than 400 people have been killed, mostly women and children. Israel says the operation is open-ended and expected to expand, raising fears of the 17-month-old war fully reigniting.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who has repeatedly threatened to resume the war, said he ordered the strikes because of HAMAS' rejection of the new proposal. He said Israel "will, from now on, act against HAMAS with increasing military strength."

The White House said it had been consulted and voiced support for Israel's actions.



HAMAS accused Netanyahu of upending the ceasefire agreement and exposing the remaining hostages” to an unknown fate.” In a statement, it called on mediators to hold Israel “fully responsible for violating and overturning the agreement.”

The attack came during the Muslim holy month of Ramadan. No major fighting has occurred in Gaza since the ceasefire took hold on 19 January, but Israeli strikes have killed dozens of Palestinians who the military said had entered unauthorized areas, engaged in militant activities or otherwise violated the truce.

ALJAZEERA: HOUTHIS CLAIM MISSILE LAUNCH AT ISRAEL AMID RENEWED FIGHTING IN GAZA



The Houthis have launched a hypersonic missile at Israel's Ben Gurion airport, days after the Israeli army broke a ceasefire in Gaza, the Yemeni group said.

“The Yemeni armed forces carried out a qualitative military operation targeting Ben Gurion airport in the occupied Jaffa region with a Palestine-2 hypersonic ballistic missile,” Houthi spokesman Yahya Saree said on 20 March.

He said the operation “successfully achieved its objective”, without elaborating. It was the second such attack since the United States began a new campaign of air raids against the rebels earlier this week.

The Israeli military said it intercepted the missile before it entered the country's territory early on 20 March. Sirens sounded in several areas in Israel after the projectile was

fired, the military said in a post on Telegram. The Israeli police said sirens were heard in Tel Aviv and Jerusalem. Israel's ambulance service said no serious injuries were reported.

On 18 March, the Houthis said they had fired a ballistic missile towards Israel and would expand their range of targets in the coming days in retaliation for Israel breaking the ceasefire in Gaza. The Houthis have carried out more than 100 attacks on shipping vessels since Israel's war on Gaza began in late 2023, saying they are acting in solidarity with Gaza's Palestinians.

NORTHCOM

THEWARZONE: RADARS DEPLOYED TO MEXICO BORDER TO DETECT CARTEL DRONES



The U.S. Army is contributing ground-based radars to help spot and track drones as part of the continued build-up of U.S. military support along the U.S.-Mexican border. Drug cartels in Mexico have been steadily increasing their use of weaponized uncrewed aerial systems, as well as unarmed types for surveillance and smuggling. There are also growing concerns about the threats drones pose to the U.S. homeland, especially military bases and other critical infrastructure.

On 17 March, the Department of Defense released pictures showing members of the Army's 10th Mountain Division, based at Fort Drum in New York State, training with the AN/TPQ-53 and AN/MPQ-64 Sentinel radars in Arizona. The 10th Mountain Division is one of several

units from across the U.S. military that has sent personnel and material to support the enhanced border security mission that kicked off after President Donald Trump took office in January.

CYBER

REUTERS: U.S. HOUSE COMMITTEE SEEKS RECORDS FROM DHS ON CHINESE TELECOM HACKING

On 17 March, a U.S. House of Representatives committee asked the Homeland Security Department to turn over documents on the federal government's response to reported massive Chinese hacking incidents.

House Homeland Security Chair Mark Green and the chairs of two subcommittees asked DHS Secretary Kristi Noem to turn over records detailing the government's response to two major Chinese hacking incidents, including "Salt Typhoon," which lawmakers have called the largest telecommunications hack in U.S. history, and "Volt Typhoon," which involved espionage into critical infrastructure organizations.

The Salt Typhoon hack allegedly exposed a huge swathe of Americans' call logs to Chinese spies and rattled the U.S. intelligence community. In some cases, hackers are alleged to have intercepted conversations, including between prominent U.S. politicians and government officials.

"Despite officials raising the alarm about Volt and Salt Typhoon, we still know very little about them - except that Volt Typhoon, in particular, continues to compromise our critical infrastructure," said the letter also signed by Representatives Andrew Garbarino and Josh Brecheen.



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES



AFMC A2: World Threat Brief CAO: 16 April 2024

<https://usaf.dps.mil/sites/22244/SitePages/Command-Intel-Threat-Brief.aspx>



China Aerospace Studies Institute: CASI supports the Secretary of the Air Force, Joint Chiefs of Staff, and other senior leaders of the Air and Space Forces. CASI provides expert research and analysis supporting decision and policy makers in the Department of Defense and across the U.S. government.

<https://www.airuniversity.af.edu/CASI/>



Research and Development Corporation (RAND): RAND is a nonprofit, nonpartisan research organization that provides leaders with the information they need to make evidence-based decisions.

<https://www.rand.org/>



Institute for the Study of War: The Institute for the Study of War (ISW) is a non-partisan, non-profit, public policy research organization. ISW advances an informed understanding of military affairs through reliable research, trusted analysis, and innovative education.

<https://www.understandingwar.org/>



Stockholm International Peace Research Institute: SIPRI is an independent international institute dedicated to research into conflict, armaments, arms control and disarmament. Established in 1966, SIPRI provides data, analysis and recommendations, based on open sources, to policymakers, researchers, media and the interested public.

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<https://worldview.stratfor.com/>



Defense Intelligence Agency Military Power Publications: an intelligence agency and combat support agency of the United States Department of Defense, specializing in defense and military intelligence.

<https://www.dia.mil/Military-Power-Publications/>



Perun: An Australian covering the military industrial complex and national military investment strategy.

<https://www.youtube.com/@PerunAU>



Task & Purpose: Chris Cappy is a former US Army infantryman and Iraq Veteran. I cover geopolitics, history, weapon systems and all things military related — I do this from a veteran's perspective.

<https://www.youtube.com/@Taskandpurpose>



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<https://www.csis.org/>



FRONTLINE examines the rise of Xi Jinping, his vision for China and the global implications. Correspondent Martin Smith traces the defining moments for President Xi, how he's exercising power and his impact on China, and relations with the U.S. and the world.

<https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/documentary/china-the-u-s-the-rise-of-xi-jinping/>