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A. India

- No first use nuclear policy may change in future, says Rajnath Singh on India's defence strategy
- India says committed to 'no first use' of nuclear weapons for now
- Supply of equipment for Kudankulam Nuclear Power Plant unit III, IV completed by Russia
- Chandrayaan-2 precisely inserted in defined lunar orbit: ISRO Chairman
- ISRO aims for Chandrayaan-2 landing at 1.55 AM on September 07, says Dr K. Sivan
- PM Modi congratulates team ISRO as Chandrayaan 2 completes entry into Moon's orbit
- Chandrayaan 2 enters lunar orbit, 'biggest milestone' achieved
- ISRO releases first image of Moon captured by Chandrayaan-2
- NSG Membership Crucial For Growth Of Nuclear Power: PM Modi To UN Chief
- Imran Khan should stop making empty threats: Naqvi on Pakistan's nuke warning
- India, Russia to seal nuclear pact next week

B. China

- US puts Chinese nuclear giant, subsidiaries on Entity List to ban exports
- Chinese missile destroyer "Xi'an" makes technical stop in Egypt's Alexandria
- China's first commercial carrier rocket Jielong-1 launches satellites into orbit
- Beijing warns US of 'consequences' after Donald Trump approves US\$8 billion sale of fighter jets to Taiwan
- Smart Dragon rocket makes debut flight, launches 3 satellites
- China urges U.S. to immediately stop arms sales plan to Taiwan
- China uses advanced weapons in plateau military drills
- Japan's accusation that Chinese aircraft targeted Japanese warships 'purely speculation'
- China warns of new global arms race
- China urges U.S. to exercise restraint on armament development after missile test
- China's new carrier 'better and can carry more fighters'
- Private Chinese space firm successfully launches satellite into orbit
- Chinese military says Taiwan's US\$8 billion deal to buy US F-16 fighter jets is a waste of money because they will be 'useless' against the PLA
- Chinese mainland operates 47 nuclear reactors, world's third most



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- White paper shows transparency of China's national defense: expert
- China launches world-leading unmanned warship
- Russia, US trade barbs over INF collapse, China says no interest in trilateral treaty
- China's hypersonic DF-17 missile threatens regional stability, analyst warns
- China's Chang'e-4 probe resumes work for ninth lunar day
- China urges U.S. to stop malicious hyping on South China Sea
- China's navy 'set to pick J-20 stealth jets for its next generation carriers'
- Chinese aviation and space development commands attention in Russia
- China to show off advanced nuclear weapons in National Day parade and 'send message to US about capabilities'
- Chinese exhibitors display laser weapon, stealth target drone at Russian expo
- Russia offers rocket engine tech as China's Long March 5 struggles to get off the ground
- U.S. accountable for all Taiwan arms sales consequences: spokesperson
- China's KZ-1A rocket launches two satellites
- China's nuclear capabilities maturing
- Chinese, US scientists develop AI technology to help detect submarines in uncharted waters

C. Pakistan

- India, Pakistan once again on verge of full-scale war
- Kashmir a nuclear flashpoint: Pakistan army spokesman Asif Ghafoor
- Imran Khan: World must seriously consider safety of India's nuclear arsenal under Modi govt
- India's nuclear threat reflective of defeat: Qureshi
- Pakistan Leader Vents Frustration at India: 'No Point in Talking to Them'
- After Imran Khan's nuclear threat, Sheikh Rashid predicts 'full-blown Indo-Pak war' in Sep-Oct
- Pakistan test fires Ghaznavi missile to raise war spectre, to focus next on Geneva meet
- Pakistan successfully carried out night training launch of surface to surface ballistic missile Ghaznavi, capable of delivering multiple types of warheads upto a range of 290 kilometers.
- Pakistan tests night launch of N-capable ballistic missile

D. USA

- Regulators formalise technical collaboration on SMR regulation
- Three Mile Island, site of America's nuclear power blunder, set to close-down in few weeks
- What a mysterious explosion tells us about Russia's 'doomsday weapon'
- Pentagon Tests New Missile System, Weeks After a U.S.-Russia Nuclear Arms Treaty Collapsed
- Pompeo warns of 'new turmoil' if U.N. arms embargo on Iran lifted in 2020
- Trump denies report he wanted to nuke hurricanes
- Sale of Nuclear Power Plant for Decommissioning Finalized
- Axios: Trump floated the idea of using nuclear bombs to stop hurricanes headed for US
- US intel report says mysterious Russian explosion was triggered by recovery mission of nuclear-powered missile, not a test

E. Europe

- UK looking to complete British Steel sale to Turkish military fund in coming weeks
- Poland may join U.S.-led mission in Strait of Hormuz
- Bulgaria nuclear project attracts China and S.Korea interest-sources
- Russia's Rosatom interested in Bulgaria nuclear plant tender
- UK's Wood to sell nuclear energy unit for \$305 million
- Macron says will meet Iranians before G7 summit
- Czechs pick Bell for \$622 million army helicopter deal
- EDF gets OK to restart Scottish nuclear plant where cracks found
- Slovenia PM pushes for construction of new nuclear reactor
- Norway nuclear monitor backtracks on theory of second Russia blast
- UK, Germany, France warn on South China Sea tensions
- UK calls for broad support to tackle Gulf shipping threats
- France abandons research into fourth-generation nuclear-Le Monde
- EU will keep working to preserve Iran nuclear deal: Mogherini

F. Russia

- Ecologist Says Russian Nuclear Agency Committed Crime by Conducting Test Near City
- Russia completes MBIR hydraulic tests
- Russia says no plans to install new missiles unless U.S. deploys them
- Russia, China and South Korea vie for Bulgarian nuclear project
- Nuclear monitoring stations went mysteriously quiet after Russian missile facility explosion
- Russia to launch floating nuclear reactor
- Russia's floating plant heads for final destination
- Putin To Russian Military: 'Prepare A Symmetrical Response' To U.S. Missile Test
- Russia's first seaborne nuclear power plant sets sail across Arctic
- Earth's final frontier: Russia's floating nuclear power plant leaves for new Arctic home
- Russia says it launched 2 ballistic missiles in the Arctic Ocean as part of combat training
- Russia Finds Radioactive Isotopes in Test Samples After Accident in Severodvinsk
- Russia says radioactive isotopes released by mystery blast
- Russia to promote initiatives aimed at overcoming nuclear deal crisis, says Lavrov
- How Russia and Iran Dominated the G7 Summit
- Russia's Mystery Nuclear Explosion Occurred During Missile Recovery at Sea - Reports

West Asia

G. Iran

- Iran ready to scale up nuclear work by installing advanced centrifuges: top MP
- Satellite images suggest Iran satellite launch looms
- Iran tanker heads to Greece after release, Iran warns US against seizure attempt
- US says it has blocked billions of dollars from reaching Iran and its proxies
- Europe should pre-purchase Iran's oil through INSTEX first: CBI chief
- Iranian oil tanker pursued by US says it is going to Turkey
- Iran test fires new missile
- Macron gets G7 nod over plan to defuse tensions with Iran
- Zarif's trip to France not related to G7: spokesman

- Iran says it will not negotiate missile work, wants to export more oil
- Iran's Rouhani says no talks with US unless sanctions lifted
- Not all problems can be solved through diplomacy: ex-envoy
- Iranian youth will hit back at Trump's bullying, Macron's deceit: ex-nuclear negotiator
- Iran's Zarif to Japan PM: we are not seeking heightened tensions
- US sanctions networks it says are connected to Iran's government, military
- EU backs US-Iran talks but says nuclear deal must stay
- Satellite photos shows burning rocket at Iranian space center
- Trump says US not involved in Iran satellite launch failure

H. Yemen

- US military drone shot down in Yemen

I. Iraq

- Iraqi PM's government facing collapse over Israeli airstrikes: Military and political officials

J. Israel

- Israel accuses Iran of pushing Hezbollah missile plants in Lebanon

K. Turkey

- Turkey, Russia seek closer defense, aviation cooperation at MAKS 2019 Airshow
- Confusion as Turkey says Iranian tanker now headed to Lebanon

East Asia

L. North Korea

- NK raises military tension on peninsula: NSC
- N. Korea fires more projectiles, rules out talks with South
- North Korea says it tested 'new weapon' under leader Kim's guidance
- Kim expresses 'great satisfaction' over NKorea weapons tests
- Speculation swirls over possible US-NK meeting this week
- Warning to North Korea? US tests medium-range cruise missile for first time in 32 years
- N. Korea continued nuclear program in 2018 in Yongbyon: IAEA
- N. Korea says 'no interest in denuke talks' as long as South-US military drills in place
- North Korea prepared for dialogue, confrontation
- N. Korea fires unidentified projectiles into East Sea: JCS
- Foreign minister rebukes US State Secretary Pompeo
- North Korea tests new 'super-large' rocket launcher
- North Korea's propaganda outlet mentions Seoul's GSOMIA termination for first time
- North Korea says it won't give up arms modernization
- North Korea says Pompeo's remarks make talks with U.S. more difficult

M. South Korea

- South Korea's military says North Korea launched projectiles twice into sea
- S. Korea, US wrap up summertime combined exercise

- Biegun holds talks with S. Korean counterpart over resumption of nuke talks with NK
- Cheong Wa Dae says it never used Japan's intel in analyzing NK missiles under Moon
- S. Korea's Lee: GSOMIA can stay if Japan retracts trade measures
- S. Korea seeks to increase defense budget 7.4% next year
- South Korean leader says Japan dishonest over wartime past
- Defense chief vows staunch readiness
- Moon invites Kim Jong-un at summit in Busan

N. Japan

- Defense paper to stress reality of North Korean nuclear threat
- 'Blind men': End of South Korea-Japan pact undermines bid to understand North Korea threats
- Abe heads to France for G-7 summit clouded by divisions
- UN chief urges Japan, S. Korea to mend ties
- Japan faster to report N. Korean missile launch than S. Korea
- Japan affirms cooperation with France, Canada, Germany on N. Korea
- Trump, Abe at odds on North Korea missile launches
- TEPCO offers to close reactors after restarting Niigata plant
- Abe, Rouhani to meet late Sept. in New York amid Gulf tension
- Kono urges Iran to abide by nuclear deal in talks with Zarif
- Japan begins to doubt G7's influence in addressing East Asian issues
- Japan's Tepco, Chubu, Hitachi, Toshiba to collaborate on nuclear plants
- Iran's Zarif urges Japan not to join US coalition
- Japan seeks record ¥5.32 trillion defense budget with new focus on space and cyberspace

O. Taiwan

- Han pledges to start mothballed nuclear power plant
- Nuclear plan 'unfeasible,' Han criticized

P. Miscellaneous and World

- Canadian, Korean waste organisations agree cooperation
- Iran goes further in breaching nuclear deal, IAEA report shows

Q. Op-Ed

India

- Chandrayaan 2: What are ISRO's '15 terrifying minutes' to Moon touchdown
- Nothing scares Pakistanis more than the possibility that India could succeed and Pakistan fail
- As Chandrayaan-2 Enters Moon Orbit, Musk's Tesla Roadster Completed A Full Orbit Around The Sun
- There's much more than national prestige driving India's ambitious moon mission
- Should India tinker with its 'No First Use' policy?
- How Delhi and Paris became friends | ?Opinion
- Pakistan's ballistic missile arsenal and why India is safe from all of them
- Decoding the Cold War space race
- Is India "creatively reinterpreting" its no-first-use policy?

- The false assertions made by Imran Khan about India in his NYT propaganda column masquerading as opinion article

China

- Op-ed: Competition shouldn't be a zero-sum game
- China will think long and hard before sending in the PLA - it needs the Hong Kong 'experiment' to work, and it wants Taiwan back
- Shared vision binds Iran-China relations
- Message delivered; was it received?

Pakistan

- India makes veiled threat of nuclear war
- Pakistan Has Lots of Nuclear Weapons: Should the World Worry?
- Scholars point to change in India's nuclear policy
- India's nuclear threats
- Kashmir dispute seen as fuelling threat of N-conflict
- Why Pakistan Army will never want a nuclear war with India
- Imran Khan: The World Can't Ignore Kashmir. We Are All in Danger.
- India and Pakistan: Let's not be casual about nuclear war

USA

- The nuclear arms race is back ... and ever more dangerous now
- 'Nuclear winter' coming? Nuclear war between US and Russia would cause catastrophic event, study confirms
- If US, Russia clash, world to plunge into nuclear winter
- How Congress Can Prevent a Meltdown of Global Nuclear Arms Control
- Nuclear Power Must Not Lead to Nuclear Bombs
- Russia Is Developing Some Scary Nuclear Weapons. It Has To Give Them Up To Save New START.
- US missiles plan could spark arms race

Russia

- Russia's Plans to Counter U.S. Missile Defense Will Destroy the World-From Underwater

WEST ASIA

Iran

- Why Trump Fails at Making Deals
- Trump's Spat With Denmark Could Cost Him Against Iran
- The impact of US sanctions on Iran

EAST ASIA

North Korea

- Nonsense of lunatics
- Experts: North Korea's Nuclear-Capable Missile Threat Real But Not Imminent
- 'Impact of scrapping GSOMIA will hit Korea harder'
- Pie in the sky
- Positive turn

Japan

- TEPCO's nuclear reactor decommissioning announcement too vague
- Theater puts human face on nuclear crisis, life in Trump era

Taiwan

- Taiwan not affected by Russian nuclear accident: AEC
- A nuclear red herring
- Ryan Hass On Taiwan: Is the long peace in Asia unraveling?

R. Think Tanks

- No, Mr. Stephens, the United States doesn't need more nuclear weapons
- Defense Spending and the New CBO Budget Projections for FY2020-FY202
- The Nenoksa accident: A timeline of confusing and conflicting reports
- The U.S., Iran, and the JCPOA: Providing Incentives as Well as Threats
- Strangelove redux: US experts propose having AI control nuclear weapons

S. Reports and Original Documents

- Joint Statement on the State Visit of Prime Minister of India to Bhutan
- India-France Joint Statement on Visit of Prime Minister to France (22-23 August 2019)
- The Question That Never Gets Asked About Kashmir
- Iran-related Designations; Non-proliferation Designations

A. India

No first use nuclear policy may change in future, says Rajnath Singh on India's defence strategy

India Today, August 16, 2019

Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Friday said that India may see a major shift in its policy of using nuclear weapons. Rajnath has said India currently has a "no first use policy" on nuclear weapons but it may change in the future. Speaking at an event in Pokhran on Friday, Rajnath Singh said, "Till today, our nuclear policy is 'No First Use'. What happens in future depends on the circumstances."

Rajnath also added, "India attaining the status of a responsible nuclear nation became a matter of national pride for every citizen of this country. The nation will remain indebted to the greatness of Atal Ji."

<https://www.indiatoday.in/india/story/india-no-first-use-nuclear-policy-may-change-rajnath-singh-1581403-2019-08-16>

India says committed to 'no first use' of nuclear weapons for now

Sanjeev Miglani, Reuters, August 16, 2019

India has stuck to its commitment of 'no first use' of nuclear weapons but future policy will depend on the situation, the defense minister said on Friday, which analysts said introduced a level of ambiguity in a core national security doctrine.

India declared itself a nuclear weapons power after conducting underground tests in 1998 and long-time rival Pakistan responded with its own tests shortly afterwards. Since then, nuclear experts say the rivals have been developing nuclear weapons and the missiles to deliver them.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-india-nuclear/india-says-committed-to-no-first-use-of-nuclear-weapons-for-now-idUSKCN1V613F>

Supply of equipment for Kudankulam Nuclear Power Plant unit III, IV completed by Russia

The New Indian Express, August 19, 2019

The main equipment for the under construction third unit of Kudankulam Nuclear Power Plant in Tamil Nadu have been shipped, a key Russian supplier for the project said on Monday. The Rosatom State Corporation, the main equipment supplier and technical consultant for the Indo-Russian joint venture KNPP in Tirunelveli district in southern Tamil Nadu, said it had "completed" the supply of the materials, including embedded parts of the reactor pit. "The shipment consisted of the molten core catcher, embedded parts of the reactor pit, dry protection, heat-insulation of the cylindrical shell/barrel, truss buckstay (and) reactor vessel," it said in an official release.

<http://www.newindianexpress.com/states/tamil-nadu/2019/aug/19/supply-of-equipment-for-kudankulam-nuclear-power-plant-unit-iii-iv-completed-by-russia-2021128.html>

Chandrayaan-2 precisely inserted in defined lunar orbit: ISRO Chairman

PIB India, August 20, 2019

The second moon mission of India, the Chandrayaan-2 has been precisely inserted in defined orbit. It reached in defined lunar orbit at 09.02 am today. This was stated by the Chairman, Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), Dr K. Sivan, while addressing a press conference after the Lunar Orbit Insertion of Chandrayaan-2, in Bengaluru, today. With this, Chandrayaan-2 has crossed a major landmark, he said.'

Dr Sivan said that ISRO aims for successful landing at 1.55 AM on 7th September. The soft landing will be near lunar South Pole. He said that the next major event will be on 2nd September when the lander will be separated from the orbiter. The Chairman said that ISRO is confident about its landing mission. ISRO has done enough

stimulations of soft landing, he added. Chandrayaan-2 will undergo four more manoeuvres. The first manoeuvre will be tomorrow, followed by subsequent manoeuvres on 28th August, 30th August and 1st September. This is ISRO's second moon mission after Chandrayaan-1 in the year 2008. Chandrayaan-2 was launched from Sriharikota on 22nd July this year. It carries an orbiter, 'Vikram' lander and 'Pragyan' rover.

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1582414>

PM Modi congratulates team ISRO as Chandrayaan 2 completes entry into Moon's orbit

Sushant Talwar

Times now News. August 20, 2019

India's most ambitious deep-space mission to date, Chandrayaan 2, is currently en-route to the Moon's surface. Built at a cost of Rs 938 crore, the mission is scheduled to soft-land on the Moon on September 7 after having launched on July 22 from ISRO's Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Sriharikota.

Since its launch, the mission has been reaching one milestone after the other, with latest being its entry into the Moon's orbit — a step that is regarded as one of the most complex and challenging manoeuvres in its journey to the Moon.

<https://www.timesnownews.com/technology-science/article/pm-modi-congratulates-team-isro-as-chandrayaan-2-completes-entry-into-moons-orbit/472319>

Chandrayaan 2 enters lunar orbit, 'biggest milestone' achieved

Anonna Dutt, Hindustan Times, August 20, 2019

India's second mission to moon Chandrayaan 2 achieved the "biggest milestone" as it entered the lunar orbit on Tuesday, a tense operation only next to the 15 minutes of terror scientists will experience on September 7 when the lander-rover starts a descent to the moon.

This critical manoeuvre comes on Day 30 after the launch of the mission on July 22. Scientists at Indian Space Research Agency (Isro) fired the propulsion system onboard Chandrayaan 2 in 1738 seconds to achieve a highly elliptical orbit of 114x18,072 km at 9.02am on Tuesday.

<https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/in-a-big-leap-chandrayaan-2-enters-lunar-orbit/story-r9DJg0GTLh7QNokHX4jB4O.html>

ISRO releases first image of Moon captured by Chandrayaan-2

The Indian Express, August 23, 2019

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) Thursday released the first image of the Moon captured by Chandrayaan-2, which moved into a lower orbit around the Moon on Wednesday. The picture was taken at a height of about 2650 km from the Lunar surface. The agency also said that Mare Orientale basin and Apollo craters were identified in the picture.

<https://indianexpress.com/article/india/isro-releases-first-moon-image-captured-by-chandrayaan-2-5928308/>

NSG Membership Crucial For Growth Of Nuclear Power: PM Modi To UN Chief

NDTV, August 26, 2019

India is moving towards clean energy including investment-intensive nuclear power for which membership of Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) is crucial to building investor confidence, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday told the UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres during their meeting on the sidelines of the G7 summit. Briefing reporters about the meeting on Monday, Foreign Secretary Vijay Gokhale said Mr Guterres was "very enthusiastic" about the Prime Minister's leadership on climate change.

He said that the Prime Minister will be going to the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) next month and participating as one of the keynote leaders

and speakers in the UN Secretary General's climate summit and India hopes to launch a new initiative of the coalition for disaster-resistant infrastructure.

<https://www.ndtv.com/india-news/nsg-membership-crucial-for-growth-of-nuclear-power-pm-narendra-modi-to-un-chief-2090817>

Imran Khan should stop making empty threats: Naqvi on Pakistan's nuke warning

India Today, August 27, 2019

Union minister Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi has hit out at Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan over his nuclear threat to India on Monday. Naqvi has said that Imran Khan should quit making such empty threats over and over again.

Speaking to India Today TV, Naqvi said, "He should stop issuing such empty threats time and again and look at the condition of his own country. He will have to decide if he wishes for the support of terrorists or the world."

<https://www.indiatoday.in/india/story/mukhtar-abbas-naqvi-imran-khan-empty-nuclear-threat-1592038-2019-08-27>

India, Russia to seal nuclear pact next week

Elizabeth Roche, Live mint, August 28, 2019

Russia hopes to conclude a new pact for building six more nuclear power plants in India during next week's visit to Vladivostok by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Russian ambassador to India Nikolay Kudashev said. The trip is expected to open a "new chapter" in the "special and privileged strategic partnership," between the two countries, he said on Wednesday.

One of the key takeaways expected from Modi's visit is the signing of a pact for the construction of six nuclear power plants for India. This is apart from the six being set up in Kudankulam in Tamil Nadu.

<https://www.livemint.com/politics/policy/india-russia-to-seal-nuclear-pact-next-week-1567015328920.html>

B. China

US puts Chinese nuclear giant, subsidiaries on Entity List to ban exports

Xie Jun, Global Times, August 15, 2019

The US has added China General Nuclear Power Corp (CGN), China's largest state-owned nuclear company, and several of its subsidiaries to its Entity List, barring US companies from selling products to those enterprises. Experts said that the ban is part of a series of US moves to crack down on China's high-technology sector, but those moves have in effect accelerated China's efforts to seek technological independence. The US government said that companies on the entity list have been acting "contrary to" the US' national security or foreign policy interests, according to a statement published by the Federal Register on its website. Commenting on the US' move, Chinese Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Hua Chunying said on Thursday that the US is abusing the use of export control measures.

<http://www.globaltimes.cn/content/1161621.shtml>

Chinese missile destroyer "Xi'an" makes technical stop in Egypt's Alexandria

Xinhua, August 17, 2019

Chinese missile destroyer "Xi'an" of the 32nd Chinese naval escort fleet arrived at the port of Alexandria Naval Base of Egypt on Friday for a four-day technical stop. Chinese Ambassador to Egypt Liao Liqiang and other diplomats of the Chinese embassy in Egypt as well as more than 300 representatives attended the welcoming ceremony and boarded the ship for a tour. Representatives of the Egyptian Naval Forces and the Commander of the Alexandria Naval Base Hisham Safwat also attended the ceremony. This year marks the 70th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China and the People's

Liberation Army Navy, as well as the 63rd anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and Egypt. The arrival of the Xi'an ship is of special significance which will further enhance the friendship between the two countries, said Liao in a welcoming speech.

http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2019-08/17/c_138314914.htm

China's first commercial carrier rocket Jielong-1 launches satellites into orbit

Global Times, August 18, 2019

The Jielong-1 rocket, the first commercial rocket made by the state-owned China Aerospace Science and Technology Corp (CASC), was successfully launched on Saturday, sending three satellites into orbit, according to information released by CASC's WeChat account. The carrier rocket successfully blasted off from Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center in the Northwest China's Gansu Province at 12:11 pm Beijing Time. An example of civilian-military integration in the commercial aerospace area, the rocket is of the highest standard in the industry. The Jielong-1 is the lightest and smallest solid propellant rocket, but it is designed with the highest carrying efficiency. At 19.5 meters long and with a diameter of 1.2 meters, the solid-propellant carrier rocket can send a payload of 200 kilograms to an orbit of 500 kilometers.

<http://www.globaltimes.cn/content/1161802.shtml>

Beijing warns US of 'consequences' after Donald Trump approves US\$8 billion sale of fighter jets to Taiwan

Lawrence Chung, South China Morning Post, August 19, 2019

Beijing warned it would take countermeasures against Washington for selling 66 fighter jets to Taiwan after US President Donald Trump said he had approved the US\$8 billion deal. Chinese foreign ministry spokesman Geng Shuang

on Monday said the sale of Lockheed Martin F-16V jets was a serious violation of the one-China principle. "China has made numerous solemn representations to the US on the sale of F-16V jets to Taiwan," Geng said in a press conference, adding that the United States should halt the sale. "The US has to bear all the consequences triggered by the sale," Geng said. "China will take necessary measures to defend its self-interest based on the development of the situation."

Geng gave no details of the action China would take. In July, Beijing said it would impose sanctions on US firms involved in a deal to sell US\$2.2 billion worth of tanks, missiles and related equipment to Taiwan, describing it as harmful to China's sovereignty and national security.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/military/article/3023387/donald-trump-confirms-he-has-approved-us8-billion-deal-sell>

Smart Dragon rocket makes debut flight, launches 3 satellites

Zhao Lei, China Daily Global, August 19, 2019

Smart Dragon 1, the newest model in China's carrier rocket family, conducted its debut flight over the weekend from northwestern China's Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center, expanding the nation's launch service capabilities SD 1 Y1, the first rocket in the solid-propellant SD 1 series, blasted off at noon on Saturday from a large launch vehicle. After several minutes of flight, it successfully placed three satellites, designed and built by three private satellite startups in Beijing, into orbits about 550 kilometers above Earth. The mission gave China a fourth carrier rocket alongside China Aerospace Science and Technology Corp's Long March series, China Aerospace Science and Industry Corp's Kuaizhou, and the SQX of privately owned space startup i-Space in Beijing.

http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/global/2019-08/19/content_37503033.htm

China urges U.S. to immediately stop arms sales plan to Taiwan

Xinhuanet, August 19, 2019

China on Monday urged the United States to immediately stop its planned arms sales to Taiwan and cease military contact with Taiwan, saying otherwise, the U.S. side will have to bear all the consequences. Foreign Ministry spokesperson Geng Shuang made the comments in response to U.S. planned sales of F-16V fighter jets worth 8 billion U.S. dollars to Taiwan, reiterating that the move severely violates the one-China principle and the three China-U.S. Joint Communiques, especially the August 17 Communique.

