

DAILY TRACKER

NUCLEAR ISSUES

1. In a joint statement published on Thursday 3 March, Ukraine's energy minister, its nuclear regulator and nuclear power plant operator Energoatom, called on NATO and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to bring in 30km exclusion zones around nuclear power plants and introduce no-fly zones.
Source: <https://world-nuclear-news.org/Articles/IAEA-chief-warns-over-pressure-on-Ukraine-nuclear>
2. X-energy has delivered the first of four sets of equipment for the prototype reactor protection system (RPS) for the Xe-100 small modular reactor (SMR). The equipment, developed by X-energy and Rock Creek Innovations, will enable field testing, validation and optimisation, with results built into the final Xe-100 RPS design.
Source: <https://world-nuclear-news.org/Articles/Prototype-SMR-safety-system-ready-for-field-testin>
3. The Finnish government and nuclear regulator have published a comprehensive plan and an environmental impact assessment for the management of all the used fuel and radioactive waste generated in the country.
Source: <https://world-nuclear-news.org/Articles/Finland-sets-out-nuclear-waste-plans>
4. Voters in Belarus have supported constitutional amendments that will authorize the country to host nuclear weapons. And Belarus is not the only one. More and more countries are looking to go nuclear amid ongoing tensions in Europe and elsewhere.
Source: <https://eurasianimes.com/belarus-south-korea-also-wants-to-go-nuclear-us-unreliability/>
5. On 1 March, the Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation to the International Organisations in Vienna wrote an official letter to Grossi saying that the personnel at the plant 'continued their work on providing nuclear safety and monitoring radiation in normal mode of operation'.
Source: <https://www.power-technology.com/news/zaporizhzhia-nuclear-plant/>
6. Soaring fossil fuel prices and rising demand for clean energy have governments around the world reconsidering nuclear power programs that had been left for dead amid safety concerns and massive cost overruns. Finland and the Philippines are the latest to show their support for nuclear, after Germany, South Korea and others softened opposition to the sector.
Source: <https://www.bloombergquint.com/business/eye-watering-energy-prices-are-sparking-a-nuclear-power-rethink>
7. The Department of Energy (DOE) has welcomed the signing of Executive Order 164, or the inclusion of nuclear power in Philippines energy mix, as this will address the high electricity rate and secure energy for the future. Erguiza, chairperson of the DOE Nuclear Energy Programme Implementing Organization (NEPIO), added that the EO provides four cornerstone approaches in developing the Nuclear Energy Program (NEP).
Source: <https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1168973>

MISSILES/ BIO WEAPONS

1. European countries are delivering the latest weaponry including anti-tank missiles to Ukraine to bolster its defense against the invading Russian troops. NATO member Turkey has also done its part and has reportedly strengthened Ukrainian offensive capabilities by sending more Bayraktar TB-2 drones.
Source: <https://eurasianimes.com/ukraine-receives-more-game-changing-bayraktar-tb2-uavs/>
2. The Air Force Life Cycle Management Center said on February 28 that up to 22 changes will be made on F-16 fighter jets. The goal of the programme is to improve aircraft lethality and ensure that the fourth-generation fighter can deal with current and future threats.
Source: <https://eurasianimes.com/us-air-force-biggest-upgradation-program-for-f-16-fighter-jets/>
3. The US Navy will need a fleet of more than 500 ships to fulfill its commitments under the soon-to-be-released National Defense Strategy, Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Mike Gilday was quoted as saying by USNI News recently.
Source: <https://eurasianimes.com/usnavy-says-over-500-warships-amphibious-force-threats/>
4. China's reliance on high-tech imports and projected workforce shortages in the coming decade are two major drawbacks of the country's defense industry, according to a new report by an American think tank. The lack of transparency in the massive state-owned conglomerates was also underlined by researchers at the Rand Corporation.
Source: <https://eurasianimes.com/china-chink-in-the-armour-new-us-report-defence-industry/>
5. The US military said on Wednesday it will postpone a scheduled test launch of a Minuteman III intercontinental ballistic missile, in a bid to lower soaring tensions after Russia announced it was putting its nuclear forces on high alert.
Source: <https://www.ndtv.com/world-news/russia-ukraine-war-us-delays-intercontinental-ballistic-missile-test-amid-russia-nuclear-threat-2800237>
6. The US is aiming to improve its anti-drone capabilities in light of growing threats from hostile elements, such as the recent strikes on the UAE and Saudi Arabia by Iran-backed Houthi militias using unmanned combat aircraft vehicles (UCAVs).
Source: <https://eurasianimes.com/us-air-force-eyes-thors-hammer-to-neutralize-weaponized-uavs/>

NUCLEAR PROLIFERATION

1. Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov warned on Wednesday that "World War III will be a devastating nuclear war," during an interview with Al-Jazeera and as Russia's invasion of Ukraine entered its seventh day.

