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Russian Navy to Add Rocket-Carrying Ice Breakers to Arctic Fleet

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The Russian navy is planning to introduce military icebreakers to its Arctic fleet, the Izvestia news website reported Friday.

The icebreakers will be capable of carrying both artillery and rocket-based weapons said the general director of the Krylov State Research Center, Valery Polovinkin, Izvestia reported.

Russian forces want to boost their presence in the area due to the increasing presence of American cruise missile-carrying ships in the Arctic, Polovinkin claimed.

"American ships with long distance BGM-109 Tomahawk cruise missiles are capable of striking three quarters of Russian territory inaccessible from any other direction," he claimed. Only icebreakers can provide year-round maritime traffic in the region, he said.

"The recent debarkation drills carried out on Kotelny Island in the Arctic by the Northern Fleet showed that even with the support of icebreakers, conventional battleships cannot

operate freely in the Arctic," Polovinkin said.

"Even the most modern of them are not capable of withstanding breaking ice."

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