China firmly opposes U.S. arms sales to Taiwan as it seriously interferes in China's internal affairs and undermines China's sovereignty and security interests, Geng said.

http://eng.mod.gov.cn/news/2019-08/19/content_4848515.htm

China uses advanced weapons in plateau military drills

Global Times, August 19, 2019

In preparation for potential plateau warfare, China recently used, for the first time, some of its most powerful weapons and equipment, including Type 99A main battle tanks and battlefield robots to a snow-covered plateau in combat exercises. Taking part in the exercises at an elevation of 4,200 meters was a combined brigade under the 76th Group Army of the People's Liberation Army (PLA), who conducted mock battles using live ammunition, China Central Television (CCTV) reported on Sunday.

The report did not identify the area, but such a terrain is usually found in western China. Weapons and equipment, including Type 99A tanks and battlefield robots used for mine sweeping and reconnaissance, were deployed for the first time in a plateau, the CCTV report said. Heavy weapons will usually suffer from the lack of oxygen on plateaus, military analysts said. "Switching from the plains to a plateau, the tanks' mobility and assault capabilities suffered, so

we devised some tactics that best suit plateaus. Our goal is to maximize these new weapons' combat readiness in a potential plateau warfare," Fan Hailong, an officer with the 76th Group Army, told CCTV.

<http://www.globaltimes.cn/content/1161939.shtml>

Japan's accusation that Chinese aircraft targeted Japanese warships 'purely speculation'

Guo Yuandan, Global Times, August 19, 2019

Japanese media accusations that Chinese aircraft used Japanese warships as imaginary targets during a missile drill is purely speculation and only reveals Japan's own guilty conscience, Chinese military experts said on Monday. Chinese military aircraft "likely used nearby Japanese destroyers as targets during a missile drill in international waters in the East China Sea in May," Japanese media outlet Kyodo News reported on Sunday, citing Japanese government sources. It claimed that several Chinese JH-7 fighter bombers approached two Maritime Self-Defense Force destroyers that were within striking distance of anti-ship missiles.

While the Chinese pilots did not lock on guided missile radar, the Japanese intercepted communications between the Chinese aircraft in which the pilots said they would conduct a drill using the Japanese vessels as mock targets, Kyodo News said. In response to the report, Chinese air defense expert Fu Qianshao said the evidence from the Japanese side was not trustworthy. "During military exercises, the communications between warplanes are usually conducted through abbreviated sentences and not done through voice comms," Fu said, questioning how it was possible for the Japanese side to intercept the Chinese communications.

<http://www.globaltimes.cn/content/1161973.shtml>

China warns of new global arms race

Global Times, August 20, 2019

China warned Tuesday that the testing of a medium-range cruise missile by the US would start a new "arms race," one day after the US Department of Defense announced that it tested a new ground-based cruise missile which can hit a target after more than 500 kilometers of flight. "The US move will trigger a new round of arms race, leading to an escalation of military confrontation, which in turn will have a serious negative impact on the international and regional security situation," Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Geng Shuang said. The US Department of Defense announced on Monday it had tested a type of ground-launched missile that was banned under the 1987 INF agreement, which limited the use of nuclear and conventional medium-range weapons. The missile was launched from the US Navy-controlled San Nicolas Island off the coast of California.

Geng pointed out that the US land-based medium- and short-range missile test, which was previously prohibited by the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) treaty, came less than three weeks since it quit the treaty on August 2. "This shows that the real purpose of the US' withdrawal from the treaty was to seek 'self-deregulation,' let go of the development of advanced missiles, and seek military superiority," Geng said.

<http://www.globaltimes.cn/content/1162102.shtml>

China urges U.S. to exercise restraint on armament development after missile test

Xinhuanet, August 20, 2019

China on Tuesday urged the United States to exercise restraint on armament development and earnestly safeguard the existing arms control regime, after the U.S. Defense Department on Monday reportedly announced the test of a medium-range ground-launched cruise missile. It was reported that the "conventionally

configured" test missile hit the target after flying more than 500 km. That was the first time the United States carried out a missile test previously prohibited by the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty (INF Treaty), marking the resumption of an arms race.

Foreign Ministry spokesman Geng Shuang said the missile test was conducted less than three weeks after the United States announced its official withdrawal from the INF Treaty on Aug. 2.

http://eng.mod.gov.cn/2019-08/20/content_4848594.htm

China's new carrier 'better and can carry more fighters'

KG Chan Asia Times, August 21, 2019

China's new home-made aircraft carrier, which can house a dozen more fighter jets than its sister ship the Liaoning, is likely to be in service by the end of this year. The new ship's multiple voyages in the Yellow Sea off northeastern China this year are an indication that the official christening and commission of the Type 001A carrier are drawing near. It is likely to be in service by the end of the year if it is not ready for the big military show on October 1, the 70th anniversary of the Communist republic.

Despite being ridiculed as a lookalike of the Soviet-built Liaoning - the People's Liberation Army's only carrier in service - the new Type 001A can house a dozen more fighter jets than her sister ship, according to state broadcaster China Central Television.

https://www.asiatimes.com/2019/08/article/chinas-new-carrier-better-and-can-carry-more-fighters/?_id=8759837

Private Chinese space firm successfully launches satellite into orbit

China Daily, August 21, 2019

The No. 1 Qiansheng-1 satellite, the main carrier of the Smart Dragon-1 (SD-1) Y1 of China Aerospace Science and

Technology Corporation, was launched at the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center on Aug 17, 2019. The satellite successfully entered into the scheduled orbit after flying through the powered phase.

As one of the achievements of the project of the core area of Zhongguancun Science Park to develop industries with high technical level and fast growth rate and to promote original scientific and technological innovation, the No.1 Qiansheng-1 satellite was named “Haichuang Qiansheng” by the Haidian District Government. It was completed in 14 months, weighs 65 kilograms, and has obtained more than 30 independent intellectual property rights and completed more than 10 technological innovations and projects.

http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/m/beijing/zhongguancun/2019-08/21/content_37504216.htm

Chinese military says Taiwan’s US\$8 billion deal to buy US F-16 fighter jets is a waste of money because they will be ‘useless’ against the PLA

Liu Zhen, South China Morning Post, August 22, 2019

A mainland Chinese military official has said Taiwan’s purchase of American warplanes will not help the island defend itself and will only be a financial burden. Beijing responded with fury this week after US President Donald Trump approved the sale of 66 F-16V, or “Viper”, jets to Taiwan in a US\$8 billion deal, threatening to retaliate without saying what action it would take. Senior Colonel Cao Yanzhong, a researcher at the PLA Academy of Military Science, said the fighters would be “useless” in improving the island’s combat strength against the mainland’s military.

“This deal just places an extra financial burden on the Taiwanese people and only benefits the American arms dealers ... It is essentially Taiwan paying a fee to the Americans to buy protection, but this will not work and cannot protect them,” Cao said. “No one shall doubt the PLA’s

determination and ability to ensure our national security, reunification and sovereignty.” Beijing regards Taiwan as a breakaway province that must eventually be reunified with the mainland, by force if necessary.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/military/article/3023969/chinese-military-says-taiwans-us8bn-deal-buy-us-f-16-fighters>

Chinese mainland operates 47 nuclear reactors, world’s third most

Global Times Published, August 22, 2019

A total of 47 nuclear power reactors with an installed capacity of 48.73 million kilowatts (kwh) are in operation on the Chinese mainland, as of June 2019, ranking the 3rd in the world, data from the China Nuclear Society showed on Wednesday. It is estimated that the installed capacity of China’s nuclear power will reach 51.03 million kwh in 2020.

“The independent innovation system of China’s nuclear power has been continuously strengthened, and the localization rate of key equipment and materials for nuclear power has been significantly improved,” said Wang Shoujun, chairman of the China Nuclear Society, according to a report from the Xinhua News Agency.

<http://www.globaltimes.cn/content/1162272.shtml>

White paper shows transparency of China’s national defense: expert

Xinhua, August 22, 2019

A military expert said Thursday that a newly issued defense white paper, which outlines China’s national defense policy system, showed a high level of transparency in its strategic intentions and military development. Chen Rongdi, head of the Institute of War Studies of the Academy of Military Sciences of the Chinese People’s Liberation Army, made

the comment at a press salon with the All-China Journalists Association.

The national defense policy system was the most distinctive highlight of the white paper, said Chen, who also introduced the fundamental goal, the distinctive feature, the path forward, the missions and task of China's national defense in the new era, as well as its global significance.

http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2019-08/22/c_138329517.htm

China launches world-leading unmanned warship

Liu Xuanzun, Global Times, August 22, 2019

China on Wednesday launched a world-leading unmanned warship, with its developer claiming the vessel is combat-ready. Jointly developed by No. 716 and No. 702 research institutes under the state-owned China Shipbuilding Industry Corporation (CSIC), the JARI multi-purpose unmanned combat vessel held its launch ceremony on Wednesday at an undisclosed location, according to a statement the No. 716 Research Institute of CSIC released on its WeChat account on Wednesday.

The launch indicates the world-leading combat drone ship has gained initial combat capability, the statement said. Announcing JARI's combat-readiness immediately after its launch is also an indication of how mature the technologies used on the ship are, a military expert who asked not to be named told the Global Times on Thursday.

<http://www.globaltimes.cn/content/1162320.shtml>

Russia, US trade barbs over INF collapse, China says no interest in trilateral treaty

China Daily, August 23, 2019

Russia and the United States on Thursday blamed each other for the collapse of the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty, while China said it has no interest in trilateral arms control talks that Washington wants. At a United Nations

Security Council meeting, Dmitry Polyanskiy, Russia's acting permanent representative to the UN, said the United States "consistently and deliberately violated" the Treaty for some time. He recalled the US deployment of missile launchers in eastern Europe, the first one in Romania, which he said could be easily re-equipped to launch missiles banned by the treaty. The US missile test, conducted soon after its formal departure from the treaty on Aug 2, proved its intended breach.

In response, Chinese Permanent Representative to the United Nations Zhang Jun said "China has repeatedly stated its position on the so-called arms control negotiation with the United States and Russia. China has no interest and will not be part of it". Zhang stressed that, for any arms control negotiation, it is imperative to fully consider the overall military capabilities of countries and follow the principle of "undiminished security for all", a basic principle of international arms control. In addition, he said it is unacceptable to use China as an excuse for the United States to leave the INF Treaty. "China unswervingly pursues a national defense policy that is defensive in nature," he said. "China's nuclear strategy for self-defense is completely transparent and its nuclear policy is highly responsible." "China's nuclear arsenal is extremely limited in scale, and poses no threat to international peace and security," he noted.

<http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/201908/23/WS5d5f9b35a310cf3e3556794c.html>

China's hypersonic DF-17 missile threatens regional stability, analyst warns

Kristin Huang, South China Morning Post, August 23, 2019

China's development of a hypersonic ballistic missile – capable of reaching well above the speed of sound and penetrating US missile shields – is a threat to stability in the region, a military analyst has warned. A source from the state-owned

China Aerospace Science and Industry Corporation (CASIC) said the DF-17 missile, currently in development, would be capable of hypersonic speeds and delivering a manoeuvrable re-entry vehicle which could shift targets in flight, making it less vulnerable to interception by other countries' defence systems.

"And the DF-17 will be capable of delivering both nuclear and conventional payloads," said the source, who declined to be named due to the sensitivity of the topic.

"There are now two institutions under CASIC that are competing to develop these advanced features," the source added. China fires up new hypersonic missile challenge to US defences

The US intelligence community has assessed that the DF-17 is expected to reach initial operational capability by 2020. In addition to China, the United States and Russia are also developing the hypersonic glider technology behind the Chinese DF-17.

Adam Ni, a military researcher at Macquarie University in Sydney, said the developments in the DF-17 enhanced China's nuclear deterrence since it would be capable of penetrating existing US missile shields.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/military/article/3023972/chinas-hypersonic-df-17-missile-threatens-regional-stability>

China's Chang'e-4 probe resumes work for ninth lunar day

China Military Online, August 25, 2019

The lander and rover of the Chang'e-4 probe have resumed work for the ninth lunar day on the far side of the moon after "sleeping" during the extremely cold night. The lander woke up at 8:10 a.m. Sunday, and the rover, Yutu-2 (Jade Rabbit-2), awoke at 8:42 a.m. Saturday, according to the Lunar Exploration and Space Program Center of the China National Space Administration. For the ninth lunar day, the lander's neutron radiation detector and low-frequency radio detector, as well as the rover's infrared imaging spectrometer and other instruments will be restarted to conduct scientific tasks

including moon surface observation and composition analysis.

China's Chang'e-4 probe, launched on Dec. 8, 2018, made the first-ever soft landing on the Von Karman Crater in the South Pole-Aitken Basin on the far side of the moon on Jan. 3.

http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/view/2019-08/25/content_9600450.htm

China urges U.S. to stop malicious hyping on South China Sea

Xinhua, August 27, 2019

China urges the United States to stop malicious hyping and play a positive and constructive role in international and regional affairs, a foreign ministry spokesperson said on Tuesday. Spokesperson Geng Shuang made the comments at a daily press briefing in response to the U.S. Department of Defense's accusation that "China recently resumed its coercive interference in Vietnam's longstanding oil and gas activities in the South China Sea."

"The rights and wrongs of the issue are quite clear. The U.S. has made irresponsible remarks over and over again, disregarding facts and calling black white, and China is firmly opposed to that," he said. China firmly safeguards the world order and abides by international law, always exercising its legitimate rights in the region based on international law, and firmly safeguarding regional peace, stability and order, Geng said.

http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2019-08/27/c_138342613.htm

China's navy 'set to pick J-20 stealth jets for its next generation carriers'

Minnie Chan, South China Morning Post, August 27, 2019

China's military is likely to pick the country's first active stealth fighter, the J-20, for its next generation aircraft carriers, according to military sources and a recent report on state media.

The J-20, made by the Chengdu Aerospace Corporation (CAC), appears to have won a head-to-head contest with the FC-31, a fighter made by another company which is still undergoing testing. A military insider told the South China Morning Post that the Central Military Commission, the People's Liberation Army's top decision-making body, now favoured adapting the J-20 for its new carriers.

"The Chengdu Aerospace Corporation will announce some new products, which will include a new version of their J-20. You can guess what type it will be," the military insider, who requested anonymity because of the sensitivity of the subject, said.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/military/article/3024584/chinas-navy-set-pick-j-20-stealth-jets-its-next-generation>

Chinese aviation and space development commands attention in Russia

Liu Xuanzun, Global Times, August 28, 2019

The China Pavilion opened on Tuesday at the 2019 Russian International Aviation and Space Salon (MAKS) in Zhukovsky, near Moscow, as the event attracted attention from local visitors with some of the most popular exhibits from China. The China Pavilion features weapons, aircraft, and equipment from nearly 20 companies. For the first time, China is the partner country of the biannual Russian exhibition and compared to past editions of MAKS, China has sent the most companies and exhibits in the largest area of 3,000 square meters.

A crowd of visitors gathered outside the China Pavilion prior to its opening on Tuesday morning, eager to see what the Chinese exhibitors would put on display. The top exhibit for the Aviation Industry of China (AVIC) is the AG600 large amphibious aircraft, which is exhibited overseas for the first time, according to a statement AVIC sent to the Global Times on Tuesday.

<http://www.globaltimes.cn/content/1162880.shtml>

China to show off advanced nuclear weapons in National Day parade and 'send message to US about capabilities'

Minnie Chan, South China Morning Post, August 28, 2019

China is planning to make its strategic nuclear missiles and advanced fighter jets the centrepiece of its National Day military parade in what military sources and analysts said was an attempt to show off its achievements in overhauling its armed forces over the past few years. Military analysts said the show of nuclear strength was intended to demonstrate China's enhanced deterrence and second strike capability, especially to the United States.

"The parade is to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China on October 1," one military insider said.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/military/article/3024782/china-show-advanced-nuclear-weapons-national-day-parade-and>

Chinese exhibitors display laser weapon, stealth target drone at Russian expo

Liu Xuanzun, Global Times, August 27, 2019

About 20 Chinese exhibitors will showcase hardware such as a laser weapon and a stealth target drone at the 2019 Russian International Aviation and Space Salon (MAKS), which opens on Tuesday. Aviation Industry Corp of China (AVIC) will display aircraft such as the AG600 large amphibious aircraft, JF-17 fighter jet and Wing Loong drones. The China Aerospace Science and Industry Corp will display missiles and a laser weapon. The LW-30 laser defense weapon system features a directional-emission high-energy laser to quickly intercept aerial targets such as photoelectric guidance equipment, drones, guided bombs and mortars.

Xi'an-based Northwestern Polytechnical University will showcase the LJ-1. It is a tactical target featuring sustained-G, long endurance, stealth and recoverability, and is capable of simulating third and fourth

generation fighter jets and, depending on another commonly used classification, fifth generation fighter jets, according to introductory material MAKS provided. Chinese exhibitors will also show space rockets, aero engines and passenger aircraft.

<http://www.globaltimes.cn/content/1162762.shtml>

Russia offers rocket engine tech as China's Long March 5 struggles to get off the ground

Liu Zhen, South China Morning Post, August 28, 2019

China and Russia are forging stronger ties in space technology with Russia offering to supply rocket engines to China in exchange for Chinese microelectronics, according to the head of Russia's state space corporation. At the MAKS 2019 Moscow air show on Tuesday, Dmitry Rogozin, director general of Roscosmos, said Russia was also keen to use its rocket technology to launch Chinese satellites. "Cooperation in the field of space transport services could involve the launches of Chinese spacecraft on board Russian carrier rockets to deploy China's multi-satellite constellation, as well as possible deliveries of rocket engines," Russian state news agency Sputnik quoted Rogozin as saying.

China, it is the supply of microelectronics that we need." In addition, representatives from both countries would discuss "cooperation in near-space infrastructure" when a Chinese delegation visits Roscosmos later this year or in early 2020, he said. China's space ambitions have been held back by a lack of progress in development of a heavy-lift rocket engine.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/military/article/3024766/russia-offers-rocket-engine-tech-chinas-long-march-5-struggles>

U.S. accountable for all Taiwan arms sales consequences: spokesperson

Xinhua, August 30, 2019

The United States is accountable for all consequences of its arms sales to Taiwan, a spokesperson for the Ministry of National Defense said Thursday. The one-China

principle is the political foundation for the China-U.S. relationship, said the spokesperson Ren Guoqiang at a press conference when asked about the U.S. approval of arms sales to Taiwan. It is a pity that the United States repeatedly violated the one-China principle and the three China-U.S. joint communiqués, Ren said.

Arms sales to Taiwan will not change the historical trend of China's reunification, Ren said, noting that the move will only send wrong signals to "Taiwan independence" forces and deteriorate the situation across the Taiwan Strait. "We have resolute will, abundant confidence and sufficient ability to defeat any form of interference of external forces and separatist acts of 'Taiwan independence,'" Ren said. "We will take all necessary measures to safeguard our interests. We will defend our national sovereignty and territorial integrity and maintain the peace and stability across the Strait at any cost," Ren stressed.

http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2019-08/30/c_138349053.htm

China's KZ-1A rocket launches two satellites

China Military Online, August 31, 2019

Two satellites for technological experiments were sent into space by a Kuaizhou-1A, or KZ-1A, carrier rocket from the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center in northwest China on Saturday. The rocket blasted off at 7:41 a.m. and sent the two satellites into their planned orbit. Kuaizhou-1A, meaning speedy vessel, is a low-cost solid-fuel carrier rocket with high reliability and a short preparation period. The rocket, developed by a company under the China Aerospace Science and Industry Corporation, is mainly used to launch low-orbit microsattellites.

Saturday's launch was the third mission of the KZ-1A rocket. One of the newly launched satellites was developed by the Innovation Academy for Microsatellites of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, and will

be used for microgravity technology experiments. The other satellite, developed by Spacety Co., Ltd. (Changsha), a privately owned Chinese commercial space company, will be used to test solar sail technology.

http://english.chinamil.com.cn/view/2019-08/31/content_9607564.htm

China's nuclear capabilities maturing

Aaron Tu and Jake Chung, Taipei Times, August 31, 2019

The defense ministry said that the PLA has been expanding its arsenal to achieve its strategic goals and increase its force projection in the region. The Chinese armed forces could soon have full-fledged "tactical nuclear power" to counter any major nuclear-armed nation, according to the Ministry of National Defense's People's Liberation Army Report for this year.

Such capabilities could allow China to attain its strategic goals of ending calls for independence within and outside of its borders; combating hegemony; establishing control of its border with India; and stabilizing its frontiers, said the report, which was delivered to the Legislative Yuan yesterday. The Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) could by next year establish an arsenal of tactical nuclear weapons sizeable and powerful enough to deter a nuclear war and protect China's borders, it said. By 2050, China could complete the infrastructure necessary to launch nuclear-armed aircraft for strategic bombing, it added. The report also maintained a theory from last year's edition that the PLA could conclude preparations to invade Taiwan by next year, but has limited ability to capture it due to geographical and equipment challenges.

<http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/front/archives/2019/08/31/2003721435>

Chinese, US scientists develop AI technology to help detect submarines in uncharted waters

Stephen Chen, South China Morning Post, August 31, 2019

Scientists from China and the United States have developed a new artificial intelligence-

based system that they say will make it easier to detect submarines in uncharted waters. The technology builds on earlier work by the team, led by Dr Niu Haiqiang from the Institute of Acoustics at the Chinese Academy of Sciences in Beijing, which saw them develop a deep-learning algorithm that could improve the speed and precision of detection.

The algorithm, however, needs a large amount of data to work, so its use is limited to waters that have already been fully charted. In contrast, the upgrade works in all waters, charted or otherwise. Niu and his colleagues, who included scientists from the Scripps Institution of Oceanography at the University of California San Diego, started by developing a simulator to generate a wide range of virtual environments from which the algorithm was able to learn.

Once it had assimilated that information, the simulator was able to analyse real-life data taken from the world's oceans and seas, the team said in a paper published in the July issue of *The Journal of the Acoustical Society of America*. It is now able to help a single hydrophone locate more than 80 per cent of underwater targets within an uncharted area with a margin of error of less than 10 metres (33 feet), the paper said.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/science/article/3025096/chinese-us-scientists-develop-ai-technology-help-detect>

C. Pakistan

India, Pakistan once again on verge of full-scale war

The News International, August 17, 2019

India and Pakistan are once again on the verge of a full-scale war. It is an unimaginable scenario as the two South Asian neighbors possess high-tech nuclear arms. They have fought three wars over Kashmir, which they both claim in full, but rule in part. Any escalation of military conflict between the two countries has a dangerous risk of a nuclear confrontation. New Delhi justifies its airstrike inside

Pakistan by saying that it targeted a militant camp run by the Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) militant group, international media reported on Friday.

The group claimed responsibility for the February 14 suicide bombing in Kashmir's Pulwama district, which killed more than 40 Indian troops. JeM, which allegedly has links to al-Qaeda, regularly targets government installations in Indian-held Kashmir. So India claims its military operation was actually an act in self-defense.

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/512959-india-pakistan-once-again-on-verge-of-full-scale-war>

Kashmir a nuclear flashpoint: Pakistan army spokesman Asif Ghafoor

Elizabeth Roche, Live Mint, August 17, 2019

Pakistan army spokesman Asif Ghafoor on Saturday described Kashmir as a "nuclear flashpoint", a day after defence minister Rajnath Singh said India could review its nuclear no first use policy.

Ghafoor's comment, quoted by news reports, could be seen as another attempt by Pakistan to internationalise the Kashmir dispute between the two countries and invite offers of mediation. Western nations have always been wary of tensions flaring up between the two countries that have nuclear weapons. Ghafoor's comments also come after the UN Security Council on Friday said India and Pakistan should sort out their differences bilaterally after closed-door consultations. This came after China sought the meeting on Pakistan's behalf after India revoked a provision in its constitution giving special status to Kashmir.

<https://www.live mint.com/politics/news/kashmir-a-nuclear-flashpoint-pakistan-army-spokesman-asif-ghafoor-1566058203618.html>

Imran Khan: World must seriously consider safety of India's nuclear arsenal under Modi govt

The Indian Express, August 18, 2019

Two days after Defence Minister Rajnath Singh hinted that India's "no first use" for

nuclear weapons might not be etched in stone, Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan on Sunday expressed concern about the "safety and security of India's nuclear arsenal" under the control of the "fascist, racist Hindu supremacist" Narendra Modi government and urged the international community to take notice.

"The world must also seriously consider the safety and security of India's nuclear arsenal in the control of the fascist, racist Hindu supremacist Modi government. This is an issue that impacts not just the region but the world," Khan tweeted.

<https://indianexpress.com/article/india/jammu-and-kashmir-india-pakistan-imran-khan-nuclear-war-5914651/>

India's nuclear threat reflective of defeat: Qureshi

Shafqat Ali, The Nation, August 19, 2019

Pakistan yesterday told India that its veiled nuclear threat was only reflective of its defeat at the global level on the Kashmir issue.

Responding to Indian Defence Minister Rajnath Singh threatening statement, Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi said: "We have seen the comments made by the Indian Defence Minister today. These are reflective of the predicament that India finds itself in, after its illegal and unilateral actions imperilling peace and security in the region and beyond."

In a written reply to the Indian minister's outburst, Qureshi said: "Equally condemnable is the completely indefensible lockdown of the entire population in Occupied Kashmir that has gone on for two weeks, and continues to deepen the dire humanitarian tragedy as reported by the international human rights organizations and the international media. The world community, including the United Nations Security Council, have taken cognizance of this utterly untenable situation."

