

DAILY TRACKER

NUCLEAR ISSUES

1. Tractebel is to contribute to the development of France's Nuward small modular reactor (SMR) project. The Belgian engineering firm will conduct studies for the completion of the conceptual design of "the first SMR in the European Union".

Source: <https://www.world-nuclear-news.org/Articles/Tractebel-to-conduct-Nuward-SMR-conceptual-design>

2. In-coming President Yoon Suk-yeol made nuclear power one of his campaign pledges and, the Yonhap News Agency reports, Industry Minister nominee Lee Chang-yang told his confirmation hearing nuclear power was a way to boost energy security and hit its carbon-zero goals.

Source: <https://www.world-nuclear-news.org/Articles/South-Korea-to-reasonably-utilise-of-nuclear-energ>

3. The State of Wyoming has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Batelle Energy Alliance, the operating contractor of the Idaho National Laboratory (INL), to collaborate in the research, development, demonstration and deployment of advanced energy technologies with a special focus on advanced nuclear.

Source: <https://www.world-nuclear-news.org/Articles/Wyoming,-INL-sign-MoU-on-advanced-nuclear-developm>

4. The European Union is making a last-ditch attempt to save the Iran nuclear deal and break a deadlock, the Financial Times reported on Saturday. EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell told the Financial Times that he was seeking a "middle way" to end the impasse, which threatens to scupper more than a year of European diplomatic efforts.

Source: <https://english.alarabiya.net/News/middle-east/2022/05/07/EU-attempts-to-save-Iran-nuclear-deal-with-last-ditch-effort-Report>

5. The European Union's coordinator for talks on restoring Iran's 2015 nuclear deal with world powers will visit Tehran on Tuesday in an effort to find a solution to a months-long standoff between Tehran and Washington.

Source: <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/5/7/iran-confirms-eu-envoy-visit-to-save-stalled-nuclear-deal-talks>



6. “The agenda for talks (with Enrique Mora) in Tehran is nearly finalised,” Iran’s foreign ministry spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh said. “He will meet with Ali Bagheri, the Islamic Republic of Iran’s chief nuclear negotiator.”

Source: <https://english.alarabiya.net/News/middle-east/2022/05/09/Iran-says-EU-nuclear-negotiator-to-visit-this-week>

7. Rosatom’s unit in Finland says it has "no other choice but to defend ourselves and demand compensation" for the "unlawful termination" of the Hanhikivi I project, adding that it is ready to discuss "possible options for the project to recommence when conditions permit".

Source: <https://www.world-nuclear-news.org/Articles/Rosatam-seeks-compensation-for-cancelled-Finland-p>

8. Kim Jong-un is testing North Korea's weapons with renewed urgency, as South Korea prepares to inaugurate a new, hard-line president. After years of stalemate, following failed nuclear talks, tensions on the Korean peninsula are rising.

Source: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-61331859>

MISSILES/ BIO WEAPONS

1. The Ukrainian military, on May 7, released the footage of two back-to-back aerial bombings of the Russian-occupied Snake Island located in the western Black Sea, which established that the Ukrainian Air Force is still in the fight.

Source: <https://eurasianimes.com/ukraine-launches-daring-attack-on-russia-with-its-su-27-fighters/>

2. Earlier, SIGAR reported that 16 Mi-17 helicopters and 17 other pieces of military equipment which the US allocated for Afghanistan were given to Ukraine. According to SIGAR, On January 19, DOD notified Congress that it intended to transfer five U.S.-procured former Afghan Mi-17 helicopters that had been undergoing maintenance in Ukraine to the Ukrainian government. Ukraine accepted these excess defense articles on March 11, 2022.

Source: <https://tolonews.com/afghanistan-177922>

3. Weapons maker Lockheed Martin Corp (LMT.N) plans to nearly double production of Javelin missiles, the antitank weapon that has helped Ukraine fight Russia's invasion, Chief Executive Officer James Taiclet said in an interview on Sunday.

Source: <https://www.reuters.com/business/aerospace-defense/lockheed-martin-ceo-says-firm-is-looking-nearly-double-javelin-missile-2022-05-08/>

NUCLEAR PROLIFERATION

1. The European Union's coordinator for talks between Iran and world powers over restoring a frayed 2015 nuclear deal will visit Tehran this week, Iran's foreign ministry said Monday.

Source: <https://www.timesofisrael.com/eu-intermediary-to-visit-iran-amid-stalled-nuclear-talks/>

2. An Iranian lawmaker has called on the authorities to tell the people that the Vienna talks to restore the 2015 nuclear deal will yield no results. Mahmoud Ahmadi-Bighash, who is a member of the parliament's National Security and Foreign Policy committee, said on Saturday that there is no news about the revival of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) because it has reached a dead-end.

Source: <https://www.iranintl.com/en/202205085340>

3. There are many in the Biden administration who view reaching a nuclear deal with Iran as a legacy item dating back to their time in the Obama administration and appear willing to throw the United States into a pact with Iran that is even worse than the original Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) from 2015. There are also indications that the Biden administration is willing to do so without seeking congressional approval.

