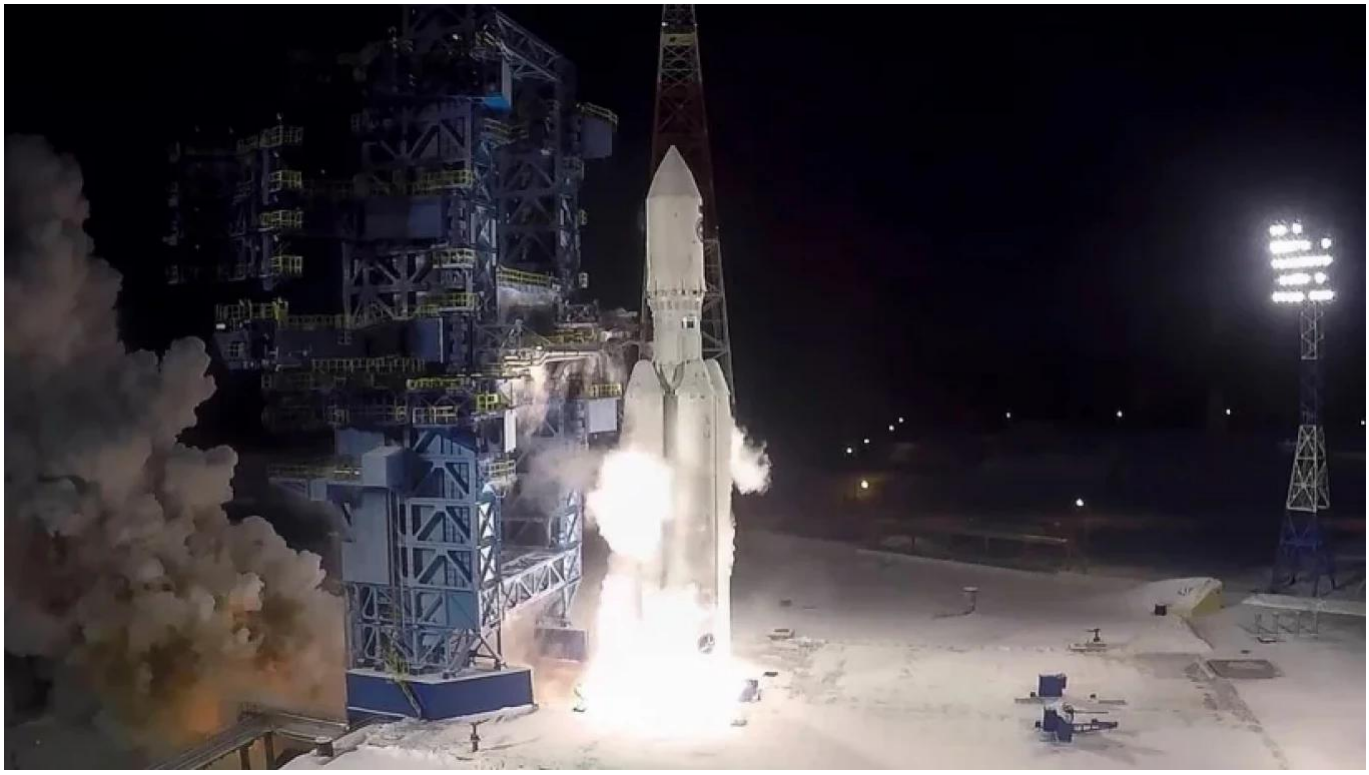
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INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Russia Tests Anti-Satellite Weapon From Plesetsk

By The Barents Observer

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Defense Ministry / TASS

A top-secret missile launched from the Plesetsk cosmodrome in Arkhangelsk region earlier this week was a weapon capable of destroying satellites in low orbit.

Indications of a launch from Plesetsk came as NOTAM warnings were issued for three areas in the Russian Arctic in a straight line north from the cosmodrome. The areas were coincident with the different stages of a space missile's fall-down; east of Cape Kanin, over Novaya Zemlya and the last over Severnaya Zemlya.

Embed:

> Probably "Nudol" from Plesetsk will be launched on December 16, reserve date December 20.

> On December 14, the launch of "Angara-A5" from Plesetsk.
>
> Is it possible that "Angara-A5", in addition to the satellite, should launch a real target for the "Nudol"? pic.twitter.com/3jfILvoVTX
>
> — Evgeniy Maksimov (@PararamTadam) December 12, 2020

The Pentagon sees the missile test as a rapidly advancing threat to its own space systems.

“Russia publicly claims it is working to prevent the transformation of outer space into a battlefield, yet at the same time Moscow continues to weaponize space by developing and fielding on-orbit and ground-based capabilities that seek to exploit U.S. reliance on space-based systems,” said Army General James Dickinson, a commander of the U.S. Space Command.

According to the Space Command, Russia is developing several types of anti-satellite weapons. This week’s test is a missile launched from earth that can directly hit an enemy satellite and take it out. A second weapon under development is an on-orbit kinetic weapon. Based in space, such weapons could take out targets from orbit, in orbit.

The U.S. Space Command also pointed to the on-ground combat laser systems currently under development by the Russian Space Forces.

"Russia has made space a warfighting domain by testing space-based and ground-based weapons intended to target and destroy satellites," according to the statement by General Dickinson.

According to him, Russia demonstrated its on-orbit kinetic weapon system in 2017 and again in 2020. No details were attached to the statement.

In April this year, The Barents Observer reported about this year’s first anti-satellite missile test from Plesetsk. That missile made a spectacular trace above two remote villages in the republic of Komi, north of the cosmodrome in northern Russia.

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