<https://nation.com.pk/19-Aug-2019/india-s-nuclear-threat-reflective-of-defeat-qureshi>

Pakistan Leader Vents Frustration at India: 'No Point in Talking to Them'

Salman Masood and Maria Abi-Habib, The New York Times, August 21, 2019

Prime Minister Imran Khan of Pakistan intensified his criticism of India on Wednesday over its Kashmir crackdown, saying he would no longer seek dialogue with Indian officials and raising the threat of a military escalation between the nuclear-armed neighbors.

In an interview with The New York Times, Mr. Khan complained bitterly about what he described as repeated rebuffs from Prime Minister Narendra Modi of India at his entreaties for communication, both before and after the Aug. 5 crackdown on the disputed territory of Kashmir.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/08/21/world/asia/india-pakistan-kashmir-imran-khan.html>

After Imran Khan's nuclear threat, Sheikh Rashid predicts 'full-blown Indo-Pak war' in Sep-Oct

Jagran English, August 28, 2019

Amid the ongoing tensions between India and Pakistan following New Delhi's decision to abrogate Article 370 in Jammu and Kashmir, a senior minister of the neighbouring country today "predicted" a "full-blown war" between the two nuclear-armed countries. Pakistan media quoted Railways Minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmed predicting a full-blown war between Pakistan and India which is "likely to occur in October or the following month".

The development comes two days after Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan threatened nuclear war with India over the issue of Kashmir.

<https://english.jagran.com/world/after-imran-khans-nuclear-threat-sheikh-rashid-predicts-full-blown-indo-pak-war-in-sep-oct-watch-10003783>

Pakistan test fires Ghaznavi missile to raise war spectre, to focus next on Geneva meet

Shishir Gupta, Hindustan Times, August 29, 2019

Pakistan carried out a night training launch of surface-to-surface ballistic missile Ghaznavi early on Thursday, a move that coincides with its scaled-up effort to internationalise the Kashmir issue. Major General Asif Ghafoor, spokesperson of Pakistan Armed Forces, tweeted that the exercise was successful and put out a 30-second video clip of the missile launch along with a group photograph of officers with the missile.

The military spokesperson said the ballistic missile is capable of "delivering multiple types of warheads upto 290 km". He added that Pakistan President Arif Alvi and Prime Minister Imran Khan had conveyed its appreciation to the team and congratulated the nation.

<https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/in-message-to-india-pakistan-tests-nuclear-capable-ballistic-missile-ghaznavi/story-ovzrBgmXQgYzVDX7NXAM7M.html>

Pakistan successfully carried out night training launch of surface to surface ballistic missile Ghaznavi, capable of delivering multiple types of warheads upto a range of 290 kilometers.

ISPR, August 29, 2019

Pakistan successfully carried out night training launch of surface to surface ballistic missile Ghaznavi, capable of delivering multiple types of warheads upto a range of 290 kilometers. This training launch was the culminating point of the Field Training Exercise of Army Strategic Forces Command, which was aimed at practicing quick response procedures. The training launch was witnessed by Commander Army Strategic Forces Command and other civil military officials.

Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee and Services Chiefs have appreciated the team involved. President and Prime Minister of Pakistan have also conveyed their appreciation to the team and Congratulations to the nation on this landmark achievement.

<https://www.ispr.gov.pk/press-release-detail.php?id=5408>

Pakistan tests night launch of N-capable ballistic missile

Baqir Sajjad Syed, Dawn, August 30, 2019

The Army's Strategic Force Command has conducted the training launch of Ghaznavi, a nuclear-capable short-range ballistic missile, to signal readiness to arch-rival India, which is suspected of planning a misadventure against Pakistan.

The announcement of the test was made through a tweet by military spokesman Maj Gen Asif Ghafoor, who posted on the micro-blogging site: "Pakistan successfully carried out night training launch of surface to surface ballistic missile Ghaznavi."

The test, although planned beforehand, was carried out amid escalating tensions between Pakistan and India over the latter's move to annul Article 370 of its constitution and end autonomous status of occupied Kashmir.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1502516>

D. USA

Regulators formalise technical collaboration on SMR regulation

World Nuclear News, August 16, 2019

Canadian and US nuclear regulators have signed a first-of-a-kind Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) that will see them collaborate on the technical reviews of advanced reactor and small modular reactor (SMR) technologies. Meanwhile, the US Department of Energy has awarded funds to build SMR simulators at three US universities.

The MoC was signed on 15 August in Ottawa by Canadian Nuclear Safety

Commission (CNSC) President Rumina Velshi and US Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) Chairman Christine Svinicki and follows a Memorandum of Understanding signed two years ago.

<http://world-nuclear-news.org/Articles/Regulators-formalise-technical-collaboration-on-SM>

Three Mile Island, site of America's nuclear power blunder, set to close-down in few weeks

Will Wade, The Print, August 18, 2019

It started with a pump failure early on the morning of March 28, 1979.

Steam generators were unable to draw heat out of a reactor at the Three Mile Island nuclear power plant in Middletown, Pennsylvania. While an emergency shutdown was triggered, another problem – a stuck valve – was letting coolant escape from the reactor core.

The core's fuel began to overheat, causing the partial meltdown and release of radiation that remain the worst nuclear accident in US history. The reactor, one of two at the plant, has been silent ever since. To this day, it stands as an enduring symbol of all that can potentially go wrong with American nuclear energy.

<https://theprint.in/world/three-mile-island-site-of-americas-nuclear-power-blunder-set-to-close-down-in-few-weeks/278562/>

What a mysterious explosion tells us about Russia's 'doomsday weapon'

Nick Paton Walsh and Nathan Hodge, CNN, August 18, 2019

An explosion. An abruptly-canceled village evacuation. Five dead nuclear experts. And a few traces of radioactive iodine in the air over the northern Norwegian coastline. These are the fingerprints of what appears to have been Russia's latest failed bid to test its Burevestnik missile, also known as Skyfall.

It's claimed by its owner, Russian President Vladimir Putin, to have unlimited

range and be able to outflank all US air defenses. But this month, it proved, for a Kremlin keen to emphasize its growing military muscle, yet another high-profile hiccup.

<https://edition.cnn.com/2019/08/17/europe/russia-nuclear-summer-skyfall-intl/index.html>

Pentagon Tests New Missile System, Weeks After a U.S.-Russia Nuclear Arms Treaty Collapsed

W.J. Hennigan, Time, August 20, 2019

The U.S. military carried out a test-flight Sunday of a new road-mobile, ground-launched cruise missile system less than a month after the U.S. and Russia ripped up a landmark arms treaty. The missile blasted from a launcher on San Nicolas Island, a Navy test site off the coast of Los Angeles, Calif., and sped above the Pacific Ocean for more than 310 miles before hitting a target, the Pentagon said in a statement. “Data collected and lessons learned from this test will inform the Department of Defense’s development of future intermediate-range capabilities,” it said.

The test marks a new era for the U.S. military in the wake of the Aug. 2 collapse of the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty. First signed by President Ronald Reagan and Soviet Union leader Mikhail Gorbachev in December 1987, the INF treaty eliminated an entire class of nuclear weapons. It forced the superpowers to scrap more than 2,600 land-based missiles with ranges 310 to 3,420 miles — weapons considered destabilizing to the European continent because of their capability to launch a nuclear strike from anywhere without early warning.

<https://time.com/5656057/pentagon-missile-test-inf-treaty-russia/>

Pompeo warns of ‘new turmoil’ if U.N. arms embargo on Iran lifted in 2020

Michelle Nichols, Reuters, August 21, 2019

U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo pushed the international community on Tuesday to

work out how to stop Iran from being “unshackled to create new turmoil” when a United Nations arms embargo on the country and a travel ban on the head of Iran’s elite Quds Force expire in October 2020.

Speaking at a U.N. Security Council meeting on Middle East peace and security challenges, Pompeo called for greater cooperation in the region to produce “fresh thinking to solve old problems,” citing problems including the Libyan and Syrian conflicts and a rift between several Gulf states and Qatar.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-iran-un/pompeo-warns-of-new-turmoil-if-u-n-arms-embargo-on-iran-lifted-in-2020-idUSKCN1VA253>

Trump denies report he wanted to nuke hurricanes

Pakistan Today, August 26, 2019

US President Donald Trump on Monday denied an Axios report that he wanted to drop nuclear bombs on hurricanes before they made landfall in the United States, calling it “ridiculous”. During a briefing, Trump asked if it would be possible to disrupt hurricanes forming off the coast of Africa by dropping a nuclear bomb in the eye of the storm, a report on the Axios website said on Sunday.

According to an anonymous source, the news website said that attendees left the hurricane briefing thinking, “What do we do with this?” Axios did not say when this conversation took place.

<https://www.pakistantoday.com.pk/2019/08/26/trump-denies-report-he-wanted-to-nuke-hurricanes/>

Sale of Nuclear Power Plant for Decommissioning Finalized

US News, August 26, 2019

The owner of a now-shuttered nuclear power plant in Plymouth has sold the facility to a private company for decommissioning.

Entergy Corporation said Monday it has completed the sale of the Pilgrim Nuclear Power Station to Holtec International, which plans to complete major decommissioning work at the site decades sooner than if Entergy had continued to own the facility.

The two announced the planned sale last year. U.S. Sens. Elizabeth Warren and Edward Markey and U.S. Rep. William Keating – all Democrats – recently urged the Nuclear Regulatory Commission to delay ruling on the license transfer needed to finalize the sale.

<https://www.usnews.com/news/best-states/massachusetts/articles/2019-08-26/sale-of-nuclear-power-plant-for-decommissioning-finalized>

Axios: Trump floated the idea of using nuclear bombs to stop hurricanes headed for US

Devan Cole, CNN Politics, August 26, 2019

President Donald Trump has floated multiple times the idea of thwarting hurricanes headed for the US by bombing them, including by dropping nuclear bombs on hurricanes to disrupt their course, Axios reported Sunday, citing conversations with sources who heard Trump's comments and were briefed on a National Security Council memo that recorded the comments.

In an early Monday tweet, Trump denied the Axios' report, claiming that he "never said" what was in it. CNN has not been able to independently verify the report.

According to Axios, the President has suggested the idea several times to senior Homeland Security and national security officials that they look into the idea of using nuclear bombs to stop hurricanes from hitting the US. A source who was at a hurricane briefing at the White House told the outlet that the President once said of hurricanes, "I got it. I got it. Why don't we nuke them?"

<https://edition.cnn.com/2019/08/26/politics/donald-trump-nuclear-bombs-hurricanes/index.html>

US intel report says mysterious Russian explosion was triggered by recovery mission of nuclear-powered missile, not a test

Amanda Macias, CNBC, August 30, 2019

A U.S. intelligence assessment found that the mysterious explosion off of Russia's northern coast occurred during a recovery mission to salvage a nuclear-powered missile from the ocean floor, according to people with direct knowledge of the report. The mysterious explosion on Aug. 8 killed five scientists and sparked fears that Russia had tested its new nuclear-powered Burevestnik missile, also known as Skyfall.

"This was not a new launch of the weapon, instead it was a recovery mission to salvage a lost missile from a previous test," said a person with direct knowledge of the U.S. intelligence assessment. "There was an explosion on one of the vessels involved in the recovery and that caused a reaction in the missile's nuclear core which lead to the radiation leak," said another person, who spoke to CNBC on the condition of anonymity.

<https://www.cnbcm.com/2019/08/29/intel-says-russian-explosion-was-not-from-nuclear-powered-missile-test.html>

E. Europe

UK looking to complete British Steel sale to Turkish military fund in coming weeks

Costas Pitas, Reuters, August 16, 2019

Britain is looking to complete the sale of British Steel to Ataer Holdings, an affiliate of Turkey's military pension fund OYAK, in the coming weeks, the Insolvency Service said on Friday. "I will be looking to conclude this process in the coming weeks, during which time British Steel continues to trade and supply its customers as normal," the Official Receiver said in a statement released by The Insolvency Service.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/britain-steel-turkey-deal/uk-looking-to-complete-british-steel-sale-to-turkish-military-fund-in-coming-weeks-idUSL9N23Y00W>

Poland may join U.S.-led mission in Strait of Hormuz

Joanna Plucinska, Reuters, August 16, 2019

Poland is considering supporting a U.S.-led mission to protect the Strait of Hormuz, but has not made a formal decision yet. It's unclear when Poland, which has sought to strengthen ties with the U.S. since the Law and Justice (PiS) party came to power in 2015, will make a decision on the matter. Poland's Foreign Minister Jacek Czaputowicz first made the comments to German news agency dpa on Friday.

German Foreign Minister Heiko Maas has reiterated that Germany will not take part in a U.S.-led naval mission in the Strait of Hormuz and would instead prefer to form a European mission. The U.S. has pushed to secure the strait, which lies between Oman and Iran and through which almost a fifth of the world's oil passes, as tensions have risen between Iran, Britain and the United States in recent months. Poland has in the past offered military support to U.S.-led missions - its soldiers took part in missions in Iraq and Afghanistan.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-iran-poland/poland-may-join-u-s-led-mission-in-strait-of-hormuz-idUSKCN1V616M>

Bulgaria nuclear project attracts China and S.Korea interest-sources

Tsvetelia Tsoleva, Maria Kiselyova, Reuters, August 19, 2019

State-run companies from China and South Korea have applied to be strategic investors in Bulgaria's revived Belene nuclear project, two industry sources familiar with the process said on Monday after Russia's Rosatom said it wanted to take part. Sofia plans to pick a strategic investor or investors by May 22 next year to install and run two Russian-made 1,000 megawatt reactors at Belene project on the river Danube. The plant, estimated to cost about 10 billion euros (\$11 billion), should be operational in 10 years.

France's Framatome, a unit of EDF, and General Electric have filed letters saying

they are interested in providing conventional power generation equipment and carrying out work for the Belene project, one of the sources said. Bulgaria cancelled Belene in 2012 after failing to find investors and facing pressure from the United States and the European Union to limit its energy dependence on Russia, which had been under contract to build the plant. It has been sitting on unused nuclear equipment since paying Rosatom more than 620 million euros for scrapping the project, and in June 2018 its parliament ordered the government to revive it. Sofia plans to keep a blocking stake in the venture and participate with the site, the nuclear reactors and the acquired licences, but would not extend state or corporate guarantees or offer to buy electricity from the plant under long-term contracts at preferential rates.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/bulgaria-energy-nuclear/update-1-bulgaria-nuclear-project-attracts-china-and-s-korea-interest-sources-idUSL5N25F3ST>

Russia's Rosatom interested in Bulgaria nuclear plant tender

Anastasia Lyrchikova, Maria Kiselyova, Reuters, August 19, 2019

Russian state nuclear energy company Rosatom said on Monday it had filed an application to be a strategic investor in a nuclear power plant project in Bulgaria. Bulgaria is seeking a strategic investor for its revived Belene project on the Danube, which is estimated to cost at least 10 billion euros (\$11.1 billion).

Sofia cancelled the project in 2012 after failing to find investors and as it faced pressure from the United States and the European Union to limit Bulgaria's energy dependence on Russia, which had been under contract to build the plant. The deadline for submitting letters of interest for investing in the project expires later on Monday.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/bulgaria-energy-nuclear-russia/russias-rosatom-interested-in-bulgaria-nuclear-plant-tender-idUSL5N25F1VY>

UK's Wood to sell nuclear energy unit for \$305 million

Yadarisa Shabong, Reuters, August 20, 2019

British oilfield services provider Wood Plc said on Tuesday it would sell its nuclear energy business for about \$305 million to Jacob Engineering and reported a 2.6% drop in first-half revenue. It reported adjusted core earnings of \$384 million, with margins of 8%. Total revenue fell to \$4.79 billion compared with \$4.92 billion last year and total order book stood at \$9.19 billion as of June 30, also down from a year earlier.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/john-wood-results/uks-wood-to-sell-nuclear-energy-unit-for-305-million-idUSL4N25G1II>

Macron says will meet Iranians before G7 summit

Reuters, August 21, 2019

France's president said on Wednesday he would meet Iranian officials ahead of this weekend's G7 summit and make proposals to help de-escalate tensions between Washington and Tehran. "In the coming hours before the G7 I will have meetings with the Iranians to propose things," Emmanuel Macron told reporters.

Iran's foreign minister said earlier this week he would meet Macron and Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian in Paris on Friday.

<https://in.reuters.com/article/mideast-iran-france/macron-to-meet-iranians-before-g7-to-float-ideas-for-defusing-crisis-idINKCN1VC0NK>

Czechs pick Bell for \$622 million army helicopter deal

Jason Hovet, Reuters, August 22, 2019

The Czech Republic will buy 12 military helicopters from U.S. maker Bell in a deal priced at 14.5 billion crowns (\$622 million), Defence Minister Lubomir Metnar said on Thursday. The Czech Republic, a NATO member, has pledged to raise defense spending to 1.4% of gross domestic product in 2021 and 2% by 2024, from 1.2% this year. The deal includes the utility Venom aircraft and the attack Viper aircraft, which share most of their parts. Bell is a unit of Textron.

The Czech Army was choosing between Bell and Lockheed Martin's Sikorsky in the deal which also includes weaponry and ammunition shipments.

News agency CTK said Metnar expected to sign a contract by the end of the year and delivery was due in 2023. The country's defense spending plan includes accelerated replacement of Soviet-era equipment. In the largest tender announced so far, worth an estimated \$2 billion, the army is also choosing the supplier of 210 infantry fighting vehicles.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-czech-army-helicopters/czechs-pick-bell-for-622-million-army-helicopter-deal-idUSKCN1VC1BN>

EDF gets OK to restart Scottish nuclear plant where cracks found

Susanna Twidale, Reuters, August 20, 2019

EDF Energy will be allowed to restart a reactor at its Hunterston plant in Scotland where cracks were found last year, for an initial four month period, Britain's nuclear regulator said on Tuesday. The Hunterston B nuclear plant on the west coast of Scotland is more than 40 years old and when operating can provide enough electricity to power more than 1.7 million homes. It has two reactors, so called reactors 3 and 4, which were both taken offline last year after cracks were found on the graphite core during routine inspections at the facility. Before either reactor could restart EDF Energy had to provide safety cases to the Office for Nuclear Regulation (ONR) to show they would be safe to operate even in the unlikely event of an earthquake.

"ONR is satisfied that Reactor 4 is safe to operate for the next period and can be safely shut down in all foreseeable circumstances, including that of a significant seismic event," the regulator said in a statement. EDF Energy, British arm of France's EDF, said it had invested more than 125 million pounds (\$151 million) in research into the operations of the graphite cores used in most of its UK reactors.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-edf-britain/edf-gets-ok-to-restart-scottish-nuclear-plant-where-cracks-found-idUSKCN1VA134>

Slovenia PM pushes for construction of new nuclear reactor

Marja Novak, Reuters, August 22, 2019

Slovenian Prime Minister Marjan Sarec threw his weight on Thursday behind a tentative plan to build a new nuclear reactor to help support the country's economic growth. The government has not yet made a final decision on whether to build a new reactor alongside Slovenia's existing and only nuclear power plant Krsko (NEK).

"We have to put all our efforts into building the second block of the nuclear power plant," Sarec told reporters during a visit to NEK, stressing increasing demand for electricity. At present NEK, which is equally owned by Slovenia and Croatia, covers about a fifth of Slovenian electricity needs. In 2016 Slovenia and Croatia agreed to extend NEK's lifespan by 20 years to 2043. NEK was built in cooperation with U.S. firm Westinghouse and started operating in 1984. It was originally scheduled to close in 2023.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-slovenia-nuclear/slovenia-pm-pushes-for-construction-of-new-nuclear-reactor-idUSKCN1VC1MH>

Norway nuclear monitor backtracks on theory of second Russia blast

Terje Solsvik, Reuters, August 27, 2019

Reports of a second blast from a deadly Russian rocket engine test may be wrong, and the signals could stem from unrelated mining activity, the Norwegian monitor that first presented the double explosion theory said. The second explosion was detected by infrasonic air pressure sensors in the Norwegian town of Bardufoss, but further analysis, taking in additional data from Norway and Finland, pointed to a different explanation, Norsar said on its website.

The governor of Russia's Arkhangelsk region, where the blast took place, has dismissed reports of another explosion. Russia's state weather agency said on Monday it had found the radioactive isotopes of strontium, barium and lanthanum in test samples after the accident. President Vladimir Putin has said

the mishap occurred during testing of what he called promising new weapons systems. U.S.-based nuclear experts believe the incident occurred during tests of a nuclear-powered cruise missile.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-russia-blast-norway/norway-nuclear-monitor-backtracks-on-theory-of-second-russia-blast-idUSKCN1VH14C>

UK, Germany, France warn on South China Sea tensions

David Milliken, Reuters, August 29, 2019

Britain, Germany and France said on Thursday they were concerned by tensions in the South China Sea, in a statement issued the day after a U.S. Navy destroyer sailed near islands claimed by China. The situation there "could lead to insecurity and instability in the region," the three countries said in a joint statement issued by Britain's foreign ministry.

China and the United States have traded barbs in the past over what Washington has said is Beijing's militarization of the South China Sea via the building of military installations on artificial islands and reefs in disputed waters.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-china-britain/uk-germany-france-warn-on-south-china-sea-tensions-idUSKCN1VJ1ZN>

UK calls for broad support to tackle Gulf shipping threats

David Milliken, Reuters, August 30, 2019

British Foreign Minister Dominic Raab will call for more international support to protect shipping in the Strait of Hormuz when he meets his French and German counterparts later on Friday for talks about Iran. Britain joined a U.S.-led mission to escort merchant vessels through the Strait of Hormuz at the start of August but Germany and France declined to take part amid fears that it could increase the chance of open conflict with Iran. German Chancellor Angela Merkel said a possible separate European maritime defense operation would be discussed in Helsinki, though her foreign minister Heiko Maas

previously acknowledged it would be slow to get off the ground.

Last week, Iran's President Hassan Rouhani said international waterways would be less secure if his country's oil exports faced complete sanctions. Raab reiterated Britain's commitment, alongside Germany and France, to a 2015 nuclear deal that U.S. President Donald Trump pulled out of last year, reimposing sanctions on Iran. The 2015 deal between Iran and six world powers, reached under former U.S. President Barack Obama, aimed to curb Iran's disputed uranium enrichment program in exchange for the lifting of many international sanctions on Tehran. Trump said on Monday at a G7 summit in Biarritz, France, that he might be willing to meet Rouhani in the coming weeks to end confrontation over the deal.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-iran-britain/uk-calls-for-broad-support-to-tackle-gulf-shipping-threats-idUSKCN1VJ2U1>

France abandons research into fourth-generation nuclear-Le Monde

Geert De Clercq, Reuters, August 30, 2019

French state nuclear agency CEA has abandoned research into so-called fourth-generation nuclear reactors, newspaper Le Monde reported on Friday. The CEA has done years of research and spent hundreds of millions of euros on developing a new sodium-cooled reactor in the ASTRID (Advanced Sodium Technological Reactor for Industrial Demonstration) project. In November last year, the CEA had already said it was considering to reduce ASTRID's capacity to a 100-200 megawatt (MW) research model from the commercial-sized 600 MW originally planned.

In 2010, the ASTRID project was granted a 652 million euro (\$723 million) budget. Media reports have estimated France had budgeted up to 900 million euros through to 2019 for ASTRID. In theory, breeders could turn nuclear waste into fuel and make France self-sufficient in energy for decades, but uranium prices have been on a downward slope for a decade, which

undermines the economic rationale for fast-breeder technology.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/france-nuclearpower-astrid/france-abandons-research-into-fourth-generation-nuclear-le-monde-idUSL5N25Q1MU>

EU will keep working to preserve Iran nuclear deal: Mogherini

Anne Kauranen, Reuters, August 30, 2019

The European Union will work to preserve the 2015 nuclear deal with Iran and would welcome any moves to add to its conditions, EU foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini said on Friday. The deal has been in jeopardy since the United States withdrew from it last year and reimposed economic sanctions on Iran, seeking to push Tehran into wider security concessions including curbs on its ballistic missile program. New hope of unblocking the political impasse emerged after Iran's foreign minister made a flying visit for talks with host France at the G7 summit in Biarritz last Sunday.

The 2015 nuclear deal between Iran and international powers aimed to curb Iran's nuclear activities in exchange for the lifting of many international sanctions on Tehran. Mogherini declined to answer directly when asked if the United States now demanded that Iran to do more than just going back in line with the existing deal's commitments.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-iran-eu/eu-will-keep-working-to-preserve-iran-nuclear-deal-mogherini-idUSKCN1VK1AY>

F. Russia

Ecologist Says Russian Nuclear Agency Committed Crime by Conducting Test Near City

The Moscow Times, August 16, 2019

An ecologist in northern Russia said Thursday the state nuclear agency Rosatom had committed a crime by carrying out a mysterious test last week close to inhabited areas, which caused a spike in radiation in his native city. Rosatom has said that the Aug. 8 accident

occurred during a rocket test involving “isotope power sources” that was carried out on a sea platform in the White Sea. At least five people were killed in the accident.

<https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2019/08/16/ecologist-says-russian-nuclear-agency-committed-crime-by-conducting-test-near-city-a66893>

Russia completes MBIR hydraulic tests

World Nuclear News, August 16, 2019

Atomash said yesterday that the procedure had involved using a 600-tonne crane to place the reactor vessel in a hydraulic test box. The reactor lid was installed and the vessel was filled with 80 tonnes of specially prepared water. During the hydraulic tests, a maximum pressure of 14 atmospheres was created in the reactor vessel, which confirmed the strength of the base metal and the quality of the welds, the company said.

Rovshan Abbasov, director of the Volgodonsk branch of AEM Technology, said: “Hydro testing is a standard procedure for us, but MBIR is a thin-walled product and has a metal thickness that is 12 times less than the usual Atomash VVER-type reactor. Working with such a thin metal is much more difficult.”

