

DAILY TRACKER

NUCLEAR ISSUES

1. At the recent United Nations climate summit known as COP26, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi grabbed attention when he stated that India wants to achieve net zero emissions by 2070. However, nuclear power is the only method to achieve this.
Source: <https://foreignpolicy.com/2021/11/18/india-nuclear-power-2070-cop26/>
2. NASA and the nation's top federal nuclear research lab on Friday put out a request for proposals for a fission surface power system. NASA is working with the Idaho National Laboratory of the US Department of Energy to develop a sun-independent power source for lunar missions before the end of the decade.
Source: https://www.business-standard.com/article/international/nasa-us-govt-look-for-ideas-for-nuclear-fission-surface-power-system-on-moon-12112000148_1.html
3. Uranium Energy (NYSEMKT:UEC), a uranium mining firm, was down 11.5 percent as of 2 p.m. ET Friday. There wasn't any stock-specific news behind the drop. On the contrary, it was the absence of news that was the problem.
Source: <https://www.fool.com/investing/2021/11/19/why-uranium-energy-stock-cratered-on-friday/>
4. Cheyenne's Wyoming Retirement System announced \$112 million in investments and promises. The \$10.5 billion pension fund's employees announced a \$50 million investment in the Sprott Physical Uranium Trust as part of its marketable alternatives asset class. According to a recording of the meeting, WRS' investment in the commodity ETF was completed on October 18, as stated by Sam Masoudi, chief investment officer, at the pension fund's board meeting on Wednesday. Sprott Asset Management is in charge of the exchange-traded fund.
Source: <https://www.pionline.com/searches-and-hires/wyoming-allocates-112-million-uranium-private-equity-funds>
5. The US will prevent Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon and will counter its destabilising actions in the region if Tehran does “not engage seriously”, Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin said on Saturday.
Source: <https://www.thenationalnews.com/mena/2021/11/20/us-will-stop-iran-developing-nuclear-weapon-top-official-assures-gulf-and-region/>
6. On Friday, President Joe Biden temporarily delegated presidential authority to Vice President Kamala Harris while undergoing a routine colonoscopy, making her the first woman in US history to hold the position of commander-in-chief of the armed forces and the first woman to command the US nuclear arsenal.
Source: <https://www.businessinsider.in/politics/world/news/kamala-harris-will-become-the-first-woman-to-have-control-over-us-nuclear-weapons-but-only-briefly/articleshow/87806057.cms>
7. The Global Times, a state-run Chinese news agency, rejected American fears of a nuclear attack,

claiming that officials were exaggerating the threat to punish Beijing. Tensions between China and the US have been rising, with authorities expressing alarm over China's military expansion.

Source: <https://www.newsweek.com/china-accuses-us-fueling-nuclear-war-panic-after-official-warns-attack-1651357>

8. While pledges made at the COP26 climate change summit show that nations are dedicated to curbing global warming, World Nuclear Association Director General Sama Bilbao y León says the nuclear industry is ready to help achieve those goals.

Source: <https://world-nuclear-news.org/Articles/Viewpoint-COP26-pivotal-point-in-perception-of-nuc>

9. Chancellor Angela Merkel has defended her decision to phase out nuclear energy, even though it has made it harder for Germany to wean its economy off fossil fuels. In a Reuters interview, the outgoing chancellor also stated that she opposes any European Union efforts to identify nuclear power as "sustainable."

Source: <https://www.reuters.com/business/energy/exclusive-merkel-defends-nuclear-power-exit-despite-climate-challenges-2021-11-17/>

MISSILES/ BIO WEAPONS

1. The Indian Navy is due to commission an indigenously developed P15B stealth guided-missile destroyer ship on November 21 at the Naval Dockyard in Mumbai, in the presence of Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, in a major boost to maritime strength. The destroyer Visakhapatnam was designed by the Directorate of Naval Design, an in-house organisation of the Indian Navy, and built by Mazagon Dock Limited.

Source: <https://www.timesnownews.com/india/article/big-boost-to-maritime-power-as-indian-navy-all-set-to-commission-guided-missile-destroyer-details-here/833618>

2. Also, Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Karambir Singh will be the Chief Guest at the commissioning ceremony of the fourth submarine of the Kalvari Class - Submarine Vela on November 28. "We are ready for INS Visakhapatnam's commissioning. Our indigenous content is the highest today. After commissioning, we will continue with a few more trials and will be one with the fleet," said Captain Birendra Singh Bains, Commanding Officer (designate) of INS Visakhapatnam.

Source: <https://www.ndtv.com/india-news/ins-visakhapatnam-navys-stealth-guided-missile-destroyer-to-be-commissioned-tomorrow-2618241>

3. More than two dozen members of Congress are asking the secretary of the Army to "expeditiously" award the Purple Heart to soldiers injured when Iran struck their airbase in Iraq with ballistic missiles in January 2020. In a letter obtained exclusively by CBS News, a bipartisan group of 29 congressional representatives urged Army Secretary Christine Wormuth to "rectify this injustice as quickly as possible" and recognize soldiers suffering from traumatic brain injuries sustained in the attack.

