

DAILY TRACKER**NUCLEAR ISSUES**

1. Small modular nuclear reactors, or SMRs, can help Middle Eastern countries achieve their clean energy goals and enable power-hungry industrial units decarbonize output in the face of increased demand for greener metals and other products, according to the chief executive of Rolls-Royce SMR. Source: <https://www.thenationalnews.com/business/energy/2022/01/18/rolls-royce-brings-mini-nuclear-power-plant-technology-to-world-future-energy-summit/>
2. TerraPower, a firm founded by Bill Gates, has picked Kemmerer for a nontraditional, sodium-cooled nuclear reactor that will employ workers from a nearby coal-fired power station that is set to close soon. The demonstration project comes as several states in the United States consider nuclear as a method to bridge the gap between coal, oil, and natural gas as a way to cut greenhouse gas emissions. Source: <https://techxplore.com/news/2022-01-tiny-wyoming-town-bill-gates.html>

MISSILES/ BIO WEAPONS

1. Indian Navy's indigenous guided missile destroyer, INS Kochi, conducted a joint naval exercise with Russian Navy's RFS Admiral Tributs. Thus, showcasing developing Indo-Russian strategic co-operation. Source: <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseIframePage.aspx?PRID=1790311>
2. North Korea launched tactical guided missiles on Monday, according to state news agency KCNA, the latest in a series of recent tests that have highlighted the country's developing missile programmes amid delayed denuclearization talks. Source: <https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/nkorea-tested-tactical-guided-missiles-monday-kcna-2022-01-17/>
3. Night combat drills were recently conducted by China's J-20 stealth fighters. The fifth-generation warplanes, according to Chinese observers, demonstrated their "all-time and all-weather" combat preparedness during the exercise. Source: <https://eurasianimes.com/j-20-fighters-practice-night-combat-drills-s-400-missiles-experts/>
4. During a standoff with Russia, which has massed troops along the Ukrainian border, Britain announced on Monday that it had begun supplying Ukraine with anti-tank weapons to assist it defend itself against an invasion. Source: <https://www.reuters.com/world/uk/uk-says-supplying-ukraine-with-weapons-system-defend-against-russia-2022-01-17/>



5. Military analysts warn that joint military exercises between Russia and Belarus in the next weeks will provide Russian President Vladimir Putin more options if he decides to invade Ukraine and will further stretch Ukraine's defences.
Source: <https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/russian-military-drills-belarus-create-new-threats-ukraine-2022-01-18/>
6. Since Prime Minister Scott Morrison accused Beijing of "manufacturing" the coronavirus pandemic and sought an independent probe, Australia's relations with China have deteriorated. Work on a massive US fuel storage station in Australia's Northern Territory is set to begin soon to support military activity in the Asia-Pacific area, according to a recent development. With a capacity of 300 million litres, the \$270 million project will be the largest purpose-built fuel storage facility in northern Australia.
Source: <https://eurasianimes.com/us-big-boost-to-australia-after-deploying-f-22-raptors-b2-bombers/>
7. The US Navy has created a new division dedicated to high-power microwave (HPM) weapon research and development.
Source: <https://eurasianimes.com/us-navy-gets-a-dedicated-microwave-weapons-division-drones-missiles/>
8. The J-20 stealth fighter jets have begun combat missions, according to China's state-run Global Times. In June of last year, the fighters were enrolled into the PLA's northern theatre command. According to the Chinese publication, the defence forces now have two J20 aircraft units.
Source: <https://www.wionews.com/world/chinas-j-20-stealth-fighter-jets-ready-for-combat-operations-report-445653>

NUCLEAR PROLIFERATION

1. When Russian President Vladimir Putin visits Beijing next month, he will brief his Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping on Moscow's negotiations with NATO, according to Kremlin spokesperson Dmitry Peskov.
Source: <https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/putin-brief-chinas-xi-russia-nato-talks-kremlin-says-2022-01-18/>
2. According to a report issued on Tuesday by Canadian researchers, a smartphone app developed by China to monitor the health of attendees at the Beijing Winter Olympics next month contains security flaws that make it vulnerable to privacy breaches and hackers.
Source: <https://www.reuters.com/lifestyle/sports/chinas-mandatory-games-app-has-security-flaws-researchers-say-2022-01-18/>
3. Yao Ming, a Chinese basketball icon, said on Monday that tennis star Peng Shuai was in high spirits when they met at an event last month after she accused a former top politician of sexually assaulting her. Given CCP's absolute coercion, speculations and concerns over Shuai's safety have never left public minds.
Source: <https://www.reuters.com/lifestyle/sports/yao-ming-says-he-peng-shuai-chatted-merrily-event->



4. If Russia invaded Ukraine, diplomats and former officials said, NATO would likely reinforce its troop presence in the Black Sea and Baltics while fending off cyberattacks.

