

WORLD

Russia warns of direct clash with West

New military assistance to Ukraine will not change front line situation: Kremlin

By REN QI in Moscow
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A new US package of military aid to Ukraine will not change the situation on the front lines, where Russia has the upper hand, the Kremlin said on Monday.

The United States House of Representatives approved on Saturday more than \$61 billion in new aid for Ukraine, which has been held up in Congress for months, causing Kyiv's forces to run low on ammunition.

"The Russian armed forces are improving their positions at the front. ... The money allocated and the weapons that will be supplied will not change this dynamic,"

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters.

"They will lead to new victims on the Ukrainian side. More Ukrainians will die, Ukraine will suffer greater losses."

He said the US defense industry will be the real beneficiary of the package.

"We also recognize that most of this money will remain in the US. The US will become richer and will receive additional dividends by providing assistance to Ukraine," Peskov said.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky urged Washington on Sunday to quickly turn the bill into law and proceed with the actual transfer

of weapons, saying long-range arms and air defense systems were top priorities.

"I think this support will really strengthen the armed forces of Ukraine and we will have a chance for victory," Zelensky said.

The Pentagon said it could get weapons moving to Ukraine within days if the Senate and President Joe Biden give final approval to the aid package. But experts and Ukrainian lawmakers said it could take weeks for the assistance to reach troops, giving Russia more time to degrade Ukrainian defenses, The Associated Press reported.

Western officials and experts agree that artillery rounds, precision-guided missiles and air defenses will change the military outlook for Ukraine.

Ukrainian commanders have com-

plained about dire ammunition shortages since late December. By February, heads of artillery units in several regions said they had less than 10 percent of the supplies they needed as Kyiv rushed to economize shells.

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov warned on Monday that US, British and French military support for Ukraine has pushed the world to the brink of a direct clash between the world's biggest nuclear powers that could end in catastrophe.

'Strategic defeat'

Lavrov said the new military aid to Ukraine showed that the US and NATO were obsessed with the idea of inflicting "strategic defeat" on Russia.

Lavrov said the support for Ukraine was putting the US and its allies on the verge of a direct military clash with Russia.

Meanwhile, European Union countries possessing Patriot air defense systems gave no clear signal on Monday whether they might be willing to supply them to Ukraine, which is desperately seeking at least seven of the missile batteries.

Only Germany has come forward with a single Patriot missile battery in answer to Ukraine's latest request.

At a meeting of EU foreign and defense ministers, Dutch Foreign Minister Hanke Bruins Slot said the Netherlands is "looking at every kind of possibility at the moment" and is offering financial support to a German initiative to help Ukraine bolster its air defenses and buy more drones.

Asked why the Netherlands is reluctant to send some of its Patriot systems, Slot said: "We are looking

again if we can deplete our store of what we still have, but that will be difficult."

Patriots take a long time to make — as long as two years, some estimates suggest — so countries are reluctant to give them up and leave themselves exposed. Germany had 12, but it is now supplying three to Ukraine. Poland, which borders Ukraine, has two and needs them for its own defenses, AP said.

More than two years into Russia's special military operation, Moscow claimed Ukraine has lost territory in the eastern part of the country and Russia has ramped up its bombardment of cities and towns behind the front lines amid a slowdown in Western military assistance.

The Russian Defense Ministry said on Monday that its forces had taken control of the village of Novomykhailivka, nearly 40 kilometers southwest of Donetsk city, the second advance it has announced in two days.

Agencies contributed to this story.

Makeshift classroom



Afghan students attend an open-air school in Khost province, Afghanistan, on Monday. Nonprofit Today Child offers free education in rural areas by teaching classes outdoors with portable blackboards, AsiaNews reported. WAKIL KOHSAR / AFP

Trump corrupted 2016 poll, prosecutors say

NEW YORK — New York prosecutors said on the first day of Donald Trump's criminal hush money trial that the former president broke the law and corrupted the 2016 election by trying to cover up sexual encounters with a porn star and a Playboy model, while his defense lawyer said he committed no crime.

Jurors in the historic trial also heard briefly from the prosecution's first witness: former National Enquirer publisher David Pecker, who prosecutors say participated in a "catch and kill" scheme to suppress unflattering stories about Trump and help him get elected.

In the first-ever trial of a former US president, Trump is charged with falsifying business records to cover up a \$130,000 payment to adult film star Stormy Daniels in 2016 to keep quiet about a sexual encounter she says they had 10 years earlier. Trump has pleaded not guilty and denies the encounter took place.

Prosecutors portrayed the payment as a criminal effort to deceive voters at a time when Trump was facing other accusations of crude sexual behavior.

"This was a planned, coordinated, long-running conspiracy to influence the 2016 election, to help Donald Trump get elected through illegal expenditures to silence people who had something bad to say about his behavior," prosecutor Matthew Colangelo said.

"It was election fraud, pure and simple."

Colangelo told the jury that they would hear Trump working out the details of the scheme in recorded conversations and see an extensive paper trail to back up the testimony of witnesses.

Trump's lawyer told the jury that the former president did not commit any crimes and said Manhattan District Attorney Alvin Bragg should not have brought the case.

"There's nothing wrong with trying to influence an election. It's called democracy. They put something sinister on this idea, as if it's a crime," Trump lawyer Todd Blanche said.