Source: <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/lawmakers-army-award-purple-heart-soldiers-injured-iran-missile-attack-cbs-news-investigation/>



4. Japan and Australia have joined the international community in condemning Russia for testing an anti-satellite missile on Nov. 15, which resulted in over 1,500 pieces of trash in low Earth orbit. In a Nov. 18 statement, Japan's foreign ministry called the test "an irresponsible behavior that undermines sustainable and stable use of outer space." The ministry said the test also "runs counter to the Space Debris Mitigation Guidelines" adopted unanimously by the member states of the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS), including Russia, in 2007.
Source: <https://spacenews.com/japan-australia-condemn-russia-for-irresponsible-anti-satellite-missile-test/>
5. North Korea "successfully launched ballistic missiles from a train for the first time" in September 2021. Ballistic missiles were launched into Japan's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). Following North Korea's missile launch, the French ambassador to the United Nations, Nicolas de Riviere, was quoted as saying that the Security Council had decided to condemn the test and saw it as a "serious threat" because it was "a clear breach of the Council's resolutions."
Source: <https://thediplomat.com/2021/11/how-useful-is-north-koreas-railroad-missile-launching-system/>
6. Poland's Defense Minister, Mariusz Błaszczak, has signed an agreement with the UK to create a new ground-based air defense system for the Polish military. The collaboration will allow the two countries to share cutting-edge technologies for the future Narew air defense system, enhancing both countries' defense capabilities while preserving crucial missile expertise.
Source: <https://www.thedefensepost.com/2021/11/19/poland-uk-air-defense-system/>
7. The British government announced new defense collaborations with Poland and the Ukraine on the back of a visit to the two Eastern European nations by Defence Secretary Ben Wallace this week. Poland announced Nov. 18 that it had selected MBDA's Common Anti-air Modular Missile (CAMM) and launcher as the centerpiece of its multibillion-dollar NAREW air defense system program being developed and led-by local company PGZ.
Source: <https://www.defensenews.com/global/europe/2021/11/19/britain-bolsters-ties-with-poland-ukraine-amid-jitters-in-eastern-europe/>
8. On Friday, Nisha Biswal, head of the US-India Business Council (USIBC), said that India's purchase of S-400 missile systems from Russia poses some issues for Washington and New Delhi, which both governments must work out, but that sanctions will not be used. The CAATSA is a federal statute in the United States that places penalties on Iran, North Korea, and Russia. In response to Russia's annexation of Crimea in 2014 and alleged intervention in the 2016 US presidential election, CAATSA allows the US administration to impose penalties on countries that buy key defence hardware from Russia.
Source: <https://www.ndtv.com/india-news/india-russia-s-400-deal-us-india-business-council-head-nisha-biswal-us-business-council-chief-urged-no-sanctions-against-india-for-russia-missile-s-40-2618159>
9. According to reliable sources, Russian President Vladimir Putin will visit India next month, which will coincide not only with the delivery of the first batch of S-400 surface-to-air missile (SAM) systems, but also with negotiations with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi over the potential sale of the super-advanced S-500 and S-550 missile systems. India could become the first foreign buyer of Russian-made S-500 and S-550 SAM air defence systems if talks go well.

Source: <https://eurasianimes.com/with-s-400-in-kitty-modi-putin-may-discuss-acquiring-russian-s-500-s-550-missile-systems-during-india-visit/>

NUCLEAR PROLIFERATION

1. Customs and Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) teams confiscated seven containers from a ship that was meant to be sent to China at Mundra port in Kutch district, based on particular intelligence information. On November 18, Customs and DRI confiscated numerous containers at the port from a foreign vessel on suspicion of containing undeclared hazardous goods, according to a statement from Gautam Adani's Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone (APSEZ), which operates Mundra port.
Source: <https://www.deccanherald.com/national/fuel-reactors-from-pakistans-nuclear-power-plant-on-its-way-to-china-seized-at-mundra-port-in-kutch-1052386.html>
2. Ukhnaa Khurelsukh's longstanding endorsement of nuclear power looks to be creating geopolitical interest in Beijing, given Mongolia's huge uranium deposits. In July 2021, Khurelsukh and Chinese President Xi Jinping agreed to continue strengthening strategic ties, notably in the mining sector.
Source: <https://www.eastasiaforum.org/2021/11/20/mongolia-weighs-up-going-nuclear/>
3. On November 20, America's top defense official will vow to prevent Iran from gaining a nuclear weapon and to oppose its "dangerous use" of suicide drones in the wider Middle East, a statement made as talks over Tehran's shattered nuclear deal with Western powers remain stuck. The upcoming remarks by Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin at the annual Manama Dialogue in Bahrain appear to be aimed at reassuring America's Gulf Arab allies as the Biden administration tries to revive the nuclear deal, which limited Iran's uranium enrichment in exchange for the lifting of economic sanctions.
Source: <https://www.thehindu.com/news/international/us-defense-chief-to-vow-to-counter-iran-in-visit-to-bahrain/article37592611.ece>
4. After Tehran increased its stockpiles of enriched uranium, the US envoy for Iran warned on Friday that Iran was approaching the point of no return in terms of reviving the 2015 nuclear deal. On November 29, talks to resurrect the Iran nuclear deal will resume in Vienna. Iran is making it "difficult" to get any benefit from reviving the agreement, according to Robert Malley, the US envoy for Iran.
Source: <https://www.wionews.com/world/time-is-short-for-iran-to-return-to-nuclear-deal-us-envoy-430764>
5. The "p3"—America, the United Kingdom, and France, the three nuclear-armed NATO allies with permanent seats on the UN Security Council—are concerned about two issues. First, Germany may soften its stance on NATO's "nuclear sharing" agreements, which see America deploy up to 20 nuclear weapons at Büchel Air Base in western Germany while Germany retains a fleet of dual-capable aircraft (dcas) from which they can be launched. Second, the next administration may toy with the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (tpnw), a global disarmament initiative.

