

DAILY TRACKER

NUCLEAR ISSUES

1. With aims to position Canada as a global exporter of SMR, Saskatchewan, Ontario, New Brunswick, and Alberta have issued a strategy plan to boost the nuclear industry by developing small modular reactors (SMR).
Source: <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/saskatchewan/smr-nuclear-power-provinces-canada-1.6399928>
2. Partner Therapeutics, the pharmaceutical company said it was reaching out to the World Health Organization and other entities to provide the necessary tools if nuclear war broke out.
Source: <https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/news/radiation-sickness-treatment-provider-will-ramp-up-supply-in-europe>
3. The U.S. Department of Energy's National Nuclear Security Administration (DOE/NNSA) announced today the removal of plutonium from the International Atomic Energy Agency's Office of Safeguards Analytical Services (IAEA/SGAS), Nuclear Material Laboratory in Siebersdorf, Austria, to Oak Ridge National Laboratory (ORNL).
Source: <https://www.energy.gov/nnsa/articles/plutonium-removed-international-atomic-energy-agencys-nuclear-material-laboratory>
4. The government plans to take a 20% stake in a £20bn large-scale nuclear plant at Sizewell, the BBC has learned. French developer EDF will also take a 20% stake in the Suffolk power station. Ministers hope the confirmation of two cornerstone investors will encourage infrastructure investors and pension funds to take up the remaining 60%.
Source: <https://www.bbc.com/news/business-60889001>
5. Fennovoima has submitted an update to its application for a construction license for the Hanhikivi 1 nuclear power plant to Finland's Ministry of Employment and the Economy. The company maintains its estimate that it could obtain a licence by this summer and begin construction next year.
Source: <https://www.world-nuclear-news.org/Articles/Fennovoima-submits-Hanhikivi-licence-update>
6. India is preparing to start building reactors in "fleet" mode from next year, beginning with the first concrete for two 700 MWe pressurised heavy water reactors (PHWRs) at Kaiga in Karnataka, Department of Atomic Energy (DAE) officials have told a parliamentary panel.
Source: <https://www.world-nuclear-news.org/Articles/2023-construction-start-for-Indian-reactor-fleet>
7. International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Director General Rafael Mariano Grossi is in Ukraine to "start delivering" the safety and security assistance Ukraine has requested for the country's nuclear facilities.
Source: <https://www.world-nuclear-news.org/Articles/IAEA-s-Grossi-in-Ukraine-for-nuclear-safety-talks>
8. At a meeting with US President Joe Biden, Poland's President Andrzej Duda said that he believed the

two countries' nuclear energy programme "will be able to get off the ground soon".

Source: <https://www.world-nuclear-news.org/Articles/Polands-president-hails-nuclear-partnership-with-U>

9. The Netherlands only has one nuclear power station at the moment. Instead of closing it down in 2033, as was the plan, it will now be kept open for longer while work will start on two more nuclear reactors.
Source: <https://www.dutchnews.nl/news/2022/03/the-netherlands-needs-to-train-specialists-to-go-nuclear-expert-warns/>
10. Companies exiting Russia due to the war in Ukraine are welcome to move production to Kazakhstan, the country's deputy foreign minister told a German newspaper, saying Kazakhstan would not want to be on the wrong side of a new "iron curtain."
Source: <https://www.reuters.com/world/kazakhstan-does-not-want-be-behind-new-iron-curtain-deputy-minister-2022-03-28/>
11. The Faculty of Nuclear Sciences and Physical Engineering (FNSPE) at the Czech Technical University (CTU) in Prague has obtained permission from the State Office for Nuclear Safety (SÚJB) to build the VR-2 research reactor. Construction and commissioning of the subcritical reactor is scheduled to be completed by the end of this year.
Source: <https://www.world-nuclear-news.org/Articles/Construction-permit-issued-for-Czech-research-reactor>

MISSILES/ BIO WEAPONS

1. Reports suggest North Korea's biggest missile test ever may not have been what it seemed, raising new questions over the secretive country's banned weapons programme.
Source: <https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/analysts-investigate-possibility-nkorea-missile-test-deception-2022-03-28/>
2. Northrop Grumman Corp. will see a surge of as much as \$59 billion in research and procurement spending over six years for its two top defense programs -- a new bomber and an intercontinental ballistic missile -- if the U.S. Air Force's new spending plan is realized.
Source: <https://www.bloombergquint.com/business/northrop-bomber-icbm-stand-to-reap-59-billion-over-six-years>
3. North Korea's leader Kim Jong Un says his country plans to develop more powerful means of attack, days after its first intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) launch since 2017.
Source: <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/3/28/kim-jong-un-pledges-build-up-north-korea-attack-capability>

