SAHA 2026
ULUSLARARASI SAVUNMA, HAVACILIK VE UZAY SANAYİ FUARI

GBP Daily News
06-05-2026
Official Show Daily

WWW.SAHAEXPO.COM
GBP AEROSPACE & DEFENCE | WWW.GBP.COM.SG

TURKEY REDEFINES GLOBAL DEFENCE PARADIGMS

The Istanbul Expo Centre transformed into the epicentre of global strategic discourse on Tuesday as the curtain went up on SAHA EXPO 2026, the fifth edition of the biennial event and the biggest one yet.

...CONT'D TO PG 3

INTERVIEW SEE P/12

Murat Ikinci
CEO, ROKETSAN

INTERVIEW SEE P/10

Prof. Dr. Orhan Aydın
President, TÜBİTAK


1 MILLION
FLYING HOURS
eurofighter.com
Eurofighter
Typhoon
nothing comes close

...CONT'D FROM PG 1

The flagship event, held under the auspices of the Turkish Presidency, has attracted over 1,700 companies and 140 official delegations to witness a definitive shift in the global security architecture. The opening ceremony served as a powerful declaration of Türkiye's transition from a regional player to a primary architect of modern warfare technology.

Haluk Bayraktar, the CEO of Baykar and Chairman of SAHA Istanbul, opened the proceedings by highlighting the fragility of the current global order. He asserted that the world is awakening from a long-held illusion of free trade to a harsh reality defined by customs wars and technological protectionism. Bayraktar noted that in this era, national production capacity is no longer merely an economic choice but a vital test of endurance for state survival. He revealed that global defence spending has reached a staggering US$2.9 trillion, with Turkey achieving a 14 per cent growth rate in this sector. "Modern warfare manifests as the sum of technology and industrial production capacity," Bayraktar stated, emphasizing that military doctrines are being rewritten around autonomous systems.

Bayraktar warned against a burgeoning "techno-feudalism," where reliance on foreign algorithms and data could lead to digital bondage. He argued that true sovereignty in the 21st century requires total control over the digital "operating systems" that govern modern weaponry.

Strategic Industry Growth

The momentum continued with Prof. Dr. Haluk Görgün, the Director of the Defence Industries Directorate, who detailed the rapid expansion of Turkey's domestic ecosystem. Turkey has successfully increased its indigenisation rate from 20 per cent in the early 2000s to an impressive 83 per cent today. Görgün underscored that the sector aims to reach a US$13 billion export target by the end of 2026, building on the record-breaking US$10.29 billion achieved over the previous twelve months. This growth is underpinned by a shift toward high-value, technology-driven products that have been battle-proven in diverse theatres of operation.

Mehmet Fatih Kacır, the Minister of Industry and Technology, followed with a focus on the broader National Technology Move. He explained that Turkey is not just manufacturing hardware but is fostering a comprehensive value chain that integrates artificial intelligence, satellite technologies, and advanced materials. Kacır highlighted that the success of the defence sector serves as a blueprint for other industries, including health and energy, where technological independence is equally critical. He noted that the ministry is prioritising pre-competitive projects and satellite development to ensure Turkey remains at the forefront of the burgeoning space economy.

Autonomous Warfare Dominance

The narrative of technological supremacy was further reinforced by Yaşar Güler, the Minister of National Defence, who addressed the shifting nature of security threats. Güler pointed out that the ongoing Russia-Ukraine war and tensions involving the United States, Israel, and Iran have fundamentally altered regional security calculations. He argued that simply monitoring military movements is no longer sufficient; nations must possess a sustainable defence ecosystem to maintain deterrence. Güler praised the Turkish Armed Forces for integrating advanced technologies into their doctrine, noting that "the actual great revolution of the Turkish defence industry has taken place with our unmanned aerial vehicles, which have rewritten the doctrines of warfare in the world and are the new masters of the sky."

SAHA 2026
OFFICIAL SHOW DAILY

PUBLISHED BY
GBP AEROSPACE & DEFENCE

Editorial Director
Vittorio Rossi Prudente
vittorio.prudente@gbp.com.sg

Editorial Team
Jay Menon
jay.menon@gbp.com.sg

Arun Sivasankaran
arun.sivasankaran@gbp.com.sg

Yulian Ardiansyah
yulian.ardiansyah@gbp.com.sg

Jeoffrey Maitem
jeoffrey.maitem@gbp.com.sg

Mohd Hanif Bin Ismail
hanif.ismail@gbp.com.sg

Art Director
Sudheesh Kularmunda
sudheesh.kularmunda@gbp.com.sg

Sales Director
Akshay Satyamurthy
akshay.satyamurthy@gbp.com.sg

FOR EDITORIAL ASSISTANCE AND ENQUIRIES PLEASE VISIT US AT
GLOBAL BUSINESS PRESS PTE LTD (GBP) :: HALL: 3 | STAND: 3X-28

ASELSAN at SAHA 2026: Shaping the Future of Unmanned Naval Warfare

As maritime operations evolve toward distributed, network-centric and increasingly asymmetric engagements, unmanned systems are becoming a defining pillar of modern naval power. Across littoral zones, open seas and critical infrastructure environments, navies are prioritizing scalable, flexible and cost-efficient capabilities that extend operational reach, reduce risk to personnel and sustain effectiveness in contested maritime domains.

At SAHA 2026 in Istanbul, ASELSAN reflects this transformation through its expanding portfolio of autonomous naval systems designed for both surface and subsurface operations. Building on its established expertise in integrated naval solutions, the company is advancing toward a new operational paradigm where autonomy, expendability and coordinated multi-domain employment form the basis of future maritime concepts.

Subsurface Precision: KILIÇ Family

Below the surface, ASELSAN introduces a new generation of autonomous underwater capabilities under the KILIÇ family, designed to address asymmetric maritime challenges through covert, flexible and mission-adaptable operations.

KILIÇ 10 system represents a compact, rapidly deployable autonomous underwater platform optimized for tactical missions in complex maritime environments. Designed for single-operator use, it combines autonomous functionality with multiple control modes, enabling both independent and coordinated employment. Its low acoustic and visual signature supports covert operation, while integrated sensing and communication features enhance situational awareness in low-visibility underwater conditions. The system's precision-oriented design enables engagement of both surface and subsurface targets within a highly flexible operational envelope.

Scaling this concept further, KILIÇ 200 extends operational reach and mission capacity for more demanding scenarios. With enhanced endurance and payload capability, it is designed for engagement against a broader set of maritime targets, including underwater infrastructure, port environments and offshore assets. Its compatibility with unmanned surface platforms and networked maritime systems enables coordinated employment within a wider unmanned ecosystem, supporting distributed and multi-domain naval operations.

Together, the KILIÇ family reflects a shift toward autonomous, expendable and swarm-enabled underwater warfare concepts where scalability, stealth and mission flexibility define operational effectiveness.

Surface Domain Expansion: TUFAN Unmanned Surface Vehicle

At the surface level, ASELSAN introduces TUFAN, an unmanned surface vehicle designed to operate across both reconnaissance and strike-oriented mission sets. Built on a compact, high-speed platform architecture, it delivers strong maneuverability and rapid deployment capability across littoral and open-sea environments.

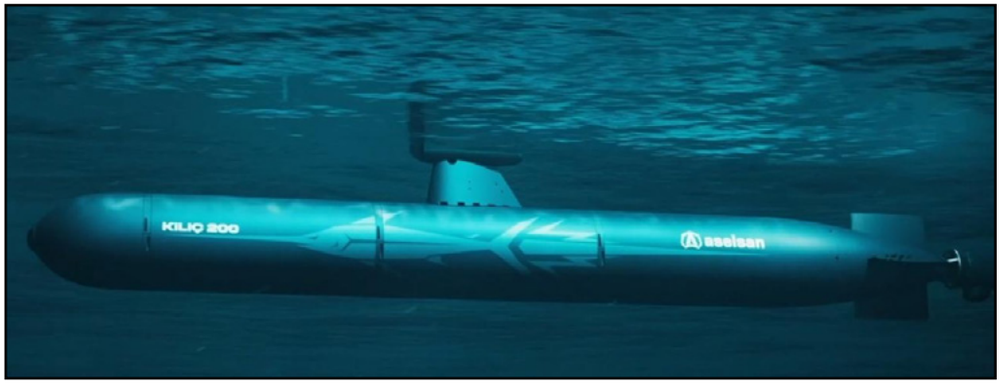
What distinguishes TUFAN is its distributed swarm intelligence and advanced autonomy framework. The platform can operate individually or as part of coordinated swarm formations, enabling multiple unmanned systems to execute synchronized missions such as surveillance, reconnaissance and precision engagement. This distributed operational logic enhances coverage, resilience and tactical unpredictability in contested maritime environments.

