

CURRENT INTELLIGENCE FOLDER

LAST UPDATED: **24 JAN 97**

These are a number of items pertaining to Russian naval systems that I personally found rather interesting. All of the material appearing here is original, based on the cited sources, so the interpretations and the inevitable errors are mine alone. Incidentally, if it's here, there's a good chance that there's some sort of ongoing discussion about it in [sci.military.naval](#); this group is full of people more knowledgeable than I in these fields and is highly recommended if you're interested in finding out more. Thanks to Bill Green for his excellent summaries of *Morskoi sbornik*, robin@ridgecrest.ca.us, and to Nikolai Skrynnikov for his many updates on the *Admiral Kuznetsov's* latest deployment. Send your corrections, updates, and/or contributions to amraam@netcom.com.

[Previous news items, mid-1995 to mid-1996.](#)

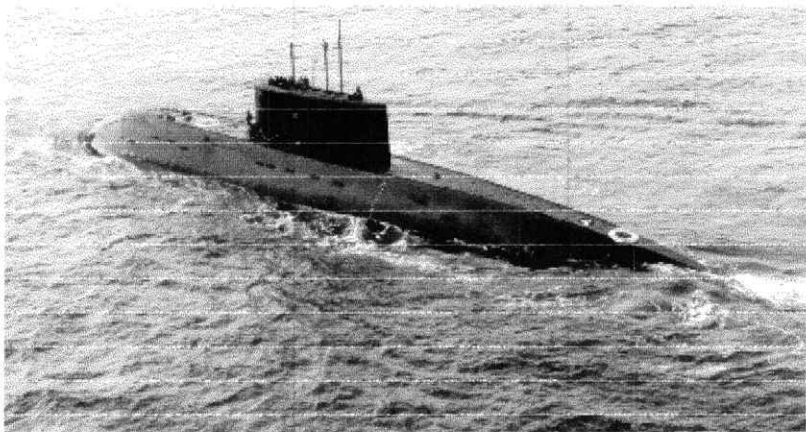
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9 Jan 97 -- Source: OMRI Daily Digest

India has ordered two Kilo-class diesel electric submarines from Russia, and will produce two more under license. This new arms deal comes on the heels of a purchase of Su-30MK fighter-bombers reportedly worth in excess of \$1.5 billion. It was not specified whether the submarines would be of the older 877 design or would be Project 636 "Improved Kilo" vessels.

2 Jan 97 -- Source: U.S. Department of Defense

The third and last Project 877EKM SSK ordered by Iran back in 1994 has finally departed its shipyard for the Persian Gulf under tow in mid-December. It arrived in Iran on 6 Jan 97, according to ITAR-TASS.



Official DoD photo of Kilo #3. The Sixth Fleet tracked the submarine's transit through the Med.

6 Dec 96 -- Source: Monitor

Admiral Vladimir Kuroyedov, CinC-Pacific Fleet, announced that the strength of the fleet was currently at 140 ships, down from 335 ships a bare four years ago. He warned that this was the absolute minimum level, and that further cuts would paralyze the fleet.

4 Dec 96 -- Source: Monitor

Five new submarine orders have been placed with the Admiralty Shipyard in St. Petersburg. Three of those submarines are diesel submarines (possibly Kilo-636s) to be delivered to the Russian Navy; two additional "special orders" are scheduled for 1998, type unspecified. There is also talk of a new submarine design to be produced by the year 2000.

2 Dec 96 -- Source: Monitor

Pursuant to a presidential decree, the city of Severomorsk is now a "closed administrative-territorial district." The reasons given for sealing off the city, which is home to Northern Fleet headquarters and is a naval shipbuilding center, were to "create a reliable security zone" for the naval facilities there while "ensuring ecological safety" for the population.

19 Nov 96 -- Source: Monitor

Petr Velikiy left the Baltic for the Northern Fleet in order to finish its sea trials. In the short time since it was completed, the last of the Kirovs has been the subject of an international incident between Latvia and Russia, saw a Swedish reconnaissance flight crash while making a photo pass, and had five workers killed when a steam line let go in port. After its trials in the Northern Fleet, it will deploy to the Pacific Fleet.

30 Oct 96 -- Source: Monitor

A new **Zhukov State Prize for Weapons Designers** was announced, to be awarded annually to top weapons designers whose weapons have reached the production stage. The cash bonus is set at 1,500 times the minimum wage.