<https://www.world-nuclear-news.org/Articles/Russia-completes-MBIR-hydraulic-tests>

Russia says no plans to install new missiles unless U.S. deploys them

Reuters, August 18, 2019

Russia will not deploy new missiles as long as the United States shows similar restraint in Europe and Asia, Russian defense minister Sergei Shoigu said on Sunday, after Washington’s withdrawal from a Soviet-era arms pact.

The United States formally left the Intermediate Nuclear Forces (INF) treaty with Russia earlier this month after accusing Moscow of violating the treaty and deploying one banned type of missile, allegations the Kremlin denies.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-russia-usa-missiles/russia-says-no-plans-to-install-new-missiles-unless-u-s-deploys-them-idUSKCN1V8054>

Russia, China and South Korea vie for Bulgarian nuclear project

Tsvetelia Tsoleva, Reuters, August 20, 2019

State run energy companies from Russia, China and South Korea are among seven groups interested in becoming strategic investors in Bulgaria’s Belene nuclear power project, the Balkan nation’s energy minister said on Tuesday.

Neighboring North Macedonia has also expressed an interest in a minority stake and long-term contracts to buy electricity from the 2,000 megawatt project on the river Danube, estimated to cost 10 billion euros (\$11 billion), Temenuzhka Petkova said.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-bulgaria-nuclear/russia-china-and-south-korea-vie-for-bulgarian-nuclear-project-idUSKCN1VA114>

Nuclear monitoring stations went mysteriously quiet after Russian missile facility explosion

Barbara Starr and Ryan Browne, CNN, August 20, 2019

Four Russia-based nuclear monitoring stations that monitor radioactive particles in the atmosphere have mysteriously gone quiet after an August 8 explosion at a Russian missile testing facility, an explosion that has sparked confusion and concerns about possible increases in radiation levels, according to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization. CTBTO is an independent body which watches for nuclear weapons testing violations with over 300 monitoring stations around the world. Both Russia and the US are signatories to the treaty.

The two Russian radionuclide stations, called Dubna and Kirov, stopped transmitting data within two days of the explosion, the organization said.

<https://edition.cnn.com/2019/08/19/politics/nuclear-monitoring-stations-russian-missile-facility/index.html>

Russia to launch floating nuclear reactor

Nastassia Astrasheuskaya, Financial Times, August 21, 2019

On Friday, three tugs will tow the Akademik Lomonosov barge out of Murmansk to begin a 5,000km voyage to a remote port on the other side of Russia's Arctic coast, and in the process send waves through the nuclear energy sector.

The vessel is a floating nuclear reactor, a portable power plant designed to supply electricity to areas disconnected from the grid, and envisaged by Russia's state nuclear corporation Rosatom as the future of small-scale nuclear power with an eye on export opportunities in developing countries.

<https://www.ft.com/content/2edadf02-b538-11e9-8cb2-799a3a8cf37b>

Russia's floating plant heads for final destination

World Nuclear News, August 23, 2019

Rosatom Director General Alexey Likhachev gave the signal for the *Akademik Lomonosov* to set sail and said, "This is a momentous occasion for our company and for the Chukotka region. Today *Akademik Lomonosov* begins its journey to Pevek, where it will guarantee clean and reliable energy supplies to people and businesses across the region. This amounts to a significant contribution to creating an Arctic future that is both sustainable and prosperous." Upon completing the 4700 km journey to Pevek, *Akademik Lomonosov* will become a central part of the Chukotka region's power supply, replacing the Bilibino nuclear power plant and the Chaunskaya combined heat and power plant.

Rosatom said the project is one of the most promising small nuclear power reactors on the market today. It is especially suited, it said, to very remote areas and island states that require stable, green sources of energy. The technology has attracted interest from the Middle East, North Africa, and South-East Asia, it said.

<https://www.world-nuclear-news.org/Articles/Russias-floating-plant-heads-for-final-destination>

Putin To Russian Military: 'Prepare A Symmetrical Response' To U.S. Missile Test

Sasha Ingber, National Public Radio, August 23, 2019

Days after the United States tested a new cruise missile, Russian President Vladimir Putin is calling for a symmetrical response. His order comes weeks after the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty, a landmark arms control agreement between Washington and Moscow, collapsed on Aug. 2 amid concerns of a renewed arms race.

Putin told Russia's Defense Ministry and other agencies to "study the level of threat posed by these US actions and take exhaustive measures to prepare a symmetrical response," according to Russia-backed outlet RT.

<https://www.npr.org/2019/08/23/753662354/putin-to-russian-military-prepare-a-symmetrical-response-to-u-s-missile-test>

Russia's first seaborne nuclear power plant sets sail across Arctic

Lev Sergeev and Maxim Shemetov, Reuters, August 23, 2019

Russia's first floating nuclear power plant set sail on Friday from the Arctic port of Murmansk to provide power to one of the country's most remote regions, sparking environmental concerns.

Developed by the Russian state nuclear company Rosatom, the plant, known as "Akademik Lomonosov", set off on a 5,000 km (3,100 mile) journey through Arctic waters to reach the Chukotka region, which lies across the Bering Strait from Alaska.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-russia-nuclear-floating-plant/russias-first-seaborne-nuclear-power-plant-sets-sail-across-arctic-idUSKCN1VD164>

Earth's final frontier: Russia's floating nuclear power plant leaves for new Arctic home

Russian Times, August 23, 2019

The world's first floating nuclear power plant (NPP), designed and built by Russia, is set to start its trip across the Arctic to its 'workplace' in the Chukotka Region and will provide Russia's remote areas with heat and energy.

During a special ceremony on Friday the unique vessel, called the 'Akademik Lomonosov,' will leave the city of Murmansk to float thousands of kilometers, all the way to the small far-eastern port of Pevek, which sits on the Arctic coast of Chukotka. Two tug boats and one reserve vessel will tow the floating nuclear power plant.

<https://www.rt.com/business/467122-floating-nuclear-plant-arctic/>

Russia says it launched 2 ballistic missiles in the Arctic Ocean as part of combat training

Amir Vera, CNN, August 25, 2019

Russia launched two ballistic missiles from nuclear-powered submarines in the Arctic Ocean and the Barents Sea on Saturday, according to a tweet from the Russian Ministry of Defense. Described as a successful test launch, the missiles were part of combat training, the ministry said. Video of the missiles' launch was also shown in the tweet.

"Nuclear powered submarines Tula and Yuri Dolgoruky launch ballistic missiles Sineva and Bulava from Circumpolar region of the Arctic Ocean and the Barents Sea," the tweet read.

<https://edition.cnn.com/2019/08/24/europe/russia-test-fires-ballistic-missiles/index.html>

Russia Finds Radioactive Isotopes in Test Samples After Accident in Severodvinsk

The Moscow Times, August 26, 2019

Russia's state weather agency said on Monday it had found the radioactive

isotopes of strontium, barium and lanthanum in test samples after a mysterious accident during a test at a military site earlier this month.

The deadly accident on Aug. 8 caused a brief rise in radiation levels in the nearby city of Severodvinsk. President Vladimir Putin later said the mishap occurred during testing of what he called promising new weapons systems.

<https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2019/08/26/russia-finds-radioactive-isotopes-in-test-samples-after-accident-in-severodvinsk-a67012>

Russia says radioactive isotopes released by mystery blast

Matthew Bodner, Guardian, August 26, 2019

Russia's state meteorological service says it has identified four radioactive substances in samples taken from Severodvinsk, a city where radiation levels briefly spiked after a mysterious explosion at a site 18 miles (29km) away. The explosion on 8 August killed at least five nuclear specialists from one of the premier research hubs run by the state nuclear energy corporation, Rosatom.

The substances were identified as "technogenic radionuclides" - strontium-91, barium-139, barium-140 and lanthanum-140. These are fast-decaying radioactive substances that would emit inert radioactive gases if exposed to the open air.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/aug/26/russia-confirms-radiation-spike-after-weapons-test-blast>

Russia to promote initiatives aimed at overcoming nuclear deal crisis, says Lavrov

TASS News Agency, August 28, 2019

Russia will be promoting initiatives aimed at overcoming the crisis centering around the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). However, they should be acceptable to all parties to the deal, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov told

reporters at a news conference on Wednesday.

“Regarding the initiatives to overcome the crisis around the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action on Iran’s nuclear program put forward by the French leadership, there was a detailed conversation between Presidents [Emmanuel] Macron [of France] and [Vladimir] Putin [of Russia] at Fort de Bregancon a week ago at an extraordinary Russian-French summit. President Putin supported President Macron’s proposal aimed at restoring the viability of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action and all the agreements enshrined in it,” he said.

<https://tass.com/politics/1075387>

How Russia and Iran Dominated the G7 Summit

Hunter DeRensis, National Interest Blog, August 28, 2019

Monday concluded the three-day summit held in Biarritz, France, by the Group of Seven (G7), which is composed of the most advanced economies in the world: France, Canada, Germany, Japan, Italy, the United Kingdom, and the United States. European Union Council President Donald Tusk was also present, along with a litany of heads of state who were each invited by a participating G7 member.

<https://nationalinterest.org/feature/how-russia-and-iran-dominated-g7-summit-76736>

Russia’s Mystery Nuclear Explosion Occurred During Missile Recovery at Sea – Reports

The Moscow Times, August 30, 2019

The mysterious explosion in northern Russia that caused a spike in radiation levels happened during a mission to salvage a nuclear-powered cruise missile from the bottom of the sea, media have cited a U.S. intelligence assessment as saying.

Five nuclear engineers were killed in a liquid propulsion system blast at Russia’s naval missile test facility, leading to a brief spike in radiation on Aug. 8. The secrecy surrounding the accident has led outside observers to speculate that what the

explosion involved the Burevestnik nuclear-powered intercontinental cruise missile, dubbed the SSC-X-9 Skyfall by NATO.

<https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2019/08/30/russias-mystery-nuclear-explosion-occurred-during-missile-recovery-at-sea-reports-a67084>

West Asia

G. Iran

Iran ready to scale up nuclear work by installing advanced centrifuges: top MP

Tehran Times, August 17, 2019

The head of the Majlis Nuclear Committee has said Iran is ready to use advanced centrifuges in the third phase of reducing its commitments to the 2015 nuclear deal, officially called the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). “We have many options to choose from in the third phase, such as utilizing advanced centrifuges,” Mehr on Saturday quoted Mohammad Ebrahim Rezaee as saying.

“In fact, we are currently using the old IR1 centrifuges, while the IR6 and IR8 centrifuges are ready to be used,” he stated. Rezaee said IR6 and IR8 centrifuges respectively have a capacity 26 to 48 times more than the IR1 ones. Centrifuges are machines that spin uranium hexafluoride gas (UF6) at high speeds.

The legislator said Iran can further activate its production of heavy water, increase its stockpile of heavy water and increase its enrichment level. The Westerners should know well that Iran scaled back its nuclear program because of its commitment to the JCPOA, and all the actions taken by Iran under the deal are reversible.

<https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/439328/Iran-ready-to-scale-up-nuclear-work-by-installing-advanced-centrifuges>

Satellite images suggest Iran satellite launch looms

Arab News, August 18, 2019

Iran appears to be preparing another satellite launch after twice failing this year

to put one in orbit, despite US accusations that the Islamic Republic's program helps it develop ballistic missiles. Satellite images of the Imam Khomeini Space Center in Iran's Semnan province this month show increased activity at the site, as heightened tensions persist between Washington and Tehran over its collapsing nuclear deal with world powers. While Iran routinely only announces such launches after the fact, that activity coupled with an official saying a satellite would soon be handed over to the country's Defense Ministry suggests the attempt will be coming soon.

"The Imam Khomeini space launch center is usually quite empty," said Fabian Hinz, a researcher at the James Martin Center for Nonproliferation Studies at the Middlebury Institute of International Studies in Monterey, California. "Now we've seen pictures where you can see activities at this assembly center and something happening at the (launch) pad."

"If you put both together it sounds very likely there's something that's going to happen," he said. The satellite images of the space center, taken Aug. 9, show activity at one facility there, Hinz said Sunday. Another image of a launch pad at the facility shows water that's run off it and pooled, likely a sign of workers preparing the site for a launch, he said.

<https://www.arabnews.com/node/1541726/middle-east>

Iran tanker heads to Greece after release, Iran warns US against seizure attempt

Reuters, August 19, 2019

An Iranian tanker sailed through the Mediterranean toward Greece on Monday after it was released from detention off Gibraltar, and Tehran said that any US move to seize the vessel again would have "heavy consequences." The Grace 1, renamed the Adrian Darya 1, left anchorage off Gibraltar about 11 p.m. (2100 GMT) on Sunday. Refinitiv ship tracking data showed on Monday that the vessel was heading to Kalamata in Greece and was scheduled to arrive next Sunday at 0000 GMT.

The seizure of the tanker by British Royal Marines near Gibraltar on July 4 on suspicion of carrying oil to Syria in violation of European Union sanctions led to a weeks-long stand-off between Tehran and the West. It also heightened tensions on international oil shipping routes through the Gulf. Gibraltar, a British overseas territory, lifted the detention order on Thursday but the next day a federal court in Washington issued a warrant for the seizure of the tanker, the oil it carries and nearly \$1 million.

He also said the US warrant had no legal basis and was politically motivated to "make more escalation." Greek authorities had no immediate comment on the situation.

Iran said on Monday any US attempt to seize the tanker would have "heavy consequences."

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-mideast-iran-tanker/iran-tanker-heads-to-greece-after-release-iran-warns-u-s-against-seizure-attempt-idUKKCN1V90DS>

US says it has blocked billions of dollars from reaching Iran and its proxies

Arab News, August 20, 2019

The US has blocked billions of dollars from reaching Iran and its Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps, a senior State Department official said Tuesday. The elite force, which spearheads Tehran's aggressive regional policies, has been the chief target of wide-ranging sanctions from the Trump administration. It has been blamed for a number of attacks on international shipping in or near the Strait of Hormuz in recent months as tensions have escalated between Iran and both its Arab and Western rivals. In a briefing on Middle East security, Brian Hook, the US Special Representative for Iran, said the regime and its proxies are weaker today than when Donald Trump took office.

Hook said Iran's military budget went down 10 percent during the first year of his administration and 28 percent during

the second year. That included a 17 percent cut for the IRGC and its foreign wing the Quds Force, he said. "We are telling Iran that it is not acceptable to provide lethal assistance on a regular basis to terrorist organizations," Hook said.

<https://www.arabnews.com/node/1542681/middle-east>

Europe should pre-purchase Iran's oil through INSTEX first: CBI chief

Tehran Times, August 21, 2019

The governor of the Central Bank of Iran (CBI) has said that the Europeans should show their sincerity about their Instrument in Support of Trade Exchanges (INSTEX) by ordering Iran's crude. "If the Westerners are serious and determined about this issue (INSTEX), they should inject money to it equal to the extent that our oil revenues have been harmed or file for Iran's oil futures," Abdolnasser Hemmati said in an interview with the IRIB TV on Tuesday.

He stressed that if the Europeans want to keep the nuclear deal alive, they should implement their undertakings, noting that INSTEX should also include the sanctioned goods too.

<https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/439458/Europe-should-pre-purchase-Iran-s-oil-through-INSTEX-first-CBI>

Iranian oil tanker pursued by US says it is going to Turkey

AP, August 24, 2019

An Iranian-flagged oil tanker pursued by the U.S. amid heightened tensions between Tehran and Washington changed its listed destination to a port in Turkey early Saturday after Greece said it wouldn't risk its relations with America by aiding it. Meanwhile, Iran sanctioned a prominent Washington-based think tank that led criticism of Tehran's 2015 nuclear deal with world powers over its alleged "economic terrorism," something the organization described as a "badge of honor."

The crew of the oil tanker *Adrian Darya 1*, formerly known as the *Grace 1*, updated its

listed destination in its Automatic Identification System to Mersin, Turkey, a port city in the country's south and home to an oil terminal. However, mariners can input any destination into the AIS, so Turkey may not be its true destination. Mersin is some 200 kilometers (125 miles) northwest of a refinery in Baniyas, Syria, where authorities alleged the *Adrian Darya* had been heading before being seized off Gibraltar in early July. Iranian state media did not acknowledge the new reported destination of the *Adrian Darya*, which carries 2.1 million barrels of Iranian crude oil worth some \$130 million. Nor was there any immediate reaction from Turkey, whose President Recep Tayyip Erdogan deals directly with Tehran and Russia over Syria's long war.

<https://www.apnews.com/6dbf7769a32849e6a6e2817a91a67519>

Iran test fires new missile

Reuters, August 24, 2019

Iran has test fired a new missile, the commander of Iran's Revolutionary Guards, Major General Hossein Salami, said on Saturday, according to the Tasnim news agency. "Our country is always the arena for testing a variety of defense and strategic systems and these are non-stop movements toward the growth of our deterrent power," Salami said. "And yesterday was one of the successful days for this nation."

He did not provide any additional information about the missile. US President Donald Trump pulled out of an international agreement on Iran's nuclear program last year and stepped up sanctions on Tehran in order to curb its development of ballistic missiles and its support for proxies in Syria, Yemen, Lebanon and Iraq. The two countries have been exchanging threats and warnings since then. Iran shot down a US military surveillance drone in the Gulf with a surface-to-air missile in June, nearly setting off a conflict with the United States. The Islamic Republic says the drone was over its territory, but Washington says it was in international airspace. Iran displayed

what it described as a domestically built long-range, surface-to-air missile air defense system on Thursday.

<https://www.arabnews.com/node/1544586/middle-east>

Macron gets G7 nod over plan to defuse tensions with Iran

Tehran Times, August 25, 2019

French President Emmanuel Macron said on Sunday that G7 leaders had agreed to a joint action on Iran with the aim of defusing tensions and opening a new negotiation with Tehran. "We agreed on what we wanted to say jointly on Iran," Reuters quoted Macron as saying. "There is a message from the G7 on our objectives and the fact that we share them is important, which avoids divisions that in the end weaken everybody." "Everyone wants to avoid a conflict, Donald Trump was extremely clear on that point." It came after a French official said the French president had shared details of the plan to ease tensions with Iran during his working lunch with President Donald Trump at the G-7 summit. The official, who was speaking anonymously in accordance with the French presidency's customary practices, said France has been working for several weeks on the plan, the Associated Press reported on Saturday.

<https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/439592/Macron-gets-G7-nod-over-plan-to-defuse-tensions-with-Iran>

Zarif's trip to France not related to G7: spokesman

Tehran Times, August 26, 2019

Government spokesman Ali Rabiei said on Monday that the Iranian foreign minister's trip to France was not related to the G7 summit and was carried out due to a request from the French side. "Mohammad Javad Zarif's trip was unrelated with the G7," Rabiei said during a press conference in Tehran. "The French government has taken an initiative and held talks with the U.S. to reduce Iran-U.S. tensions." He said Iran welcomes the gesture of goodwill by France, but plays no role in the France-U.S. talks. Zarif on Sunday paid a surprise visit to

Biarritz, France, where the G7 leaders were meeting.

The visit came only hours after sources said French President Emmanuel Macron had been given mission by his G7 counterparts to engage in talks with Iran. "We agreed on what we wanted to say jointly on Iran," Reuters quoted Macron as saying. "There is a message from the G7 on our objectives and the fact that we share them is important, which avoids divisions that in the end weaken everybody."

<https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/439650/Zarif-s-trip-to-France-not-related-to-G7-spokesman>

Iran says it will not negotiate missile work, wants to export more oil

Tehran Times, August 26, 2019

Iran wants to export a minimum of 700,000 barrels per day of its oil and ideally up to 1.5 million bpd if the West wants to negotiate with Tehran to save a 2015 nuclear deal, two Iranian officials and one diplomat told Reuters on Sunday. "As a goodwill gesture and a step toward creating space for negotiations, we have responded to France's proposal. We want to export 700,000 bpd of oil and get paid in cash ... and that is just for a start. It should reach to 1.5 million bpd," said a senior Iranian official, who asked not to be named.

A second official said "Iran's ballistic missile program cannot and will not be negotiated. We have underlined it clearly and openly." The officials did not elaborate on the reference to a French proposal. French officials were not immediately available for comment.

<https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/439645/Iran-says-it-will-not-negotiate-missile-work-wants-to-export>

Iran's Rouhani says no talks with US unless sanctions lifted

Reuters, August 27, 2019

Iran will not talk to the United States until all sanctions imposed on Tehran are lifted,

President Hassan Rouhani said on Tuesday, a day after President Donald Trump said he would meet his Iranian counterpart to try to end a nuclear standoff. Trump said on Monday he would meet Iran's president under the right circumstances to end a confrontation that began when Washington pulled out of Tehran's 2015 nuclear deal with six powers and reimposed sanctions on the country. Trump also said talks were under way to see how countries could open credit lines to keep Iran's economy afloat.

Rouhani said Iran was always ready to hold talks. "But first the US should act by lifting all illegal, unjust and unfair sanctions imposed on Iran," he said in a speech broadcast live on state TV.

<https://in.reuters.com/article/iran-usa/irans-rouhani-says-no-talks-with-u-s-unless-sanctions-lifted-idIND5N23V015>

Not all problems can be solved through diplomacy: ex-embassy

Tehran Times, August 27, 2019

A former Iranian ambassador says not all of the country's problems will be resolved through diplomacy. "Because of our current circumstances, there's this need to increase interactions with other countries, including the small European countries," said Alireza Farajirad, who has served as ambassador to Norway as well as to Hungary, Mehr reported on Tuesday.

"Of course we must bear in mind that with increasing activities in the field of diplomacy, not all of our problems will be resolved," he said.

<https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/439680/Not-all-problems-can-be-solved-through-diplomacy-ex-embassy>

Iranian youth will hit back at Trump's bullying, Macron's deceit: ex-nuclear negotiator

Tehran Times, August 27, 2019

Former chief nuclear negotiator Saeed Jalili says Donald Trump's bullying and Emmanuel Macron's deception will be responded to by

the Iranian youth's national faith. Jalili made the remarks while referring to the unveiling of the domestically-built missile defense system, dubbed "Bavar-373" (faith), ISNA reported on Tuesday.

"The only response to this maximum pressure of Trump and small gestures of Macron is the great faith of the Iranian nation and the efforts of this land's children and nothing else," he said. The comments came after President Macron said that G7 leaders had agreed to a joint action on Iran with the aim of defusing tensions and opening a new negotiation with Tehran.

"We agreed on what we wanted to say jointly on Iran," Reuters quoted Macron as saying on Sunday. "There is a message from the G7 on our objectives and the fact that we share them is important, which avoids divisions that in the end weaken everybody." "Everyone wants to avoid a conflict, Donald Trump was extremely clear on that point."

<https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/439681/Iranian-youth-will-hit-back-at-Trump-s-bullying-Macron-s-deceit>

US sanctions networks connected to Iran's govt, military

Reuters, August 28, 2019

The United States imposed sanctions on Wednesday on two networks it says helped boost Iran's nuclear program and evade US and international sanctions to benefit Tehran's government and military, the Treasury Department said. One of the networks used a Hong Kong-based front company to avoid sanctions and target US technology and components on behalf of people tied to Iran's government and its Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, the US Treasury Department said in a statement.

The other network obtained aluminum alloy products controlled by the Nuclear Suppliers Group, a body that oversees the export of goods that can be used for nuclear weapons manufacturing, on behalf of companies owned or controlled

by Iran's defense ministry, the department said. The US Treasury Department also slapped sanctions on individuals connected to the two networks.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-iran-sanctions/u-s-sanctions-networks-it-says-are-connected-to-irans-government-military-idUSKCN1VI1S3>

Iran's Zarif to Japan PM: we are not seeking heightened tensions

Reuters, August 28, 2019

Iran is not seeking to increase tension but every country should be able to enjoy its rights under international law, Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif said on Wednesday.

Zarif made the comment in Yokohama, near Tokyo, at the beginning of a meeting with Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe. "As our president has said, we are not at all seeking heightened tensions," Zarif said, speaking through a translator. "We believe every country should be able to enjoy its rights under international law." US President Donald Trump pulled the United States out of an international agreement aimed at curbing Iran's nuclear program in 2015 and reimposed sanctions on it. Trump said on Monday he would meet Iran's president under the right circumstances to end the confrontation over the nuclear deal, and that talks were underway to see how countries could open credit lines to keep Iran's economy afloat.

But Trump ruled out lifting economic sanctions to compensate for losses suffered by Iran.

On Tuesday, President Hassan Rouhani said Iran would not talk to the United States until all sanctions were lifted. Japan, Washington's closest Asian ally, has historically had friendly ties with Iran. Abe visited Tehran in June to try to ease tensions.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-japan-iran/irans-zarif-to-japan-pm-we-are-not-seeking-heightened-tensions-idUSKCN1VI0H9>

EU backs US-Iran talks but says nuclear deal must stay

Saudi Gazette, August 29, 2019

The EU's diplomatic chief said on Thursday that the bloc would support talks between the US and Tehran, but only if the current nuclear deal with Iran is preserved. Tensions have risen dramatically in the Gulf, where Iran has seized tankers, but EU countries are reluctant to join a US-led operation to protect commercial shipping, floating instead their own observation mission. The idea of direct talks between Washington and Tehran as a way out of the crisis has grown this week after Trump mooted the idea and the new US defense secretary urged Iran's leaders to engage.

The EU has desperately sought to stop the deal from collapsing completely, arguing it is the best way to stop Iran developing nuclear bombs. EU diplomatic chief Federica Mogherini gave a cautious welcome to the idea of negotiations, after Trump said Monday he was ready to meet Iran's President Hassan Rouhani within weeks. "We are always in favor of talks, the more people talk, the more people understand each other better, on the basis of clarity and on the basis of respect," Mogherini said as she arrived for a meeting of EU foreign and defense ministers in Helsinki.

<http://saudigazette.com.sa/article/575801/World/Mena/EU-backs-US-Iran-talks-but-says-nuclear-deal-must-stay>

Satellite photos shows burning rocket at Iranian space center

Arab News, August 29, 2019

A rocket at an Iranian space center that was to conduct a satellite launch criticized by the US apparently exploded on its launch pad, satellite images show, suggesting the Islamic Republic suffered its third failed launch this year alone. State media and officials did not immediately acknowledge the incident at the Imam Khomeini Space Center in Iran's Semnan province.