TUFAN's autonomy is further reinforced by advanced navigation and obstacle avoidance capabilities, allowing it to operate effectively in dynamic maritime conditions. Equipped with precision engagement functionality, it extends its role beyond ISR missions, enabling action against surface threats and critical maritime targets. Its modular communication architecture allows integration into broader naval command structures, supporting both standalone and networked operations.

A New Layer of Maritime Capability

Together, KILIÇ autonomous underwater systems and TUFAN surface unmanned vehicle represent ASELSAN's strategic expansion into a fully integrated unmanned maritime architecture. By combining swarm intelligence, advanced sensing, autonomy and precision engagement, these platforms provide scalable tools for addressing emerging threats across both surface and subsurface domains.

This capability set reflects not only a technological evolution but also a broader doctrinal shift toward distributed maritime operations. Within this context, ASELSAN continues to position Türkiye as a growing reference point in unmanned naval warfare, extending its global standing in autonomous systems from air to sea.



ROKETSAN

AIR DEFENCE SYSTEMS

SAHA 2026

SALON 6, STANT G-07

Eurofighter Expands Beyond Europe as Türkiye Deal Advances

The Eurofighter Typhoon program is entering a new phase, marked by tangible progress in Türkiye and renewed export efforts in Southeast Asia. Developments across 2025-2026 indicate how the aircraft is expanding beyond its traditional European base, shaped by geopolitical shifts, procurement constraints, and industrial priorities.

Türkiye's interest in the Typhoon emerged in the early 2020s amid uncertainty over access to Western combat aircraft. Its removal from the F-35 Lightning II program in 2019, following the acquisition of the S-400 missile system, and delays in securing F-16 Fighting Falcon upgrades created a capability gap that required alternative solutions.

Discussions on the Eurofighter gained momentum in 2023-2024 but initially encountered political resistance, particularly from Germany. Berlin lifted its veto in 2024, allowing negotiations to move forward, with the United Kingdom playing a central role.

Two key milestones followed. A memorandum of understanding signed on July 23, 2025, marked Türkiye's formal intent to acquire the aircraft, with reports indicating a potential order of up to 40 units. This was followed by a firm contract on October 27, 2025, for 20 new-build Typhoons, valued between £5.4 billion and £8 billion depending on configuration and support.

Focus has since shifted to implementation. In March 2026, Türkiye and the United Kingdom signed a technical and logistical agreement covering maintenance, training, and operational readiness. This builds on the earlier procurement contract and supports the aircraft's path to operational service.

Deliveries are expected to begin around 2030. Türkiye is also exploring options to expand its fleet to 40-44 aircraft, potentially including second-hand jets from existing operators as an interim measure.

The acquisition reflects a combination of operational, political, and industrial considerations. Aging F-16 variants and remaining F-4 Phantom II aircraft are approaching obsolescence, increasing the urgency of replacement. The Typhoon provides a near-term solution to sustain air superiority.

Politically, the move signals a shift toward diversified defense partnerships. Friction with the United States has highlighted the risks of reliance on a single supplier, prompting Ankara to deepen engagement with European partners while maintaining interoperability within NATO.

Industrial factors also play a role. Türkiye continues to expand its domestic defense sector and may benefit from integration into European supply chains, even without full technology transfer.

At the same time, the indigenous TAI KAAN fighter remains central to long-term planning, with entry into service targeted for the 2030s. The Eurofighter is therefore positioned as an interim capability bridging current requirements and future ambitions.

As of 2026, the program remains in the early stages of implementation. The March support agreement marks progress toward operational integration, including infrastructure, training, and sustainment.

While the initial order covers 20 aircraft, Türkiye's broader ambitions suggest a larger fleet. Any expansion will depend on budget conditions, political factors, and progress on KAAN. Ongoing discussions with the United States over F-16 procurement and potential re-engagement with the F-35 program add further uncertainty, reinforcing the Typhoon's role as a medium-term solution.

In contrast to Türkiye's confirmed acquisition, Eurofighter's efforts in Southeast Asia remain at the campaign stage. The Philippines is a key target as it seeks to restore air defense capabilities through its Multi-Role Fighter (MRF) program, typically defined as 24-32 aircraft.

Eurofighter formally entered the competition in September 2025, when Leonardo offered the Typhoon in a proposed Tranche 5 configuration. The bid expanded in December to include industrial cooperation and long-term partnership elements, and was reaffirmed in February 2026 with a comprehensive package covering aircraft, training, logistics, financing, and potential local industry participation.

The Typhoon faces strong competition. The F-16 Block 70/72 offers continuity with established U.S. ties and a mature support ecosystem. Saab's Gripen is positioned as a cost-effective option with lower lifecycle costs, while South Korea's KF-21 Boramae introduces a newer platform with potential for regional collaboration.

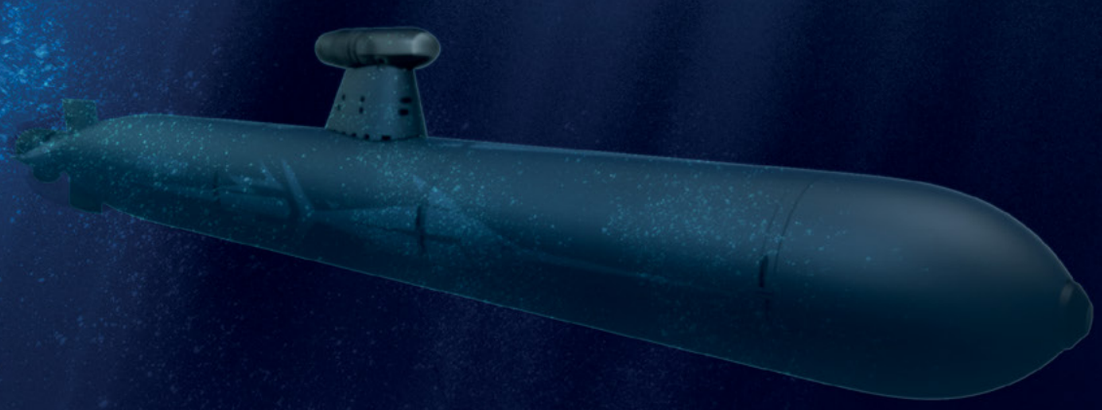
Eurofighter's approach emphasizes high-end capability paired with partnership. Its strengths include air superiority performance, advanced avionics, and a proven operational track record. However, higher acquisition and operating costs may remain a limiting factor for Manila.

KILIÇ

aselsan

UNMANNED SURFACE VEHICLE

SECURING BEYOND THE SEA



aselsan

BAE Systems Strengthens Strategic Turkish Ties

The presence of BAE Systems at the SAHA 2026 defense exhibition in Istanbul has centered on a series of transformative aerospace agreements that redefine the bilateral defense relationship between the United Kingdom and the Republic of Türkiye. Most prominent among these developments is the formalized roadmap for the Eurofighter Typhoon, following Ankara's multibillion-dollar acquisition of 20 aircraft. This procurement marks a significant pivot in Turkish aerial strategy, providing a high-end interim capability while the domestic KAAN fighter continues its development cycle. Industry analysts suggest that this deal serves as a cornerstone for deeper integration between the defense industrial bases of both nations, particularly as regional security dynamics in the Mediterranean and Black Sea remain fluid.

Technical specifications for the incoming Turkish fleet indicate that the aircraft will be among the most advanced variants ever produced. The primary highlight of the acquisition is the integration of the European Common Radar System (ECRS) Mk2, a cutting-edge Active Electronically Scanned Array (AESA) radar system that provides world-leading electronic warfare and data-linking capabilities. According to official project timelines, the first delivery of the Turkish Typhoons is scheduled for 2030, with final assembly taking place at BAE Systems' facility in Warton, Lancashire. These aircraft will be equipped with the latest avionics suites, ensuring full interoperability with NATO standards while significantly enhancing the long-range strike and air superiority profile of the Turkish Air Force.

GBP Daily News spoke to David Coates, Senior Communications Advisor at the show regarding these milestones. Simon Barnes, Group Managing Director of BAE Systems' Air sector, emphasized the long-term nature of the commitment by stating, "We're proud to support the UK's partnership with Türkiye by delivering a trusted defence capability that deepens collaboration and reinforces shared security commitments." This sentiment reflects a broader strategic alignment where the UK seeks to anchor its industrial presence in one of the most rapidly growing defense markets in the world.