30 Oct 96 -- Source: Monitor

The General Staff is getting leaner. From its current 16 Main Directorates will emerge only 4: Operations, Intelligence (the GRU), Organization and Mobilization, and Personnel. The other dozen branches currently enjoying "Main Directorate" status will be reduced to "Central Directorates." Military district and fleet staffs will also be cut by roughly 15%.

29 Oct 96 -- Source: Monitor

The city of Moscow is turning out to be a powerful friend of the Russian Navy, sponsoring the new SSBN project (whose lead vessel is named after the traditional founder of the city) and funding the completion of the fourth Slava-class cruiser (which has been renamed from *Admiral Lobov* to *Moskva*). In addition, Mayor **Yuri Luzkhov** has donated a block of apartments and a kindergarten in Sevastopol for the use of Black Sea Fleet personnel. Reportedly, the wages of the shipyard workers *and* of the sailors who will operate the new SSBN will be paid from the city coffers in the event that the federal government is unable to pay.

28 Oct 96 -- Source: Monitor

The keel-laying ceremony for the lead ship of the Russian Navy's next-generation SSBN class, *Yuri Dolgoruky*, was postponed for a week after poor weather made it impossible for several high ranking officials to attend. Among the invited: First Deputy Defense Minister **Andrei Kokoshin**, Presidential Chief of Staff **Anatoly Chubais**, Moscow mayor **Yuri Luzkhov**, and **Admiral Gromov**. The submarine was variously described as being "a totally unique thing for a submarine of the next century" and as incorporating "substantial improvements" over today's submarine fleet.

The first of what is now being called the **Boreas**-class of SSBNs will enter service just after the turn of the century, and will be replacing the aging Typhoons and Delta IVs.

23 Oct 96 -- Source: Monitor

Faced with the disposal of an SS-N-20 SLBM, the Russian Navy chose a novel way of getting rid of the missile: they launched it. The SS-N-20 was packed into the launch tube of a *Typhoon* SSBN, taken to the Arctic, and fired. The missile self-destructed at 3,000 meters. Reportedly, the operation was ecologically safe.

22 Oct 96 -- Source: Monitor

The Deputy Chief of Logistics for the Navy, **Admiral Ivan Vasilyev**, announced that over 60% of the fleet's fuel tankers, cargo ships, repair ships, ammunition ships, and other auxiliaries would require major repairs in the very near future. The repairs are estimated to cost 1.4 trillion rubles.

21 Oct 96 -- Source: Monitor

The fourth and last of the *Kirov*-class BCGNs, the *Petr Velikiy*, made its maiden voyage in October from its shipyard to Baltiysk in October, after a building period in excess of ten years. It was an eventful first trip. On October 15, a Swedish reconnaissance aircraft making a low photo pass on the battle cruiser accidentally flew into the water within sight of the cruiser, killing its pilot. Shortly afterward, the Latvian government raised objections to the cruiser's transit, complaining that they had not been notified of its presence in their economic zone.

After sea trials are completed, *Petr Velikiy* is bound for the Russian Pacific Fleet.

17 Oct 96 -- Source: Monitor

The next-generation SSBN was announced on October 17 by **Admiral Gromov**. Details on the design were not forthcoming, but the first unit is reportedly to be named *Yuri Dolgoruky*. Work was to begin by the end of October; the final design is said to be "two to three times more powerful than any submarine now in the fleet."

15 Oct 96 -- Source: Monitor

The submarine base in Zaozyorsk had its gas shut off by the local gas company, which demanded that its 3 billion ruble debt be paid. This echoes similar actions previously taken by power companies until such coercive power shutoffs were banned by the government.

14 Oct 96 -- Source: Monitor

Russian TV reported that the Pacific Fleet may run into serious personnel problems in 1997, when officer contracts come up for renewal. 70% of the Pacific Fleet officer corps expressed no intention of extending their service for another term, and of 600 officers, nearly 200 have already filed demobilization requests.

8 Oct 96 -- Source: Monitor

The Pentagon announced that it would be evaluating a number of Russian military technologies, including a modification of the **AS-13/Kh-31** antiradiation/antiship missile converted to the sea-skimming target role (the U.S. military designation is **M-31**). The DoD has already bought four M-31s and will be considering a longer-ranged variant of the Kh-31 in the coming year.