Source: <https://www.jpost.com/international/article-699089>

2. According to the Nour-news website, Iran's senior security official stated on Wednesday that "bitter experience" with failed US commitments has made it unavoidable that Iran will push to preserve its interests by getting a "reliable" nuclear agreement.
Source: <https://www.jpost.com/middle-east/iran-news/article-699103>
3. Even if a deal is achieved between Tehran and the West, Israel will continue to do all it takes to prevent Iran from gaining nuclear weapons, Defense Minister Benny Gantz warned Wednesday night.
Source: <https://www.jpost.com/middle-east/iran-news/article-699181>
4. International Atomic Energy Agency Director-General Rafael Grossi will visit Tehran on Saturday in an effort to reach certain understandings in the shadow of a potential impending deal at the nuclear talks in Vienna between Iran and the world powers.
Source: <https://www.jpost.com/middle-east/iran-news/article-699182>
5. The head of the International Atomic Energy Agency will visit Tehran on Saturday, the agency confirmed on Thursday, raising the prospect of progress on one of the last thorny issues blocking a revival of the 2015 Iran nuclear deal.
Source: <https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/bitter-experience-with-us-is-reason-iran-push-sustainable-nuclear-deal-top-2022-03-02/>
6. Taiwan President Tsai Ing-wen bestowed a presidential honour on former U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo on Thursday for his contribution to boosting relations with the island, as China's government lambasted his record as "despicable".
Source: <https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/taiwan-honours-former-top-us-diplomat-pompeo-china-calls-him-liar-2022-03-03/>
7. Talks on reviving the 2015 Iran nuclear deal appeared to near a climax with talk of an imminent ministerial meeting as a U.N. report on Thursday showed Iran is most of the way to amassing enough enriched uranium for one bomb if purified further.
Source: <https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/iran-nuclear-talks-appear-near-climax-no-deal-yet-2022-03-03/>
8. The Russia-Ukraine conflict has already pushed other major issues to the margins of global diplomacy. But there seems to be a sense of urgency in the US and European nations over Iran's nuclear deal.
Source: <https://eurasianimes.com/as-russia-attacks-ukraine-us-eu-rush-to-conclude-iran-nuclear-negotiations-in-vienna/>
9. China has strongly objected to former Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's call for Tokyo to contemplate housing US nuclear weapons and advised the neighboring country to reflect thoroughly on its history. "Japan is a signatory to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and has its three non-nuclear principles, but it should not be treated as a taboo discussion on the reality of how the world is kept safe," Abe said during an Interview.
Source: <https://eurasianimes.com/china-slams-shinzo-abe-over-his-calls-to-host-us-nukes-japan/>
10. Strategic Command (STRATCOM) chief Adm. Charles Richard warned the US Congress that China



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is on track to surpass the US in land-based strategic nuclear forces unless the US invests extensively in modernizing its land-based long-range missile force. “The discovery of three new ICBM missile fields in the last year demonstrates the value the PRC [People’s Republic of China] places on land-based forces,” Richard told the US House Armed Services Committee Strategic Forces Subcommittee on Tuesday.

Source: <https://eurasianimes.com/china-on-track-to-surpass-the-us-in-land-based-nuclear-weapons/>

UN REFORMS

1. Russia on Wednesday made a huge claim that some Indian students in Kharkov (Kharkiv) were being held hostage by Ukrainian forces. The Russian side also said that these students were being used as human shields and that Russia was trying to organise 'urgent evacuation' of this group of students.
Source: <https://www.wionews.com/india-news/indian-students-taken-hostage-by-ukraine-forces-says-russia-458328>
2. The UN General Assembly on Wednesday voted overwhelmingly to demand Russia's immediate withdrawal from Ukraine. 141 out of 193 member countries voted in favour of the resolution and 35 countries abstained including China and India.
Source: <https://www.wionews.com/world/un-general-assembly-votes-to-demand-russian-withdrawal-from-ukraine-india-china-abstain-458333>
3. The house-to-house searches launched last week by the forces of the Islamic Emirate in Kabul and in some provinces continue despite national and international reactions.
Source: <https://tolonews.com/afghanistan-176938>
4. The US special envoy for women, girls and human rights in Afghanistan, Rina Amiri, met with Qatari officials and leaders in Doha and discussed the situation of women and human rights in Afghanistan.
Source: <https://tolonews.com/afghanistan-176935>
5. The house-to-house searching by Islamic Emirate forces has provoked domestic and global reactions, the Chargé d'Affaires of the UK Mission to Afghanistan, Hugo Shorter said, adding that he is deeply concerned about the clearing operations across Kabul and beyond.
Source: <https://tolonews.com/afghanistan-176932>
6. US Special Representative for Afghanistan, Thomas West, in a special interview with TOLONews, said that no decision has been made regarding the recognition of the Islamic Emirate by the United States.
Source: <https://tolonews.com/afghanistan-176923>
7. The Afghan Independent Journalists Association (AIJA) today (Thursday) in a press conference expressed its concerns over the poor economic situation of the country's media.
Source: <https://tolonews.com/afghanistan-176950>