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Iran tests air missile

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Iran has successfully test-fired an air missile, Iranian state media has reported.

Pictures broadcast on Saturday showed the launch of the missile system called the S-200. Though it shares the same name as a Russian missile S-200, it is said to have the capabilities of a stronger Russian system known as the S-300, according to Press TV.

The launch was part of Iran's military exercise that started on Tuesday with the aim of testing the country's air defence capabilities to defend its nuclear plants from possible attacks.

The tested missile was developed by Iranian scientists and is capable of identifying and hitting targets at low and medium altitudes, according to General Hamid Arjangi, a spokesman for the five-day exercise.

The military exercise that concluded on Saturday was the country's biggest air drill, Iranian military officials said earlier this week.

Israeli threat

Iran conducts several war games every year, as part of its military self-sufficiency programme that started in 1992, and frequently unveils new weapons and military systems during the drills.

Its claims often cannot be independently verified.

The five-day drill followed an announcement by the Iranian air force saying its troops earlier this year conducted an exercise at several nuclear facilities, including the uranium enrichment plant at Natanz, the under-construction enrichment site at Fordo, the nuclear uranium conversion facility near Isfahan and the Bushehr nuclear power plant.

Iran has been looking to upgrade its air defences, especially as Israel has refused to rule out an air strike over concerns that Tehran is developing nuclear weapons.

Iran denies the charge and insists the programme is only for peaceful purposes. It has also said Israel would face a "devastating retaliation" if it attacked the Islamic Republic.