Source: <https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/best-supporting-actor-nato-secondary-role-if-russia-invades-ukraine-2022-01-18/>

5. The senior diplomat of US President Joe Biden will visit Kyiv this week after talks with Russia ended in a stalemate last week amid fears in the US and other Western countries that Moscow is planning another invasion of Ukraine.

Source: <https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/uss-blinken-visit-ukraine-following-russia-talks-2022-01-18/>

UN REFORMS

1. China arrested Tibetan Lhundrup Dorje and stripped him of his civil rights for simply uploading images of the Dalai Lama on social media.

Source: <https://twitter.com/TibetCouncil/status/1483251795640135680>

2. The Australian government and human rights groups have expressed worry about Australian blogger Yang Hengjun's worsening health, three years after he was arrested in China, and with a Beijing court still to give a judgement in an espionage trial that began in secret eight months ago.

Source: <https://www.reuters.com/world/china/health-fears-australian-blogger-held-three-years-china-spying-charges-2022-01-17/>

3. According to a report, China has been employing a variety of unscrupulous means to bring back dissidents, Uyghurs, journalists, and Hong Kongers residing abroad, including family intimidation and "state-sponsored kidnapping" to bring them back to the mainland.

Source: <https://www.wionews.com/world/china-using-intimidation-tactics-on-expatriate-dissidents-journalists-and-hong-kongers-living-abroad-report-445765>

4. The revelation on social media that China will host the Olympics elicited a significant response from major and large international companies and institutions, such as Coca-Cola, who have associated with it monetarily and otherwise.

Source: <https://www.rfa.org/uyghur/xewerler/beijing-olimpic-01132022185152.html>

5. Last week Wednesday, the Anti-China Parliamentary Committee (IPAC), in collaboration with various Southeast Asian human rights organisations, hosted a special online lecture on the Uyghur Judiciary's verdict.

Source: <https://www.rfa.org/uyghur/xewerler/geoffrey-nice-01132022194433.html>

6. On January 13, Human Rights Watch, one of the world's major human rights groups, published its World Human Rights Report 2022, claiming that China continues to commit crimes against humanity against the Uyghurs.

Source: <https://www.rfa.org/uyghur/xewerler/kishilik-hoquq-01132022184257.html>

7. Yang Hengjun, a Chinese-Australian writer, says he has no regrets about being detained in China, claiming that it has allowed him to put a spotlight on the country's legal system. Three years after the University of Technology graduate and pro-democracy blogger was first jailed and subjected to torture and isolation, he made the remarks in a message to his wife Yuan Xiaoliang, attorneys, and friends.
Source: <https://www.smh.com.au/world/asia/tortured-and-isolated-in-a-chinese-jail-yang-hengjun-has-no-regrets-20220117-p59oul.html>
8. Two days after his wife's death, Yang Maodong was arrested "on suspicion of inciting subversion of state power."
Source: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/jan/18/chinese-activist-yang-maodong-told-he-could-not-visit-dying-wife-is-re-arrested>
9. Despite a European human rights monitor filing a complaint against Ankara over his arrest, a Turkish court on Monday rejected a request to release philanthropist Osman Kavala, who has spent more than four years in prison without being convicted.
Source: <https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/turkish-court-rules-keep-kavala-jail-during-trial-2022-01-17/>
10. The Taliban recently announced that it will form a suicide strike unit as part of Afghanistan's national army. According to Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid, these "martyrdom brigades" will be "under the control of the ministry of defence and will be used for special operations."
Source: <https://theconversation.com/afghanistan-taliban-plans-for-suicide-brigade-reveal-changing-nature-of-warfare-in-21st-century-174829>
11. Officials announced on Monday that a Mexican photojournalist was killed after being shot in the head outside his home in the northern border city of Tijuana.
Source: <https://www.reuters.com/world/americas/mexican-journalist-shot-dead-outside-home-border-city-tijuana-2022-01-18/>
12. Guatemalan authorities said on Monday that they had deported over 600 migrants who had entered the nation in a caravan en route to the United States.
Source: <https://www.reuters.com/world/americas/guatemala-pushes-back-622-migrants-us-bound-caravan-2022-01-17/>
13. On Monday, a UN envoy urged Thailand's assistance in preventing a worsening of the crisis in Myanmar's neighbour, and appreciated promises that refugees fleeing military operations would be protected by the Thai government.
Source: <https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/un-envoy-seeks-thai-help-halt-deterioration-myanmar-crisis-2022-01-17/>
14. On Monday, the 87 Afghan refugees saved by Israel-based humanitarian group "IsraAID" last August got the chance to meet the humanitarian professionals who orchestrated their rescue as they prepare to file for resettlement in Canada.
Source: <https://www.jpost.com/international/article-692816>

15. Sanctioned Chinese firms linked to Beijing's Communists have pocketed tens of thousands of pounds in Covid furlough cash.

Source: <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-10406695/Sanctioned-Chinese-firms-pocketed-200-000-Covid-furlough-cash.html>