However, satellite images by Planet Labs Inc. showed a black plume of smoke rising above a launch pad there, with what appeared to be the charred remains of a rocket and its launch stand. In previous days, satellite images had shown officials there repainted the launch pad blue.

On Thursday morning, half of that paint apparently had been burned away. "Whatever happened there, it blew up and you're looking at the smoldering remains of what used to be there," said David Schmerler, a senior research associate at the Middlebury Institute of International Studies. Schmerler told The Associated Press that the images of the space center suggested that the rocket either exploded during ignition or possibly briefly lifted off before crashing back down on the pad. Water runoff from the pad, likely from trying to extinguish the blaze, could be seen along with a host of vehicles parked nearby.

<https://www.arabnews.com/node/1547076/middle-east>

Trump says US not involved in Iran satellite launch failure

Reuters, August 30, 2019

US President Donald Trump said on Friday that the United States was not involved with a failed Iranian rocket launch, and he wished Tehran luck at finding out what went wrong. "The United States of America was not involved in the catastrophic accident during final launch preparations for the Safir SLV Launch at Semnan Launch Site One in Iran," Trump said on Twitter. The rocket exploded on its launch pad at a space center in northern Iran on Thursday, an Iranian official said. A US official also said Iran suffered a satellite launch failure.

The United States has warned Iran against rocket launches, fearful the technology used to put satellites into orbit could enable Tehran to develop the ballistic missile capability needed to launch nuclear warheads. Tehran denies the US accusation that such activity is a cover for ballistic missile development.

<https://in.reuters.com/article/iran-space-launch-usa/trump-says-us-not-involved-in-iran-satellite-launch-failure-idINKCN1VK2A4>

H. Yemen

US military drone shot down in Yemen

Reuters, August 26, 2019

A US military MQ-9 drone was shot down in Yemen's Dhamar governate, southeast of the Houthi-controlled capital Sanaa, two US officials told Reuters on Wednesday, the second such incident in recent months. The officials said the drone was shot down late on Tuesday.

This is not the first time a US drone has been shot down in Yemen. In June, the US military said that Houthi rebels had shot down a US government-operated drone with assistance from Iran.

US forces have occasionally launched drone and air strikes against Yemen's Al-Qaeda branch, known as Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP). The group has taken advantage of a four-year-old war between the Houthi movement and President Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi's internationally recognized government to try to strengthen its position in the impoverished country. One of the officials said that it appeared that the armed military drone, made by California-based General Atomics, had been shot down by a surface-to-air missile operated by the Iran-aligned Houthi group.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-yemen-security-usa-drone/u-s-military-drone-shot-down-over-yemen-officials-idUSKCN1VB180>

I. Iraq

Iraqi PM's government facing collapse over Israeli airstrikes: Military and political officials

Arab News, August 27, 2019

Iraqi Prime Minister Adel Abdul-Mahdi's government could be toppled within weeks in the wake of a series of strikes on targets associated with paramilitary groups linked to Iran, sources claim. Government officials, commanders of armed factions and observers told Arab News on Tuesday that recent bomb

attacks have embarrassed the premier and robbed him of domestic and international support.

Iraq has seen 18 bombings and two airstrikes over the past three years, most of which have hit warehouses and headquarters of armed factions that have fought Daesh alongside the Iraqi government and which are mostly linked to Iran. The latest bombings last week targeted three weapons stores near Baghdad belonging to Kata'ib Hezbollah-Iraq, an anti-US and pro-Iranian Shiite militia in Iraq, while a drone hit one of its headquarters in the border city of Qaim near the Iraqi-Syrian border on Sunday, killing two of its commanders.

<https://www.arabnews.com/node/1546156/middle-east>

J. Israel

Israel accuses Iran of pushing Hezbollah missile plants in Lebanon

Reuters, August 29, 2019

Israel accused Iran on Thursday of stepping up efforts to provide the Hezbollah militia with precision-guided missile production facilities, a warning to Beirut that Israeli counter-strikes could escalate. "Dir balak," Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said in public remarks directed at Lebanon, using the Arabic for "watch out." Israel and Lebanon's Hezbollah, which last fought a war in 2006, are on high alert after drones were used at the weekend to attack what a security official in the region described as a target linked to precision-guided missile projects.

Hezbollah has blamed Israel for the rare strike in Beirut, and said it will retaliate. The heavily armed Shiite movement has denied harboring such missile facilities. Lebanon has accused Israel of seeking pretexts for aggression. Without claiming responsibility for the drone attack, the Israeli military published what it said were details about an extensive Iranian-sponsored campaign to provide Hezbollah with the means to

produce precision-guided missiles. Such missiles – which Hezbollah acknowledges possessing – could potentially pose a counter-balance to Israel's overwhelming military force in any future war, with the capacity to home in on and knock out core infrastructure sites.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-security-israel-lebanon/israel-says-iran-boosting-bid-to-set-up-hezbollah-precision-missile-plants-in-lebanon-idUSKCN1VJ10I>

K. Turkey

Turkey, Russia seek closer defense, aviation cooperation at MAKS 2019 Airshow

Daily Sabah, September 27, 2019

Leaders of Turkey and Russia expressed their intent to further develop their cooperation in the defense and aviation industry at the MAKS 2019 International Aviation and Space Salon, a biennial showcase of Russia's aerospace industry. Speaking at the inauguration ceremony at Zhukovsky Airport near Moscow alongside his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin, Erdoğan said he believed that "the synergy we have been cultivating with Russia in aviation and space technology will help deepen bilateral relations." The two leaders later toured the exhibition and inspected various military and civilian aircraft.

Erdoğan was in Moscow for a one-day trip, as part of which the leaders discussed bilateral relations and international issues. Ahead of the bilateral meeting, Erdoğan told reporters that he was "pleased" to visit the fair, and seeing fighter aircraft and passenger planes. He said the steps Russia has taken in space aviation proves its position in the science world. Putin, for his part, said Russia and Turkey can unite efforts in the industry for aircraft construction.

<https://www.dailysabah.com/defense/2019/08/27/turkey-russia-seek-closer-defense-aviation-cooperation-at-maks-2019-airshow>

Confusion as Turkey says Iranian tanker now headed to Lebanon

Reuters, August 30, 2019

Turkey said on Friday that an Iranian tanker at the center of a confrontation between Washington and Tehran was headed to Lebanon's waters after changing course several times, although Beirut said it was not informed of the plan. According to Refinitiv tracking data, the Adrian Darya, formerly called Grace 1, made another U-turn on Friday and headed for Turkey's Iskenderun port – 200 km (124 miles) north of Syria's Baniyas refinery, the tanker's suspected original destination. When the ship was released off Gibraltar in mid-August after a five-week standoff, Iran assured the United Kingdom that the cargo was not headed to Syria. The latest twist sets it in the direction of Syria, and raises the possibility that a ship-to-ship transfer of cargo may be attempted once it nears Lebanon's coast. Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu said on Friday that despite the tracking data, the tanker was "for sure" not going to Turkish ports but rather toward Lebanese waters.

Earlier on Friday, the minister said the ship was headed to Lebanon's "main" port. "I didn't mean that this tanker is going to a Lebanese port, but (rather) according to the information coordinates it is heading to the territorial waters of the country," he later told reporters at an Oslo forum. "It doesn't mean that it is going to reach a Lebanese port," he said of the tanker that was carrying 2 million barrels of oil when released at Gibraltar. "We are monitoring it very closely." In response, Lebanese Finance Minister Ali Hassan Khalil said in a separate interview: "We have not been informed of the Iranian oil tanker Adrian Darya heading here."

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-iran-tanker/confusion-as-turkey-says-iranian-tanker-now-headed-to-lebanon-idUSKCN1VK0N0>

East Asia

L. North Korea

NK raises military tension on peninsula: NSC

Yonhap, Korea Herald, August 16, 2019

2 unidentified projectiles flew 230 kilometers with peak altitude of 30 km: JCS. The firing came along with a warning that North Korea could end dialogue with South Korea in apparent protest against the Seoul-Washington military exercise and Seoul's defense plan, announced earlier this week, to outline its five-year major weapons procurement projects. The two projectiles were fired from its eastern coastal county of Tongchon in Kangwon Province earlier in the day, according to the Joint Chiefs of Staff. No other details were immediately known, including their type, flight range and maximum altitude. "Our military is monitoring the situation in case of additional launches while maintaining a readiness posture," the JCS said in a brief release.

http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20190816000031&ACE_SEARCH=1

N. Korea fires more projectiles, rules out talks with South

Kim Tong-hyung, AP News, August 16, 2019

North Korea on Friday bluntly criticized South Korean President Moon Jae-in for continuing to hold military exercises with the U.S. and over his rosy comments on inter-Korean diplomacy, and said Pyongyang has no current plans to talk with Seoul. The statement by an unidentified government spokesman came hours before South Korea's military detected two projectiles North Korea fired into the sea to extend a torrid streak of weapons display that's apparently aimed at pressuring Washington and Seoul over their joint drills and slow nuclear negotiations.

South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff said the projectiles launched from the North's eastern coast flew about 230 kilometers

(143 miles) on an apogee of 30 kilometers (18 miles) before landing in waters between the Korean Peninsula and Japan. The U.S. and South Korean militaries were analyzing the launches but didn't immediately say whether the weapons were ballistic missiles or rocket artillery.

<https://www.apnews.com/bfeaa5c3f8a84436b500f2c23a68e9d0>

North Korea says it tested 'new weapon' under leader Kim's guidance

Korea Times, August 17, 2019

North Korea said Saturday that it has tested a "new weapon" under the guidance of its leader, Kim Jong-un, in the launch of two projectiles the previous day. Kim "guided the test-fire of (a) new weapon again on Friday morning," the Korean Central News Agency said. "The national defense scientists showed a perfect result in the test-fire, too, and helped cement bigger confidence in this weapon system." "It is our party's goal of defense building to possess invincible military capabilities no one dare provoke and to keep bolstering them," Kim was quoted as saying. "Everyone should remember that it is the party's core plan and fixed will for defense building to possess such a powerful force strong enough to discourage any forces from daring to provoke us."

https://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/nation/2019/09/103_274085.html

Kim expresses 'great satisfaction' over NKorea weapons tests

Kim Tong-hyung, AP News, August 17, 2019

North Korea said Saturday that leader Kim Jong Un supervised another test-firing of an unspecified new weapon, seen as an attempt to pressure Washington and Seoul over slow nuclear negotiations and their joint military exercises. Pyongyang's Korean Central News Agency, or KCNA, said that following Friday's launches, Kim expressed "great satisfaction" over his military's "mysterious and amazing success rates" in recent testing activity and vowed to build

up "invincible military capabilities no one dare provoke." The report did not mention any specific comment about the United States or South Korea.

KCNA did not describe what Friday's weapons were or how they performed, but said that the tests were successful and strengthened the military's confidence in the reliability of the system.

<https://www.apnews.com/3db6a538e77d45f1b7fc851ac3322bd1>

Speculation swirls over possible US-NK meeting this week

Korea Times, August 20, 2019

U.S. Special Representative for North Korea Stephen Biegun's upcoming trip to South Korea is fanning speculation of a possible meeting between him and North Korean officials on the inter-Korean border this week.

The timing of his visit – Tuesday to Thursday – is conspicuous because it starts on the day military exercises between Seoul and Washington end, the same day the North has said it would be ready to resume talks with the U.S. If a meeting is realized, it would mark the resumption of denuclearization negotiations that have stalled since a second summit between U.S. President Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong-un in February ended without a deal.

https://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/nation/2019/09/103_274215.html

Warning to North Korea? US tests medium-range cruise missile for first time in 32 years

Korea Times, August 20, 2019

The U.S. military has conducted a flight test of a type of missile banned for more than 30 years by a treaty that both the United States and Russia abandoned this month, the Pentagon said. The test off the coast of California on Sunday marked the resumption of an arms competition that some analysts worry could increase U.S.-

Russian tensions. The Trump administration has said it remains interested in useful arms control but questions Moscow's willingness to adhere to its treaty commitments. The Pentagon said it tested a modified ground-launched version of a Navy Tomahawk cruise missile, which was launched from San Nicolas Island and accurately struck its target after flying more than 500 kilometers (310 miles). The missile was armed with a conventional, not nuclear, warhead.

Defense officials had said last March that this missile likely would have a range of about 1,000 kilometers (620 miles) and that it might be ready for deployment within 18 months.

https://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/nation/2019/09/103_274221.html

N. Korea continued nuclear program in 2018 in Yongbyon: IAEA

Kim So-hyun, Korea Herald, August 21, 2019

North Korea continued and further developed its nuclear program last year at a 5-megawatt reactor in Yongbyon, the International Atomic Energy Agency said in its annual report. According to the IAEA report, which will be submitted to the 74th United Nations General Assembly in New York next month, the agency observed through satellite imagery "indications that were consistent with the operation of the Yongbyon Experimental Nuclear Power Plant (five-megawatt) reactor until mid-August 2018."

The IAEA also said it observed indications consistent with the use of the centrifuge enrichment facility known to be located within the Yongbyon nuclear fuel rod fabrication plant, and activities consistent with the fabrication of reactor components as well as the possible transfer of these components into the reactor building.

http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20190821000522&ACE_SEARCH=1

N. Korea says 'no interest in denuke talks' as long as South-US military drills in place

Korea Times, August 22, 2019

North Korea said Thursday it has no interest in dialogue as long as South Korea and the United States keep up military threats against it, a day after two F-35 stealth fighters arrived in the South. A spokesperson for the North's foreign ministry issued the warning in a statement, also denouncing South Korea for violating inter-Korean agreements to reduce cross-border tensions by introducing high-tech weapons from the U.S, calling such an act a "grave provocation."

Stephen Biegun, said in Seoul that Washington is ready to resume talks with Pyongyang. "We remain unchanged in our position to resolve all issues in a peaceful manner through dialogue and negotiation. However, dialogue accompanied by military threats is of no interest to us," the statement said. "This act of continuously introducing the cutting-edge lethal equipment is a grave provocation that has openly denied the joint declarations and the military agreement between the north and the south of Korea," it added.

https://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/nation/2019/09/103_274352.html

North Korea prepared for dialogue, confrontation

Park Han-na, Korea Herald, August 23, 2019

North Korean Foreign Minister Ri Yong-ho said Friday the regime is ready for both dialogue and confrontation with the US, criticizing Washington for using sanctions as leverage in denuclearization talks. In a statement via the state-run Korean Central News Agency, Ri condemned US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo for invoking sanctions imposed on the North in a recent interview with Washington Examiner.

"The US is miscalculating if it is trying to not lose (the) confrontational stance against us and confront us with sanctions," Ri said. "Then, we would remain the biggest threat to the US for a long time and make it realize what it has to do for the sake of denuclearization once and for all," he added. "We are ready both for confrontation and dialogue." Calling Pompeo "a disrupter" in negotiations between North Korea and the US, Ri said that he lacks rational thinking and judgment in invoking international restrictions against the regime.

http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20190823000510&ACE_SEARCH=1

N. Korea fires unidentified projectiles into East Sea: JCS

Yonhap, Korea Herald, August 24, 2019

North Korea fired two projectiles presumed to be short-range ballistic missiles into the East Sea on Saturday, South Korea's military said, ratcheting up tensions even after the end of a joint military exercise between the South and the United States. The projectiles were fired at 6:45 a.m. and 7:02 a.m. from the eastern town of Sondok in South Hamgyong Province into the East Sea, and both flew around 380 kilometers at a maximum altitude of 97 km and a top speed of around Mach 6.5, according to the Joint Chiefs of Staff. "Our military is monitoring the situation in case of additional launches and maintaining a readiness posture," the JCS said in a release, adding the South Korean and the US intelligence authorities are analyzing their exact type.

http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20190824000004&ACE_SEARCH=1

Foreign minister rebukes US State Secretary Pompeo

The Pyongyang Times, August 24, 2019

US State Secretary Pompeo told a press conference on Wednesday that if North Korea does not set out to denuclearize itself, the US will maintain the toughest sanctions in history to make it confirm that denuclearization is the right way. As the saying goes "A crow never becomes whiter

for often washing". Pompeo is just the diehard toxin of the US diplomacy.

Nothing decent can be expected from Pompeo, who are subjected to a firestorm of criticism from many countries as he adopts the most wicked methods of the Central Intelligence Agency as diplomatic means when he deals with issues in every part of the world. But it is not something to go unnoticed that such a string of senseless remarks come from the man heading the US negotiation team at a time when the DPRK-US dialogue is high on the agenda. There is a proverb saying "Sow the wind and reap the whirlwind". Now that he made rhetoric about the DPRK without elementary obligation as a human being, losing his face as the diplomatic chief of a country, I cannot but respond to it in kind.

Things that seemed to be fruitful at the beginning go wrong and end up in failure whenever Pompeo meddles. Viewed in this light, he must be more concerned about his "political ambition" for the future rather than about the current foreign policy of the US. The US is sadly mistaken if it still tries to take on the DPRK with the help of sanctions, not dropping its confrontational approach. Then we will remain the biggest "threat" to the US for long enough to make it realize for sure what it has to do for denuclearization.

<http://www.pyongyangtimes.com.kp/?bbs=31141>

North Korea tests new 'super-large' rocket launcher

Hyung-jin Kim, AP News, August 25, 2019

North Korea said Sunday that leader Kim Jong Un supervised the test-firing of a "newly developed super-large multiple rocket launcher," another demonstration of the North's expanding weapons arsenal apparently aimed at increasing its leverage ahead of a possible resumption of nuclear talks with the U.S. The North's official Korean Central News Agency, or KCNA, said that Saturday's weapons test was successful and cited Kim as saying the rocket launcher is "indeed a great weapon."

Kim underscored the need to “continue to step up the development of Korean-style strategic and tactical weapons for resolutely frustrating the ever-mounting military threats and pressure offensive of the hostile forces,” according to KCNA. The “hostile forces” likely referred to the United States and South Korea, whose recently ended regular military drills infuriated North Korea. The North has called the drills an invasion rehearsal and conducted a slew of missile and rocket tests in response.

<https://www.apnews.com/aea805efb3f842c38680b523018263bb>

North Korea’s propaganda outlet mentions Seoul’s GSOMIA termination for first time

Korea Times, August 27, 2019

A North Korean propaganda outlet mentioned South Korea’s recent decision to end a military information-sharing deal with Japan for the first time Tuesday, citing a South Korean media report that strongly supports the move. South Korea decided not to extend the General Security of Military Information Agreement (GSOMIA) last week, citing a “grave change” in security cooperation conditions and Tokyo’s refusal to accept Seoul’s dialogue proposals. Seoul and Tokyo signed GSOMIA in 2016, which was aimed at exchanging sensitive intelligence in the face of growing nuclear and missile threats from North Korea. The decision to terminate the pact was made amid an intensifying feud over wartime history and trade with Japan.

North Korean media outlets have called for an end to GSOMIA, calling it a stepping stone for Japan toward reinvading the Korean Peninsula, but they have not directly mentioned the latest decision to terminate the deal. Meari, one of North Korea’s propaganda outlets, mentioned the issue for the first time, though indirectly, by carrying the entire editorial of a South Korean internet media company, Voice of People.

https://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/nation/2019/09/103_274610.html

North Korea says it won’t give up arms modernization

Edith M. Lederer, AP News, August 30, 2019

North Korea accused the United Kingdom, France and Germany on Thursday of meddling in its “self-defensive measures for arms modernization,” saying the West will make “no greater mistake” than thinking Pyongyang will give up its right to have weapons that it says are needed to ensure peace. The North’s official Korean Central News Agency circulated a statement from Kim Son Gyong, an adviser at the Korea-Europe Association, in response to a joint statement Tuesday from the three important U.S. allies condemning Pyongyang’s “repeated provocative launches” of ballistic missiles.

The Europeans accused North Korea of violating U.N. sanctions and urged leader Kim Jong Un to engage with the United States and make progress on denuclearization, which they said is “the only way to guarantee security and stability on the Korean peninsula and in the region.” The North Korean statement said defending national security has become more important after seeing countries “whose destinies were hacked to pieces by the Western powers” and which yielded to Western demands “for disarmament under the pressure and appeasement of ‘international society.’” The statement dismissed U.N. resolutions, saying they “trample the rights to self-defense and survival of the sovereign state, and accordingly, we have never acknowledged them.”

<https://www.apnews.com/e4efed99f8504d7b8a3fa4b3c5779051>

North Korea says Pompeo’s remarks make talks with U.S. more difficult

Reuters, August 31, 2019

A recent remark by U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo about “North Korea’s rogue behavior” will make talks with the United States more difficult, the North’s KCNA

news agency on Saturday quoted its vice foreign minister, Choe Son Hui, as saying. "We recognized that North Korea's rogue behavior could not be ignored," Pompeo said on Tuesday, while speaking at the American Legion National Convention in the state of Indiana. Pompeo's comment was unreasonable and provocative, Choe said, according to the news agency. "Pompeo has gone so far in his language and it made the opening of the expected DPRK-U.S. working-level negotiations more difficult," Choe said in statement."

Choe also warned that North Korea's expectations of talks with the United States are gradually disappearing and the country is being pushed to reexamine all measures.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-northkorea-pompeo/north-korea-says-pompeos-remarks-make-talks-with-us-more-difficult-idUSKCN1VL02X>

M. South Korea

South Korea's military says North Korea launched projectiles twice into sea

AP News, August 16, 2019

South Korea's military says North Korea launched projectiles twice into sea.

<https://www.apnews.com/54ae47ec7e4843cdb10d53fd988c84c9>

S. Korea, US wrap up summertime combined exercise

Yonhap, Korea Herald, August 20, 2019

South Korea and the United States wrapped up their week long combined military exercises on Tuesday, raising hopes for a halt in a series of missile launches by North Korea and a possible resumption of nuclear talks between Washington and Pyongyang. The North has strongly bristled at the Combined Command Post Training and Crisis Management Staff Training, ratcheting up tensions with six rounds of missile or projectile launches and bellicose rhetoric over about three weeks. "We've wrapped up the training as scheduled, and all the training sessions proceeded without a hitch," a military officer said.

This year's exercise, which replaced their summertime Ulchi Freedom Guardian exercise, involved computer simulations without the actual mobilization of troops or military equipment, which is part of the allies' reorganization of major exercises aimed at supporting peace efforts with North Korea. But the training was based upon similar scenarios to previous ones and was composed of two parts just as the allies have done before: defending the country against invasion by North Korea and launching a counterattack in response. The focus of the exercise was to verify whether Seoul is on course to meet the conditions required for its retaking of operational control over its forces from Washington during wartime," a defense ministry official said, adding that the results of the initial operational capability (IOC) test will be discussed later this year.

http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20190820000638&ACE_SEARCH=1

Biegun holds talks with S. Korean counterpart over resumption of nuke talks with NK

Yonhap, Korea Herald, August 21, 2019

US Special Representative for North Korea Stephen Biegun held talks with his South Korean counterpart in Seoul on Wednesday to discuss joint efforts to resume and make progress in nuclear talks with North Korea. The US envoy met Lee Do-hoon at Seoul's foreign ministry, kicking off his official schedule for a series of meetings with senior Seoul officials, including Unification Minister Kim Yeong-chul. He arrived here from Japan on Tuesday for a three-day visit.

His trip came as the conclusion of a combined South Korea-US military exercise raised the prospects for the resumption of working-level nuclear negotiations between Washington and Pyongyang. The communist regime had berated the exercise as a rehearsal for invasion, shunning negotiations with the United States, firing a fusillade of short-range projectiles into the East Sea and sharpening its rhetoric against the South. Biegun and Lee were expected to

coordinate the allies' positions and strategies over how to make progress once negotiations with the North are relaunched.

http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20190821000079&ACE_SEARCH=1

Cheong Wa Dae says it never used Japan's intel in analyzing NK missiles under Moon

Yonhap, Korea Herald, August 24, 2019

South Korea never used Japan's intelligence in analyzing North Korea's missile launches under the current Moon Jae-in administration, a senior official at the presidential office said Saturday, amid concerns over possible limits in countering the North's threats with the termination of an intel-sharing deal between Seoul and Tokyo. The official made the remark after North Korea fired two projectiles believed to be short-range ballistic missiles into the East Sea earlier in the day, marking the seventh such launch since late July. "Not a single piece of information Japan provided regarding North Korea's missiles was meaningful," the official told Yonhap News Agency on the condition of anonymity.

The official's remarks came amid rising concerns over Seoul's decision on Thursday to pull out from the General Security of Military Information Agreement in the face of an escalating bilateral dispute over trade and history. The termination of GSOMIA marks the culmination of a spat that began with Japan's decision to curb exports of sensitive materials to South Korea in early July. The dispute escalated with Japan's delisting in August of South Korea from a list of trusted trading partners and Seoul's tit-for-tat action to remove Tokyo from its own list.

http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20190824000062&ACE_SEARCH=1

S. Korea's Lee: GSOMIA can stay if Japan retracts trade measures

Hajimu Takeda, The Ashai Shimibun, August 27, 2019

South Korean Prime Minister Lee Nak-yeon said a military intelligence-sharing pact

could continue with Japan if Tokyo agrees to roll back measures to tighten regulations on exports to South Korea. Speaking at the South Korean National Assembly on Aug. 26, Lee said the General Security of Military Information Agreement (GSOMIA) with Japan would become invalid on Nov. 23. Seoul informed Tokyo last week of its intention to end the agreement. "If the inappropriate measures taken by Japan are reverted back to their original status, I believe it would be desirable for our government to also reconsider the GSOMIA with Japan," Lee said. He said the decision to end the GSOMIA with Japan was in reaction to Tokyo's labeling of South Korea as a nation that cannot be trusted in the national security area.

