

A group of German air force fighter jets were due to arrive in Singapore after a marathon bid to fly them some 12,800 kms (8,000 miles) from their home base to Southeast Asia in just 24 hours.



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Two Eurofighter jets perform at the German air force base in Noervenich, western Germany in 2016 [File: Martin Meissner/AP]

The scheduled arrival of the jets on Tuesday demonstrates the ability of a European nation to move air power quickly to the region and comes at a time of heightened tension.

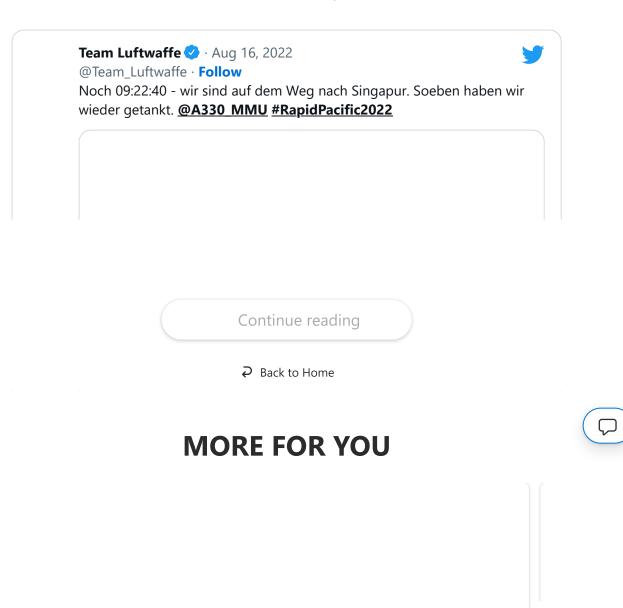
China and the United States and its allies over Taiwan.

The European Union unveiled a new strategy in September for boosting economic, political and defence ties in the Indo-Pacific region.

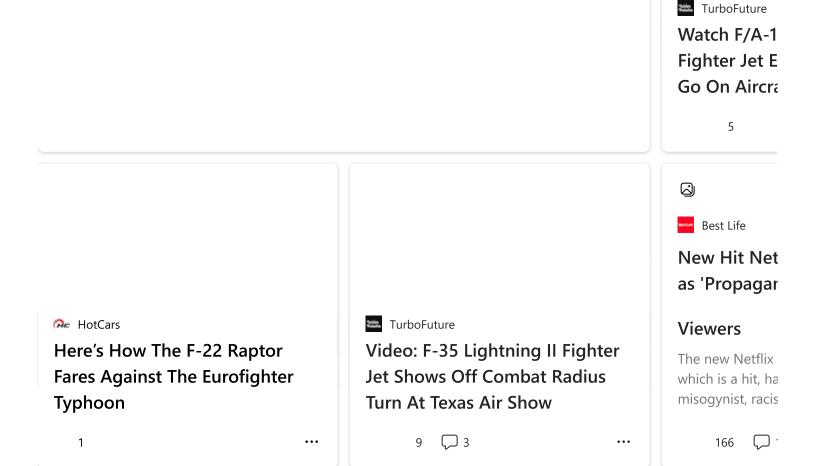
German defence minister Christine Lambrecht told reporters that despite the war in Ukraine being a priority at the moment, Germany's Eurofighter mission underscores that Asia has not been forgotten.

"We are at the side of all of those who stand for our values such as democracy, freedom and security, and are also willing to contribute," she said as the German air force planes took off from Neuburg, Germany, on Monday, the dpa news agency reported.

"Our focus at the moment is naturally on the eastern flank, for which Russia's brutal war of aggression is to blame, but we also have to keep an eye on other regions," Lambrecht said.



■ Feedback





Russia blames sabotage as blasts rock another military facility in Crimea

Uliana Pavlova - Yesterday 9:39 p.m.



blast at an ammunition depot in the village of Maiskoye in Crimea injured at least two people, local authorities said Tuesday, in the second incident in a week to rock the Russian-controlled peninsula.

Russia's ministry of defense has blamed sabotage for the Tuesday morning explosions and damage to the military facility in the Dzhankoi area of northern Crimea, state news agency RIA Novosti reported.

Around 2,000 residents in the area were evacuated, Russian state media RIA Novosti reported, and train services from Russia into Crimea were suspended.

Ukraine has not claimed responsibility for the incident, but Mykhaylo Podolyak, a Ukrainian presidential adviser, tweeted that: "Crimea occupied by Russians is about warehouses explosions and high risk of death for invaders and thieves. Demilitarization in action."

Last Tuesday, a series of explosions damaged at least eight aircraft and infrastructure at a Russian military air base in Novofedorivka, on Crimea's west coast.

The Russian defense ministry statement did not clarify how much military equipment and ammunition may have been destroyed in the latest incident. Footage of the facility posted on social media last week showed large



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