Falcon Works

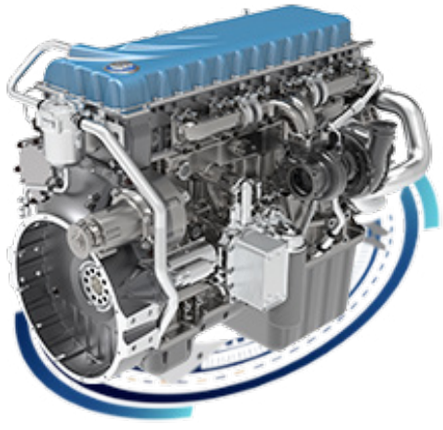
A second major highlight from the exhibition involves Falcon Works, the advanced research and technology division within BAE Systems' Air sector. In a move that signals a shift toward autonomous combat ecosystems, BAE Systems has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Turkish Aerospace (TUSAŞ) specifically focused on Collaborative Combat Aircraft (CCA). This agreement explores the joint development of uncrewed systems designed to operate as loyal wingmen alongside crewed platforms like the Typhoon and the KAAN. The collaboration aims to leverage the rapid prototyping capabilities of Falcon Works and the extensive manufacturing infrastructure of Turkish Aerospace to accelerate the deployment of autonomous air power within the next decade.

The implications of this CCA partnership extend far into the Asia-Pacific region, where many nations are closely watching the evolution of uncrewed teaming technologies to counter sophisticated anti-access/area denial (A2/AD) networks. By partnering with Türkiye, BAE Systems is creating a blueprint for co-development that could be replicated with other regional powers in Southeast Asia, such as Malaysia or Indonesia, who are seeking cost-effective ways to modernize their air forces. The initiative demonstrates a shift away from traditional buyer-seller relationships toward genuine industrial co-creation. This collaborative model is increasingly favored by middle powers who wish to retain sovereign control over their defense technologies while benefiting from global tier-one expertise.

Digital Intelligence

Simultaneously, BAE Systems is showcasing its prowess in the software-defined battlespace through the BAE Systems Digital Intelligence business. This division is working on the integration of mission-critical data systems that act as the digital glue between air, land, sea, and space domains. In the context of the Turkish market, Digital Intelligence is focusing on sovereign data management and cyber-resilience for the new Typhoon fleet. The goal is to provide Turkish commanders with a decisive information advantage, utilizing artificial intelligence and secure cloud computing to process vast amounts of sensor data in real time. This digital backbone is essential for the effective operation of modern AESA radars and the future coordination of uncrewed CCA swarms.

BMC Power Showcases Fully Indigenous Engine Family



BMC Power is showcasing its full range of engines developed using 100 percent Turkish engineering at SAHA 2026, highlighting Türkiye's push for propulsion independence across land and naval platforms.

The company's portfolio spans engines from 400 horsepower to 1,500 horsepower, designed for armored vehicles, heavy platforms and marine applications.

At the lighter end, the TUNA engine delivers 400 horsepower and is designed for tactical vehicles. It represents one of the earliest steps in Türkiye's domestic engine development program.

Moving up, the AZRA and LEVEND engines each produce 600 horsepower. These engines are aimed at 6×6 and 8×8 armored vehicles and are currently undergoing testing and preparation for serial production.

The UTKU engine marks a major step forward. It is a 1,000 horsepower V-type engine and is the first V8 engine developed by Turkish engineers. Initial ignition tests were completed successfully, with further testing ongoing.

At the top end is the BATU powerpack, a 1,500 horsepower V12 engine developed from scratch along with its transmission and cooling system.

The engine is designed for heavy platforms such as main battle tanks. It is Türkiye's first domestically developed 12-cylinder engine and continues to undergo qualification testing.
Complementing this is the BLUE BATU, a 1,407 horsepower marine diesel engine developed for naval applications, extending BMC Power's reach beyond land systems.

BMC Power is not only developing engines but complete powerpack systems.

These include transmission units with steering and braking capability, high-

efficiency cooling systems and integrated control units. The approach allows full system optimization for military platforms.

The company's test and integration capabilities are also being highlighted at the show, reflecting its focus on end-to-end development.

The engine family on display reflects Türkiye's long-term effort to reduce reliance on foreign suppliers for critical subsystems.

From tactical vehicle engines to tank powerpacks, BMC Power's lineup demonstrates a complete domestic capability across multiple power ranges.

The Architect of Innovation: An Interview with Prof. Dr. Orhan Aydın

As SAHA EXPO 2026 enters its second day, the focus shifts toward the foundational research and disruptive technologies that underpin Türkiye's burgeoning defense ecosystem. At the heart of this transformation is the Scientific and Technological Research Council of Türkiye (TÜBİTAK). Occupying a unique space between academic theory and industrial reality, TÜBİTAK has become the primary engine for national technological independence.

In this exclusive interview for the **Daily News**, **Prof. Dr. Orhan Aydın,** President of TÜBİTAK, discusses the council's multi-domain strategy—from the depths of electronic warfare to the heights of orbital logistics—and how they are cultivating the next generation of scientific talent to ensure the future of the Turkish Armed Forces (TSK).

TÜBİTAK occupies a unique space between academic research and industrial application. How does the Council prioritize which emerging technologies receive funding and R&D focus to ensure they meet the future operational requirements of the Turkish Armed Forces?

At TÜBİTAK, technology prioritization is not driven through a purely top-down model. As an institution operating at the intersection of academia, public research capacity, and industrial application, we adopt a structured and consultative approach that brings together key stakeholders across the ecosystem. When technology roadmaps, foresight studies, and prioritization exercises are conducted, representatives from universities, public research institutes, industry, and end users are brought together to ensure that priority areas reflect both scientific developments and national strategic needs.

Defense and security requirements are systematically integrated into this process. The scientific and technological needs of the Turkish Armed Forces are primarily communicated to TÜBİTAK through the Defense and Security Technologies Research Support Group (SAVTAG), in close coordination with the Ministry of National Defense and the Presidency of Defense Industries. These institutional inputs are complemented by feedback from defense companies, technology-focused SMEs, and researchers working in defense-related fields. This ensures that defense priorities are assessed not only through formal institutional channels but also in light of broader technological developments and industrial capabilities.

A recent example of this model is TÜBİTAK's Advanced Materials Research, Development, and Innovation Agenda. This process included gap analyses, stakeholder mapping, and prioritization surveys involving 143 stakeholders from public institutions, universities, and private sector firms like ASELSAN, ROKETSAN, and BAYKAR. The objective is to create a structured pipeline that translates operational needs into practical capabilities.

In building our technology roadmap, we rely on three main sources. First, we maintain direct interaction with the Turkish Armed Forces, gathering feedback on delivered systems and assessing requirements through dedicated workshops and firsthand observation during exercises like Anatolian Eagle and EFES. Second, we work closely with sector stakeholders to strengthen inter-institutional coordination. Third, our partnerships with universities allow us to follow the latest scientific research to shape short-, medium-, and long-term priorities. Global disruptive technologies such as AI, autonomous systems, and advanced sensors are closely monitored and incorporated into this process. This ensures that the technologies we support are scientifically strong and aligned with long-term strategic priorities.

TÜBİTAK SAGE has been instrumental in developing the SOM cruise missile family and the GÖKTUĞ air-to-air missiles. What is the next evolution for these platforms in terms of range, stealth characteristics, and "swarm" capabilities?

The SOM missile family was developed end-to-end by TÜBİTAK SAGE and is already in the inventory of the Turkish Air Force. Equipped with an imaging infrared (IIR) seeker, SOM provides highly precise engagement capability against strategic targets. One of its key advantages is its open architecture, which allows it to evolve with emerging threats. Our current focus is on improving mission effectiveness by integrating artificial intelligence and advanced mission planning tools to optimize launch conditions and in-flight performance.

Low observability remains a priority; SOM uses radar-absorbing materials on certain surfaces and is designed for compatibility with the internal weapon bays of next-generation platforms like the Bayraktar KIZILELMA, TAI ANKA III, and TAI KAAN. Recent variants include post-launch control and network-enabled capabilities. Looking

ahead, data-link coordination between missiles could enable swarm-based operations where multiple systems coordinate during missions.

