

DAILY TRACKER

NUCLEAR ISSUES

1. When India set off a nuclear bomb in the desert of Rajasthan in 1974, describing it implausibly as a “peaceful nuclear explosion”, a young Pakistani metallurgist in the Netherlands was ready to volunteer his services to his country. A few months later Abdul Qadeer (A.Q.) Khan was explaining to the prime minister, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, how uranium could be spun in centrifuges so it could be used in bombs. Within a decade, Pakistan had the ability to build and test a nuclear device; in 1998, it did so following a series of Indian tests.

Source: <https://www.economist.com/obituary/2021/10/16/obituary-aq-khan-was-the-worlds-biggest-nuclear-proliferator>

2. This summer, U.S. analysts using commercial satellite imagery discovered that China was significantly expanding its nuclear forces and building hundreds of new missile silos. With the new silos, China could potentially double the size of its arsenal of intercontinental ballistic missiles. The news sent shockwaves through Washington. The head of Strategic Command called the developments “breathhtaking,” and the news is sure to embolden efforts to fund U.S. nuclear modernization efforts on Capitol Hill. While the United States has a much larger nuclear force than China — with 3,750 nuclear warheads in its nuclear weapons stockpile compared to China’s 350 warheads — it will still likely take a forceful response to China’s latest nuclear developments.

Source: <https://warontherocks.com/2021/10/chinas-missile-silos-and-the-sino-indian-nuclear-competition/>

3. Indian Ambassador to the United Nations (UN) Conference on Disarmament, Pankaj Sharma on Wednesday, 13 October stated that India is a “responsible nuclear weapon” state while maintaining the policy of credible minimum deterrence based on a 'no-first-use' approach and non-use of nuclear weapons against other non-nuclear-weapon states. While speaking at the 76th Sessions of the UN General Assembly, the Indian envoy, according to ANI, noted that

global peace and security is tackling multiple threats such as weapons of mass destruction, terrorism and cyber threats.

Source: <https://www.republicworld.com/world-news/rest-of-the-world-news/india-tells-un-it-is-a-responsible-nuclear-weapon-state-follows-no-first-use-policy.html>

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5. It is only possible to achieve progress in nuclear disarmament based on consensus and calculated, gradual reductions under the Article 6 of the Non-Proliferation Treaty," Department for Nonproliferation and Arms Control Acting Deputy Director Konstantin Vorontsov noted

Source: <https://tass.com/world/1349325>

NUCLEAR PROLIFERATION

1. The State of Qatar renewed the importance of international cooperation for elimination of nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction and non-proliferation, pointing to the State’s efforts to continue developing its national legislation related to weapons of mass destruction to comply with its obligations under the conventions the country has acceded to and ratified. The State of Qatar expressed its support for all activities that promote the implementation and understanding of those treaties and agreements.

Source: <https://thepeninsulaqatar.com/opinion/15/10/2021/Qatar-calls-for-elimination-of-nuclear-and-mass-destruction-weapons>

2. The National Nuclear Security Administration wants to make it easier for people in the nuclear industry to understand the complexities of non-proliferation. It's brought all of the information together in an online portal called US Nuclear Nexus. For what's going on, Argonne National Laboratory principal systems engineer Allison Bennett Irion and NNSA Associate Assistant Deputy Administrator Jeff Chamberlin spoke to *Federal Drive with Tom Temin*.

Source: <https://federalnewsnetwork.com/technology-main/2021/10/nnsa-hopes-new-online-portal-will-make-nuclear-non-proliferation-easier-to-understand/>

MISSILES/BIO WEAPONS

1. Russia should remove missiles from Europe that violate the conditions of the INF Treaty, according to US Special Envoy for Nuclear Nonproliferation Jeffrey Eberhardt. On being asked to clarify the Biden administration's view on Russia's intention to implement a moratorium on the deployment of medium- and shorter-range missiles in Europe

Source: <https://www.republicworld.com/world-news/us-news/us-special-envoy-says-russia-should-remove-missiles-violating-treaty-from-europe.html>

2. Earlier, it was reported that the Ivan Papanin-class multi-purpose reefer transport will be capable of traveling along the Northern Sea Route without icebreaker support thanks to its ice-reinforced hull, the Azipod electric propulsion system, and an ice-type radar station

Source: <https://tass.com/defense/1350061>

3. PLAAF's J-20 stealth fighter had altered the regional balance of power when it was unveiled 10 years ago. With its first flight on January 11, 2011, the aircraft proved to the world that China was extremely close to becoming the second country after the US to develop its own indigenous fifth-generation fighter. Manufactured by China's state-owned Chengdu Aircraft Industry Group (CAIG), the J-20 is a single-seat, multirole stealth fighter aircraft. This warplane has been designed to be able to execute ground attack missions even in hostile environments.

Source: <https://eurasianimes.com/chinese-j-20-miles-to-go-before-it-can-actually-counter-us-f-35s-dominance/>

UN REFORMS

1. The three-day UN Sustainable Transport Conference, which opened on Thursday, will examine how transportation can contribute to climate response, economic growth and sustainable development. It is taking place just weeks before the COP26 UN climate change conference in Glasgow, Scotland. In remarks to the opening, UN Secretary-General António Guterres underlined what is at stake. **“The next nine years must see a global shift towards renewable energy. Sustainable transport is central to that transformation,”** he said.

Source: <https://news.un.org/en/story/2021/10/1103062>

2. Armenia on October 14 accused Azerbaijan of promoting systematic ethnic hatred against Armenians, and urged judges at the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in The Hague to issue an order to halt hate speech. During opening arguments at the ICJ, Armenian representative Yeghishe Kirakosyan also asked the court to order the release and repatriation of prisoners of war taken during the conflict in late 2020. The feud between the neighbors escalated into open war last year over the disputed region of Nargorno-Karabakh , which left well over 6,000 people dead. Azerbaijani troops drove ethnic Armenian forces from territory that they had controlled since the 1990s in and around the region before Russia brokered a ceasefire. "With this application, Armenia instead seeks to prevent and remedy the cycle of violence and hatred perpetrated against ethnic Armenians," Kirakosyan said.

Source: <https://frontline.thehindu.com/dispatches/armenia-and-azerbaijan-face-off-in-un-court/article37008778.ece>

3. UN chief Antonio Guterres asked to postpone a virtual meeting with Southeast Asian ministers at the last minute to avoid signalling any recognition of Myanmar's military government by being in the same online room as the military's envoy, United Nations diplomats have said. The meeting between the UN secretary-general and foreign ministers from the 10-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) – including Wunna Maung Lwin, the foreign minister appointed by the military – had been due to take place last Friday.

Source: <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/10/15/un-chief-delayed-asean-meeting-to-avoid-military-envoy>

4. A deal for the United Nations to start work on a remote Bangladeshi island where the government has sent thousands of Rohingya refugees offers no guarantee they will be allowed to move freely to the mainland, according to a copy of the agreement. The Bangladesh government has moved nearly 19,000 Rohingya refugees, members of a persecuted mostly Muslim minority from Myanmar, to Bhasan Char island from border camps, despite protests by refugees and opposition from rights groups, who have likened it to an island jail and said some relocations were involuntary.

Source: <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/10/15/rohingya-free-movement-guarantee-un-deal-bhasan-char-island-bangladesh>