<http://www.asahi.com/ajw/articles/AJ201908270030.html>

S. Korea seeks to increase defense budget 7.4% next year

Yonhap, Korea Herald, August 29, 2019

South Korea is seeking a 7.4 percent increase in its defense budget for next year, as it strives to strengthen self-defense capabilities amid growing security uncertainties, the defense ministry said Thursday. The government has proposed a budget of 50.15 trillion won (\$41.29 billion) for next year, up from this year's 46.7 trillion won. If approved, it will be the first time that the country's defense budget surpasses the 50 trillion-won mark.

Of the total, the ministry plans to spend 16.69 trillion won on arms purchases and other projects to boost defense capabilities, up 8.6 percent from this year, and to set aside 33.46 trillion won for running military forces, marking an on-year growth of 6.8 percent. "In consideration of recent uncertainties in security circumstances of the date, the government has increased investment in the strengthening of defense capabilities to allow our military proactively to respond to security threats from all directions," the ministry said in a release. North Korea has conducted a series of major weapons tests, involving short-range ballistic missiles.

Last month, a Russian warplane intruded into Korean airspace over its easternmost islets of Dokdo twice, prompting the South Korean Air Force to fire hundreds of warning shots.

http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20190829000209&ACE_SEARCH=1

South Korean leader says Japan dishonest over wartime past

Kim Tong-hyung, AP News, August 29, 2019

South Korean President Moon Jae-in on Thursday berated Japan for carrying out its plan to downgrade South Korea's trade status and reiterated that Tokyo was weaponizing trade to retaliate over political rows stemming from the countries' wartime history. Moon said in a Cabinet meeting that Japan is being dishonest by insisting that its trade curbs weren't retaliation over historical issues, including South Korean court rulings that called for Japanese companies to offer reparations to aging South Korean plaintiffs for forced labor during World War II.

He said Japan should look "squarely at the past" and that its current actions were aggravating the pain and anger of South Koreans who suffered under Japan's brutal colonial rule of Korea from 1910 to 1945. "Japan has yet to even state an honest reason for its economic retaliation No matter what excuse it provides as justification, it is clear that the Japanese government has linked historical issues to economic matters," Moon said. Moon spoke hours before the countries' diplomats held working-level meetings in Seoul to discuss the trade row and security issues related to North Korea.

<https://www.apnews.com/acaf62092a554f10a9ad77e7645a7b98>

Defense chief vows staunch readiness

Yonhap, Korea Herald, August 26, 2019

Defense Minister Jeong Kyeong-doo vowed Monday to maintain a staunch readiness

posture for North Korean provocations as Pyongyang has ratcheted up tensions with projectile launches even after South Korea and the United States ended joint exercises. "North Korea has heightened military tensions by firing a series of short-range projectiles and making verbal attacks against the South," he said during a speech at the first World Congress of Security Studies hosted by Korea National Defense University held in Seoul. So far this year, the North conducted a total of nine rounds of missile tests.

"While maintaining a firm military readiness and the combined defense posture with the US, our military is strongly backing the government's diplomatic efforts" to resolve tensions with North Korea, he said. The defense chief also called for the restoration of trust and cooperative ties among countries, citing deepening feuds with Japan over its "unfair economic measures" against South Korea and a Russian warplane's violation of the Korean airspace last month. "South Korea strives to further strengthen cooperation with all nations to establish the order of peace and prosperity in East Asia ... and the denuclearization of North Korea," Jeong said, vowing to continue such efforts "prudently with patience."

http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20190826000589&ACE_SEARCH=1

S. Korean nuke envoy to visit Russia for denuclearization talks

Yonhap, Korea Herald, August 30, 2019

South Korea's top nuclear envoy Lee Do-hoon will visit Russia next week for talks on North Korea's denuclearization, Seoul's foreign ministry said Friday. The special representative for Korean Peninsula peace and security affairs is set to leave for Vladivostok on Monday to meet Russian Vice Foreign Minister Igor Morgulov the following day. They are expected to discuss the current situation on the Korean Peninsula, including North Korea's latest missile launches, and ways to facilitate stalled denuclearization negotiations

between Washington and Pyongyang, it said.

Morgulov will be attending the Eastern Economic Forum to be held in the city from Sept. 4-6. Denuclearization talks have made little headway since the second summit in Hanoi between US President Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong-un ended without a deal. They failed to narrow differences over the scope of the North's denuclearization and sanctions relief by Washington.

http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20190830000655&ACE_SEARCH=1

Moon invites Kim Jong-un at summit in Busan

Kim Yoo-chul, Korea Times, August 30, 2019

President Moon Jae-in is sticking to his engagement-driven North Korea policy, seeking to break the impasse in the denuclearization talks via another direct encounter with North Korean leader Kim Jong-un at the upcoming summit with leaders of Southeast Asian countries in Busan. In a special contribution to Bangkok Post, the President said he is expecting to meet Kim at the ASEAN-South Korea Commemorative Summit to be held in the country's largest port city of Busan.

"It would be a very meaningful occasion for peace on the Korean Peninsula and in East Asia, if Kim Jong-un is given the chance to join the gathering. East Asian countries would be able to discuss in detail with the North about possible areas of cooperation between them,"

https://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/nation/2019/09/103_274832.html

N. Japan

Defense paper to stress reality of North Korean nuclear threat

The Asahi Shimbun, August 23, 2019

The Japanese government plans to include for the first time in its annual white paper on defense that North Korea appears to have

already realized small nuclear warheads that can be loaded onto missiles. The description was found in the draft of the 2019 version of the document. In the latest version, the government also demoted South Korea in the order of countries Japan cooperates with in the field of security, as relations continue to deteriorate owing to the issue of wartime laborers.

The white paper is expected to be approved at a Cabinet meeting in mid-September. In the 2018 version, the government wrote that "there is a possibility that North Korea has realized" small, missile-mounted nuclear warheads. The wording was changed to "North Korea seems to have already realized ..." in the 2019 version. The change reflects a growing sense of crisis over the nuclear threat posed by the hermetic country. Since July 25, North Korea has launched projectiles, including short-range ballistic missiles, six times. Regarding the launches, the latest version reads, "They are serious and pressing threats."

<http://www.asahi.com/ajw/articles/AJ201908230036.html>

'Blind men': End of South Korea-Japan pact undermines bid to understand North Korea threats

Hyonhee Shin, Tim Kelly, Reuters, August 23, 2019

South Korea's decision to scrap an intelligence-sharing pact with Japan could harm efforts to understand threats from North Korea, and potentially weaken the ability to monitor its missile launches, officials and analysts say. South Korea's announcement on Thursday that it would abandon the accord drew a swift protest from Tokyo and ratcheted up the neighbours' feud over history and trade. The agreement had been due for automatic renewal on Saturday.

<https://in.reuters.com/article/southkorea-japan-labourers-intelligence/blind-men-end-of-south-korea-japan-pact-undermines-bid-to-understand-north-korea-threats-idINKCN1VD20S>

Abe heads to France for G-7 summit clouded by divisions

Mainichi Japan, August 23, 2019

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe embarked Friday on a five-day trip to France where he hopes to help his fellow leaders from the Group of Seven industrialized nations find common ground amid divisions over trade, climate change and Iran. In the Atlantic coast city of Biarritz, Abe is seeking to play a part in preventing rifts within the G-7 from widening amid a tense atmosphere due to clashes between the United States and other members. French President Emmanuel Macron has tabbed fighting inequality as a key theme while his country holds the G-7 presidency this year.

<https://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20190823/p2g/00m/0na/063000c>

UN chief urges Japan, S. Korea to mend ties

Mainichi Japan, August 24, 2019

U.N. Secretary General Antonio Guterres on Friday urged Japan and South Korea to mend relations after Seoul scrapped a military intelligence-sharing pact with Tokyo amid disputes over trade and wartime issues. Speaking to Japanese media organizations in New York ahead of an overseas trip that includes Tokyo, the U.N. chief said, "I can only wish that they will be able to solve whatever difficulties exist in their relationship." "These two countries are very important pillars of stability and development in the region," he said.

Guterres meanwhile expressed concern at the recent lapse of the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty and U.S. testing of a new type of missile, saying the trends of nuclear disarmament seen in the late 20th century are "being reversed."

<https://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20190824/p2g/00m/0na/047000c>

Japan faster to report N. Korean missile launch than S. Korea

The Asahi Shimbun, August 25, 2019

A day after South Korea announced the scrapping of a military information sharing agreement with Japan, North Korea launched two short-range ballistic missiles on Aug. 24, as if testing their response. Japan reported the launches quicker than South Korea. At 7:10 a.m. on Aug. 24, the Japanese Defense Ministry announced, "It appears that ballistic missiles were launched from North Korea." The announcement came 26 minutes earlier than one made by the South Korean military forces.

Since July 25, North Korea had launched projectiles, including ballistic missiles, six times. In all those instances, the South Korean military forces had announced the launches earlier than Japan. The Japanese government dealt with the Aug. 24 launch differently from the previous six times after South Korea notified Japan of withdrawing from the GSOMIA on Aug. 23.

<http://www.asahi.com/ajw/articles/AJ201908250036.html>

Japan affirms cooperation with France, Canada, Germany on N. Korea

Mainichi Japan, August 25, 2019

Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe agreed Saturday with the leaders of Canada, France and Germany to cooperate in efforts to contain the security threat posed by North Korea, hours after Pyongyang again launched what appeared to be short-range ballistic missiles. G-7 on same page over Iran's nuclear weapons amid fears of disunity

During their meeting in the French coastal city of Biarritz, Abe and French President Emmanuel Macron agreed that they will "work closely" to tackle several issues including the denuclearization of North Korea, a Japanese government official said. In respective talks with German

Chancellor Angela Merkel and Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, Abe and his counterparts affirmed that the international community should fully implement U.N. resolutions aimed at thwarting North Korea's nuclear and ballistic missile ambitions. Abe held the three bilateral talks before the Group of Seven summit began Saturday evening.

<https://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20190825/p2g/00m/0in/009000c>

Trump, Abe at odds on North Korea missile launches

Reuters, August 25, 2019

U.S. President Donald Trump and Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe showed their differences over the seriousness of North Korea's series of short-range missile launches on Sunday, while maintaining that they would remain in synch on the issue. Trump, who prizes his relationship with North Korean leader Kim Jong-un, said the launches did not violate an agreement and were in line with what others were doing. "He hasn't been doing nuclear testing. He has done short range, much more standard missiles. A lot of people are testing those missiles, not just him," Trump said. Asked if he was concerned by the latest launches, Trump said: "I'm not happy about it, but again, he's not in violation of an agreement."

Abe said the launches breached U.N. resolutions. Asked if he wanted Trump to come closer to his position on the issue, Abe said: "I would like to make sure that we, meaning myself and President Trump, will always stay on the same page when it comes to North Korea." Abe said he said he supported the U.S.-North Korea dialogue. The launches have complicated attempts to restart talks between U.S. and North Korean negotiators over the future of Pyongyang's nuclear weapons and ballistic missile programmes.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-g7-summit-korea-north/trump-abe-at-odds-on-north-korea-missile-launches-idUSKCN1VF0BU>

TEPCO offers to close reactors after restarting Niigata plant

The Asahi Shimbun, August 26, 2019

Tokyo Electric Power Co. indicated it would decommission idle reactors at its Kashiwazaki-Kariwa nuclear plant here, but that move may not be enough to win local consent to restart other reactors at the site. TEPCO officials, including President Tomoaki Kobayakawa, met with Kashiwazaki Mayor Masahiro Sakurai on Aug. 26 and passed on their plans to decommission one or more reactors within five years after operations are resumed at the No. 6 and No. 7 reactors. TEPCO has long planned to restart those two reactors at the seven-reactor plant. As a condition for his consent to the restarts, Sakurai in June 2017 insisted that TEPCO compile a plan regarding the decommissioning of the other five reactors. Hearing of TEPCO's latest plan, Sakurai said the proposal was likely the maximum that could be expected of the utility.

<http://www.asahi.com/ajw/articles/AJ201908260024.html>

Abe, Rouhani to meet late Sept. in New York amid Gulf tension

Mainichi Japan, August 28, 2019

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe plans to meet with Iranian President Hassan Rouhani late next month in New York, the Foreign Ministry said Wednesday, as Japan seeks to play a role in easing tensions in the Middle East between Iran and the United States. Abe agreed with Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif during a meeting in Yokohama to arrange the summit on the margins of the U.N. General Assembly, the Japanese ministry said.

At the outset of the meeting, Zarif said his country "is not hoping tensions rise further" in the Middle East due to the standoff between Washington and Tehran over a 2015 nuclear deal.

<https://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20190828/p2g/00m/0na/055000c>

Kono urges Iran to abide by nuclear deal in talks with Zarif

The Asahi Shimbun, August 28, 2019

Foreign Minister Taro Kono said he urged Iran to abide by a 2015 nuclear deal during a meeting on Tuesday with his Iranian counterpart, Mohammad Javad Zarif. The men agreed to maintain close communication between Japan and Iran, which historically have had friendly ties, to ease tension between the United States and Iran, Kono told reporters afterward. "Based on Japan's stance of consistently supporting the nuclear agreement, I asked the Iranian side to observe the agreement, to go back immediately to the commitments of the agreement, and to refrain from taking measures that would infringe on the agreement," Kono said.

<http://www.asahi.com/ajw/articles/AJ201908280028.html>

Japan begins to doubt G7's influence in addressing East Asian issues

Tomoyuki Tachikawa, August 27, 2019

There are indications that Japan, the only Asian member of the Group of Seven nations, has begun to doubt the influence of the 44-year-old organization of mainly Western nations, as it has proved largely ineffective in resolving issues surrounding the East Asian region. With U.S. President Donald Trump and some European leaders at odds over trade, security and climate matters, concerns in East Asia have received less attention at G7 meetings, Japanese officials have grumbled in private. While Japan continues to cooperate with its G7 peers – which include Britain, Canada, Germany, France, Italy, and the United States, plus the European Union – to tackle threats from North Korea's nuclear and ballistic missile programs, as well as the negative impact of China's economic slowdown and its trade war with the United States, things recently have not gone as Tokyo had hoped.

<https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2019/08/27/national/politics-diplomacy/japan-doubts-emerge-g7s-influence-east-asia/#.XWubgWgvO7g>

Japan's Tepco, Chubu, Hitachi, Toshiba to collaborate on nuclear plants

Reuters, August 28, 2019

Tokyo Electric Power, Chubu Electric Power, Hitachi and Toshiba have agreed to consider cooperating on their nuclear plant businesses, the companies said in a statement on Wednesday. The companies have agreed to consider together building a sustainable business that focuses on constructing and operating boiling water reactors (BWRs) similar to the ones that melted down at Tokyo Electric's Fukushima plant north of Tokyo after an earthquake and tsunami in 2011.

Japan shut down its nuclear plants nationwide in the wake of the 2011 disaster. Neither Tokyo Electric or Chubu Electric have restarted any reactors since then, while Hitachi and Toshiba have pulled out of reactor construction plans overseas. While nine reactors in Japan have been given approval to operate, all of the units have been pressurized water reactors, a different design than BWRs. Tokyo Electric said on Monday it may start to decommission at least one reactor at its Kashiwazaki-Kariwa plant, the world's biggest nuclear station by capacity, within five years of restarting two of the newer reactors at the site.

<https://in.reuters.com/article/japan-nuclear-alliance/japans-tepco-chubu-hitachi-toshiba-to-collaborate-on-nuclear-plants-idINL3N25O26A>

Iran's Zarif urges Japan not to join US coalition

Mainichi Japan, August 29, 2019

Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif showed opposition to Japan's possible participation in a U.S. coalition scheme to patrol the Strait of Hormuz when he met Wednesday with Prime Minister Shinzo Abe in Yokohama near Tokyo, a diplomatic source said. By conveying Tehran's opposition directly to the Japanese leader, Iran sent a strong message for Japan not to join the U.S.-led coalition amid intensifying tensions

between Iran and the United States over the 2015 nuclear deal.

While some countries such as Australia and Britain have announced they will take part in the coalition, Japan remains ambiguous on the matter, caught between its alliance with the United States and traditionally friendly ties with Iran. According to the source, Zarif told Abe that the stationing of foreign military forces in the region would not enhance safety in the Strait of Hormuz and could instead put stability in the Middle East at peril.

<https://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20190829/p2g/00m/0na/031000c>

Japan seeks record ¥5.32 trillion defense budget with new focus on space and cyberspace

Japan Times, August 30, 2019

The Defense Ministry on Friday requested a record ¥5.32 trillion (\$50 billion) budget for fiscal 2020 as it stressed the need to beef up the nation's defense capabilities in domains such as outer space and cyberspace. The sum marks a 1.2 percent rise from the initial budget for the current fiscal year through March 2020. If approved, the defense budget will grow for the eighth year in a row under Prime Minister Shinzo Abe. The ministry asked for ¥52.4 billion to strengthen its capabilities in space amid the intensifying race among major powers such as the United States, Russia and China to develop technologies in the domain.

A space operation unit will be newly formed inside the Air Self-Defense Force, including purchases of equipment to detect electromagnetic interference with Japanese satellites, as well as an optical telescope to monitor space debris and unidentified objects in outer space. The ministry is seeking ¥23.8 billion to expand staffing levels for the cyberdefense unit and take other measures for cybersecurity. A budget of ¥20.7 billion will be earmarked to develop a "stand-off electronic warfare aircraft," which can hinder invading enemy forces by jamming equipment.

https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2019/08/30/national/japan-record-defense-budget-space-cyberspace/#.XWua_2gvO7g

O. Taiwan

Han pledges to start mothballed nuclear power plant

Ann Maxon, Taipei Times, August 22, 2019

Kaohsiung Mayor Han Kuo-yu yesterday said that, if elected president, he would activate the mothballed Fourth Nuclear Power Plant once its safety could be ensured and if the public agrees. The Chinese Nationalist Party (KMT) presidential candidate made the remarks during an interview with reporters after a luncheon with the American Chamber of Commerce in Taipei (AmCham Taipei) at the Regent Hotel in Taipei.

<http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/taiwan/archives/2019/08/22/2003720928>

Nuclear plan 'unfeasible,' Han criticized

Sean Lin, Jason Pan and Lin Hui-chin, Taipei Times, August 23, 2019

The Cabinet's spokeswoman said that the government would ensure stable energy supply, while lawmakers said Han Kuo-yu's plan was deceptive. Democratic Progressive Party legislators speak at a news conference at the Legislative Yuan in Taipei yesterday in front of a poster that reads: "How can a nuclear power salesman run for president?"

Restarting work on the Fourth Nuclear Power Plant and deferring decommissioning of the Guosheng plant in New Taipei City's Wanli District and Ma-anshan plant in Pingtung County's Ma-anshan would pose technical difficulties, so plans to do so are infeasible, Executive Yuan spokeswoman Kolas Yotaka said yesterday in response to a proposal by Kaohsiung Mayor Han Kuo-yu. The Ministry of Economic Affairs has said on numerous occasions that Taiwan would not face an energy shortage in the run-up to 2030, Kolas told a news conference in Taipei after a Cabinet meeting.

<http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/front/archives/2019/08/23/2003720967>

P. Misc

Canadian, Korean waste organisations agree cooperation

World Nuclear News, August 18, 2019

KORAD CEO Sung-soo Cha and CNL President and CEO Mark Lesinski signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in Ottawa on 21 August. The signing of that agreement followed the signing of an MoU by Cha and NWMO President and CEO Laurie Swami on 19 August.

Under the agreements, KORAD will cooperate with the Canadian organisations to share technology, experience and information on the decommissioning of nuclear reactors, the transport and interim storage of intermediate-level waste and used fuel, and the final disposal of high-level waste.

The Canadian and Korean nuclear industries' long-standing relationship dates back more than 30 years, since the construction of four Canadian-designed Candu pressurised heavy water reactors at Wolsong. Canadian companies have supported the ongoing maintenance of the Wolsong units, including a major refurbishment of Wolsong 1 completed in 2013. Korea itself is now a major nuclear energy country and is exporting its own nuclear technology, with Korean designed reactors under construction in the United Arab Emirates.

<https://www.world-nuclear-news.org/Articles/Canadian-Korean-waste-organisations-agree-coopera>

Iran goes further in breaching nuclear deal, IAEA report shows

Francois Murphy, Reuters, August 30, 2019

Iran has gone further in breaching its nuclear deal with world powers, increasing its stock of enriched uranium and refining it to a greater purity than allowed, the U.N. atomic agency report said on Friday.

The quarterly report from the International Atomic Energy Agency, which is policing the 2015 deal, confirms Iran is progressively

backing out of the deal in retaliation for Washington's withdrawal from the accord and renewal of sanctions that have hit Iranian oil sales.

Iran has said it will breach the deal's limits on its nuclear activities one by one, ratcheting up pressure on parties who still hope to save it.

U.S. President Donald Trump has offered to hold talks with Iran on a broader deal but Tehran says first it must get relief from U.S. sanctions.

In July, the IAEA said Iran exceeded both a 202.8-kg limit on its enriched uranium stock and its 3.67% cap on the fissile purity to which it is allowed to refine uranium. In a verbal update on July 10, the IAEA said Iran was enriching uranium to 4.5% purity and had stockpiled 213.5 kg of enriched uranium.

https://www.reuters.com/article/us-iran-nuclear-iaea/irans-enriched-uranium-stock-grows-well-past-deal-cap-iaea-report-idUSKCN1VK1XH?feedType=RSS&feedName=topNews&utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+reuters%2FtopNews+%28News+%2F+US+%2F+Top+News%29

Q. Op-Ed

India

Chandrayaan 2: What are ISRO's '15 terrifying minutes' to Moon touchdown

Milind Kulshreshtha, Financial Express, August 16, 2019

Chandrayaan 2 is gradually moving closer to the Moon for the penultimate orbital rendezvous with it and facilitate scheduled 07th Sep 19 landing of Vikram (Lander) on the Lunar surface. ISRO's trans-Lunar injection of Chandrayaan 2 forms part of a well-planned Transfer approach, wherein the spacecraft's low Earth circular orbit is translated to a highly eccentric orbit to make it elliptical. Using this 'slingshot' technique, once near Moon, Chandrayaan 2 shall enter the Lunar sphere of influence and spacecraft shall start orbiting the Moon by 20th Aug 19.

Terrifying Minutes: Once Chandrayaan2 is in the designated Moon orbit, the Lander unit shall undock and separate from the Orbiter at a predetermined position. The Lander itself weighs 1,471 Kg and has an additional 27 Kg Pragyan rover in its belly. Once Lander capsule is decoupled and is at a safe distance from the Orbiter, Lander's Descent Orbit Insertion stage fires in to reduce its speed and altitude so as to further undertake the Powered Descent initiation. Thus, the final 30km journey towards the Lunar surface shall be covered using a sequence of powered manoeuvre in about 15 minutes. Here, the Lander's onboard rocket thrust mechanism is used in a highly controlled manner and thruster operations is a complex combination of Navigation, Guidance, Controls, Propulsion, Sensors and various other operational constraints. It works on various feedback mechanisms received for Roll, Pitch, Yaw, Altitude, Speed etc. Through Simulation technique, ISRO has already arrived at the most suitable Lunar surface approach trajectory for the Lander unit for various scenarios. To assist in the descent, Radio signal Doppler measurements based on a highly accurate atomic clock and received from radio telescopes of the Indian Deep Space Network shall display the accurate speed and distance parameters of the Lander.

<https://www.financialexpress.com/lifestyle/science/chandryaan-2-what-are-isros-15-terrifying-minutes-to-moon-touchdown/1677408/>

Nothing scares Pakistanis more than the possibility that India could succeed and Pakistan fail

Tavleen Singh, Indian Express, August 18, 2019

Some years ago when relations with Pakistan were in a good season, the Indian cricket team went on tour to the Islamic Republic. When they played in Lahore, many Indian cricket fans crossed the border to lend the team support. The Indian economy in those days was bursting with animal spirits. So among these fans were Indian industrialists who descended in private jets. A Pakistani friend said later that

it was when they saw those private jets arrive that they first realised how far ahead of Pakistan the Indian economy had gone. It was good to see, she added, that it was not just Arab billionaires who were having all the fun. But, I knew from the way she said this that actually most Pakistanis were not happy about this.

As someone who knows Pakistan well, I learned long ago that nothing frightens Pakistanis more than the possibility that India could succeed and Pakistan fail. It may seem from Imran Khan's recent rantings about the 'fascist, Hindu Supremacist Modi government' that it is Kashmir that Pakistanis care about more than anything. This is not true. Kashmir is not the 'core problem' between India and Pakistan as military men and jihadists next door like to say. The core problem is that if India becomes a mighty economic superpower and Pakistan remains a bankrupt nuclear power, then the whole exercise of breaking India to make a nation for the 'pure' could become meaningless.

<https://indianexpress.com/article/opinion/columns/what-scares-pakistan-most-india-development-nuclear-weapons-economy-kashmir-terrorism-5913507/>

As Chandrayaan-2 Enters Moon Orbit, Musk's Tesla Roadster Completed A Full Orbit Around The Sun

Sarthak Dogra, Urban Mobility, August 20, 2019

Indian Space Research Organisation is in the midst of one of its most crucial missions to date. It announced that the Chandrayaan 2 recently entered the lunar orbit and is successfully on its way to land the rover on the moon's surface in September. Simultaneously, there is another interesting space phenomenon that took place this week but this one was around the sun.

For those unaware, tech billionaire Elon Musk had pulled off what can easily be called as one of the coolest stunts on Earth last year. The SpaceX founder had to test

launch the company's Falcon Heavy rocket in February last year and for that, a dummy load was needed.

<https://www.indiatimes.com/auto/current/as-chandrayaan-2-entered-moon-s-orbit-musk-s-tesla-roadster-just-completed-a-full-orbit-around-the-sun-373920.html>

There's much more than national prestige driving India's ambitious moon mission

Nicholas Borroz, Quartz India, August 22, 2019

India's Chandrayaan-2 spacecraft has settled into lunar orbit, ahead of its scheduled Moon landing on Sept. 7. If it succeeds India will join a very select club, now comprising the former Soviet Union, the US and China.

