

DAILY TRACKER

NUCLEAR ISSUES

1. On December 6, Tokyo Electric Power Company (TEPCO) began driving steel pipes into the ground to prevent underground water from entering the thawed portion of the frozen soil barrier wall (about 1.5 km long) built underground around the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant's No. 1 to No. 4 reactors (Okuma and Futaba towns, Fukushima Prefecture).
Source: <https://dunrenard.wordpress.com/2021/12/06/steel-pipes-to-be-driven-into-thawed-parts-of-frozen-earth-wall-at-tepcos-fukushima-daiichi-nuclear-power-plant/>
2. President Isaac Herzog informed the incoming US ambassador on Sunday that if the international community fails to prevent Iran from gaining nuclear weapons, Israel will "protect itself." The remarks, made during a normally solemn ceremony to accept Tom Nides' credentials, highlighted tensions between Israel and the United States ahead of talks in Vienna last week aimed at re-entering the 2015 nuclear accord between Iran and global powers.
Source: <https://www.timesofisrael.com/israel-will-protect-itself-against-iran-if-world-wont-herzog-warns-new-us-envoy/>
3. If corresponding US moves abroad are taken into consideration, the nuclear discussions between Iran and the P4+1 (UK, France, Russia, China, and Germany) in Vienna have consequences across three regions - West Asia, Far East Asia, and Eastern Europe.
Source: <https://www.moneycontrol.com/news/opinion/through-iran-nuclear-talks-us-balances-israel-and-china-7797241.html>
4. Officials said the US did not expect Iran's harsh demands on sanctions, but that Israel can still 'impact' the nuclear talks as international powers break for internal consultations. Israeli officials have rebuked the United States' handling of the Iran nuclear talks, with one saying Washington was "confused" in their expectation that Tehran would not harden its position on returning to compliance with the terms of the 2015 agreement.
Source: <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/.premium-israel-says-u-s-confused-over-iran-s-hardened-stance-in-nuke-talks-1.10440109>
5. Due to routine safety checks and a court order, Japan reactivated one of the nuclear reactors that had been shut down for two years. The number 3 nuclear reactor at Shikoku Electric Power Co.'s Ikata nuclear power facility in western Ehime province was shut down by the Hiroshima High Court in January last year due to safety concerns.
Source: <https://www.yenisafak.com/en/world/japan-restarts-nuclear-reactor-after-2-years-3585377>

MISSILES/ BIO WEAPONS

1. The S-400 contract with India has been implemented, according to Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov. Lavrov, who is in India for the India-Russia summit and the maiden 2+2 discussion, told news agency ANI that the agreement has a "very practical meaning for India's defense capability."
Source: <https://www.indiatvnews.com/news/india/india-russia-s-400-missile-deal-sergey-lavrov-statement-on-america-modi-putin-summit-748366>
2. After France struck a record 14-billion-euro agreement with the United Arab Emirates for 80 Rafale combat jets, Iran accused France of "destabilising" the Gulf region.
Source: <https://www.ndtv.com/world-news/iran-slams-france-for-destablising-rafale-fighter-jet-deal-with-uae-2639492>
3. The surface transit of a Chinese Intercontinental Ballistic Missile (ICBM) submarine in the Taiwan Strait was reported this week by military analyst H. I. Sutton. The European Space Agency's Sentinel-2 Earth monitoring satellite captured its existence in an open-source image released on Monday, November 29.
Source: <https://www.news.com.au/technology/innovation/military/chinas-bizarre-move-to-surface-icbm-submarine-in-taiwan-strait/news-story/409aa901f267d16a5ec61766571eae9f>
4. According to Ministry of Defense (MOD) sources, Taiwan's military forces would temporarily decrease anti-aircraft mobile missile launcher deployments because to a urea shortage.
Source: <https://www.taiwannews.com.tw/en/news/4360782>
5. Despite US interference, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said the deal to equip India with the S-400 air defense missile system was being implemented. Lavrov, who is in New Delhi for the India-Russia summit and the inaugural 2+2 conversation, said India has made it plain that it is a sovereign country with its own foreign policy.
Source: <https://www.wionews.com/india-news/us-tried-to-undermine-deal-russian-foreign-minister-on-s-400-missile-system-supplies-to-india-434631>
6. Russia announced on Monday that it was bolstering its military camp in Tajikistan with 30 new tanks and that its personnel had conducted missile defense exercises at the location, reflecting Moscow's concern about the unrest in Afghanistan.
Source: https://www.reuters.com/world/russia-sends-new-tanks-base-tajikistan-practices-missile-defence-2021-12-06/?taid=61adec0c4c9fd400019fc4f0&utm_campaign=trueAnthem:+Trending+Content&utm_medium=trueAnthem&utm_source=twitter
7. North Korea's missile and weapons developments are increasingly destabilizing for regional security, U.S. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin said after talks with his South Korean counterpart, Suh Wook. The defense chiefs of the United States and South Korea said on Thursday they would review and



update ways to deter North Korea, even as they emphasised a growing regional role for Seoul.