3 Oct 96 -- Source: Monitor

REDUT-96, a force-wide strategic nuclear readiness test involving all elements of Russia's strategic rocket forces, ended after three coordinated launch events: a land-based SS-25 "Topol" ICBM, a pair of ALCMs from a Tu-160 and a Tu-95MS, and an SLBM from an SSBN in the Barents Sea. The SLBM landed in a range area in the Far East.

3 Oct 96 -- Source: Monitor

The Black Sea Fleet completed its major annual exercise, which lasted twelve days and involved forty warships and auxiliary vessels, land-based aviation elements, coastal batteries, and naval infantry. The announcement was made by Admiral **Viktor Kravchenko** (CinC BSF) and Vice Admiral **Pyotr Svyatashov** (Fleet Chief of Staff), who went on to discuss the future of the Fleet. The Black Sea Fleet will be organized into a western group (based at Sevastopol) and an eastern group (based on the Russian Caucasian coast); its projected strength is about 100 warships and 30,000 personnel. The Fleet is

expecting several new deliveries this year, including the guided missile cruiser *Moskva*.

October, 1996 -- Source: USNI Proceedings

Fleet Admiral Feliks Gromov, CinC of the Russian Federation Navy, wrote an article commemorating the fleet tricentennial. Among his comments:

- "The introduction of helicopters, VSTOL aircraft, and non-catapult launching of usual aerodynamic aircraft with missiles created for a Navy a new class of surface ship: the aircraft carrier...the first ship of this type carried 24 aircraft...the last ship of the series, named *Admiral of the Fleet of the Soviet Union N.G. Kuznetsov*, is capable of accommodating 50 different designations of combat aircraft."
- "The geographical location of Russia...require0s- the Navy to have four separate fleets -- Northern, Pacific, Baltic, Black Sea, and a Caspian Flotilla. The fleets' combat task and organizational structures have changed -- they are now maintained as operational-strategic groupings...[whose] composition is determined by the specifics of each theater."
- "The Pacific region requires reinforced development of mobile forces, including landing ships of special design, for operations in straits and around islands. Sharp changes in the base systems in the Baltic and Black Sea regions have shifted priority to the small attack ships, diesel submarines, attack aviation, mine sweepers, and boats."
- "Our efforts in Russian Navy development cover two projects:
 - Surface combat ship and patrol ship zones: destroyer, light cruiser
 - Submarines: two nuclear-powered, one diesel (for close sea zone)"

23 Sep 96 -- Source: OMRI Daily Digest

The First Deputy Commander of the Russian Navy, **Admiral Igor Kasatonov**, publicly accused the West of spying on Northern Fleet operations, and warned of continuing Western aggressive designs against Russia.

19 Sep 96 -- Source: OMRI Daily Digest

A major rally of Far East defense workers, involving about 1,500 shipyard workers, took place in Vladivostok. The demonstrators demanded that the Defense Ministry pay over 140 billion rubles in back wages. The previous day, a similar demonstration of Northern Fleet shipyard workers took place in Murmansk; they are owed 230 billion rubles. A follow-up protest involving workers in Moscow, the Far East, and Murmansk was held on 31 October.

14 Sep 96 -- Source: OMRI Daily Digest

A warship from the Black Sea Fleet, scheduled to participate in Exercise **Black Sea Partnership 96**, was barred from taking part by the Turkish government because it continued to fly the Soviet naval ensign -- representing a nonexistent nation. The status of the Black Sea Fleet continues to be unresolved between Russia and Ukraine, and its ships do not fly the flags of one nation or the other. **Admiral Petr Svyatashov**, then deputy commander of the Russian BSF, offered that the ships were ready to fly the Russian flag at any time, a comment which must have raised eyebrows in Kiev.

Fall, 1996 -- Source: World Air Power Journal

The *Admiral Kuznetsov* air wing was photographed in work-up operations at Kubinka air base, roughly 75 kilometers west of Moscow, prior to the December, 1996 Mediterranean deployment. Contrary to

earlier published reports, and confirming observations since made by Russian Navy watchers, no MiG-29Ks were in evidence. The heart of the air wing's fixed-wing component is the Su-33 (once "Su-27K") carrier-modified Flanker. Structural modifications to the Su-33 include a shortened tail cone for high angle-of-attack landings, a large tailhook, and canard foreplanes.