Saudi Arabia may acquire nuclear capable Dong Feng Ballistic missiles from China

Seen as a response to Iran’s march towards the production of nuclear weapons, one of its major rivals in the region, the Saudi Arabia is reported to be in talks with the Chinese authorities, for the purchase of nuclear capable missiles.

The news was first reported by the Jerusalem-based unofficial Israeli military intelligence website Debka. The report claims that the negotiations are currently ongoing, with a number of Saudi diplomats trying to finalize the deal in Beijing.

The website reported that the deal is almost finalized, and that the missiles will be deployed from a base near Riyadh. The website had also reported last year that the Kingdom had entered in to an agreement with Pakistan, for the purchase of an undisclosed number of nuclear weapons.

Western analysts argue that the Saudi authorities decided to pursue their nuclear ambitions after finding out that the new sanctions and embargoes on Iran are not having their desired effect. A recent Pentagon report had stated that Iran is only two years away from developing a nuclear weapon on its own. Saudi Arabia is regarded as one of the primary targets for an Iranian nuclear attack, partly due to its close association with the United States. The Saudis are also concerned about the ongoing situation in Syria.

This month, the European Union had imposed new embargoes on Iran, in an attempt to force the Islamic republic to cooperate more with the officials of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). However the Iranians have refused to back down, and have instead threatened to attack the American military facilities in return.
The Dong Feng (DF, East Wind in Chinese) are a series of Inter-Continental Ballistic Missiles (ICBMs) developed by the Chinese military. The Saudis are reported to be negotiating for the purchase of DF-21, a Medium Range Ballistic Missile (MRBM). It was developed by the China Changfeng Mechanics and Electronics Technology Academy (CCMETA) during the 1970s.