

## DAILY TRACKER

### NUCLEAR ISSUES

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1. The government aims to increase nuclear energy production three times from the current level, Minister of State for Science and Technology Jitendra Singh said on Tuesday. Jitendra Singh said the country was on the course to increase nuclear energy production capacity to 22,480 MW by 2031. The minister sat down with a high-level US delegation, led by Deputy Secretary of Energy David M Turk, and said that in the coming decade India would produce more than three times nuclear power from the current level of 6,780 MW.

*Source: <https://www.indiatoday.in/science/story/india-nuclear-energy-hydrogen-fuel-climate-action-1852716-2021-09-14> 14 September 2021*

2. On the 20th anniversary of 9/11, against the backdrop of the rushed U.S.-allied Afghanistan withdrawal, the grisly reality of armed combat and the challenge posed by asymmetric suicide terror attacks grow harder to ignore. But weapons technology has changed substantially over the past two decades. And thinking ahead to the not-so-distant future, we must ask: What if these assailants were able to remove human suicide bombers or attackers from the equation altogether? As someone who has studied and worked in artificial intelligence for the better part of four decades, I worry about such a technology threat, born from artificial intelligence and robotics.

*Source: <https://www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/2021/09/i-weapons-are-third-revolution-warfare/620013/> 11 September 2021*

### MISSILES/BIO WEAPONS

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1. “There is nothing unusual about this test, but what we need to understand is that the North Koreans have tested a long-range cruise missile which is of strategic relevance for a particular region,” said Dr Jagannath Panda, coordinator of the East Asia Centre at MP-IDSA, New Delhi, in an interview with *indianexpress.com*. Following the test, Joseph Dempsey, research associate at the International Institute for Strategic Studies wrote on Twitter that the DPRK “technically already had cruise missiles – albeit a shorter range anti-ship system – the Kumsong-3 (KN-SS-N-2 Stormpetrel) based on the Soviet Kh-35.”



**Source:** <https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/explained-importance-of-north-korea-first-strategic-cruise-missile-tests-7508564/> *14 September 2021*

## NUCLEAR PROLIFERATION

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1. Over 2,000 academics from 81 countries and varied disciplines have delivered a letter demanding a Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty to manage a global phase-out of coal, oil and gas to governments gathering at the UN General Assembly (UNGA) on Tuesday. In the open letter, the academics have recognised that burning coal, oil, and gas is the most significant contributor to climate change, responsible for almost 80% of carbon dioxide emissions since the industrial revolution. Furthermore, they noted that "air pollution caused by fossil fuels was responsible for almost one in five deaths worldwide in 2018".

**Source:** <https://weather.com/en-IN/india/climate-change/news/2021-09-14-academics-demand-non-proliferation-treaty-on-fossil-fuels> *14 September 2021*

2. It has become commonplace to talk about the climate crisis as the greatest threat to the planet. It is certainly right to focus on an existential issue which we can do something about. But I fear there are other problems which could – at very short notice – prove even more pressing. Pandemics we know about. But the risks around nuclear war and weapons proliferation have slipped out of public consciousness. They mustn't.

**Source:** <https://www.independent.co.uk/voices/nuclear-war-north-korea-china-vigil-b1919912.html> *14 September 2021*

## UN REFORMS

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1. In an update to the UN Human Rights Council (OHCHR) on the situation in the northernmost regional state in Ethiopia, Ms. Bachelet said the conflict has "continued unabated," and "risks spilling over to the whole Horn of Africa". In the last few months, "mass detentions, killings, systematic looting, and sexual violence" have created "an atmosphere of fear and an erosion of living conditions that resulted



in the forced displacement of the Tigrayan civilian population. Civilian suffering is widespread, and impunity is pervasive, she said.

**Source:** <https://news.un.org/en/story/2021/09/1099812#> 14 September 2021

2. Millions of Afghans could run out of food before the arrival of winter and 1 million children are at risk of starvation and death if their immediate needs are not met, top United Nations officials warned Monday, putting the country's plight into stark relief. Secretary-General António Guterres, speaking at a high-level UN conference in Geneva convened to address the crisis, said that since the Taliban takeover in Afghanistan last month, the nation's poverty rate has soared; basic public services have neared collapse; and, in the past year, hundreds of thousands of people have been made homeless after being forced to flee fighting.

**Source:** <https://indianexpress.com/article/world/a-million-afghan-children-could-die-in-most-perilous-hour-un-warns-7507701/> 14 September 2021

3. "Today, we have already heard clearly more than \$1 billion in pledges...It represents a quantum leap in relation to the financial commitment of the international community towards the Afghan people," said Mr. Guterres. UN relief chief Martin Griffiths confirmed in his closing remarks to the meeting that more than \$1.2 billion in humanitarian and development aid in total had been promised, incorporating both Monday's appeal, and the regional response

**Source:** <https://news.un.org/en/story/2021/09/1099782> 14 September 2021