Regarding air-to-air capabilities, the GÖKTUĞ family—comprising BOZDOĞAN for within-visual-range and GÖKDOĞAN for beyond-visual-range—is moving toward full-rate production with industrial partners. We are adapting these systems for new integration requirements as indigenous platforms like the KAAN enter service. The successful live firing from Bayraktar KIZILELMA at the end of 2025 was an important milestone. Additionally, we are developing the long-range GÖKHAN missile program, powered by liquid-fuel ramjet propulsion systems, which reflects our growing capabilities in beyond-visual-range air combat.

Through TÜBİTAK UZAY, Türkiye has achieved significant milestones with the İMECE and TÜRKSAT 6A satellites. How is the Council integrating satellite-derived data and orbital logistics into the broader national defense architecture?

We view these projects as part of a broader national security infrastructure. One critical area is data sovereignty; the İMECE satellite's sub-meter resolution imaging allows us to provide high-resolution imagery without external dependency. Combined with domestic image processing tools, this supports surveillance, reconnaissance, and target identification.

A second priority is secure communication. TÜRKSAT 6A strengthens command-and-control resilience against cyber and electronic warfare threats through sovereign communication systems and secure protocols. We are also focusing on orbital sustainability and space domain awareness. Electric propulsion technologies and indigenous flight software developed by TÜBİTAK UZAY improve the operational sustainability and orbital positioning of our assets. These capabilities contribute to the long-term protection of critical space infrastructure.

What are the primary technical challenges TÜBİTAK is currently addressing to make high-power laser systems more mobile and effective against modern UAV threats?

While we have made progress, several challenges remain. Power generation and energy management are primary focus areas, as these systems require significant energy. Thermal control is also critical for stable performance. Beam quality can be affected by atmospheric conditions, and precise target tracking is difficult with fast-moving UAVs. For mobile integration, our priority is making systems more compact, lightweight, and stable while maintaining high-precision engagement through multiple sensor compatibility.

What steps is TÜBİTAK taking to secure communication networks against next-generation cyber and electronic warfare (EW) threats?

Cyber and EW threats affect both infrastructure and inter-platform data exchange. TÜBİTAK SAGE focuses on ensuring munitions operate in contested electromagnetic environments through cryptographic security and frequency hopping. Anti-jamming measures are integrated into system designs to ensure mission continuity.

At TÜBİTAK BİLGEM, we focus on securing broader networks through indigenous cryptographic solutions and end-to-end encryption. We are also developing real-time cybersecurity systems for anomaly detection. Our tactical protection systems, like the İLTAREN system, provide electronic countermeasures against infrared-guided missiles. Together, these efforts strengthen the resilience of Türkiye's air, land, and naval systems.

How is TÜBİTAK utilizing AI for predictive analytics in logistics and real-time sensor fusion?

In logistics, AI supports predictive maintenance and supply chain management by analyzing telemetry data to identify potential hardware failures in advance. In real-time sensor fusion, AI combines data from air, land, naval, and space assets to create a shared operational picture.

This is central to the "Steel Dome" concept—Türkiye's multi-layered air defense architecture. Steel Dome integrates data from drones, fighter aircraft, and missiles, using radar and sensor networks to support target evaluation and engagement decisions. Furthermore, TÜBİTAK SAGE is developing the S-FORCE ecosystem, a multi-domain simulation platform that uses AI and digital twin technologies to model complex operational environments.

How are TÜBİTAK's competitions and scholarship programs tailored to steer young scientists toward careers in aerospace?

We approach this through a long-term talent pipeline. Our 2210-C and 2211-C scholarship programs support graduate students in strategic fields like aircraft design and satellite technologies. At the middle and high school levels, research competitions and TEKNOFEST provide students with hands-on experience in UAV development and rocketry. These programs expose participants to the full engineering process, from design to testing. Early exposure is also facilitated through science centers like GUHEM and DENEYAP Technology Workshops.

Finally, how is TÜBİTAK using SAHA EXPO 2026 to establish new international R&D partnerships?

SAHA EXPO 2026 is a vital platform for building international partnerships. Through our various institutes, we seek joint technology development in satellite technologies, autonomous systems, and advanced materials. We use this platform to explore joint projects and researcher exchanges with international institutions. Our goal is to expand Türkiye's role in global defense R&D partnerships and strengthen our connections with international industrial clusters.

ROKETSAN's Turnover to Grow Over 50% Within Ten Years: CEO Murat Ikinci

ROKETSAN's turnover is set to grow more than 50 per cent in dollar terms in the next five to ten years, says **Murat İkinci,** CEO of the Turkish defence giant.

"We completed 2025 with an increase of over 100 per cent in exports and a turnover exceeding 2 billion dollars," Ikinci tells **Arun Sivasankaran. "Through the new contracts secured last year, we grew our business volume by around US$10 billion in both export and domestic markets. That means a threefold growth and indicates that ROKETSAN's turnover will grow more than 50 per cent in dollar terms in next five to ten years. We achieve that growth rate with local content rate of 92 per cent."**

ROKETSAN recently opened new production facilities in Ankara. How much of an impact will this have on the company's production capacity?

The Turkish defence industry has reached a significant level of maturity in terms of original design and R&D over the last years. At the current stage, the critical challenge lies in producing these products rapidly, at high volumes, and cost-effectively. Accordingly, we have planned our recent investments specifically to address this need.

Our facilities, officially inaugurated on April 7th in the presence of our President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, elevate our entire operations from production to testing and R&D to the next level. In Kırıkkale, our fuel production facilities, established on a 25,000-acre site, enable us to develop critical fuel technologies using domestic resources. Meanwhile, our Lalahan warhead facility stands as one of Europe's largest production infrastructures, significantly boosting our capacity and expediting operational workflows.

The newly opened Advanced Technologies, R&D and Engineering Centre, with a capacity of 1,000 personnel, will allow us to focus on next-gen technologies, while our Missile Integration Facilities will create a multiplier effect on the production side once commissioned. Through this strategic investment, we aim to achieve a five-fold increase in serial production capacity, markedly enhancing the delivery speed of strategic defence systems including SİPER, HİSAR, and TAYFUN systems. These facilities not only increase our mass production capacity; they also take ROKETSAN to a much higher level in terms of delivery speed, efficiency and sustainability.

While completing the first $1 billion phase of facilities, we add another $2 billion to this amount with the new investments. In fact, with these investments, we are securing Türkiye's infrastructure in rocket and missile systems, paving the way for the next several decades.

How significant is the company's investment in the space sector? Will we see ROKETSAN doing more in this field?

As ROKETSAN, we have a critical role in achieving independent access to space. With the decision taken at the Defence Industry Executive Committee in 2012, our company was entrusted with the mission of bringing our country into the space league. In line with this goal, ROKETSAN continues its efforts with great resolve to contribute to the National Space Program and develop the domestic space industry, leveraging our deep engineering heritage and technological capabilities. In 2015, we institutionalized these activities by establishing our Satellite Launch Space Systems and Advanced Technologies Research Center.

In this context, we focus specifically on rocket technologies, which form the foundation of access to space. The work we conduct with sounding rockets is one of the most critical steps of this journey. Indeed, in 2017, we crossed a major threshold by exceeding an altitude of 100 kilometers with the first domestically developed sounding rocket. With additional launches conducted in 2020 and 2023, we further advanced our capabilities by reaching higher altitudes with various payloads. Throughout this process, we have made significant progress in critical technologies, particularly in liquid-propellant rocket engines.

We are looking to commission our own satellite launch vehicles, developed entirely with domestic and national capabilities, to deploy our satellites into space as soon as possible. To that end, the first test of the ŞİMŞEK-1 Satellite Launch Vehicle is planned to be conducted in the near future. We are also working on the ŞİMŞEK-2 project, where we are developing a system that will be able to place 1,500-kilogram class satellites into orbits over 700 kilometers.

In the coming years, you will clearly

see ROKETSAN taking part in this field with much more visible and ambitious projects. Beyond making our country independent in the space industry, our goal is to make our country a global player in this field.

Can you talk about ROKETSAN's role in Türkiye's multi-layered Steel Dome Air Defence project?

Within the scope of the Steel Dome Project, ROKETSAN is taking on the striking power, which is one of the system's most critical elements. We contribute to the effective operation of this architecture by developing multi-layered air defence missile systems and establishing an integrated structure across short, medium and long-range layers.