Source: <https://thehill.com/blogs/congress-blog/3481801-biden-willing-to-enter-a-nuclear-deal-with-iran-thats-even-worse-than-original-2015-pact/>

UN REFORMS

1. Afghanistan is in the grips of one of the worst humanitarian crises in the world. More than 24.4 million people will need humanitarian health aid in 2022, roughly two-thirds of the population. Earlier this year, the World Health Organization (WHO) warned that Afghanistan's health system was on the brink of collapse.

Source: <https://www.hrw.org/news/2022/05/09/afghans-dying-lack-medicine>

2. Sri Lankan Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa on Monday (May 9th) announced that he'll be stepping down from his post. This comes amid countrywide protests and public calls for him and his brother, President Gotabaya Rajapaksa, to quit as the country's economic situation worsens.

Source: <https://www.wionews.com/south-asia/sri-lanka-economic-crisis-pm-mahinda-rajapaksa-announces-decision-to-resign-477587>

3. The Taliban were seeking to again force women to wear the burqa in public this weekend. This comes after weeks during which Shi'ite minorities in Afghanistan have been targeted in bombings and terror attacks.

Source: <https://www.jpost.com/middle-east/article-706066>

4. According to AFP, two people including a MP from the ruling party Sri Lanka Podujana Peramuna party (SLPP) died while 139 people were injured in the violence. Amara Keerthi Athukorala, a SLPP lawmaker, took his own life with his revolver after firing on the protestors, a police official told AFP.

Source: <https://www.wionews.com/south-east-asia/troops-deployed-in-colombo-after-pro-government-supporters-attack-protesters-477560>

5. The decree came from Taliban leader Hibatullah Akhundzada said that if women had no important work outside then it was "better they stay at home". The decree also outlined punishments for women's male guardians if they didn't comply with the dress code.

Source: <https://www.wionews.com/south-asia/cover-faces-in-public-taliban-order-afghan-women-477237>

6. Although humanitarian assistance helped avert a food security catastrophe over the harsh winter in Afghanistan, hunger still persists at unprecedented levels, according to the report. Richard Trenchard, FAO Representative in the country, described the food security situation as dire.

Source: <https://news.un.org/en/story/2022/05/1117812>

7. Expressing 'grave concern' about the state of emergency, the Bar Association of Sri Lanka has called on President Gotabaya Rajapaksa to repeal it. "We call upon His Excellency to revoke the proclamation declaring a state of emergency and to ensure that the fundamental rights of the people... are respected and protected," the BASL said in a statement.

Source: <https://www.wionews.com/south-asia/bar-association-of-sri-lanka-expresses-grave-concern-on-the-state-of-emergency-477068>

8. Afghanistan's banking crisis and loss of funding has meant that most healthcare workers have not been paid for months, and clinics and hospitals are running seriously short of essential medicines and supplies.

Source: <https://www.hrw.org/news/2022/05/09/afghans-dying-lack-medicine>

9. "Afghanistan's supreme leader and Taliban chief on Saturday ordered the country's women to wear the all-covering burqa in public -- one of the harshest controls imposed on women's lives since the hardline Islamists seized power," an AFP report said.

Source: <https://www.jpost.com/middle-east/article-706066>

10. The US special envoy Thomas West tweeted he was 'deeply concern' over the recent decision on women's hijab.

Source: <https://tolonews.com/afghanistan-177933>

11. Afghan refugees in Iran expressed concerned about a census being taken in the country as it may cause problems with their current immigration status. "Asylum seekers in Iran are afraid of the census because their information is being recorded and they are afraid that they will be fired, and that their employer will not help them fill out the forms," said Parviz Amiri, an Afghan refugee in Iran.

Source: <https://tolonews.com/afghanistan-177927>

12. The Islamic Emirate announced new rules regarding women's covering or hijab on Saturday, saying it will be implemented in two steps -- encouragement and punishment – and defining the types of dress that women will need to wear when stepping out of home.

Source: <https://tolonews.com/afghanistan-177905>

13. The Ministry of Education said the expected assembly of the Islamic scholars about the fate of the girls' schools above grade six will be held Kabul. However, the ministry didn't provide details about the exact date of the assembly.

Source: <https://tolonews.com/afghanistan-177907>



14. Zimbabwe's decision to suspend bank lending in a desperate bid to arrest the rapid devaluation of its currency will worsen the economic crisis and expose borrowers to predatory loans, the country's business chamber said on Monday.

Source: <https://www.reuters.com/business/zimbabwes-bank-lending-freeze-will-worsen-economic-crisis-business-chamber-2022-05-09/>

15. The U.N. Security Council is due to meet on Wednesday at the request of the United States to discuss North Korea's latest missile launches, diplomats said, as Washington pushes the 15-member body to strengthen sanctions on Pyongyang.

Source: <https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/un-security-council-due-meet-wednesday-north-korea-say-diplomats-2022-05-09/>

16. Emboldened by an oil price surge since Russia Ukraine war, Iran's clerical rulers are in no rush to revive a 2015 nuclear pact with world powers to ease sanctions on its energy-reliant economy, three officials familiar with Tehran's thinking said.

Source: <https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/rising-oil-prices-buy-iran-time-nuclear-talks-officials-say-2022-05-05/>