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Russia tests stratospheric missile to destroy fleets

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Russia completes the tests of stratospheric weapons for long-range bombers. The weapons are said to be capable of striking targets at a distance of 1,000 kilometers.

The Russian long-range supersonic missile-bombers Tu-22M3 with the variable geometry of wings, (NATO reporting name Backfire) will be equipped with X-32 cruise missiles. The missiles will be nearly invulnerable to enemy's air defenses and interceptors. After launch, the X-

32 will be able to gain altitude of up to 40 kilometers and reach the stratosphere before swooping down at a steep angle to strike the target.

According to representatives of the Russian defense industry, the tests of the new missile are about to be finished. Employees of the Tactical Missiles Corporation, which is part of Rainbow Design Bureau, have confirmed the information, but withheld further comments.

Reportedly, the X-32 cruise missile is designed to eliminate enemy ships and radar stations.

Equipped with inertial navigation system and radio-detecting homing head, the state-of-the-art cruise missile has high precision guidance independent of GLONASS coordinates. It is assumed that the new missile will be able to hit targets at a distance of up to 1,000 km, but its own speed will be not less than 5,000 km/h. The combination of the speed and the flight path makes the new missile literally invulnerable to anti-aircraft systems and enemy fighters.

The X-32 continues the existing line of the X-22 missile, which, until recently, was considered the main caliber for the Tu-22M3 supersonic bomber, as well as for the discontinued Tu-22M2.

Back in the Soviet era, the arsenal of the Russian Navy had more than a dozen of regiments of Backfire aircraft. The Russian Air Force had a similar amount of such aircraft as well.

Navy historian Dmitry Boltenkov says that each air regiment consisted of 20 Tu-22M aircraft that had the capacity of launching 40 or 60 X-22 missiles. The targets for the attacks could be aviation strike groups of the United States. As a result of such a massive attack, an aircraft carrier would be destroyed with her entire support group.

The work on the X-32 started in the early 1990s, but the first launches of the weapon were conducted about ten years ago.

Noteworthy, Russia's State Rocket Center named after Academician Makeyev develops a new ballistic missile. The company has already received a government contract to carry out the development work for the creation of the new ballistic missile. Experts believe that the new missile will be built for fifth-generation nuclear submarine "Husky."

The new missile is said to replace the Bulava strategic system (developed by the Moscow Institute of Thermal Engineering). The Husky fifth-generation submarines are to replace Project 885 "Yasen" subs. For the time being, it is only known that "Husky" multipurpose nuclear submarines will be armed with "Zircon" hypersonic missiles. The project is conducted by Malachite Design Bureau (St. Petersburg).