Our HİSAR and SİPER systems form the backbone of this structure. While HİSAR-A and HİSAR-O operate in the low-altitude layer, our SİPER system engages at the long-range layer. SİPER Long-Range Air and Missile Defence System Block I with a range exceeding 100 kilometers, has been added to the inventory, and development of SİPER Block II continues with a target range of 150 km. These systems provide an effective defence against a wide spectrum of threats, ranging from fighter jets and UAVs/UCAVs to cruise and ballistic missiles.

Our ALKA Directed Energy Weapon System also acts as a vital force multiplier, providing a complementary capability against emerging threats like FPV drones. SUNGUR and BURÇ systems are also play an active role in short-range air defence, protecting both units in the field and critical infrastructure. We complement this architecture in maritime defence with our MIDLAS and LEVENT systems.

The Steel Dome is not a static entity, but a system that is ever-growing and constantly evolving layer by layer. So, we are continuing to both enhance our existing capabilities and integrate new platforms into the system.

Recently we have witnessed the fact that layered air defence systems are critical in our region. From this perspective, we can state that both our air defence systems and the Steel Dome as a system are among the most critical needs for the countries in our region. As ROKETSAN, we export our rocket, missile, and ammunition systems to nearly 50 friendly and allied countries. We will all witness what the Steel Dome, as a multi-layered air defence structure, will achieve in the future.

What are some of the short-term and long-term goals of the company?

Our main goal in short, medium, and long-term is quite clear: To strengthen our country's defence by meeting all the rocket, missile, and ammunition needs of the Turkish Armed Forces with our indigenous and national systems. Our ROKETSAN family of over 7,000 members works on a 24/7 basis, in order to fulfil the responsibility entrusted to us by our country and our nation. Besides, we have also some short-, medium-, and long-term goals like increasing our exports to friendly and allied countries and scaling our company, both financially and operationally.

We are preparing our company for the future with the facilities we have opened and with the Lalahan Missile Integration Facilities that we have laid the foundation for. I would like to point out that we completed 2025 with an increase of over 100 per cent in exports and a turnover exceeding 2 billion dollars. Through the new contracts secured last year, we grew our business volume by around $10 billion in both export and domestic markets. That means a threefold growth and indicates that ROKETSAN's turnover will grow more than 50 per cent in dollar terms in next five to ten years. We achieved that growth rate with local content rate of 92 per cent. All of these clearly demonstrate that ROKETSAN has not only expanded its business volume and increased its production but has also achieved this through local and national capabilities.

As ROKETSAN, we are determined to increase our growth and production pace in the upcoming period. Within this scope, we are planning our objectives, and in the period ahead, we will continue to allocate a significant portion of our revenue to R&D and infrastructure investments, and we will take our company to new heights.

Leonardo Highlights LDEW At Defence Expo

At the ongoing SAHA 2026, Italian defence group Leonardo is showcasing a portfolio centred on next-generation combat systems, with a strong emphasis on directed energy, unmanned platforms, tactical airlift, and naval firepower. The company's exhibit reflects a strategic push to align with Türkiye's growing defence ecosystem while targeting export opportunities across the Asia-Pacific and Middle East.

Key highlights included Leonardo's Laser Directed Energy Weapon (LDEW), the Nerio ULR, the C-27J Spartan tactical transport aircraft, and the OTO 127/64 LW Vulcano naval gun system. Collectively, these platforms demonstrate Leonardo's focus on modular, interoperable systems suited for multi-domain operations.

According to Leonardo's official briefings at SAHA Expo 2026, the systems on display reflect sustained investment in high-energy weapons, ISR platforms, and cost-effective combat solutions. Company representatives stressed adaptability and reduced lifecycle costs as central to their design philosophy.

Directed Energy Focus

The LDEW system formed the centrepiece of Leonardo's presentation, underscoring its ambitions in the rapidly evolving directed energy segment. Designed primarily for counter-unmanned aerial systems, the platform uses high-energy laser beams to neutralise drones and loitering munitions at a significantly lower cost per engagement than missile-based interceptors.

Leonardo has configured the system for mobile deployment, allowing integration onto tactical vehicles. This mobility, combined with scalable power output, positions LDEW as a flexible solution for both urban defence and expeditionary operations. In the Asia-Pacific, where drone proliferation continues to accelerate, such capabilities are gaining operational relevance, particularly in maritime grey-zone scenarios.

Nerio ULR Emergence

Leonardo also presented the NERIO ULR, a state-of-the-art modular Electro-Optical (EO) Surveillance, Threat Acquisition (STA) and Reconnaissance system. NERIO ULR utilises the proprietary Horizon TI camera which enables the identification of threats at ranges typically beyond the effective range of the threat, enabling early counteraction to be initiated."

For Southeast Asian operators, the Nerio ULR offers potential applications in maritime domain awareness, especially in monitoring exclusive economic zones and illegal activities at sea. Its compatibility with NATO-standard systems further enhances its appeal for countries seeking diversified procurement options.

Spartan Versatility

The C-27J Spartan remains a key element of Leonardo's export strategy. Known for its short take-off and landing performance, the aircraft is well suited to austere environments and dispersed island geographies.

Leonardo highlighted ongoing upgrades to avionics and mission systems, reinforcing the Spartan's role in humanitarian assistance, disaster relief, and military logistics. These capabilities align closely with Southeast Asia's operational requirements, where rapid response and flexibility are critical.

Naval Firepower

On the maritime front, Leonardo showcased the OTO 127/64 LW Vulcano system, developed by OTO Melara. The 127mm gun integrates precision-guided Vulcano ammunition, enabling long-range naval gunfire support with enhanced accuracy.

This capability offers regional navies a cost-effective complement to missile systems, particularly for littoral operations. As Asia-Pacific fleets expand, demand for advanced naval guns with precision strike capability is expected to grow.

Regional Outlook

Leonardo's SAHA 2026 presence highlights Türkiye's emergence as a key defence exhibition hub linking European and Asian markets. For Asia-Pacific nations, the event provides access to alternative suppliers amid evolving geopolitical dynamics.

The systems presented reflect broader trends shaping regional defence procurement, including the rise of unmanned systems, demand for counter-drone solutions, and the need for multi-role platforms. Leonardo's blend of mature and emerging technologies positions it competitively in this evolving landscape.

K2, Mızrak and Sivrisinek Will Revolutionize Combat: Selçuk Bayraktar

Bayraktar TB2 fundamentally changed the rules of modern warfare and even inspired a folk song in Ukraine. Selçuk Bayraktar, Baykar's Chairman of the Board and Chief Technology Officer, believes the K2 Kamikaze UAV and the smart loitering munitions Mızrak and Sivrisinek also have the power to change how wars are fought.

"Just as our UAVs were used for the first time in conventional combat in the world and led to a paradigm shift, we believe that these systems we have developed will also revolutionize combat with the force multipliers they achieve, the synergy they create, and the new technology they bring," Bayraktar said as he introduced the three new unmanned systems that were unveiled on the opening day of SAHA 2026.

All components of the new products, from artificial intelligence software to the engine and warhead, are manufactured in Türkiye. According to Bayraktar, the three kamikaze drones can operate in swarms. Equipped with AI and smart swarm autonomy, they can coordinate among themselves and navigate, find, and neutralize targets independently of global positioning systems.

The K2, which has a takeoff weight of 850 kg, uses 200 kg warheads made by MKE. The drone, which is designed to take off even from short runways and unprepared roads, has range of more than 2,000 kilometers and can operate independently of the global positioning system. Because of its qualities, it cannot be easily disrupted by electronic warfare (EW) measures.

Having a large number of UAVs operating in concert with each other creates a significant force multiplier, Bayraktar said. Swarming drones need to be cost-effective and easy to produce, he added.

In a swarm operation, the Sivrisinek drone, which has a range of 1,000 kilometers and above, would be at the front and would be followed by a swarm of 500-600 Mızrak Kamikaze drones. "At the very back, we're talking about a pack of 300-400 K2 drones. In a sense, we are defining the world's new generation attack paradigm."

The swarming drones will be commanded by the AKINCI, Bayraktar TB3, or Bayraktar TB2 that follows the swarm. Such a combined attack will, in a sense, saturate a large number of cost-effective air defense systems.

Sivrisinek weighs approximately 80 kilograms and has multiple take-off methods. Mizrak is offered in two main configurations. The system delivers high explosive power with its twin-warhead variant totaling 40 kg, while its single-warhead variant is equipped with a 20 kg payload complemented by an RF (Radio Frequency) seeker head for precise target detection. Featuring a 4-meter wingspan, the platform also affords operators extensive reconnaissance and surveillance capability through EO (Electro-Optical) or IR (Infrared) camera options developed by Baykar.

STM Unveils New 1,000-km Range Kamikaze Loitering Munition KUZGUN

Turkish defence firm STM, developer of combat-proven unmanned systems, introduced KUZGUN, a Fixed-Wing Long-Range Loitering Munition System, on the opening day of SAHA 2026. The system is designed to shift the balance in deep operational theaters.

Distinguishing itself with a range exceeding 1000 kilometers and a high-explosive warhead, KUZGUN will deliver high impact against strategic targets through its low radar signature and devastating explosive power. KUZGUN has completed the design phase and successfully executed initial flight tests. On Tuesday, STM also released the first-ever footage from the system's maiden test flights.

"Strategic Strike Capability for Deep-Operational Theaters"

"Global and regional crises have once again demonstrated the decisive role of long-range, cost-effective strike capabilities on the battlefield," said STM General Manager Özgür Güleryüz. "At STM, we aim to elevate our nation's strategic deterrence to the next level with our Long-Range Loitering Munition System, KUZGUN, developed specifically to meet this need. With a range exceeding 1000 kilometers and a high-explosive warhead, this system will be able to autonomously neutralize critical targets, ranging from command centers to air defense and radar installations. Equipped with our indigenous software, an electronic warfare-resistant navigation system, and low-altitude flight capability, KUZGUN will operate with precision-strike accuracy even in the most challenging geographies."

Runway-Independent, Deep-Strike Capability

Combining its operational range with an intelligently designed strike capability, KUZGUN brings the high situational awareness and agility inherent in its name to the skies. Designed for cross-border operations and critical targets behind enemy lines, the system offers high survivability thanks to its aerodynamic structure. Maximizing operational flexibility, the platform is capable of rocket-assisted takeoff (RATO) from mobile ground platforms or fixed launchers, eliminating the need for any runway infrastructure. With endurance exceeding 6 hours, it enables rapid, effective strikes against distant targets.

Electronic Warfare Resistant and Fully Autonomous

Optimized for conflict zones with intense GNSS jamming, KUZGUN stands out with its jamming-resistant navigation architecture. Executing fully autonomous flight based on predefined routes and target data, the platform reaches its destination through its GNSS-aided precision coordinate dive capability. Despite its 200 kg total weight, the system aims to become an indispensable asset for strategic operations with its high-explosive munitions.

KUZGUN has a flight range of over 1000 km and endurance of six hours, Operational altitude is 3,500 m (MSL).

FNSS Highlights Alka-Kaplan Hybrid, Pars ALPHA 8×8, ZAHA

Turkish defense manufacturer FNSS is showcasing a range of products and capabilities at Hall 6 - Stand F03 at SAHA EXPO 2026, taking place from May 5-9 at the Istanbul Expo Center.

The company is displaying PARS ALPHA 8x8 New Generation Wheeled Armored Combat Vehicle, which will be delivered to the Turkish Land Forces (TLF), the Marine Assault Vehicle ZAHA, which is in service with the Turkish Navy Marine Corps, and the PARS İZCİ 6x6 Command and Control Vehicle, whose deliveries to the TLF are nearing completion. In addition, the TEBER-II 30/40 Remote Controlled Weapon Station, developed by FNSS, will be exhibited with PARS ALPHA 8x8.

The ALKA-KAPLAN HYBRID, first introduced at IDEF 2025 will be showcased at the event with optional manned and autonomous capabilities. ALKA-KAPLAN HYBRID is a joint solution that integrates the ALKA Directed Energy Weapon System (DEWS), developed by ROKETSAN, with the KAPLAN HYBRID vehicle developed by FNSS.

ROKETSAN Launches Four New Systems, Showcases Nearly 40

ROKETSAN, Türkiye's leading company and a global flagbearer in rocket, missile, and munition technologies, has brought nearly 40 systems to SAHA 2026, four of which are being showcased for the first time.

According to the company, the newly unveiled products - NEŞTER, CİDA, Mini Cruise Missile and CİRİT C-UAS - received strong interest and praise from visitors.

Murat İkinci, CEO of ROKETSAN, stated that the SAHA 2026 International Defence, Aerospace and Space Industry Expo serves as a strategic platform, powerfully reflecting the current heights achieved by the Turkish defence industry on a global scale.

"We took our place at this exhibition with approximately 40 of our products, from air defence and missile systems, the striking power of the Steel Dome Project, our globally proven UCAV munitions, anti-tank missile systems, to locally developed missile solutions achieving record-breaking ranges," Akinci said. "SAHA is also one of the crucial platforms for us to launch new products. The great interest in our launched systems prove that. We developed these systems using national resources to meet operational field requirements in the most effective way. Drawing strength from our nation, we will continue to develop new technologies that strengthen our national defence and pave the way for a fully independent defence industry."

CİRİT C-UAS: A new variant of the combat-proven CİRİT Laser-Guided Missile, CİRİT C-UAS stands out as a cost-effective alternative to high-cost air defense missiles used against Unmanned Aerial Vehicles. Through this capability, it will be possible to effectively destroy targets using CİRİT C-UAS within the suitable engagement range before resorting to high-cost platforms and ammunitions against aerial threats. This version also stands out with its proximity sensor and anti-UAV warhead.

CİDA, a new member of long-range anti-tank missile systems family, is an advanced system that directly addresses operational requirements on the field with pinpoint accuracy, thanks to its beyond line-of-sight capability, extended range, rapid strike proficiency, and hybrid seeker. With a much longer engagement range than its rivals, this system acts as a force multiplier by being integrated into land, sea, and air platforms.

Mini Cruise Missile is a next-generation solution that combines a cost-effective structure with high operational impact. Compared to its counterparts, it creates a significant force multiplier on the field, especially against air defence systems, thanks to its extended range, heavier warhead, and multiple carriage configurations. It also offers operational diversity through its visual intelligence gathering capability from the target line.

NEŞTER is a MAM-L munition variant designed for high precision hits with minimal collateral damage. Unlike the classical solutions, it has a unique warhead containing metallic blades which are being activated shortly before impact. Thanks to this non-explosive design, it is able to focus on specific targets rather than causing mass destruction.

Extensive Product Range on Show

Among the wide range of products and systems that the copany is showcasing is the TAYFUN Missile, Türkiye's longest-range ballistic missile, the members of Smart Gliding Munition Family -MAM-C, MAM-L IIR and MAM-T Dual Seeker, İHA-122 Air-to-Surface Ballistic Supersonic Missile, İHA-230 Air-to-Surface Ballistic Supersonic Missile, 300 ER, and EREN High Speed Multi-Purpose Loitering Munition.

The SUNGUR Air Defense Missile System, the HİSAR-A Air Defense Missile, the HİSAR-O (RF) Air Defense Missile, and the SİPER Long-Range Air and Missile Defense System Block I – Block II are being displayed. LEVENT Close-Range Air Defense System and MİDLAS National Vertical Launch System are also being shown.

ROKETSAN is also showcasing the KARAOK Short-Range Anti-Tank Weapon System and L-OMTAS Laser-Guided Medium-Range Anti-Tank Weapon System at the exhibition. Other products on show are SOM Stand-Off Missile, KARA ATMACA Surface-to-Surface Cruise Missile, LAÇİN and TEBER Guidance Kits, and METE Laser-Guided Mini Missile System.

The capabilities of the KHAN Tactical Ballistic Missile, TRLG-122 Missile, TRLG-230 Missile, LG-155 Laser-Guided Artillery Munition, AKYA Next-Generation Heavyweight Torpedo, and ORKA Next-Generation Lightweight Torpedo are being highlighted at the event. The KMC Tactical Missile Weapon System, PUSU Weapon System, ALKA Directed Energy Weapon System, and the ŞİMŞEK-2 Space Launch Vehicle are also on display.

FPV Drones Redefine Asymmetric Warfare, Finds Panel

A panel discussion on the opening day of SAHA EXPO 2026 on May 5 examined how first-person-view (FPV) drones, particularly fibre-optic guided systems, are reshaping modern warfare, drawing on lessons from Ukraine's battlefield. The session was one of several panels scheduled throughout the exhibition.

Chaired by Lt. Gen. (ret.) Yavuz Türkgenci, senior advisor to NATO, the discussion featured Can Kasapoğlu, senior defence analyst at the Hudson Institute and the NATO Defence College; Mehmet Öztekin, chief executive of Skydagger; Maksim Asketov, a Ukrainian special forces fibre-optic specialist; and Ihor Fedirko, chief executive of the Ukrainian Council of Defence Industry.