Source: <https://www.economist.com/europe/2021/11/20/allies-fear-germanys-incoming-government-will-go-soft-on-nukes>

6. Saudi Arabia's former intelligence chief prince Turki al-Faisal says the kingdom should acquire the knowledge to develop a nuclear bomb in order to defend itself, calling on the US to impose more sanctions on Iran instead of trying to restore the 2015 Iran nuclear agreement, which would remove the existing sanctions on Tehran.

Source: <https://www.presstv.ir/Detail/2021/11/19/670947/Ex-Saudi-spy-chief-Riyadh-should-build-nukes>

7. The latest report from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) describes Iran's rapidly progressing nuclear operations and actions taken to limit IAEA surveillance, showing that the inspectors' capacity to detect Iranian diversion of assets to undeclared sites has weakened. Simultaneously, the IAEA has made little progress in resolving remaining safeguards issues related to Iran's undeclared nuclear material and operations.

Source: <https://isis-online.org/isis-reports/detail/analysis-of-iaea-iran-verification-and-monitoring-report-november-2021>

8. Iranian Foreign Ministry has urged the UN nuclear watchdog to avoid any "political behaviour" with regard to its technical mission. "The Islamic Republic of Iran, as a responsible member of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), has always emphasized that the IAEA, as a technical and specialized body of the UN, must be free from any political conduct," said Iran's Foreign Ministry Spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh, according to Iranian Foreign Ministry's website.

Source: https://www.business-standard.com/article/international/iran-urges-iaea-to-avoid-political-behaviour-in-technical-issues-121112000138_1.html

UN REFORMS

1. Last month, UN Special Rapporteur on North Korean Human Rights Tomas Ojea Quintana urged the Security Council to lift sanctions against the country, noting the country's severe humanitarian circumstances. Similarly, Russia and China proposed lifting elements of the sectoral sanctions that prohibit North Korean exports of monuments, seafood, labour, and textiles – a plan that is similar to one proposed in 2019. However, lifting international sanctions on North Korea will not solve the country's humanitarian crisis.

Source: <https://thediplomat.com/2021/11/how-to-deliver-relief-to-north-koreans-without-lifting-sanctions/>

2. On Saturday, North Korea's foreign ministry slammed the UN Human Rights Council for using arbitrary Western standards to undermine the country's human rights situation. According to the ministry, special rapporteurs on North Korean human rights conditions are chosen without consultation among member states and come from countries that do not adhere to Western ideals and human rights standards.

Source: <https://www.dtnext.in/News/World/2021/11/20151227/1329811/N-Korea-raps-UN-human-rights-council-over-arbitrary-.vpf>

3. Thailand's Constitutional Court said on November 10 that calls for royal reform might be seditious. From November 2020 to August 2021, 124 individuals were charged under Article 112, including eight children under the age of 18. The sharp rise of lèse-majesté cases indicates that the law has repeatedly been exploited as a political tool to undermine critics of the monarchy.

Source: <https://thediplomat.com/2021/11/thailands-lese-majeste-law-takes-center-stage-at-un-rights-review/>

4. America's Gulf allies have changed their opinion about the 2015 Iran nuclear deal, calling for Iran to fully comply with it once more. The accord, technically known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), put constraints on Iran's nuclear programme, requiring Tehran to severely limit its enriched uranium production and stockpiles, as well as reduce the number of centrifuges, in exchange for sanctions relief.

Source: <https://www.forbes.com/sites/dominicdudley/2021/11/18/gulf-states-come-full-circle-on-iran-nuclear-deal-by-backing-it-once-more/?sh=71ada3732b76>

5. In the 15 years since the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), Nepal has made little progress on international law crimes, according to Amnesty International, the International Commission of Jurists, Human Rights Watch, and TRIAL International. The 2006 deal in Nepal brought an end to a decade of military warfare.

Source: <https://www.hrw.org/news/2021/11/20/nepal-15-years-act-peace-agreement-pledges>