With the 2024 election campaign in full swing, Trump now must juggle courtroom appearances and rallies.

Trump faces a contempt of court hearing on Tuesday as part of his historic criminal trial.

The US Supreme Court will hear arguments Thursday on whether Trump, as a former president, should be immune from criminal prosecution for acts he committed while in office.

Trump has pleaded not guilty to 34 counts of falsifying business records. Prosecutors say he falsified checks and invoices to disguise \$420,000 in payments to his personal lawyer Michael Cohen as legal services.

AGENCIES VIA XINHUA



Weichai Power recently releases a diesel engine with base engine brake thermal efficiency exceeding 53 percent. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

Weichai Power's new diesel engine a gamechanger

By TANG ZHIHAO
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Marking a pivotal milestone in diesel engine technology, Weichai Power, a leading internal combustion engine developer in Weifang of Shandong province, has unveiled a commercialized model with a base engine brake thermal efficiency exceeding 53 percent.

The product launch, attended by Wan Gang, president of the China Association for Science and Technology; Jin Donghan, an academician of Chinese Academy of Engineering and president of Tianjin University; Tan Xuguang, vice-chairman of China Society of Internal Combustion Engines and chairman of Weichai Power; and Rick Boom, president of the International Council on Combustion Engines, took place on Saturday at the 2024 World Congress on Internal Combustion Engines in Tianjin.

According to Weichai, the new engine, a record-breaker in terms of thermal efficiency, could help

reduce China's annual fuel consumption by roughly 31 million tons and carbon emissions by about 97 million metric tons, based on current diesel engine usage. In addition to the transportation sector, the technology can be applied in fields such as construction machinery, agricultural equipment, ships and power generation equipment, making new contributions to the country's economic and social development.

Helge Knobbe, vice-president of Tüv Süd's North Asia region, and An Tiecheng, chairman of China Automotive Technology & Research Center, issued product test reports and test certificates during the launch ceremony.

Dirk von Wahl, CEO of Tüv Süd's North Asia region, sent a congratulatory video in which he stated the thermal efficiency of Weichai's new engine is "a far-reaching result for the entire world."

"I believe this result reflects not only Weichai's scientific research strength, but also its technical

strength in the internal combustion engine industry," said von Wahl. "We expect this technological achievement to greatly contribute to China's dual-carbon goals and green development. It will also contribute to sustainable development, energy saving and emission reduction of the global diesel energy industry."

Enhancement of base engine brake thermal efficiency has been a shared goal among global internal combustion engine developers ever since the introduction of the diesel engine in 1897.

In 2015, Weichai established a research and development team consisting of over 100 doctorate degree holders and more than 1,000 engineers to support development of high-thermal-efficiency engines. It also gained support from the State Key Laboratory of Engine and Powertrain System and national key R&D project plans. They introduced groundbreaking products in September 2020, January 2022 and November 2022, and have consist-

ently been at the forefront of driving development in the diesel engine industry.

"Green, reliable, intelligent and efficient" are Weichai's shared objectives with the global internal combustion engine industry today, and introduction of its new design is poised to spearhead the industry's transition toward green and low-carbon development, exerting a profound influence on the strategic adjustment of China's multi-energy structure.

"Weichai Power has broken the world record for diesel engine thermal efficiency four times — an achievement attributed to the collective wisdom and efforts of Weichai engineers over nearly 4,000 days and nights, as well as the open collaboration with top global universities and research institutions, and the synergistic innovation with the global industrial and supply chain," said Tan.

"This accomplishment belongs to Weichai, and more importantly, to the global industry."

Innovation has built a global powerhouse

By YUAN SHENGGAO

Continuous innovation has become the key to strengthening Weichai Power's development and maintaining its leading position among global competitors.

Over the past decade, Weichai has invested more than 30 billion yuan (\$4.15 billion) in engine development, with approximately 20 percent of its research and development expenditure allocated to fundamental and cutting-edge exploration. A research and development team with more than 6,000 engineers dedicated to engine development has driven Weichai's breakthroughs in key technology.

"Having control over core technologies that cannot be easily replicated or developed is pivotal for achieving success in global competition," said Tan Xuguang, chairman of Weichai Power.

In 2020, Weichai became one of the first companies in China to meet the criteria of "lighthouse factory" — a designation representing the highest level of global intelligent manufacturing, characterized by high efficiency, intelligence and sustainability.

Smart technologies such as visual recognition, online testing and robots have been widely implemented in Weichai's work-

shops. Automated guided vehicles transporting parts and equipment have significantly enhanced efficiency, and the company's industrial robot density has surged to 1,160 units per 1,000 workers, up from 390 in 2021.

Weichai has also established a central research institute, eight research centers and a national-level combustion and powertrain system lab to support the development of traditional and new energy engines.

The Weichai Power Future Technology Test Laboratory was launched on April 16, marking an important milestone to lead energy reform in the "dual-carbon" era and promote Shandong Heavy Industry Group's vehicle and machinery business to the world class level. Total investment in the lab, which has 46 independent experimental rooms, is more than 2 billion yuan.

Tan said Weichai Power has effectively established a coordinated development framework across industrial sectors encompassing power systems, commercial vehicles, agricultural equipment, construction machinery, smart logistics and marine transportation equipment, solidifying its strong presence as a competitor in the global market.



The Weichai Power Future Technology Test Laboratory is launched recently. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY