

DAILY TRACKER

NUCLEAR ISSUES

1. In a statement posted on its Facebook account, the State Specialised Enterprise Chernobyl NPP said that on 6 April “divisions of the National Guard of Ukraine have arrived ... and taken control of the facility’s security. The major task of the national guardsmen on the Chernobyl site is ensuring security and defence of its nuclear facilities as well as physical protection of nuclear material”.
Source: <https://www.world-nuclear-news.org/Articles/Ukraine-National-Guard-take-control-of-Chernobyl-s>
2. Nucor Corporation has committed to a USD15 million private investment in public equity (PIPE) in small modular reactor (SMR) developer NuScale Power. The investment increases total committed PIPE investment to USD236 million.
Source: <https://www.world-nuclear-news.org/Articles/US-steel-giant-invests-in-NuScale>
3. A site in Oak Ridge, Tennessee has been selected as the site for the USA's first commercial high-assay low-enriched uranium (HALEU)-based fuel fabrication facility. Construction of the TRISO-X Fuel Fabrication Facility, or TF3, is to begin this year, with commissioning and start-up as soon as 2025. The company has submitted a licence application to the US Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC).
Source: <https://www.world-nuclear-news.org/Articles/Tennessee-site-selected-for-advanced-reactor-fuel>
4. Romania is committed to the safe and sustainable management of radioactive waste, a team of experts from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has concluded. It noted opportunities for improving implementation including preparations for further disposal facilities for radioactive waste from nuclear fuel cycle activities.
Source: <https://www.world-nuclear-news.org/Articles/IAEA-sees-Romanian-commitment-to-safe-radwaste-man>
5. Up to eight more nuclear reactors could be approved on existing sites as part of the UK's new energy strategy. The strategy, which aims to boost UK energy independence and tackle rising prices, also includes plans to increase wind, hydrogen and solar production.
Source: <https://www.bbc.com/news/business-61010605>
6. Chancellor Olaf Scholz reiterated his opposition to reversing Germany's exit from nuclear power to help cut reliance on Russian energy, saying the technical challenges would be too great.
Source: <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2022-04-06/scholz-shoots-down-appeal-to-reverse-germany-s-nuclear-exit>
7. Hungary has received its first shipment of nuclear fuel by air from Russia for its Paks nuclear power plant since the start of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, which has made shipping of the fuel by rail unfeasible. Hungarian Foreign Minister Peter Szijjarto announced the shipment in a Facebook video from Brussels, Belgium.



Source: <https://www.power-technology.com/news/hungary-nuclear-fuel-shipment-air-russia/>

8. The British government has planned to build eight nuclear reactors by 2030. The UK government has published a new energy strategy document with an aim to expand nuclear and offshore wind power as well as increase its independence of supply.
Source: <https://www.trtworld.com/magazine/uk-unveils-new-nuclear-reactors-to-boost-energy-independence-56161>
9. The powerful sister of North Korean leader Kim Jong Un has threatened South Korea with nuclear retaliation if provoked after Seoul highlighted its supposed pre-emptive strike capabilities against the North.
Source: <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/4/5/north-korea-warns-of-dreadful-nuclear-response-if-provoked>
10. Up to eight more nuclear reactors could be approved on existing sites as part of the UK's new energy strategy. The strategy, which aims to boost UK energy independence and tackle rising prices, also includes plans to increase wind, hydrogen and solar production.
Source: <https://saudigazette.com.sa/article/619125>

MISSILES/ BIO WEAPONS

1. The US recently conducted a successful hypersonic missile test in mid-march, but covered it up to prevent escalating tensions with Russia, CNN reported citing a defense official familiar with the matter. The missile, a Hypersonic Air-breathing Weapon Concept (HAWC), was launched from a B-52 bomber and tested off the west coast. The missile flew at heights greater than 65,000 feet for 300 miles, taking around five minutes.
Source: <https://eurasiatimes.com/hypersonic-air-breathing-missile-tested-from-a-b-52-bomber-us-secrective-hawc/>
2. The Chinese military has amazed the world with its complex drills on JL-10 aircraft held recently. The advanced trainer jet, also known as the L-15, in its export version, dropped a 500-kilogram bomb for the first time in a training exercise recently, The Global Times reported.
Source: <https://eurasiatimes.com/china-demonstrates-raw-bombing-power-of-its-fighters-as-beijing-eyes/>
3. Australia has approved a plan worth A\$3.5 billion (\$2.6 billion) to expedite the procurement of Joint Air-to-Surface Standoff Missile Extended Range (JASSM-ER) and Naval Strike Missiles, with the goal of enhancing the country's advanced strike capabilities.
Source: <https://eurasiatimes.com/australia-to-equip-its-f-35-stealth-fighters-jassm-er-missiles/>
4. While Russia has intensified its air raids, the Ukrainian missiles have reportedly managed to down some of its best fighter jets including the Sukhoi Su-35E Flankers and the heavy-duty Su-34.
Source: <https://eurasiatimes.com/caught-on-video-russian-su-34-fighter-jet-shoots-massive-decoy-flares/>

5. For a long time, the United States and Russia were limited by the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Force Treaty that restricted the development and deployment of missiles within the range of 500 and 5,500km. The withdrawal of the treaty about three years ago has caused concerns about a modern-day arms race.

Source: <https://eurasiantimes.com/moscow-washington-plans-to-deploy-strategic-land-based/>

NUCLEAR PROLIFERATION

1. The sister of North Korean leader Kim Jong-un says Pyongyang would retaliate with nuclear strikes if South Korea launched a pre-emptive attack. Kim Yo-jong, a senior official, has issued two statements responding to remarks from South Korean officials.

Source: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-60992313>

2. The United States' top general has said he does not support removing Iran's elite Quds Force from Washington's list of "foreign terrorist organizations", an apparent key demand from Tehran to revive the multilateral nuclear deal.

Source: <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/4/7/iran-quds-force-should-stay-on-terrorist-us-list-top-general>

3. "The Iranians' nuclear issue is on steroids after the war in Ukraine," retired IDF general Amos Yadlin explained on the program. He added that since Ukraine gave up on nuclear capabilities as part of the 1994 Budapest Memorandum on Security Assurances, Iran looked at Kyiv's current situation as a warning of what could happen to it unless it joins the nuclear club.

Source: <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/israeli-former-intel-chief-iran-nuclear-issue-on-steroids-after-ukraine-war-1.10721412>

4. More than three-quarters (77%) of Evangelical Christians believe that if the Iranian regime were able to build a nuclear weapon, its leaders would use it to carry out their repeated threats to "wipe Israel off the map" and "bring about a second Holocaust," according to a new survey published by the Joshua Fund.

Source: <https://www.jpost.com/christianworld/article-703415>

5. Secretary of State Antony Blinken said on Wednesday that he is not "overly optimistic" at the prospects of bringing the nuclear agreement with Iran to a conclusion. In an interview with MSNBC he said, "Despite all the efforts we put into it, we're not there and time is getting extremely short, but this is something that we will be talking to our European partners about this afternoon and on the next day."

Source: <https://www.jpost.com/international/article-703434>

6. Advisers to South Korea's president-elect sought redeployment of US strategic assets, such as nuclear bombers and submarines, to the Korean peninsula during talks held on a visit to Washington, one of the advisers said on Wednesday.

Source: <https://www.jpost.com/international/article-703379>

7. US to reinvest in nuclear triad to counter Russia, China. The nuclear triad strategy's strength lies in its flexibility, allowing nuclear strikes and retaliatory measures from a variety of areas.
Source: <https://www.jpost.com/international/article-703364>
8. The US Defense Department budget estimates it will have hypersonic missile batteries fielded by 2023's financial year. These will be land-launched weapon systems.
Source: <https://www.jpost.com/international/article-703346>

UN REFORMS

1. "Women and children in Afghanistan are bearing the brunt of the country's humanitarian crisis. Millions have fled their homes and struggle to find adequate food and shelter. Robust donor support is vital; women and girls and their communities must have access to life-saving aid," UNHCR Asia Pacific tweeted.
Source: <https://tolonews.com/afghanistan-177456>
2. March turned out to be the deadliest and most miserable month so far this year for Myanmar junta troops, as more than 400 soldiers have been killed in more than 500 clashes with ethnic Karen fighters in the country's south.
Source: <https://www.irrawaddy.com/news/burma/march-deadliest-month-this-year-for-myanmar-military-amid-fierce-fighting-in-karen.html>
3. Tensions between Myanmar's military and the National League for Democracy (NLD) were already building six years ago. Among the disagreements were military-appointed lawmakers' rejection of the vice-presidential nominee by the NLD and the State Counselor Bill, which was submitted to the Parliament to allow NLD leader Daw Aung San Suu Kyi to run the newly elected government.
Source: <https://www.irrawaddy.com/news/burma/myanmar-military-never-forgave-suu-kyi-for-state-counselors-role.html>
4. A deputy governor of Myanmar's Central Bank was shot at her home, less than a week after tough new regulations were issued ordering that foreign money held in bank accounts in the military-ruled nation must be exchanged for the local currency. There were conflicting accounts of whether Than Than Swe, appointed to her post after the military seized power, survived the attack on Thursday.
Source: <https://www.indiatoday.in/world/story/gunmen-shoot-deputy-governor-myanmar-central-bank-1934954-2022-04-08>
5. Myanmar's military administration is moving to tighten its control over movements of foreign currency, as the country's economy reels from mounting nationwide conflict and the accumulated effect of Western sanctions.
Source: <https://thediplomat.com/2022/04/myanmars-military-junta-tightens-control-over-foreign-currency-flows/>

6. Sri Lankans are facing fuel and food shortages, and steep price rises as the country is in the midst of its worst economic crisis in living memory. Millions are having to endure daily power cuts and queue for hours to get basics like cooking gas and diesel.

Source: <https://www.bbc.com/news/av/world-asia-61028654>

7. Fourteen sketches smuggled out of Myanmar's Insein Prison and interviews with eight former prisoners offer a rare glimpse inside the country's most notorious jail, where thousands of political prisoners have been sent since last year's military coup, and communication with the outside world has been sharply limited.

Source: <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/4/8/sketches-smuggled-out-of-insein-expose-harsh-prison-conditions>