Source: <https://www.reuters.com/world/china/us-maintain-troop-level-south-korea-minister-2021-12-02/>

8. According to Nikkei, Japan is seeking to modernise and increase the range of its cruise missiles so that they can reach targets over 1,000 km away. As China and the United States develop powerful weaponry, Tokyo sees the \$880 million move as a deterrent.

Source: <https://asia.nikkei.com/content/78d5f5bdfce2f9d8b251bf050e6f99f5>

NUCLEAR PROLIFERATION

1. China has actively aided Pakistan's nuclear weapons development. The Pakistani embassy in Beijing has a large number of missions. This, of course, is a violation of China's international obligations. Weapons and technology transfers have been chronicled in detail.

Source: <https://twitter.com/palkisu/status/1466077614393606148>

2. On Thursday night, as discussions in Vienna to resurrect the 2015 Iran nuclear agreement appeared to be stalling, Israel's intelligence head, David Barnea, declared that "Iran will not have nuclear weapons – not in the coming years, not ever. This is my personal commitment: This is the Mossad's commitment." The intelligence chief's comments were made at an award ceremony for 12 Mossad agents that received certificates of excellence.

Source: <https://www.jpost.com/breaking-news/mossad-chief-iran-will-never-have-nuclear-weapons-687675>

3. BelTA has learned that Belarusian President Aleksandr Lukashenko responded to the West's threats to deploy nuclear weapons in Poland and the Baltic states by suggesting to host Russian nuclear weapons, as editor-in-chief of the Russian magazine Natsionalnaya Oborona [National Defense] and military expert Igor Korotchenko said during a roundtable in Moscow on December 6.

Source: <https://eng.belta.by/politics/view/lukashenkos-suggestion-to-host-russian-nuclear-weapons-seen-as-response-to-western-threats-145942-2021/>

4. In the politically and militarily turbulent Middle East, a long-standing idea for a nuclear-weapons-free zone has remained elusive. UN Secretary-General António Guterres stated at the second "UN Conference on the Establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMDs)," which took place November 29 to December 3, that the five existing zones cover nearly all of the Southern Hemisphere and include 60% of the UN's 193 Member States. "Expanding such zones to more regions will strengthen global nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation norms and contribute to building a safer world."

Source: <https://www.indepthnews.net/index.php/the-world/middle-east/4914-a-nuclear-weapons-free-zone-in-the-middle-east-still-remains-elusive>



5. According to a copy of the project proposal obtained by the Washington Free Beacon, the Biden administration has hired two nuclear-disarmament activists to give the Defense Department with "alternatives" to the US' long-standing intercontinental ballistic missiles system. According to the project proposal, the Defense Department asked the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace to research "alternatives as they relate to options for the land-based leg of the U.S. nuclear triad" and provide a report to the secretary of defense in January.
Source: <https://freebeacon.com/national-security/biden-enlists-nuclear-disarmament-proponents-to-study-icbm-alternatives/>
6. Pakistan became emboldened to pursue conflict at the lower end of the spectrum after becoming an overt nuclear power, confident that nuclear weapons reduce the likelihood of an Indian military response, according to a report published by The Rand Corporation in 2009 following the Mumbai attacks of 26/11. According to the Rand Corporation, the links between LeT and Pakistan's Directorate for Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI), as well as LeT's multiple camps and offices throughout Pakistan, are widely known.
Source: <https://www.timesnownews.com/international/article/after-acquiring-nuclear-weapons-pakistan-became-more-aggressive-in-using-terrorist-groups/836064>
7. Pakistan owes its creditors more than \$200 billion. Islamabad has taken out loans from some of the world's most prestigious financial institutions. Pakistan can obtain concessions from world powers by creating a nuclear nightmare scenario.
Source: <https://www.wionews.com/videos/gravitas-how-a-nuclear-nightmare-scenario-is-keeping-pakistan-afloat-433643>
8. Though more meetings are planned, the recent round of discussions in Vienna between Iran and Germany, as well as the four members of the UN Security Council who are still participants of the 2015 Iran nuclear deal (Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action or JCPOA), did not go well. One explanation is that Iran views its relationship with China as a safety net in the event that the Biden administration fails to bargain honestly.
Source: <https://www.juancole.com/2021/12/nuclear-betting-superpower.html>
9. In talks aimed at salvaging an international nuclear deal, Israeli Prime Minister Naftali Bennett encouraged world powers to take a tough stance against Iran. Israeli Prime Minister Naftali Bennett has urged Western nations to make it clear to Iran that it cannot enrich uranium and negotiate at the same time.
Source: <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/12/5/israels-bennett-urges-stron-line-against-iran-at-nuclear-talks>