NUCLEAR PROLIFERATION

1. “The JCPOA, it’s not getting to an end,” Borrell told the European Parliament after returning from a trip to the Gulf, referring to the accord formally known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action. “It would be a shame not to reach some sort of an agreement when we’re so near to reaching one. But I cannot guarantee that we will reach an agreement,” he said.
Source: <https://www.timesofisrael.com/eu-foreign-policy-chief-says-iran-is-holding-up-nuclear-deal-with-no-end-in-sight/>
2. Opposition leader MK Benjamin Netanyahu said Sunday that US Secretary of State Anthony Blinken was mistaken for supporting the revival of a 2015 nuclear deal with Iran, warning that the terms of the refreshed pact will enable Tehran to menace the world with atomic weapons.
Source: <https://www.timesofisrael.com/netanyahu-blinken-making-a-big-mistake-on-iran-nuclear-deal/>
3. On GZERO World, Ian Bremmer speaks to Ali Vaez, Iran project director at the International Crisis Group, who says the odds of success in the short term are about 50/50. Still, he thinks the stakes have become too big to fail for both Iran, crippled by sanctions, and for the US — Biden will pay a political price if the Iranians go nuclear on his watch.
Source: <https://www.gzeromedia.com/gzero-world-with-ian-bremmer/iran-nuclear-deal-20-or-war>
4. "Deal or no deal, we will continue to work together and with other partners to counter Iran's destabilizing behavior in the region," Blinken said during a meeting with in Israel with Prime Minister Naftali Bennett.
Source: <https://edition.cnn.com/2022/03/27/politics/blinken-iran-nuclear-deal/index.html>
5. Under the new provisions, Iran may be able to accelerate its clandestine uranium enrichment program and, in due course, produce enough weapons-grade uranium to become a breakout state.
Source: <https://www.jpost.com/opinion/article-702478>
6. Israel, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) seem to be resigned to the fact that the Biden Administration is determined to revive Iran’s nuclear agreement on terms that are said to be more permissive than the original nuclear agreement, formally known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).
Source: <https://www.jpost.com/opinion/article-702478>
7. French Foreign Affairs Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian said on Monday that a nuclear deal between Iran and world powers was near even though a few items had still to be settled.
Source: <https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/french-foreign-minister-le-drian-confident-iran-nuclear-deal-is-near-2022-03-28/>
8. The statement published by the official Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) on Monday suggests North Korea might soon perform additional launches or even test a nuclear device as it pushes to modernise its military arsenal.
Source: <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/3/28/kim-jong-un-pledges-build-up-north-korea-attack-capability>

UN REFORMS

1. The Taliban have banned BBC television news in three main languages of Afghanistan from being broadcast, the British news organisation said.

Source: <https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/taliban-ban-bbcs-local-language-services-afghanistan-broadcaster-2022-03-28/>

2. Afghanistan's Taliban has instructed all government employees to wear a beard and adhere to a dress code or risk being fired, three sources told Reuters, the latest of several new restrictions imposed by the hardline Islamist administration.

Source: <https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/taliban-bars-government-employees-without-beards-work-sources-2022-03-28/>

3. The United Nations Security Council has expressed deep concern over a decision by Afghanistan's Taliban rulers to deny girls access to high school education and called on the group to reopen schools for female students without delay.

Source: <https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/un-security-council-asks-taliban-allow-afghan-girls-attend-school-2022-03-28/>

4. Many of the 175 activists sentenced to death or long prison terms by the Myanmar junta's secret military courts operating inside the country's most notorious prison are between the ages of 23 and 27 — an apparent effort to undercut the youth activism driving the resistance to the country's military rulers — according to data compiled by RFA.

Source: <https://www.rfa.org/english/news/myanmar/military-tribunals-03282022185606.html>

5. The head of the Tabasum Charity Foundation said that over the past year, it has provided free educational opportunities for male and female students who cannot afford to go to school. The students ask the Islamic Emirate to allow female students over the sixth grade to go to school.

Source: <https://tolonews.com/index.php/afghanistan-177322>

6. The Chinese Foreign Ministry stated Monday that China will host the third meeting of foreign ministers of Afghanistan's neighbors on March 30 and 31 in Tunxi, Anhui, under the name of "Neighboring Countries of Afghanistan Plus Afghanistan."

Source: <https://tolonews.com/index.php/afghanistan-177320>

7. Army chief Min Aung Hlaing remarks came as the anti-coup protesters called for a national "power strike" demonstration on the anniversary of the bloodiest crackdown so

far on democracy protests.

Source: <https://www.trtworld.com/asia/myanmar-army-to-annihilate-groups-fighting-to-overturn-its-rule-55846>

8. The members of the UN Security Council have expressed their deep concern regarding the inability of girls beyond grade six in Afghanistan to return to their schools, as they were promised.

Source: <https://tolonews.com/afghanistan-177302>