As with all previous Moon missions, national prestige is a big part of India's Moon shot. But there are some colder calculations behind it as well. Space is poised to become a much bigger business, and both companies and countries are investing in the technological capability to ensure they reap the earthly rewards.

<https://qz.com/india/1692955/isros-chandrayaan-2-moon-mission-promises-big-business-for-india/>

Should India tinker with its 'No First Use' policy?

Dinakar Peri, The Hindu, August 23, 2019

Rajesh Rajagopalan: I am not sure if it is really a revision of India's NFU policy because all he said was that in future the policy might change. That has always been the case. The doctrine is only valid for as long as the government says it is valid. It would be foolish to suggest that doctrines cannot change or that they will hold for all times and under all circumstances. All he was suggesting was that we cannot guarantee that the doctrine will hold for all times.

This is possibly a signal to Pakistan that it should not take India's restraint for granted

for all times to come, but I think even that would possibly be an exaggerated reading of the statement. I think Rajnath Singh's statement is somewhat different from former Union Minister Manohar Parrikar's statement. He had said at a book launch that he doesn't understand why we have to wait until we hit back. That was a lot more problematic even though it was clarified subsequently that his statement was his personal view rather than the government's policy. I don't see Mr. Singh's statement as signifying a change in the doctrine. And obviously if we did change the NFU policy, that would not be particularly useful.

<https://www.thehindu.com/opinion/op-ed/should-india-tinker-with-its-no-first-use-policy/article29224507.ece>

How Delhi and Paris became friends | Opinion

Rakesh Sood, Hindustan Times, August 27, 2019

India and France launched their "strategic partnership" in 1998. Last week, as Prime Minister Narendra Modi concluded his bilateral visit to France, both he and his host President Emmanuel Macron could look back at the achievements of the last 21 years with satisfaction. Yet, as the two leaders must have discovered during their discussions at Chateau de Chantilly, this partnership has far more potential, especially in today's uncertain times.

The two countries had traditionally enjoyed good relations. Since the 1960s, French aircraft and helicopters have been part of the Indian air fleet – Ouragan, Mystere, Alize, Alouette, Jaguar (it is Anglo-French), Mirage, and now Rafale. When the United States reneged on its agreement to supply nuclear fuel for Tarapur, citing domestic legal constraints in 1984, it was France that took on the role.

<https://www.hindustantimes.com/analysis/how-delhi-and-paris-became-best-friends/story-qkfML1QMvFzit1fOBROJeP.html>

Pakistan's ballistic missile arsenal and why India is safe from all of them

News Nation, August 28, 2019

In one of the biggest announcements on Jammu and Kashmir post India's Independence in 1947, the central government-led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi recently bifurcated Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh. Along with the bifurcation, Article 370 – which grants special status to Jammu and Kashmir – was removed. Also, the Article 35A of the Indian Constitution, which empowers Jammu and Kashmir state's legislature to define "permanent residents" of the state and provide special rights and privileges to those permanent residents, was scrapped. The move was appreciated across the country.

The change in status of Jammu and Kashmir means that a better-coordinated security force would be on the LoC keeping a tighter vigil on Pakistan's activities in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir including Gilgit-Baltistan. Due to the move, Pakistan was irked and approached to the United Nations. On the other hand, India received support on the international forum and countries like US and Russia over its move on Jammu and Kashmir. In the meantime, Pakistan PM Imran Khan often tries to threaten New Delhi with nuclear arms, something which has been done by other heads of the neighbouring country. The tension between India and Pakistan is currently at its peak. Here's the list of missiles of Pakistan that can be used against India. Also, here's the reason why India has the edge against Pakistan.

<https://www.newsnation.in/world/news/pakistans-ballistic-missile-arsenal-and-why-india-is-safe-from-all-of-them-235700.html>

Decoding the Cold War space race

Martand Jha, Financial Express, August 29, 2019

Last month, when India sent the Chandrayaan 2 to the moon's South Pole, many space experts pointed towards the beginning of a new space race, or the space

race 2.0. This brings back the question about what was the space race all about and how did it start in the first place? It was a distinct and unique phenomenon within the phenomenon of the Cold War.

What made it unique and distinct was the time during which it happened. Never before in the history were there two superpowers that were almost equally capable of destroying each other and set up their hegemony globally. Secondly, the global balance of power was seen for the first time. Although great powers always used to exist, but there were no superpowers. There are many takeaways and lessons that can be derived from the space race.

<https://www.financialexpress.com/opinion/decoding-the-cold-war-space-race/1689333/>

Is India "creatively reinterpreting" its no-first-use policy?

John Krzyzaniak, Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, August 30, 2019

Donald Trump isn't the only one who can change long-standing policy by tweet. On August 16, the Indian defense minister Rajnath Singh took to Twitter during a visit to Pokhran, the site of India's 1998 nuclear tests. He wrote that, up until now, India has strictly adhered to the doctrine of no nuclear first use, but stipulated that "what happens in the future depends on the circumstances." (To be fair, Singh delivered his statement orally before tweeting it.)

Singh's statement caused a stir among South Asia pundits and arms control experts, but to the uninitiated, it might have been difficult to understand what all the hoopla was about. After all, what's a one-off statement by a defense minister? Isn't India's official doctrine still unchanged? And shouldn't we really concern ourselves with deeds, not just words?

<https://thebulletin.org/2019/08/is-india-creatively-reinterpreting-its-no-first-use-policy/>

The false assertions made by Imran Khan about India in his NYT propaganda column masquerading as opinion article

DNA, August 31, 2019

Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan penned an opinion article for The New York Times which was published on Friday, wherein he made false assertions against India while trying to rake up the nuclear bogey. "After I was elected prime minister of Pakistan last August, one of my foremost priorities was to work for a lasting and just peace in South Asia. India and Pakistan, despite our difficult history, confront similar challenges of poverty, unemployment and climate change, especially the threat of melting glaciers and scarcity of water for hundreds of millions of our citizens," Khan wrote.

If this were so, Pakistan would not have been progressively reducing allocations for the water sector in its budgets, even under Imran Khan. "I wanted to normalise relations with India through trade and by settling the Kashmir dispute, the foremost impediment to the normalization of relations between us," he added.

<https://www.dnaindia.com/india/photo-gallery-the-false-assertions-made-by-imran-khan-about-india-in-his-nyt-propaganda-column-masquerading-as-opinion-editorial-2786369>

China

Op-ed: Competition shouldn't be a zero-sum game

Du Lan, China Daily, August 19, 2019

With the United States labeling China its foremost, primary and long-term strategic "rival", and adopting a policy to contain China, China sees the US as the biggest external challenge on road to national rejuvenation. As such, Sino-US relations have entered an era of strategic competition.

The US-triggered trade war reflects only one aspect of the intensified competition between China and the US, especially in the fields of science and technology, military and international relations. Most observers

see the competition as a classic power tussle between an established power and a rising power. But some see it as a competition between two competing ideologies or systems.

<http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/201908/19/WS5d59dfe9a310cf3e35566674.html>

China will think long and hard before sending in the PLA - it needs the Hong Kong 'experiment' to work, and it wants Taiwan back

David Dodwell, South China Morning Post, August 19, 2019

There is still time for the violent protests to be reined in. Hong Kong remains an indispensable connector between mainland companies and the world, and the city stands as proof of China's commitment to the market-driven global economy. There has been much hand-wringing in Hong Kong in recent days over the danger that impatient hardliners in Beijing will detonate the nuclear option, either unleashing the People's Liberation Army garrison on pro-democracy protesters or trundling in thousands of People's Armed Police, who have been amassing in a sports stadium in Shenzhen. Commentators have agreed that as demonstrations have become more violent and as local police efforts to quell the violence have proved ineffective, so the danger of mainland intervention has risen.

They have also agreed that the apparent cluelessness of the Hong Kong administration over how to calm the mood has raised the likelihood that mainland leaders will take charge. But in the full knowledge that many will call me naive, I think we are many steps short of anyone on the mainland pressing those "nuclear buttons". The danger cannot absolutely be ruled out, but it is a much more distant danger than many are now breathlessly discussing.

<https://www.scmp.com/comment/opinion/article/3023283/china-will-think-long-and-hard-sending-pla-it-needs-hong-kong>

Shared vision binds Iran-China relations

Mohammad Javad Zarif, Global Times,

As foreign minister of the Islamic Republic of Iran, I have had the honor of both travelling to China and hosting my Chinese counterparts in Tehran on several occasions. On such occasions, it has never been lost on me that I am participating in a millennia's old ritual between two great civilizations. The relationship between Iran and China stretches back 2,000 years when explorers and merchants made contact along the Silk Road. There, the people of our two countries first learned to appreciate the greatness of each other's civilizations. These early contacts set the stage for thousands of years of a special connection between two of the greatest, most advanced and most enduring civilizations in the world.

Today, China has become an indispensable economic partner of Iran and the two countries are strategic partners on many fronts. But in order to overcome the emerging challenges which have impeded the ability of many nations to achieve sustainable development, it is imperative for both China and Iran to strengthen their ties more than the past. China and Iran face challenges and strive to achieve goals in terms of sustainable development, the protection of the environment, the eradication of poverty and suppression of extremism and terrorism that threaten the world every day. We believe that common problems need common solutions thus requiring greater cooperation, coordination and close communication.

<http://www.globaltimes.cn/content/1162671.shtml>

Message delivered; was it received?

China Daily, August 27, 2019

The US leader has not been very happy to be seen as an outlier among the other leaders attending the G7 summit in Biarritz, France, mainly because of his different stance on issues such as the Iran nuclear deal and climate change, which have made it impossible for the world's major industrialized countries to unite around common goals. But then he prefers to talk

rather than listen, and he has hitherto paid little heed to complaints that the trade war he has launched against China is aggravating the woes of other countries.

The European economy faces dim prospects, with Germany already on the brink of a recession after its economy declined in the second quarter, and a possible no-deal Brexit set to bring even more chaos. The trade war between China and the United States has only worsened the situation.

http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/cndy/2019-08/27/content_37505715.htm

Pakistan

India makes veiled threat of nuclear war

Zeeshan Ahmad, The Express Tribune, August 16, 2019

Amid mounting pressure on India over its illegal move in Occupied Kashmir, Prime Minister Narendra Modi's defence minister has made a veiled threat of a nuclear war in the region.

Though Rajnath Singh didn't name any country, it is understood the threat was directed at Pakistan. It shows Modi's growing frustration at his ill-conceived move to strip Occupied Kashmir of its autonomy on August 5.

"Pokhran is the area which witnessed Atal Ji's firm resolve to make India a nuclear power and yet remain firmly committed to the doctrine of 'No First Use'. India has strictly adhered to this doctrine. What happens in future depends on the circumstances," Singh wrote on his verified Twitter handle.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2035426/1-india-makes-veiled-threat-nuclear-war/>

Pakistan Has Lots of Nuclear Weapons: Should the World Worry?

Kyle Mizokami, National Interest Blog, August 18, 2019

Pakistan currently has a nuclear "triad"

of nuclear delivery systems based on land, in the air and at sea. Islamabad is believed to have modified American-built F-16A fighters and possibly French-made Mirage fighters to deliver nuclear bombs by 1995. Since the fighters would have to penetrate India's air defense network to deliver their payloads against cities and other targets, Pakistani aircraft would likely be deliver tactical nuclear weapons against battlefield targets.

Sandwiched between Iran, China, India and Afghanistan, Pakistan lives in a complicated neighborhood with a variety of security issues. One of the nine known states known to have nuclear weapons, Pakistan's nuclear arsenal and doctrine are continually evolving to match perceived threats. A nuclear power for decades, Pakistan is now attempting to construct a nuclear triad of its own, making its nuclear arsenal resilient and capable of devastating retaliatory strikes.

<https://nationalinterest.org/blog/buzz/pakistan-has-lots-nuclear-weapons-should-world-worry-74516>

Scholars point to change in India's nuclear policy

Anwar Iqbal, Dawn, August 19, 2019

"From 'No First Use' to 'No, First Use?'" asked Franz-Stefan Gady of the EastWest Institute, New York, while summing up an article on the latest change in India's nuclear policy.

The Independent, a British online newspaper, noted that India "issued a veiled threat to Pakistan" when its defence minister said on Friday that his country's commitment to "no first use" of nuclear weapons would now "depend on the circumstances".

On Aug 16, Indian Defence Minister Rajnath Singh visited the Indian nuclear test-site Pokhran, where he declared that while India has so far adhered to the policy of "no first use, what happens in future depends on the circumstances".

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1500352/scholars-point-to-change-in-indias-nuclear-policy>

India's nuclear threats

Amjed Jaaved, Pakistan Today, August 25, 2019

Shifting nuclear policy

India's Defence Minister Rajnath Singh's statement reflects a paradigm shift in India's nuclear policy. It appears India has already perfected its delivery systems, and radar jamming capability. It launched Mars and Moon missions with dual objectives. The Indian air force chief claims 'IAF can locate, fix targets, including nuclear weapons, in Pakistan'. The Washington Post reported in 2013 that the police in occupied Kashmir published a notice in the Greater Kashmir (now under black out), advising people about nuclear-war survival tips. The tips included constructing well-stocked bunkers in basements or front yards, and having a stock of food and batteries or candles to last at least two weeks. Indian Army independent surgical fighting units carried out 'war games' in May 2019, as announced by army chief Bipin Rawat. he units are self-contained, and backed with air force and navy support. Earlier, India claimed to have carried out surgical strikes earlier on September 29, 2016. The strikes are celebrated as a national event.

<https://www.pakistantoday.com.pk/2019/08/25/indias-nuclear-threats/>

Kashmir dispute seen as fuelling threat of N-conflict

Anwar Iqbal, Dawn, August 25, 2019

The specter of nuclear war haunts tensions between India and Pakistan, and the disputed territory of Kashmir could provide the spark that lights South Asia's nuclear fuse," warns a report published by a US think-tank on Saturday.

The report – by Stratfor, a geopolitical intelligence platform based in Austin, Texas – also disputes the classification of the Kashmir issue as India's "internal affair" or a "bilateral" issue between India and Pakistan.

"It isn't. A potential nuclear conflagration cannot be anything other than a matter of

international peace and security," the report warns. According to the report, the possibility of "the conflict going nuclear may have increased on Aug 16", when Indian Defence Minister Rajnath Singh seemed to abandon India's "no first use" doctrine. Mr Singh tweeted that "India has strictly adhered to this doctrine. What happens in the future depends on the circumstances". And "the circumstances are not hopeful", the report adds.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1501504>

Why Pakistan Army will never want a nuclear war with India

Saurabh Sharma, Financial Express, August 28, 2019

Pakistan has run out of options on Kashmir. So, it is back to what it does best – raise the nuclear attack bogey, which no country in the world has ever taken seriously and rightly so. In a desperate attempt to get some attention from world powers, Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan on Monday urged the global community to intervene before it gets too late on Kashmir. As usual, he repeated the same script that both countries – India and Pakistan – have nuclear weapons and if war breaks out between them over Kashmir, the consequences will transcend their boundaries and the world will also feel the heat.

"Both countries have nuclear weapons. In a nuclear war, no one wins. It will not only wreak havoc in this region, but the entire world will face consequences. It is now up to the international community," he said in an address to nation on Kashmir.

<https://www.financialexpress.com/india-news/imran-khans-nuclear-threat-is-hollow-posturing-and-should-be-ignored-expert/1687864/>

Imran Khan: The World Can't Ignore Kashmir. We Are All in Danger.

Imran Khan, New York Times, August 30, 2019

After I was elected prime minister of Pakistan last August, one of my foremost

priorities was to work for lasting and just peace in South Asia. India and Pakistan, despite our difficult history, confront similar challenges of poverty, unemployment and climate change, especially the threat of melting glaciers and scarcity of water for hundreds of millions of our citizens.

If the world does nothing to stop the Indian assault on Kashmir and its people, there will be consequences for the whole world as two nuclear-armed states get ever closer to a direct military confrontation. India's defense minister has issued a not-so-veiled nuclear threat to Pakistan by saying that the future of India's "no first use" policy on nuclear weapons will "depend on circumstances." Similar statements have been made by Indian leaders periodically. Pakistan has long viewed India's "no first use" claims with skepticism.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/08/30/opinion/imran-khan-kashmir-pakistan.html>

India and Pakistan: Let's not be casual about nuclear war

Shakir Husain, Daily Sabah, August 30, 2019

If nuclear weapons are a matter of national prestige and power, what can go wrong when flaunting them? China, India, North Korea and Pakistan possess these arms in Asia, but no nuclear war involving any of these countries would remain confined to their limited region: The holocaust is going to be truly global.

Most possessors of nuclear bombs as well as experts on the subject make the point that these instruments, due to their deterrence value, may prevent a major escalation in nonnuclear warfare.

<https://www.dailysabah.com/op-ed/2019/08/30/india-and-pakistan-lets-not-be-casual-about-nuclear-war>

USA

The nuclear arms race is back ... and ever more dangerous now*Simon Tisdall, Guardian, August 17, 2019*

I imagine the uproar if the entire populations of York, Portsmouth or Swindon were suddenly exposed to three times the permissible level of penetrating gamma radiation, or what the nuclear physicist Ernest Rutherford termed gamma rays. The outpouring of rage and fear would be heard across the world.

That's what happened to the roughly 200,000 people who live in the similarly sized northern Russian city of Severodvinsk on 8 August, after an explosion at a nearby top-secret missile testing range. Russia's weather service, Rosgidromet, recorded radiation levels up to 16 times higher than the usual ambient rate.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/aug/17/nuclear-arms-race-is-back-and-more-dangerous-than-before>

'Nuclear winter' coming? Nuclear war between US and Russia would cause catastrophic event, study confirms*Chris Ciaccia, Fox News, August 20, 2019*

Earlier this month, the U.S. pulled out of a Reagan-era nuclear treaty with Russia after the Trump administration assessed the country was in "material breach of the treaty" and made no effort to "come back into compliance."

If there were any kind of escalation between the two countries that would result in a nuclear war, it would almost certainly end in a nuclear winter, according to a new study.

The research confirms with a 2007 climate model that if the two superpowers were to engage in a nuclear war, dropping a "large number of nuclear bombs" that were detonated in "large urban areas," the planet would cool substantially due to the smoke generated by the atomic blast. This fallout

"would cover the entire planet for years, blocking the Sun.

<https://www.foxnews.com/science/nuclear-winter-nuclear-war-between-us-russia>

If US, Russia clash, world to plunge into nuclear winter*The News International, August 22, 2019*

A new study has confirmed that the world will be plunged into a nuclear winter following a nuclear war between the United States and Russia.

According to the study, the war between these two superpowers would trigger a global environmental event that can last for several years. The new study was conducted by a team of researchers from the University of Colorado, Rutgers University and the National Center for Atmospheric Research. It was published in the Journal of Geophysical Research: Atmospheres.

Another study has revealed that South Asia will be plunged into an even longer nuclear winter of decades and thousand years old civilization thriving in India will be eliminated from the face of earth if Pakistan and India had nuclear clash. The nuclear arsenal Pakistan has would be sufficient for wiping out India three times while India's capability is less than that.

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/515807-if-us-russia-clash-world-to-plunge-into-nuclear-winter>

How Congress Can Prevent a Meltdown of Global Nuclear Arms Control*Tom Countryman and Laura Kennedy, National Interest Blog, August 24, 2019*

The Trump administration's nuclear weapons policy has eroded decades of agreed-upon norms. An important arms control agreement with Russia was already shredded, and another is on the brink of being abandoned. Instead of adhering to its commitments under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT),

which calls for good-faith steps towards the ultimate goal of nuclear disarmament, the Trump administration's Nuclear Posture Review (NPR) released last year called for, among other things, new "low-yield" nuclear weapons that are considered likely to lower the nuclear threshold. Fortunately, Congress now has an opportunity to push back on these damaging departures from long-standing policies that have so far prevented nuclear annihilation.

House and Senate negotiators will soon meet to begin reconciling major differences in their versions of the Fiscal Year 2020 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA). Among the many issues that must be addressed, that of nuclear weapons is poised to be one of the most controversial.

<https://nationalinterest.org/feature/how-congress-can-prevent-meltdown-global-nuclear-arms-control-76046>

Nuclear Power Must Not Lead to Nuclear Bombs

Victor Gilinsky and Henry Sokolski, National Interest Blog, August 25, 2019

Earlier this month, it was reported that Trump White House wants a new deal with Iran that would eliminate its uranium enrichment. Out of its highly developed suspicion of Iran's intentions, the White House has stumbled on a principle that needs near-universal application if nuclear energy use is to be compatible with international security.

The reason why is simple: Despite the brave talk from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) about its technical capabilities to safeguard nuclear power facilities, the fact is, if plutonium or highly-enriched uranium are available to would-be bombmakers, they can be put to bomb use so quickly that other countries would be confronted with a fait accompli. We need to confront that basic fact world-wide.

<https://nationalinterest.org/feature/nuclear-power-must-not-lead-nuclear-bombs-75901>

Russia Is Developing Some Scary Nuclear Weapons. It Has To Give Them Up To Save New START.

Mark Episkopos, National Interest blog, August 27, 2019

With the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty now officially dead, the fate of the New START treaty—and with it, much of the world's remaining nuclear arms control architecture—continues to hang in the balance. Earlier this week, the Pentagon revealed what it would take to save New START—and the Kremlin isn't going to like it.

In a recent interview given to Fox News, US Defense Secretary Mark Esper conditioned the potential extension of New START, set to expire in February 2021, on the inclusion of Russia's latest nuclear-capable weapons and hypersonic delivery systems: "If there is going to be an extension of the New START, then we need to make sure that we include all these new weapons that Russia is pursuing... "Right now, Russia has possibly nuclear-tipped cruise missiles, INF-range (range stipulated by the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Weapons Treaty) cruise missiles facing toward Europe."

<https://nationalinterest.org/blog/buzz/russia-developing-some-scary-nuclear-weapons-it-has-give-them-save-new-start-76411>

Russia

Russia's Plans to Counter U.S. Missile Defense Will Destroy the World – From Underwater

Sebastien Roblin, National Interest Blog, August 31, 2019

The Borei represents only half of the Russian Navy's future sea-based nuclear deterrence force. The other half will come from a unique fleet of four Khabarovsk-class submarines each carrying six nuclear-powered Poseidon drone-torpedoes designed to swim across oceanic distances to blast coastal cities and naval bases with megaton-yield warheads. Moscow, it

seems, would like a little more redundancy in its ability to end civilization as we know it in the event of a nuclear conflict.

The Borei's OKF-650B 190-megawatt reactor powers a pump-jet propulsion system that allows it to remain unusually quiet while cruising near its maximum underwater speed of thirty knots. This probably makes the Borei quieter, and able to remain discrete at higher speeds, than the propeller-driven Ohio-class submarine. Russian media claims its acoustic signature is one-fifth that of the Typhoon and Delta-IV class SSBN and that the Borei was also uniquely suited to perform nuclear deterrence patrols in the southern hemisphere, though Russian SSBNs have historically remained close to friendly waters for protection.

<https://nationalinterest.org/blog/buzz/russias-plans-counter-us-missile-defense-will-destroy-world%E2%80%9494-underwater-76731>

US missiles plan could spark arms race

Li Daguang, Global Times August 29, 2019

The US tested a conventionally configured ground-launched cruise missile on August 19 shortly after it formally withdrew from the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty, making it quite clear that these are all long-planned moves. The world is facing unprecedented changes, and many practices of the unilateralism, protectionism and bullying of the US have violated international law. Under such circumstances, US plans to develop the once restricted, conventionally configured ground-launched medium-range missiles will undoubtedly open a Pandora's Box.

First, the demise of the INF Treaty will result in a new arms race. US preposterous withdrawal from the INF Treaty destroyed an important basic arms control agreement and further complicated the international situation, which will inevitably weaken the global security architecture.

In response to the US withdrawal from the INF Treaty and test-firing of missiles, Russia has declared it will take retaliatory steps. With the US test-firing medium-range missiles, the risk of a new global arms race

has greatly increased. Once the US deploys medium-range missiles in other countries and regions, it will inevitably lead other countries to produce and deploy medium-range missiles, thus triggering a new round of world arms race.

<http://www.globaltimes.cn/content/1163107.shtml>

West Asia

Iran

Why Trump Fails at Making Deals

Michael Hirsh, Foreign Policy, August 21, 2019

His fumbles with China, Iran, North Korea, India, and now Denmark are evidence of what the people who know him best have long said: The U.S. president is actually a poor negotiator.

It is at the very core of his appeal. Since Donald Trump's improbable run to the White House began in 2015, the real estate magnate has managed to win over U.S. voters—even many who allow they don't like him personally—by arguing that he's a master negotiator who will swing a lot of new deals for the American people.

But as the third anniversary of the president's election approaches, evidence is mounting that Trump has mastered very little internationally. On the contrary, his various high-profile efforts at restarting negotiations with China, Iran, North Korea and other nations have—at least since the signing of his much-mocked makeover of NAFTA in 2018—all run aground. And this week Trump proved himself a dubious dealmaker yet again. He called off his visit to a close U.S. ally, Denmark—a country with a prime minister who's also a natural political ally, because she's as anti-immigrant as he is—ostensibly because the Danes refused to consider selling him Greenland (which, technically, may not be Denmark's to sell anyway, since it is a semi-autonomous territory with its own prime minister).

[//foreignpolicy.com/2019/08/21/why-trump-cant-make-deals-international-negotiations/](https://foreignpolicy.com/2019/08/21/why-trump-cant-make-deals-international-negotiations/)

Trump's Spat With Denmark Could Cost Him Against Iran

Lara Seligman, Foreign Policy, August 23, 2019

The Danes may have been considering joining the United States' maritime security force—until the U.S. president exploded over Greenland. Jim Townsend's decades of work on European policy in the Pentagon and at NATO, he never saw the Danes say no to a fight. From the first Gulf War to counter-Islamic State operations, Denmark was always one of the first allies to raise its hand when the United States asked for military support. "There was never, 'Oh, we have to think about it.' It was always, 'What do you need?'" Townsend said.

