

DAILY TRACKER

NUCLEAR ISSUES

1. Unit 3 of Pakistan's Karachi nuclear power plant has achieved first criticality, making it the fourth Hualong One reactor in the world - and the second outside of China - to do so.
Source: <https://www.world-nuclear-news.org/Articles/Second-overseas-Hualong-One-starts-up>
2. Kepco Nuclear Fuel (KNF) has created a light-water reactor (LWR) fuel transport container that meets international standards while using domestic technology. The South Korean company announced that it has obtained a licence from the country's Nuclear Safety and Security Commission for the Pioneer G container.
Source: <https://www.world-nuclear-news.org/Articles/KNF-obtains-licence-for-fuel-transport-container>
3. Members of the UK parliament's second chamber debated the Nuclear Energy (Financing) Bill for the first time, clearing the first hurdle for proposed changes to the funding model for new nuclear.
Source: <https://www.world-nuclear-news.org/Articles/UK-s-House-of-Lords-considers-new-nuclear-financin>
4. The European Commission recently announced plans to designate nuclear power as a sustainable energy source. This has raised many eyebrows and enraged citizens in countries such as Germany, which plans to phase out nuclear power by early 2023.
Source: <https://www.arabnews.com/node/2029901>
5. German environment minister Steffi Lemke revealed during a visit to Warsaw that Germany is concerned about Poland's plans to build nuclear power plants and the impact of its development of the Oder river, which runs along the border between the two countries.
Source: <https://notesfrompoland.com/2022/02/23/germany-to-use-legal-instruments-in-response-to-polands-nuclear-power-plans/>
6. The global Nuclear Energy market research study provides the most recent industry data and upcoming industry trends, assisting users in locating end-users and products that are driving Revenue growth and productivity. The Nuclear Energy research report identifies key industry trends and market developments that will have an impact on market growth over the forecast period. The report also includes the most recent research on a variety of threats as well as the current state of the Nuclear Energy market's supply chain.
Source: <https://znewsafrika.com/news/205783/nuclear-energy-market-to-witness-growth-development-by-2026-cez-bruce-power-e-on-se-bruce-power-nukem-china-general-nuclear-power-etc/>
7. Ukraine's nuclear power plants would pose a risk of radioactive pollution in Europe if caught in the crossfire of a Russian invasion, according to a Kyiv safety expert. While a direct military attack on such facilities is highly unlikely, a lack of high-precision weapons in the occupied Donbas suggests that sensitive facilities could be hit accidentally. According to Dmytro Gumenyuk, head of safety



analysis at the State Scientific and Technical Centre for Nuclear and Radiation Safety, a body within the state nuclear inspectorate, if this occurs, radiation could contaminate air, soil, and waterways, affecting not only Ukraine but also Russia and much of Europe.

Source: <https://inews.co.uk/news/world/ukraine-war-nuclear-risk-russia-missiles-accidental-hits-reactors-1478269>

8. The head of the UAE's nuclear regulator stated that the second reactor at the Barakah Nuclear Energy Plant is expected to begin commercial operations this year. The Federal Authority for Nuclear Regulation (FANR) also expects to issue an operating licence for the third reactor in 2022, according to Christer Viktorsson, FANR's director general, during a virtual briefing on Wednesday.

Source: <https://gulfnews.com/uae/unit-2-at-barakah-nuclear-power-plant-to-begin-commercial-operations-in-2022-fanr-says-1.85945138>

9. Following a public outcry from residents, Pueblo County officials say they are withdrawing their support for replacing the state's largest coal-fired power plant with a nuclear reactor. The decision represents a quiet reversal by county commissioners who expressed interest in nuclear technology last year, even hosting a presentation by a nuclear energy company and raising the proposal in regulatory filings.

Source: <https://www.chieftain.com/story/news/2022/02/23/pueblo-county-drops-support-nuclear-power-after-facing-backlash/6914835001/>

MISSILES/ BIO WEAPONS

1. The US recently deployed a squadron of F-22 Raptors to the UAE to counter Houthi rebel drone and missile attacks, according to the USAF and the commander of CENTCOM.

Source: <https://eurasianimes.com/first-image-of-f-22-raptor-of-us-air-force-deployed-to-protect-the-uae-from-iran-backed-rebels-surfaces-online/>

2. In the recent past, Iran-backed Houthi rebels in Yemen launched drone and missile attacks on Gulf countries such as the UAE and Saudi Arabia. In the midst of rising tensions with Iran, the US Navy has announced the establishment of a new joint fleet of drones in the Middle East with ally nations to patrol vast swaths of volatile waters, according to Al Jazeera.

Source: <https://eurasianimes.com/dus-navy-to-unleash-100-drone-ships-to-checkmate-iran/>

3. According to a report in the Hindustan Times quoting a top government official, India's plan to acquire 'most-lethal' Predator armed drones from the US has been put on hold. According to the report, in addition to the exorbitant costs that could have scuttled the deal, India is eager to focus on indigenous development of armed drones.

Source: <https://eurasianimes.com/india-scraps-plans-to-acquire-predator-drones-from-the-us/>

4. A promotional video released by the state-owned Aviation Industry Corporation of China (AVIC) earlier this month featured the popular Z-20 helicopter alongside other aircraft such as J-20 and Y-20. The video had fuelled speculation that the new Z-20 was an armed variant.