Speakers pointed to the widespread adoption of FPV drones in Ukraine as a decisive factor in countering Russian advantages in manpower and equipment. A key development has been the emergence of fibre-optic guided variants, which address a major vulnerability of conventional wireless drones: susceptibility to electronic warfare. Russian jamming systems have significantly degraded radio-controlled platforms, but fibre-optic links - physically tethered and resistant to electromagnetic interference - allow operators to maintain control in contested environments.

Despite the availability of countermeasures, panelists emphasised that cost asymmetry remains central. FPV drones can be produced at scale and at relatively low cost, enabling Ukraine to field them in large numbers. This has reduced the overall effectiveness of defensive systems that are often more expensive or complex than the drones they are designed to defeat.

Placing the shift in historical context, Kasapoğlu contrasted current operations with earlier eras of warfare. During the Second World War, Soviet forces typically required at least a battalion - around 1,000 troops - to defend one kilometre of front line against advancing German forces. In Ukraine today, he argued, a similar frontage can be held by roughly 15 personnel equipped with FPV drones and unmanned ground vehicles (UGVs), reflecting a marked change in force density and battlefield efficiency.

The discussion also extended to the maritime domain. Ukrainian unmanned surface vehicles (USVs) operating in the Black Sea have demonstrated the ability to challenge a conventionally superior fleet. Panelists cited claims that such systems have inflicted significant losses on Russian naval assets - an outcome that would have been difficult to envisage a decade ago, particularly given Ukraine's limited traditional naval capabilities.

Kasapoğlu described these developments as part of a broader transition in warfare, where human operators increasingly work alongside autonomous or semi-autonomous systems supported by algorithms and artificial intelligence. This shift, he said, is redefining how combat power is generated and applied.

From an industry perspective, Öztekin underscored the importance of simplicity in system design. Operational effectiveness, he argued, depends not only on technological sophistication but on ease of use by frontline personnel. Systems that are overly complex risk underperforming in combat conditions, regardless of their theoretical capabilities. Cost efficiency, he added, remains essential for sustaining large-scale deployment.

Operational insights from the field were provided by Asketov, who said fibre-optic FPV drones have proven effective in overcoming intense Russian electronic warfare measures. However, he also noted inherent limitations: the physical cables used in these systems can leave detectable traces on the battlefield, potentially exposing operator positions if not carefully managed.

Fedirko highlighted the industrial dimension of Ukraine's approach, noting that the relative simplicity of FPV drone technology has enabled rapid scaling of domestic production to the millions. This is paired with a fast innovation cycle, with design and tactical adjustments occurring every two to three months to keep pace with battlefield developments.

He added that fibre-optic control systems are being extended beyond aerial platforms. Variants are now being applied across unmanned ground vehicles (UGVs), unmanned surface vehicles (USVs), and unmanned underwater vehicles (UUVs), reflecting a broader effort to mitigate electronic warfare threats across multiple domains.

Overall, the panel concluded that the proliferation of low-cost, adaptable unmanned systems - combined with rapid iteration and integration into operational doctrine - is driving a fundamental shift in asymmetric warfare.

Show Debut for Koluman's Kisrak Ambulance Variant

Koluman Tech of Türkiye has unveiled the ambulance variant of the Kisrak at SAHA 2026.

"This is new," says Edip Gezici, Koluman Business Development Specialist. "We hope that the Turkish Ldand Forces will acquire the platform. We also want to export it and are in discussions with countries in Europe and the Middle East."

Among the highlights of the vehicle is its powerful engine performance, with Its high-performance motor providing uninterrupted power even on the most challenging terrain. The vehicle's advanced traction system provides superior grip and stability on uneven roads and steep slopes. Advanced control systems provide superior steering and maneuvering capabilities in narrow and complex terrains

The ambulance variant features a NATO AMedP-2 standard stretcher system and a dedicated resuscitation unit. The platform integrates a high-capacity four-person oxygen-supported respiratory system. "It ensures safe casualty evacuation in the steepest geographies with its 60 % gradeability and 30% side slope capability. It has a bigger capacity than Unimog and is more powerful. Kisrak is a 4x4 multipurpose tactical platform; it has two other variants – the Kisrak Refueler and the Kisrak Tactical Wheeled Vehicle," ads Gezici.

Also displayed at the event is Derman armored tactical wheeled vehicle (TWV) with engine options from 517 HP to 625 HP. Equipped with Turbo Retarder Clutch (VIAB) technology, it delivers uninterrupted performance even in demanding terrain conditions. Its double-row armored cabin secures a crew of up to 5 against threats. With a payload capacity of up to 30 tons, it can serve as a fuel tanker, tank transporter, container carrier or recovery vehicle. The company also produces the Derman soft cabin TWV.

"We use Mercedes Benz chassis and engine for both Derman and Kisrak. Different variants of Derman are being used by the Turkish Army; we have sold more than 100 Derman units already. We believe both Kisrak and Derman have immense export potential."

Turkish UGVs Target Southeast Asian Modernisation

The international defense community has converged upon the Istanbul Expo Centre for SAHA EXPO 2026, where Turkish land systems manufacturers are aggressively positioning their latest unmanned ground vehicles for the Southeast Asian market. As regional powers in the Asia-Pacific seek to modernize their ground forces with cost-effective yet technologically advanced autonomous systems, Turkish firms like HAVELSAN and FNSS are unveiling platforms specifically designed for the rugged terrains and asymmetric threats prevalent in maritime Southeast Asia. This year's exhibition, held from 5 to 9 May, marks a strategic pivot as Türkiye transitions from being a hardware provider to a global technology hub focused on artificial intelligence and autonomous interoperability.

The most significant development for regional observers involves the world debut of the BARKAN 3, the latest iteration of the medium-class unmanned ground vehicle. Developed under the Digital Troop concept, this platform integrates enhanced modularity to support a variety of mission profiles from reconnaissance to casualty evacuation and direct fire support. Senior industry executives at the fair noted that the modular design of the BARKAN 3 is particularly suited for the diverse operational requirements of nations like Malaysia and Indonesia, where a single platform must often perform multiple roles due to budgetary constraints and complex logistics.

Official Reports

According to reports and official company announcements from FNSS and HAVELSAN, the 2026 exhibition serves as a critical springboard for Turkish exports into the Indo-Pacific. The regional interest is bolstered by recent high-level diplomatic engagements, including the inaugural High-Level Strategic Cooperation Council between Türkiye and Malaysia held earlier this year. These diplomatic frameworks are now translating into tangible industrial cooperation, with Turkish firms offering not just platforms but also technology transfer and local co-production opportunities that appeal to the burgeoning domestic defense industries of Southeast Asian states.

The integration of artificial intelligence into land platforms remains a central theme of the 2026 show, highlighted by the introduction of the ADVENT-AI system. HAVELSAN is demonstrating this capability through scenarios involving real-time anomaly detection and tactical picture generation under electronic warfare conditions. This technological leap addresses a specific concern for Asia-Pacific militaries regarding the reliability of autonomous systems in contested electromagnetic environments. By proving that these vehicles can maintain operational integrity during jamming, Turkish manufacturers are providing a viable alternative to more expensive Western or commercially restricted Chinese systems.

Hybrid-Drive Autonomous Vehicle

FNSS has also drawn significant attention with the ALKA-KAPLAN HYBRID, a joint solution that integrates a directed energy weapon system with a hybrid-drive autonomous vehicle. This platform represents a shift towards sustainable and stealthy operations, as the hybrid powertrain allows for silent watch and low-thermal-signature movement. For Southeast Asian nations managing vast jungle borders or sensitive coastal installations, the ability to deploy high-tech surveillance and neutralisation tools with minimal logistic footprints is becoming a primary procurement driver. The hybrid technology specifically appeals to regional ministries of defense looking to balance modernization with long-term energy efficiency and operational endurance.

The strategic implications of these advancements extend beyond simple procurement, reflecting a shift in the geopolitical balance of defense technology. As Southeast Asian nations navigate the complexities of the US-China competition, the acquisition of Turkish autonomous systems provides a middle path that avoids the political strings often attached to major power exports. Furthermore, the push for localization by Turkish firms aligns with the self-reliance policies of many regional governments. As the fair continues, the focus remains on whether these technological displays will translate into the multi-million dollar contracts expected to be signed during the high-value ceremonies scheduled for the final days of the event.

HAVELSAN Unveils ADVENT-AI Naval Decision Support System with Live Asymmetric Threat Demo

HAVELSAN is presenting its ADVENT-AI system for the first time at SAHA EXPO 2026, introducing an artificial intelligence-supported decision layer designed for naval operations.