UN REFORMS

1. At the 14th Session of the UN Forum on Minority Issues in Geneva, the Tibet Bureau urged China to resolve Tibetans' underlying grievances by respecting Tibetan people's historical, social, and cultural origins. Kalden Tsomo, UN Advocacy Officer, told the UN Forum on minority issues that Tibetan people are facing the consequences of the imposition of social structural and demographic change by China.
Source: <https://www.dtnext.in/News/World/2021/12/05212504/1332426/Tibet-Bureau-Geneva-calls-upon-China-to-address-underlying-.vpf>
2. A senior administration official said late Sunday that the Biden administration is anticipated to announce a diplomatic boycott of the 2022 Winter Olympics in Beijing this week. Members of Congress have pressed the Biden administration to implement the diplomatic boycott. China has been under fire for suppressing pro-democracy demonstrations in Hong Kong, for its policy toward Tibet and Taiwan, and for arresting and abusing Muslim Uyghurs in Xinjiang. China's activities against Uyghurs have been labelled "genocide" by the US State Department and some European countries.
Source: <https://www.cnbc.com/2021/12/06/us-to-announce-diplomatic-boycott-of-the-winter-olympics-in-beijing.html>
3. As the African nation confronts rising insurgencies, the United Nations Security Council will convene on Monday afternoon for a report on sanctions against the Democratic Republic of Congo. The 'State of Siege' imposed on two eastern provinces of Ituri and North Kivu since April to quell an insurgency is of immediate concern. Militia attacks have increased in both provinces, including a recent slaughter of more than 50 persons in an Ituri refugee camp.
Source: <https://www.theeastafrican.co.ke/tea/rest-of-africa/un-security-council-to-discuss-dr-congo-sanctions-3643038>
4. The government announced on Monday that Ethiopian soldiers had recovered the vital cities of Dessie and Kombolcha from dissident Tigrayan forces, the latest instance of the government retaking territory.
Source: <https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/ethiopian-forces-have-recaptured-two-strategic-towns-government-says-2021-12-06/>
5. As the cold winter sets in, Taliban-ruled Afghanistan is on the verge of 'horrific' mass hunger. Officials from the World Food Programme have expressed concern about the sanctions imposed on the Taliban-ruled Afghanistan, claiming that they are preventing humanitarian organisations from working with the de-facto administration. The United Nations World Food Program said in a report that Afghanistan's economy has been in freefall since the Taliban took control of the country after ousting the Western-backed government.
Source: <https://www.hindustantimes.com/world-news/talibanruled-afghanistan-on-brink-of-horrific-mass-starvation-as-harsh-winter-sets-in-101638758619616.html>
6. Afghanistan, which is dominated by the Taliban, is on the edge of 'horrific' mass famine as the frigid

winter sets in. World Food Programme officials have raised concern about the sanctions imposed on the Taliban-ruled Afghanistan, stating that they restrict humanitarian organisations from cooperating with the de-facto government. Afghanistan's economy has been in freefall since the Taliban assumed control of the country after toppling the Western-backed government, according to a report by the United Nations World Food Program.

Source: <https://www.hindustantimes.com/world-news/talibanruled-afghanistan-on-brink-of-horrific-mass-starvation-as-harsh-winter-sets-in-101638758619616.html>

7. According to local media, at least five individuals were killed in Myanmar this weekend when a vehicle slammed into anti-junta protesters. The attack occurred in a Yangon township, according to Myanmar Now, which cited protesters and eyewitnesses.

Source: <https://edition.cnn.com/2021/12/05/asia/myanmar-military-yangon-un-us-intl/index.html>

8. According to media reports and eyewitnesses, security personnel slammed a car into anti-coup protestors, killing five of them. The United Nations has called on Myanmar to prosecute anybody responsible for using excessive force against unarmed civilians.

On Sunday in Yangon's largest city, photographs and images released on social media showed a speeding vehicle ploughing into a group of anti-coup demonstrators, leaving bodies on the road. Reuters reported that scores of people were injured.

Source: <https://www.ndtv.com/world-news/myanmar-news-aung-san-suu-kyi-un-calls-on-myanmar-to-halt-excessive-force-after-anti-coup-protest-violence-2638699>

