

## DAILY TRACKER

### NUCLEAR ISSUES

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1. China tested a nuclear-capable hypersonic missile in August, showing a capability that caught U.S. intelligence by surprise, the Financial Times reported, citing five unnamed sources.

*Source:* <https://www.reuters.com/world/china-surprises-us-with-hypersonic-missile-test-ft-reports-2021-10-17/>

2. Social media giant Facebook seeks to create 10,000 jobs in the European Union over the next five years in a push to build a digital world known as the “metaverse.” China’s National Bureau of Statistics said gross domestic product (GDP) increased by 4.9% in the third quarter from a year ago. China’s industrial production rose by 3.1% in September 2021.

*Source:* <https://www.swfinstitute.org/news/88920/daily-dose-october-18-2021>

3. In some ways, the AUKUS alliance between Australia, the US and the UK is the strangest new event, until you examine its details and its strategic significance. It is the strangest event because it substituted one western alliance for another, causing great anger between Europe and America and between France, a country with one million citizens resident in the Pacific, and Australia.

*Source:* <https://theprint.in/opinion/security-in-indo-pacific-is-not-a-simple-affair-aukus-china-missile-and-taiwan-prove-that/752290/>

4. After years of high tensions and fitful diplomacy, it should now be clear to all that there will be no negotiated solution to the Iranian nuclear issue. And although U.S. presidents and Israeli prime ministers have routinely insisted that all options remain on the table, it is unlikely that either the United States or Israel will use overt military force to eliminate Iran’s nuclear program. It is time to start envisioning a world with a nuclear-armed Iran.

*Source:* <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/iran/2021-10-18/bomb-will-backfire-iran>

5. Asteroid impacts are one of the most dangerous possible natural disasters, as humanity currently lacks a reliable means of defense against them. One possible solution, using nuclear



weapons or similarly destructive means, is something commonly seen in science fiction movies, but is frowned upon by many scientists due to the possibility of fragments of the asteroid causing significant damage.

**Source:** <https://www.jpost.com/science/asteroid-impact-could-be-stopped-with-nuclear-missiles-study-suggests-682211>

## NUCLEAR PROLIFERATION

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1. North Korea, long dubbed as a "hermit kingdom" has continued to remain cut off from the rest of the world—politically, economically and geographically. But neither rigid sanctions, nor international isolation and growing food insecurities, have prevented the country—officially known as the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK)—from making significant advances as the world's ninth nuclear power, along with the US, Britain, France, Russia, China, India, Pakistan and Israel.

**Source:** <https://www.indepthnews.net/index.php/armaments/nuclear-weapons/4809-north-korea-flexes-its-nuclear-muscles-and-defies-the-western-world>

2. According to the new trilateral security pact between the United States, the United Kingdom and Australia (Aukus), Washington and London will "help" Canberra to develop and deploy nuclear-powered submarines. The highly controversial \$66-billion deal is expected to trigger arms races and nuclear proliferation in Asia. It violates the Southeast Asian Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty (SEANWFZ, 1995), effective since 1997. It would seem to violate the Philippine Constitution. And it is strongly opposed by China.

**Source:** <https://www.manilatimes.net/2021/10/18/opinion/columns/from-peaceful-nuclear-free-asean-to-battle-ready-indo-pacific/1818773>

## MISSILES/BIO WEAPONS

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1. The US Army's new Precision Strike Missile exceeded its maximum "threshold" in a flight test this week, according to an announcement from prime contractor Lockheed Martin.

*Source:* <https://breakingdefense.com/2021/10/us-armys-precision-strike-missile-surpasses-inf-imposed-maximum-threshold-in-new-test/>

2. It was around a few months back that Haim Eshed, a former Israeli space security chief, shockingly talked about the existence of aliens. Eshed claimed that an advanced alien species is working together with world powers like Israel and the United States. He also hinted at the existence of a galactic federation where humans and aliens are members. And now, while interacting with The Sun Online, Robert Salas, a former US Air Force captain, had revealed that an alien UFO had disabled US nuclear missiles, long back in 1967.

*Source:* <https://www.ibtimes.co.in/alien-ufo-disabled-nuclear-missiles-claims-former-us-air-force-captain-841763>

3. The exercise, held by Russia's Pacific Fleet, featured the guided-missile cruiser Varyag and 11 other warships and support vessels, according to Russian state-sponsored news agency TASS. Ten missiles were launched and intercepted by the Varyag, which employed three surface-to-air missile systems. The fleet released video of the exercise, which showed numerous missiles being launched from a Russian vessel. Additional weapons systems, including the AK-630 rotary cannon and heavier artillery, are shown firing in the footage.

*Source:* [https://www.stripes.com/theaters/asia\\_pacific/2021-10-12/russia-missile-defense-exercise-sea-of-japan-3214481.html](https://www.stripes.com/theaters/asia_pacific/2021-10-12/russia-missile-defense-exercise-sea-of-japan-3214481.html)

## UN REFORMS

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1. “Terrorism continues in Afghanistan”, the UN mission in the country, UNAMA, said in a post on Twitter. “(The) UN condemns the latest atrocity targeting a religious institution and worshippers. Those responsible need to be held to account.” In New York, UN Secretary-General António Guterres condemned the attack in the strongest terms, describing it as “despicable”, according to a statement issued by his Spokesperson.

*Source:* <https://news.un.org/en/story/2021/10/1103272>

2. Representatives from nearly 200 countries will meet in Glasgow, Scotland, from Oct. 31-Nov. 12 for climate talks to strengthen action to tackle global warming under the 2015 Paris Agreement. Amid extreme weather events around the world and following a United Nations’ climate report which warned that global warming was close to spiralling out of control, the actions of governments at this conference will determine whether it is a success.

*Source:* <https://indianexpress.com/article/world/un-climate-conference-issues-which-need-to-be-resolved-7577982/>

3. The Taliban, notorious for its brutal and oppressive rule from 1996 to 2001, has faced international fury after effectively excluding women and girls from schools and work across the country, while incrementally stripping away Afghans’ freedoms.

*Source:* <https://www.ndtv.com/world-news/taliban-to-announce-plans-for-girls-education-soon-un-2577737>

4. The UN Global Sustainable Transport Conference concluded with a call to accelerate progress towards achieving sustainable transport that would result in major reductions in greenhouse gas emissions

*Source:* [https://www.business-standard.com/article/international/accelerate-action-to-achieve-net-zero-transport-emissions-un-summit-121101700176\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/article/international/accelerate-action-to-achieve-net-zero-transport-emissions-un-summit-121101700176_1.html)