The system is developed to process large volumes of operational data in real time, enabling detection of patterns, filtering of critical information, and support for faster decision-making during missions. ADVENT-AI is intended to assist operators rather than replace them, with the company emphasizing its role in reducing cognitive workload and improving situational awareness.

At the exhibition, HAVELSAN is demonstrating the system through an asymmetric threat scenario. The demonstration includes track-level anomaly detection and real-time identification and classification of surface objects under electronic warfare and jamming conditions. It also features AI-supported tactical picture generation, maritime navigation support, and platform safety monitoring.

Additional capabilities on display include intelligent system monitoring, voice assistant support, and AI-supported prediction of naval gunfire effectiveness. These functions are aimed at enhancing operational decision-making in complex maritime environments where data volumes and threat dynamics are increasing.

ADVENT-AI builds on HAVELSAN's broader work in artificial intelligence and is integrated within the ADVENT combat management system architecture. Its modular and distributed design allows new capabilities to be introduced through software updates rather than hardware changes.

This approach enables integration across existing naval platforms while preserving current system investments, providing flexibility for future upgrades and evolving operational requirements.

The unveiling of ADVENT-AI at SAHA EXPO 2026 reflects ongoing efforts to incorporate artificial intelligence into naval combat systems, particularly in areas related to data processing, decision support, and operational efficiency.

Meteksan Defence Presents Wide Range of Capabilities

The MILSAR SAR/MTI Radar, KAPAN Counter Drone System, MERT Electronic Attack System, and MILSAS Synthetic Aperture Sonar are among the various capabilities that Turkiye's Meteksan Defence is highlighting at SAHA EXPO 2026.

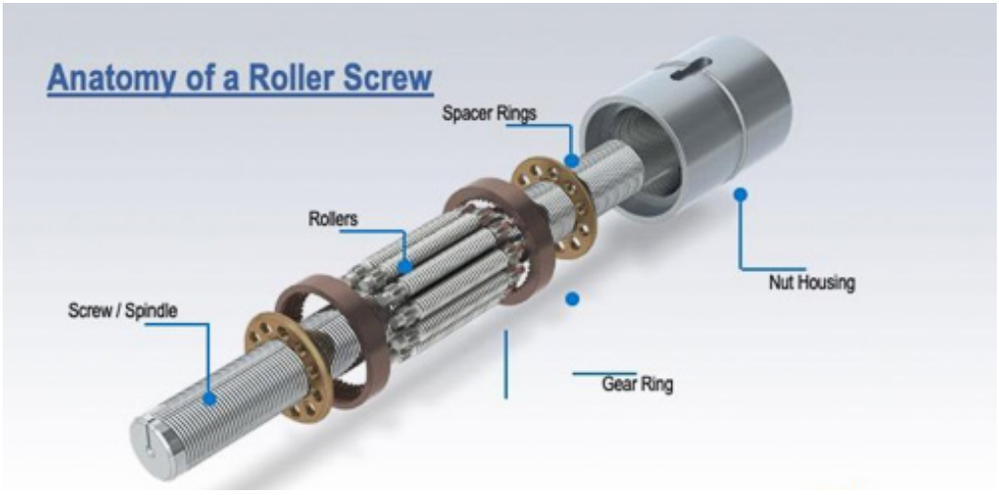
The company is also presenting missile subsystems, the Retinar AESA Multi Mission Radar, Retinar GSR Ground Surveillance Radar, SEYMEN Navigation Electronic Warfare System, MERTER Portable Electronic Attack System, the SIMETRAN Simulator Family, and the SUVDES Submarine and Underwater Vehicle Detection System at the five-day event.

"SAHA 2026 is an important platform for showcasing our advanced technologies and combat proven systems," said Adil Baktır, General Manager of Meteksan Defence. "With our strong production capabilities and international partnerships, we remain committed to supporting defense exports."

Developed in compliance with NATO standards and proven through active operational use, Meteksan Defence's systems deliver reliable and cost-effective solutions for the Turkish Armed Forces as well as for allied and friendly nations. Backed by a strong production infrastructure and high manufacturing capacity, the company continues to deliver its projects reliably and on schedule.

During SAHA 2026, Meteksan will focus on further strengthening its international collaborations, evaluating new partnership opportunities focused on production and technology transfer projects with defense companies worldwide.

ALT Bearings Showcases High-Performance Motion Systems



ALT Roller Screws, a registered trademark of ALT Bearings, showcased its high-performance motion solutions for linear and rotary applications at the opening of this year's International Defence and Aerospace Expo in Istanbul.

At SAHA Expo, held from May 5 to 9 at the Istanbul Fair Center, the French company highlighted systems designed for smooth and reliable operation, with configurations that can be tailored to specific applications and customer requirements.

Its portfolio centres on motion systems built around roller screw technology, including planetary, recirculating and inverted designs used in demanding industrial and aerospace environments. The company also develops proprietary products such as its high-capacity roller screw (HRS), alongside custom-engineered assemblies, electromechanical actuators, and integrated linear and rotary systems.

ALT Bearings said its solutions are aimed at improving efficiency, durability and load capacity, particularly in applications where compact, high-performance components are critical. It added that its roller screw systems are designed to deliver high force in smaller footprints, helping
address space and weight constraints while maintaining reliability under heavy loads.

The firm said it "specialises in the development, manufacture and supply of high-performance mechanical solutions for linear and rotary motion applications", according to its website.

Founded by bearing and roller screw specialists with decades of experience, the company said it maintains high standards in design, engineering and manufacturing. It has also built a global support network, providing customers with its Advanced Linear Technology (ALT) systems, bearing solutions and value-added services across a range of industries.

Browan Communications Hopes to Impress

Taiwan's Browan Communications is promoting its products at this year's International Defence and Aerospace Expo in Istanbul, drawing on more than two decades of wireless communications expertise to deliver integrated industrial solutions across sectors from agriculture to logistics.

The move underscores its growing presence in the global internet of things (IoT) market, as it joins the event that is currently taking place at the Istanbul Fair Center.

Its product portfolio includes LoRaWAN-compatible gateways, sensors, tracking devices and Wi-Fi 6/6E routers, designed to support applications such as smart buildings, energy management, security and supply chain operations.

Among its flagship offerings are iTank, a smart monitoring system for tank levels and pressure; B•SAFE, which focuses on workplace health and safety; and sensors integrated with Amazon Sidewalk, aimed at extending connectivity for low-bandwidth devices.

Founded in 1999 and part of the Gemtek Group, and headquartered in Hsinchu, Taiwan, Browan Communications integrates multiple connectivity technologies – including Wi-Fi, Bluetooth Low Energy (BLE), LTE, ultra-wideband (UWB) and LoRa – to develop customised IoT systems tailored to industry needs.

At the same time, Browan provides device management and data analytics services through cloud-based platforms such as AWS IoT Core for LoRaWAN, enabling real-time monitoring and system

optimization.

With projects deployed in more than 40 countries, the company has positioned itself as a growing player in the global IoT ecosystem, targeting industries seeking to digitize operations and improve efficiency through connected technologies.

The Latest Aerospace and Defence News, **Delivered Weekly**

To help readers stay abreast of the latest developments in the world of defence and security, and commercial aviation/MRO, **GBP Aerospace & Defence** produces weekly digital newsletters in English that are sent to an extensive database that includes high-ranking government officials, top executives of companies, and other decisionmakers. The newsletters provide readers a comprehensive overview of developments in each sector.

And Now, **in Three Regional Languages!**

GBP Aerospace & Defence has introduced weekly newsletters in Filipino, Malaysian, and Indonesian. The regional newsletters provide international companies the ideal vehicle to reach out to decisionmakers in the Philippines, Malaysia, and Indonesia in the local language.

For Newsletter Sponsorship Opportunities and other information, contact: **Vittorio.Prudente@gbp.com.sg**

GBP AEROSPACE & DEFENCE

TRAVEL BEYOND THE SKIES WITH US!

Subscribe to **Space Technology**, a new quarterly magazine brought to you by **GBP Aerospace & Defence**.

Stay up to date with the latest developments in the space domain as our team of writers brings you a carefully curated mix of industry news, in-depth technical analysis, and interviews from a sector that is experiencing rapid growth.

Don't miss out on this opportunity. Join us as we explore new frontiers!

Scan the QR Code to Subscribe →

GBP AEROSPACE & DEFENCE