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PHOTOS BY WILLIAM NEAL/U.S. Air Force

Airmen apply the Apocalypse II nose art to a B-1B Lancer, previously nicknamed Rage, at Dyess Air Force Base, Texas, on April 27.

‘We honor our past’

Restored B-1B bomber returns to fleet with WWII-inspired nose art

By JENNIFER H. SVAN
Stars and Stripes

A revitalized B-1B Lancer brought out of storage — with a new name and nose art that pays homage to a World War II bombing crew shot down over Burma — is ready for action in the Middle East if needed.

The Apocalypse II is back in the fleet as the flagship Lancer for the 7th Bomb Wing at Dyess Air Force Base, Texas, the Air Force said in a statement on Wednesday.

The dedication ceremony at



A B-1B Lancer, tail number 86-0115, taxis across the flightline.

Dyess last month marked the jet's return to combat capability after nearly two years of restoration work, which included replacement of more than 500 components and a complete system overhaul, Air Force officials said.

The bomber, previously nicknamed Rage, was one of the 17 B-1Bs retired in 2021 and sent to the “boneyard” at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Ariz., according to the Air Force.

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‘Golden Fleet’ initiative in Navy plan for shipbuilding

By ALISON BATH
Stars and Stripes

The Navy plans to spend hundreds of billions of dollars on shipbuilding over the next few years as it works to amass a larger, stronger fleet that now includes a nuclear-powered battleship.

The service's 2027 shipbuilding plan, released Monday, calls for \$305.7 billion in spending from 2027 to 2031 on submarines, destroyers, amphibious ships, oilers and other “battle force” vessels.

The annual blueprint outlines how the Navy will expand its fleet, modernize its force and build up the U.S. maritime industrial base over the next 30 years.

This year's plan also offers a look at the Navy's “Golden Fleet” initiative, which aims to preserve existing Navy platforms while rapidly expanding its force of surface combatants, auxiliary ships and unmanned vessels.

“This plan outlines how we will deliver the capability our warfighters deserve,” acting Secretary of the Navy Hung Cao said in a statement. He added that success would be measured by growing a larger, more capable fleet, both manned and unmanned.

To that end, the Navy will invest in 75 vessels from 2027 to 2031, including five Columbia-class submarines, seven Arleigh Burke-class destroyers and 23 medium landing ships.

The list also includes five amphibious transport dock ships, five ocean surveillance vessels and three Trump-class nuclear-powered battleships, a proposed new class of warship first unveiled in December.

“The battleship's primary role is to deliver high-volume, long-

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