Source: <https://eurasianimes.com/chinese-pap-force-to-receive-z-20-attack-choppers/>

5. The US Defense Department announced on Tuesday that the US, its four allies in the "Five Eyes" electronic surveillance and intelligence sharing programme, along with Germany and France, have released a joint space operations plan to counter other major nations over the next decade.
Source: <https://eurasianimes.com/us-led-five-eyes-network-allies-release-plan-for-2031/>
6. Ukrainian forces are strengthening anti-aircraft missile defenses, and repositioning air defense regiments near international airports, the separatist People's Militia of the Donetsk People's Republic claimed according to their intelligence sources.
Source: <https://www.jpost.com/international/article-698259>

NUCLEAR PROLIFERATION

1. Nuclear talks with Iran will conclude next week, with the outcome still unknown, according to a diplomat involved in the talks on Wednesday. "We will continue until we reach an agreement or announce the termination of negotiations next week," French chief negotiator Philippe Errera told Iran International News.
Source: <https://www.jpost.com/middle-east/iran-news/article-698389>
2. After months of talks in Vienna, the various parties have indicated that a new agreement is nearing completion, possibly in the coming days. However, instead of the "longer, stronger" agreement that the US had promised, the agreement is expected to do little more than reinstate the original pact, whose key restrictions on Iranian nuclear activity are set to expire in a few years.
Source: <https://apnews.com/article/russia-ukraine-middle-east-iran-israel-europe-f30eca2ae3a7338f8811a49a039c6829>
3. While the world's attention has been focused on Ukraine, the Biden administration has been working with world powers to re-establish the 2015 international nuclear agreement with Iran. "The emerging deal, as it seems, is highly likely to create a more violent, more volatile Middle East," Israeli Prime Minister Naftali Bennett said this week, repeating his threat that Israel is not bound by the agreement and is prepared to attack Iran if necessary.
Source: <https://www.news18.com/news/explainers/explained-impending-iran-nuclear-deal-restoration-alarms-israel-and-why-4802780.html>

UN REFORMS

1. As Western leaders impose sanctions on Russia, while China rushes to its defence. China criticised the expansion of economic sanctions against Russia, claiming that it was unlikely to resolve the Ukraine crisis.
Source: <https://www.jpost.com/international/article-698346>
2. In the latest ominous sign for Ukrainians fearing an all-out Russian military onslaught, the Ukrainian parliament approved a declaration of a state of emergency in the entire country and advised its citizens in Russia to flee, while Moscow began evacuating its Kyiv embassy.
Source: <https://www.jpost.com/breaking-news/article-698336>
3. The European Union has decided to hold an emergency summit late Thursday in Brussels to discuss Russia's "aggressive actions" against Ukraine. The emergency summit was announced in a letter written by European Council President Charles Michel to European Union leaders.
Source: <https://www.wionews.com/world/ukraine-crisis-eu-calls-emergency-summit-455750>
4. Former Estonian President Toomas Hendrik Ilves believes the current round of economic sanctions announced by the Biden administration will have little to no impact on Russian President Vladimir Putin.
Source: <https://www.wionews.com/world/current-sanctions-announced-by-us-wont-affect-putin-at-all-estonias-former-prez-455723>
5. In the midst of an escalating situation, Ukraine urged its citizens to leave Russia immediately on Wednesday. "Because of the escalating Russian aggression against Ukraine, which can lead to a substantial reduction in possible consular assistance in Russia, the foreign ministry urges the citizens of Ukraine to refrain from travel to Russia, and for those in that country to leave its territory immediately," the ministry said.
Source: <https://www.wionews.com/world/ukraine-calls-up-military-reservists-urges-citizens-to-leave-russia-immediately-455628>
6. According to reports, the virus likely leaked from a Wuhan lab, and UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson recently told Parliament that his government would be "refreshing biosecurity strategy to protect the UK against natural zoonosis and accidental laboratory leaks."
Source: <https://www.wionews.com/world/uk-government-seeks-to-create-pandemic-radar-as-wuhan-virus-lab-theory-gains-credence-455574>
7. As Russian lawmakers gave Putin approval to deploy "peacekeepers" in two Ukrainian regions, US President Joe Biden imposed new sanctions on Russia while declaring that the invasion of Ukraine had begun. Putin on Monday had declared that Russia will recognise Donetsk and Lugansk situated in eastern Ukraine as separate republics while declaring that the Minsk peace agreements on Ukraine's conflict no longer existed.
Source: <https://www.wionews.com/world/beginning-an-invasion-us-imposes-fresh-sanctions-against-russia-455521>

8. According to a new study, Greenland's ice sheet is melting rapidly from its base, and the melting water is contributing to global sea level rise. According to the study, Greenland's ice sheet, the world's second largest after Antarctica, has melted so much in the last decade that global sea levels have risen by one centimetre.
Source: <https://www.wionews.com/world/greenlands-ice-sheet-melting-faster-than-previously-thought-raising-global-sea-level-says-study-455759>
9. According to data released on Wednesday by the US National Center for Health Statistics, there is an increase in pregnancy-related deaths for mothers across America in 2020, with black women three times more likely to die than white women.
Source: <https://www.wionews.com/world/us-maternal-mortality-rate-rises-black-women-3-times-more-likely-to-die-than-white-counterparts-study-455773>
10. The Syrian Arab Republic was accused in a damning new February report by the Washington-based Centre for Strategic & International Studies of abusing the UN aid system to advance its "oppressive bureaucracy."
Source: <https://www.jpost.com/middle-east/article-698419>
11. The US Treasury said on Wednesday that it sanctioned a vast international network run by Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps and a Houthi financier that provided tens of millions of dollars to Yemen's Houthi rebels.
Source: <https://www.jpost.com/middle-east/iran-news/article-698397>
12. Understanding the complexities of southern Syria, as well as Israel's concerns about Iranian entrenchment, is critical to understanding both Israel-Russia ties and Ukrainian tensions.
Source: <https://www.jpost.com/middle-east/article-698375>