

## Pakistan Tests Short-Range Missile

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The Pakistani military claimed on April 19 to have successfully tested a 60 kilometer-range nuclear-capable ballistic missile, a move that might indicate Islamabad's intention to develop low-yield nuclear weapons for use on the battlefield.

The missile, called the Hatf 9, "could carry nuclear warheads of appropriate yields with high accuracy," the Pakistani military said in a press statement. The statement added, "This quick response system addresses the need to deter evolving threats."

Pakistan and its nuclear-armed rival, India, have continued to produce fissile material to increase their nuclear weapons stockpiles, and both countries persist in developing and testing ballistic missiles and other delivery systems.

Because of India's conventional military superiority, however, Pakistan is believed to be seeking both a degree of nuclear parity and a means to neutralize India's nonnuclear capabilities.

Islamabad is currently constructing additional nuclear reactors similar to those it already uses to produce plutonium for weapons. Pakistan's nuclear weapons program traditionally has focused on highly enriched uranium (HEU) as the nuclear explosive material. However, plutonium is better suited than HEU to producing the type of compact nuclear weapons intended for use in war-fighting.

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