<https://foreignpolicy.com/2019/08/23/greenland-trump-spat-with-denmark-could-cost-him-against-iran-security-ally/>

The impact of US sanctions on Iran

May Khaled, Saudi Gazette, August 24, 2019

Nearly 14 months ago, US President Donald Trump re-imposed US sanctions on Iran. One of the goals of these sanctions was to reduce Iranian influence in the Middle East region by curtailing Tehran's financial resources.

The question now is: Has there been any tangible impact on Iran as a result of these sanctions?

As far as nuclear activity is concerned, Iran has resumed its military nuclear program and violated the maximum limit stipulated in the nuclear deal for the first time in July 2019 when its enriched uranium reached 4.5 percent. This is a clear indication that Iran is a renegade state that did not deserve the confidence the Obama Administration placed in it.

Tension has also escalated with Iran in the Strait of Hormuz, as it attacked several oil tankers belonging to different countries, despite its denial of having anything to do with the attacks. Iran also shot down an American drone, which it claimed had violated Iranian airspace, even though the Americans denied this.

As to Iranian foreign policy since the abrogation of the nuclear deal and re-imposition of American sanctions, it is noticeable that Tehran's support for Shiite militias has slackened. This includes support for the Lebanese Hezbollah, Iraqi groups and Iranian-backed forces. Nevertheless, it continues to support Bashar Assad and has helped him regain Syrian territory since 2013.

However, since April 2019, Iranian-backed forces have refrained from participating in attacks against Idlib. This is despite the violent bombardment by Syria's other ally, Russia. For this reason, the Syrian government, represented by the Syrian Army, has failed to achieve decisive progress in recapturing Idlib.

<http://saudigazette.com.sa/article/575321/Opinion/Local-Viewpoint/The-impact-of-US-sanctions-on-Iran>

East Asia

North Korea

Nonsense of lunatics

Min Chol, The Pyongyang Times, August 18, 2019

South Korean conservatives are making much ado about the necessity to nullify the north-south agreement in the military field as they describe the DPRK's measures for self-defensive military buildup as "dangerous provocation" and "violation of resolutions". The conservative politicians of the Liberal Korea Party and the Bareunmirae Party come up with self-nuclear armament, not content with demanding an "active examination" for "NATO-style joint ownership of nukes" and negotiations with the US for the "redeployment of tactical nukes".

In particular, the LKP clan is making a fuss for discussing the "nuclear armament" on a nationwide scale. LKP representative Hwang Kyo An and its floor leader Ra Kyong Won criticized the current regime, saying its "obstinate pro-north policy" has caused the present "security crisis". They even said that they would convene an assembly meeting to

examine “security retrogression”. Won Yu Chol, chairman of the special committee for the north’s nukes, diplomacy and security of LKP, said that strong countermeasures can only deter the north’s provocation, adding LKP will prepare a strong nuclear strategy of a south Korean style to protect the people from the north’s nuclear threat. Their reckless remarks are no more than nonsense of lunatics who are unable to move even a bit without the master’s approval.

<http://www.pyongyangtimes.com.kp/?bbs=31079>

Experts: North Korea’s Nuclear-Capable Missile Threat Real But Not Imminent

Kim Young-gyo, VOA News, August 29, 2019

The threat of North Korea launching a nuclear-capable missile from a submarine is real but not imminent, experts said, after recent satellite images displayed a docked craft with missile capability. “If you really want to be able to launch a ballistic missile that could hold a nuclear weapon, you have to have a very high degree of reliability. And that can just take time,” said David Albright, a former U.N. nuclear inspector who now is a nuclear proliferation analyst at the Institute for Science and International Security. “And the only evidence we have seen so far is the outer part of the submarine. And so, it’s a big jump from that to the imminent threat.”

Satellite photos of North Korea’s Sinpo South Shipyard taken on Monday show vessels and a crane that could be used to move a missile barge for a ballistic missile test from a submarine, according to a report by the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS). The report, written by analysts Joseph Bermudez and Victor Cha of CSIS’s Beyond Parallel project, confirms a July 23 report by North Korea’s Korean Central News Agency’s (KCNA) showing North Korean leader Kim Jong Un inspecting a new submarine.

The CSIS report said Kim’s inspection in July seems to have taken place at the Sinpo South Shipyard, site of the Korean People’s Navy’s submarine missile tests. KCNA reported in

July the “operational deployment” of the new submarine “is near at hand.” But the CSIS report called the threat from the submarine “emerging rather than imminent.” The submarine will have to go through a period of trials and tests that could take more than a year, the CSIS report said, before becoming fully operational. “There is no conclusive evidence at the moment that this is a near-term certainty,” said the report.

<https://www.voanews.com/east-asia-pacific/experts-north-koreas-nuclear-capable-missile-threat-real-not-imminent>

‘Impact of scrapping GSOMIA will hit Korea harder’

Do Je-hae, Korea Times, August 17, 2019

Former Korean Ambassador to Japan Shin Kak-soo has cautioned against some calls to scrap a military information-sharing pact with Japan as a response to a series of trade restrictions imposed on Seoul since early July. “It is an important component of the Korea-U.S.-Japan system of crisis management on the Korean Peninsula.”

The former top envoy to Japan underlined that Korea needs the pact more than Japan. “Japan has more confidential military information on the Korean Peninsula than Korea,” he said. He stressed that they have more advanced equipment that processes accurate information on North Korea’s continued provocations. There has been speculation that Seoul has raised the possibility of repealing GSOMIA as a way of getting U.S. attention in the Korea-Japan conflict. “If the decision to scrap GSOMIA is actually made, however, it will be a suicidal move.”

He pointed out that the Korean government is lacking a long-term perspective on Japan. He called Japan a “natural strategic partner” that is indispensable to Korea. “If Korea-Japan relations worsen, we will suffer greater damage,” Shin said. “We need a stern response to Japan’s faults, but we also need a cool-headed approach.” In particular, he noted that maintaining good relations

with Japan is the key to overcoming Korea's grave geopolitical situation facing various challenges from the U.S., China and North Korea and assuaging the rising concerns over Korea's diplomatic isolation. "We need diplomacy that makes friends," Shin said. "It will be our loss if we disregard Japan due to historical issues. Worsening Korea-Japan relations will also have a very negative impact on Korea-U.S. and Korea-China relations."

https://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/nation/2019/08/103_274171.html

Pie in the sky

Korea Herald, August 18, 2019

North Korea has intensified provocations and criticism of South Korea. The North test-fired two missiles and ridiculed the South a day after South Korean President Moon Jae-in vowed to establish a "peace economy" in his Liberation Day speech. It is the sixth provocation in three weeks. The missiles were fired only 50 kilometers from the Military Demarcation Line separating South and North Korea. That is how emboldened Pyongyang was. The North Korean Committee for the Peaceful Reunification of the Fatherland said in a statement that Pyongyang had nothing more to say to South Korean government officials, or any intention to sit face-to-face with them.

The committee bluntly dismissed Moon's vision of a peace economy. Moon envisioned prosperity coming from peace between the two Koreas. His remarks would even provoke "side-splitting laughter" in "the boiled head of a cow," the committee said. The North also did not hesitate to make personal attacks on Moon. It called the South Korean leader a "funny man as he reads what was written by his juniors" and "an impudent guy rare to be found."

It has never given up on its ultimate objective of unifying Korea under communism. Still, Moon has set his eyes on a peace economy involving such an unruly state. This rosy picture of the future is plausible, but his rhetoric is empty. It alone cannot prevent the nation from being shaken. The government ought to look dispassionately at

the realities. North Korea launched missiles and sneered at the South a day after Moon talked about peace. This is the truth about the North. Seoul must respond sternly to Pyongyang's derision and provocations.

http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20190818000087&ACE_SEARCH=1

Positive turn

Korea Herald, August 19, 2019

Foreign ministers from South Korea, China and Japan will gather together in Beijing for three days from Tuesday for their first trilateral talks in three years. As Seoul's Foreign Ministry stated last week, the upcoming meeting is expected to help strengthen the foundation for institutionalizing and fleshing out the system of cooperation among the northeast Asian powers.

The top diplomats are likely to discuss preparations for a possible summit among leaders of the three countries. The last such trilateral summit was held in Tokyo in May last year. Enhanced cooperation among South Korea, China and Japan could help them cope with a looming global recession and long-standing threats posed by North Korea's nuclear arms and missile programs. The three-way gathering of foreign ministers comes when Seoul and Tokyo are locked in a mutually damaging feud over trade and historical issues.

http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20190819000551&ACE_SEARCH=1

Japan

TEPCO's nuclear reactor decommissioning announcement too vague

Mainichi Japan, August 29, 2019

Tokyo Electric Power Company Holdings Inc. (TEPCO) has announced for the first time it will consider decommissioning one or more of the first five reactors at its Kashiwazaki-Kariwa Nuclear Power Plant in central Japan. However restarting reactor Nos. 6 and 7 at the plant, which straddles Kashiwazaki and Kariwa,

Niigata Prefecture, would be a prerequisite for decommissioning the reactors, the company says. Another condition is the introduction of renewable energy to replace the decommissioned reactors as sources of power that do not emit greenhouse gases.

Kashiwazaki Mayor Masahiro Sakurai earlier requested that the company draw up plans for decommissioning as a prerequisite for judging whether to allow the restart of reactor Nos. 6 and 7. But TEPCO's vague decommissioning announcement with layered conditions simply appears to be a maneuver to advance procedures to restart the reactors.

<https://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20190829/p2a/00m/0na/008000c>

Theater puts human face on nuclear crisis, life in Trump era

Carter Rice, The Asahi Shimbun, August 29, 2019 at 09:20 JST

Six dancers silently toss black garbage bags across the stage as images of the areas around a crippled nuclear power plant scroll over a large screen. Whenever a survivor of the 2011 earthquake and tsunami, which triggered a triple meltdown at the Fukushima No. 1 nuclear plant in northeastern Japan, begins to speak on screen, the dancers imitate the individual's gestures to emphasize his or her words.

The filmed interviews with those who experienced the Great East Japan Earthquake and its consequences form the heart of "Falling Out," a theatrical production featured at the inaugural CrossCurrents Festival, held this spring in Washington, D.C.

<http://www.asahi.com/ajw/articles/AJ201908290018.html>

Taiwan

Taiwan not affected by Russian nuclear accident: AEC

Zin Kao, Taiwan News, August 15, 2019

The Atomic Energy Council of Taiwan (AEC) disclosed environmental radiation monitoring (ERM) data on Wednesday

(Aug. 14) to show that Taiwan was not affected by a recent Russian nuclear accident, the Liberty Times reports. A serious explosion occurred during a rocket drill at an atomic facility in Arkhangelskaya Oblast, which is located in northwestern Russia, killing five engineers on August 8. The Hydrometeorological Centre of Russia on Tuesday (Aug. 13) disclosed ERM data in the city that showed background radiation to be 16 times higher than normal.

Taiwan's AEC also disclosed data from all 53 of its ERM stations, which are all within the normal range. The AEC said that the ERM jump near the Russian military facility was short-term, limited to the region, and had no impact on Taiwan.

<https://www.taiwannews.com.tw/en/news/3763087>

A nuclear red herring

Taipei Times, August 24, 2019

Kaohsiung Mayor Han Kuo-yu, the Chinese Nationalist Party's (KMT) presidential nominee, on Wednesday tossed a nuclear energy bombshell into the presidential race when he said that, if elected, he would see the mothballed Fourth Nuclear Power Plant made operational. On Thursday, he reiterated that goal, while his campaign advisory team said that a Han administration would aim to have at least half of the nation's energy generated from renewable sources by 2035 — which would be seven years after his presidency ends, assuming he wins two terms.

Han reiterated complaints that the KMT has been making for months: that the administration of President Tsai Ing-wen is ignoring the will of the millions who voted in favor of last year's Referendum No. 16: "Do you agree that subparagraph 1, Article 95 of the Electricity, which reads: 'Nuclear-energy-based power-generating facilities shall wholly stop running by 2025,' should be abolished?"

However, he and his team have two caveats: The unfinished plant would be activated if its safety could be ensured and

if the public agrees. Those are big ifs. On Thursday, Tsai criticized Han's proposals, saying that Han should do more homework before commenting on energy policy. Yet it is not just Han and his advisers who need to do more homework. The public needs to be better educated as well. A survey by the Risk Society and Policy Research Center Taiwan in December last year highlighted the confusion of many Taiwanese about the role nuclear energy plays in Taiwan's power supply, a confusion that only exacerbated the obfuscatory wording of the pro-nuclear referendums on the ballot the previous month.

<http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/editorials/archives/2019/08/24/2003721015>

Ryan Hass On Taiwan: Is the long peace in Asia unraveling?

Taipei Times, August 26, 2019

Taiwan's external environment is growing increasingly complex, and not just in terms of cross-strait relations. While the Trump administration's approval of F-16V fighter jets provides reassurance of America's commitment to Taiwan, there are risks with overlearning the lesson. The inescapable reality is that Asia's tectonic plates are shifting. Taiwan will not be immune to the shifts, and the United States will not be able to shield Taiwan from all of them. It's too early to tell which problems will mellow and which will metastasize, but it would be a risky bet to assume that all of them will simply resolve themselves. To navigate this changing terrain, Taiwan will need leaders with vision, balance, and strategy. Such attributes should be front of mind when voters go to the polls in January.

<http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/editorials/archives/2019/08/26/2003721128/1>

R. Think Tanks

No, Mr. Stephens, the United States doesn't need more nuclear weapons

Matt Korda, Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, August 17, 2019

Last week, on the 74th anniversary of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombings, many

took time to reflect upon the destruction caused by the only uses of nuclear weapons in wartime. But not the New York Times' Bret Stephens, who took the opportunity to argue in favor of building more nuclear weapons. In an op-ed entitled "The U.S. Needs More Nukes," Stephens laid out his case against arms control: "the bad guys cheat, the good guys don't," and all the while, the US nuclear arsenal is becoming "increasingly decrepit."

It's a simple narrative; it's also false. In fact, Stephens' article is largely littered with bad analogies, flawed assumptions, and straight-up incorrect facts about the nature of nuclear weapons and arms control.

<https://thebulletin.org/2019/08/no-mr-stephens-the-united-states-doesnt-need-more-nuclear-weapons/>

Defense Spending and the New CBO Budget Projections for FY2020-FY202

Anthony H. Cordesman, CSIS Washington, August 22, 2019

The CBO issued a new set of projections for the U.S. Federal budget on August 19, 2019. Almost inevitably, these estimates focus attention on the growing federal debt and deficit. They projected that,

Deficits. In CBO's projections, the federal budget deficit is \$960 billion in 2019 and averages \$1.2 trillion between 2020 and 2029. Over the coming decade, deficits (after adjustments to exclude the effects of shifts in the timing of certain payments) fluctuate between 4.4 percent and 4.8 percent of gross domestic product (GDP), well above the average over the past 50 years. Although both revenues and outlays grow faster than GDP over the next 10 years in CBO's baseline projections, the gap between the two persists... CBO's estimate of the deficit for 2019 is now \$63 billion more – and its projection of the cumulative deficit over the 2020–2029 period, \$809 billion more – than it was in May 2019.

Debt. As a result of those deficits, federal debt held by the public is projected to grow steadily, from 79 percent of GDP in 2019 to 95 percent in 2029 – its highest level

since just after World War II... Taken together, other changes to the budget projections increased projected debt-service costs by nearly \$0.3 trillion; \$0.2 trillion of that amount is associated with the increase in projected spending stemming from the Bipartisan Budget Act.

These are important fiscal trends, as are the fact that an analysis by the Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget indicates that the CBO estimates an average rate of economic growth of 1.8 percent versus the 2.9 percent used by OMB in its budget estimates. It also indicates that that Federal debt would rise from 78 percent of the GDP to 87 percent by 2029 versus the OMB projection that it would drop to 71 percent. And, that the total deficit over the next decade would rise to \$9.9 trillion, \$2.7 trillion above the Administration's estimate.

<https://www.csis.org/analysis/defense-spending-and-new-cbo-budget-projections-fy2020-fy2029>

The Nenoksa accident: A timeline of confusing and conflicting reports

John Krzyzaniak, Bulletin of the Atomic Scientist, August 23, 2019

An accident offshore of the Nenoksa missile test site in northern Russia caused an explosion in early August that left five Russian nuclear scientists dead.

Although only the Russians know what caused the explosion, some US intelligence officials and arms control experts believe the Russians were testing an engine for a nuclear-powered cruise missile. A review of varying public statements and news accounts since the accident suggests that the full Nenoksa story has yet to be told.

<https://thebulletin.org/2019/08/the-nenoksa-accident-a-timeline-of-confusing-and-conflicting-reports/>

The U.S., Iran, and the JCPOA: Providing Incentives as Well as Threats

Anthony H. Cordesman, CSIS Washington, August 28, 2019

The latest round of exchanges between the U.S. and Iran has ended without any

tangible progress. A brief moment of hope that some form of meaningful dialogue might emerge out of the G7 has reverted back to unnegotiable positions, and the next effect may well have been to further undermine Iran's President Hassan Rouhani and harden the views of its Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei and the hardliners in the Revolutionary Guard.

So far "progress" has consisted largely of the fact that Iran has not withdrawn from the JCPOA, and the Trump Administration has said it is not seeking regime change and will not insist on any preconditions like the set of 12 demands it made in withdrawing from the JCPOA. At the same time, however, Iran has been progressively more aggressive in taking military action, and the US and Arab Gulf states have steadily hardened their military positions.

A low-level tanker war has developed inside and just outside the Gulf - raising the constant risk of some form of more serious escalation and conflict. Iran has suffered a great deal from U.S. sanctions, but has not given way or shown signs of any serious rise in popular discontent that poses a serious threat to the regime. If anything, it has become more aggressive in supporting the Hezbollah and Houthi, and in its actions in Syria, Iraq, and Yemen. At the same time, the Arab Gulf has grown even more divided, with Saudi Arabia and the UAE splitting over Yemen, and a lack of any coherent security action in the Gulf.

The end result is military confrontation, an arms race where several Arab Gulf states are spending more than 10% of their GDP on military forces, and no clear path forward. The net impact of sanctions seems as likely to continue to harden Iran's position as to lead it to make serious concessions. The risk of a more serious war in the Gulf and/or the full collapse of the JCPOA nuclear agreement is rising, and the spillover of this crisis feeds - and is fed by - the wars in Syria and Yemen and the struggle for influence in Iraq.

<https://www.csis.org/analysis/us-iran-and-jcpoa-providing-incentives-well-threats>

Strangelove redux: US experts propose having AI control nuclear weapons

Matt Field, Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, August 31, 2019

Hypersonic missiles, stealthy cruise missiles, and weaponized artificial intelligence have so reduced the amount of time that decision makers in the United States would theoretically have to respond to a nuclear attack that, two military experts say, it's time for a new US nuclear command, control, and communications system. Their solution? Give artificial intelligence control over the launch button.

In case handing over the control of nuclear weapons to HAL 9000 sounds risky, the authors also put forward a few other solutions to the nuclear time-pressure problem: Bolster the United States' ability to respond to a nuclear attack after the fact, that is, ensure a so-called second-strike capability; adopt a willingness to preemptively attack other countries based on warnings that they are preparing to attack the United States; or destabilize the country's adversaries by fielding nukes near their borders, the idea here being that such a move would bring countries to the arms control negotiating table.

<https://thebulletin.org/2019/08/strangelove-redux-us-experts-propose-having-ai-control-nuclear-weapons/>

S. Reports and Original Documents

Joint Statement on the State Visit of Prime Minister of India to Bhutan

PIB India, August 18, 2019

1. Prime Minister of India, H.E. Shri Narendra Modi, made a State Visit to the Kingdom of Bhutan from 17-18 August 2019, at the invitation of the Prime Minister of Bhutan, H.E. Dr. Lotay Tshering. This was among the first bilateral visits by Prime Minister Shri Modi after assuming office for the second time in May 2019....

13. The two Prime Ministers inaugurated the Ground Earth Station of the South Asian Satellite in Thimphu, which was

constructed with the support of the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO). Prime Minister Dr. Tshering appreciated the vision of Prime Minister Shri Modi in launching the South Asia Satellite (SAS) in 2017, as a gift to the countries in the South Asia region, which has enabled Bhutan to improve the reach and cost-effectiveness of Bhutan Broadcasting Service, while also enhancing the disaster management capacities within the Kingdom.

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1582298>

India-France Joint Statement on Visit of Prime Minister to France (22-23 August 2019)

PIB, India, August 22, 2019

1. The Prime Minister of India, Mr Narendra Modi, visited France for an official visit at the invitation of the President of the French Republic, Mr Emmanuel Macron, for a Bilateral Summit on 22nd and 23rd August 2019 in Paris and to participate in the G7 Summit, on 25th and 26th August 2019, in Biarritz, under the French presidency of the G7.....

4. Directly in line with the Joint Vision adopted during the State Visit to India of President Macron in March 2018, France and India desire to deepen their space cooperation so as to meet new challenges together, whether it concerns planetary exploration or human spaceflight. France and India thus welcome the decision to train medical support personnel for Indian astronauts, who will be part of India's manned space mission by 2022. The training will be carried out in France and in India. The leaders welcomed signing of an Implementing Arrangement for establishment of a framework for the realization of joint maritime domain awareness mission. They also hailed the launch of a Space Climate Observatory that further enhances Indo-French cooperation on combating climate change, besides TRISHNA joint mission and accommodating Argos in Oceansat 3. In an increasingly threatened environment, they have also resolved to act together at

the international level to promote norms and best practices necessary for guaranteeing the safety of space missions.

5. In the digital space, the two countries support economic and social development through an open, secure and peaceful cyberspace, in which the international law applies. To this end, the two leaders have adopted a cybersecurity and digital technology road map aimed at expanding Indo-French bilateral cooperation, particularly in the strategic sectors of high performance computing and Artificial Intelligence, with the target of bringing our start-up ecosystems closer to each other. They further welcomed the signing of the Cooperation Agreement between the Centre for Development of Advanced Computing and Atos aiming at developing the cooperation in the fields of quantum computing, Artificial Intelligence and exascale supercomputing.

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1582729>

The Question That Never Gets Asked About Kashmir

Charles Glass, Stratfor, August 23, 2019

Pakistan responded by testing five of its nuclear bombs on May 28. Pandora's box was wide open, threatening mass destruction to the Asian subcontinent if the Pakistani and Indian armies squared off along the Line of Control that separated their forces in the disputed region of Jammu and Kashmir. That happened a year later when Pakistani paramilitaries masquerading as indigenous Kashmiri rebel jihadists penetrated the Line of Control in Kashmir's Kargil region. The Indian army confronted them, and U.S. intelligence detected Pakistan moving tactical nuclear weapons onto the battlefield. American diplomat Bruce Reidel wrote in his informative book, *Avoiding Armageddon: America, India, and Pakistan to the Brink and Back*, "The last war that India and Pakistan fought, over Kargil, threatened to expand to a nuclear conflict." It didn't go nuclear, following U.S. President Bill Clinton's demand that Pakistani Prime Minister

Nawaz Sharif withdraw his forces. It was a close call.

<https://worldview.stratfor.com/article/question-never-gets-asked-about-kashmir-plurality-citizens-india-pakistan-nuclear>

Iran-related Designations; Non-proliferation Designations

Office of Foreign Assets and Control, US Department of Treasury, August 28, 2019

The following individuals have been added to OFAC's SDN List: AKHAEI, Shaghayegh); DOB 12 Mar 1988; alt. DOB 07 Mar 1988; nationality Iran; Additional Sanctions Information - Subject to Secondary Sanctions; Gender Female; National ID No. 0079221777 (Iran) (individual) [NPWMD] [IFSR] (Linked To: PISHTAZAN KAVOSH GOSTAR BOSHRA, LLC).DEHGHAN; DOB 21 Sep 1987; POB Yazd, Iran; Additional Sanctions Information - Subject to Secondary Sanctions; Gender Male; National ID No. 4433648353 (individual) [NPWMD] [IFSR] (Linked To: RASTAFANN ERTEBAT ENGINEERING COMPANY).

DEHGHAN, Hamed (a.k.a. CHENARI, Hamed Ahmad Ali Dehghan), Unit 17, Building number 48, Metro Area of Pars Tehran, East Resalat, Iran; DOB 1984; nationality Iran; Additional Sanctions Information - Subject to Secondary Sanctions; Gender Male; National ID No. 4432874473 (Iran) (individual) [NPWMD] [IFSR] (Linked To: RASTAFANN ERTEBAT ENGINEERING COMPANY). EBRAHIMZADEH, Mahdi (a.k.a. ARDAKANI, Mehdi Hosein Ebrahimzadeh); DOB 1985; nationality Iran; Additional Sanctions Information - Subject to Secondary Sanctions; Gender Male; National ID No. 4449759990 (Iran) (individual) [NPWMD] [IFSR] (Linked To: DEHGHAN, Hamed).

<https://www.treasury.gov/resource-center/sanctions/OFAC-Enforcement/Pages/20190828.aspx>

Contribute Articles

Indian Pugwash Society welcomes research articles from students, researchers and faculties on Space, Missile, nuclear technology, WMD proliferation, arms control, disarmament, export controls and other related issues. Articles should be crisply written and should address contemporary debates in the policy arena. Manuscripts submitted for the consideration of the Indian Pugwash Society should be original contributions and should not have been submitted for consideration anywhere else. For further assistance, please contact us at : indianpugwashsociety@gmail.com

The Indian Pugwash Society aims to promote the study, discussion, and knowledge of and to stimulate general interest in, and to diffuse knowledge in regards to problems relating on WMD proliferation, arms control, disarmament, space security, export controls, nuclear technology and other related issues. This newsletter is part of the project "Emerging Nuclear Order in Asia: Implications for India" sanctioned to us by Department of Atomic Energy-Board of Research in Nuclear Sciences (DAE-BRNS).

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