

Nuclear, Missile & Space Digest

Volume 11, Number 18

A Fortnightly Newsletter from the Indian Pugwash Society

September 30, 2019

Convenor

Amb. Sujan R. Chinoy

Executive Council

Cdr. (Dr.) Probal K. Ghosh

**Air Marshal S. G. Inamdar
(Retd.)**

Dr. Roshan Khanijo

Amb. R. Rajagopalan

Dr. Rajesh Rajagopalan

**Shri Dinesh Kumar
Yadvendra**

A. India

- "Imran Khan Hypes Kashmir, Personally Attacks PM Modi": Ex-US Envoy
- Chandrayaan 2 Completes Final In-Orbit Manoeuvre Before India's Maiden Moon Landing On 7 Sept
- Russia plans to set up above 20 nuclear power units in India in next 20 years
- "India Will Not Balk At Using Strength To Defend Itself": Rajnath Singh
- Explained: Chandrayaan-2, in perspective
- Lander 'tilted' not broken, says ISRO
- Modi should correct Vajpayee wrong on nuclear 'no first use': Diplomat Jaimini Bhagwati
- Chandrayaan 2: Nobel laureate entrusts Indian scientists, says 'they will soon master the setbacks of lunar mission'
- Devices onboard Chandrayaan-2 orbiter gamechangers
- Chandrayaan 2: Here's how NASA is helping ISRO in reviving Vikram Lander

B. China

- China issues white paper on nuclear safety
- China Focus: China issues white paper on nuclear safety, stressing int'l cooperation
- US ban for nuclear firm harms own interests
- China to build lab for radioactive waste disposal
- China's lunar rover travels over 284 meters on moon's far side
- China sends H-6K bombers to Russia for strategic drills
- Chinese netizens encourage India's lunar dream despite failure
- Implementation phase of China-funded Egyptian satellite project kicks off
- China's giant telescope picks up mysterious signals from deep space
- Polar observation satellite will debut soon
- Beijing deploys drones for South China Sea surveillance
- Intrusion of Canadian warship raises China's ire
- China and Russia to reach deals, including aerospace, nuclear energy: MOFCOM
- China to build warship for Thailand
- China, Malaysia to set up South China Sea mechanism



Indian Pugwash Society

No.1, Development Enclave,
Rao Tula Ram Marg, Near USI, Delhi-110010
Email: indianpugwashsociety@gmail.com

Tel. No (91-11) 2671-7983

Fax No. (91-11)2615-4192

- China launches three new satellites
- China's BeiDou has 39 satellites in orbit as construction to be completed next year
- First polar observation satellite launched into orbit
- China welcomes DPRK-U.S. dialogue resumption
- Second parade rehearsal held; new weapons spotted
- China ready to defend against drone attacks after Saudi Arabia oil hit
- China unveils supersonic spy drone during National Day military parade rehearsal
- Could a tiny Chinese magnetic sensor be up to the huge task of tracking submarines?

C. Pakistan

- PM Imran seeks to quell talk of war with India
- PM Khan: Pakistan would not use nuclear weapons first, amid tensions with India
- No change in Pakistan's nuclear policy: FO
- No first use of N-weapons not policy: DG ISPR

D. USA

- U.S. Treasury warns anyone fueling Iran tanker risks being blacklisted
- Nuclear power is the 'silent giant' being invited finally to speak
- Not great, not terrible: US tests refurbished missiles after admission nuclear refit lagging behind
- Nuclear industry urges Trump to revive uranium mining with Cold War-era rule
- U.S. hopes for North Korea talks in days, weeks – Pompeo
- North Korea could warm up to talks after removal of 'war maniac' Bolton
- USA begins first commercial testing of silicide fuel
- U.S. won't rule out Trump-Rouhani meeting after blaming Iran for Saudi attacks

E. Europe

- Finland may allow \$2.9 billion nuclear waste fund to invest in stocks
- Restart of Scotland nuclear reactor where cracks found delayed again
- China still pursuing nuclear fuel processing plant with Areva: official
- Iran and Europe unlikely to agree on nuclear pact in next few days: Rouhani
- Trump Administration cool to French plan for \$15 billion Iranian credit line: officials
- UK and Israeli leaders agree on need to stop Iran getting nuclear weapon
- Britain deeply concerned at Iran's plan for faster uranium enrichment
- Germany urges Iran to change course on nuclear commitments
- France to pursue efforts to bring Iran to comply with nuclear deal-minister
- France says Iran actions negative, but dialogue still open
- Britain accuses Iran of selling Adrian Darya 1 tanker oil to Syria
- EU creates defence and space branch 'to complement NATO'
- Merkel: We'll keep trying to find solutions with Iran to avoid escalation
- French regulator puts EDF Flamanville nuclear plant on safety watch
- U.S. backs proposed \$6.5 billion sale of 32 F-35 Lockheed jets to Poland
- France flags welding fault at five or more EDF nuclear reactors
- Bosnia protects Una river to try to block Croatian nuclear waste plan

- Britain's move to join U.S. Gulf mission frustrates European plans
- European powers urge Iran to return to nuclear accord compliance

F. Russia

- Russia Backs French Efforts to Uphold Nuclear Deal
- This Dangerous Russian Submarine Was Built to Sink U.S. Navy Aircraft Carriers
- Test-ban body chief enters race to lead U.N. nuclear watchdog
- Russian Nuclear Blast Debris Is Still Emitting Radiation, Reports Say
- Putin Says Russia Will Produce New Missiles After Demise of Nuclear Pact
- Rosatom wins licence to build second nuclear reactor in Turkey
- Rosatom says close to signing contract for Uzbekistan nuclear reactors
- 'Russia to make efforts to preserve nuclear deal'
- 'Potentially Dangerous' Objects Found in Northern Russia After Accident
- Russia nearly ready for reciprocal response after U.S. missile test – RIA
- Russian Nuclear-Powered Cargo Ship Loaded With Seafood Approaches Norway
- Russian Navy to get four nuclear subs next year — shipyard
- Trump's 'Bolton-free' policy plans and Moscow's multilateral strategic model
- Russia Is Building Submarines to Deliver a 'Radioactive Tsunami'
- Leningrad II-2 fitted with dummy assemblies ahead of March fuel loading
- Russia's first sea-borne nuclear power plant arrives to its base

West Asia

G. Iran

- Iran warns EU over nuclear commitments as deadline for further steps looms
- Iran says it closes gaps with France in talks on nuclear deal
- US won't waive sanctions to allow French-proposed Iran credit line
- Defiant Iran pooh-poohs US sanctions on its space program
- Iran gives Europe two more months to save nuclear deal
- Iran nuclear crisis in 300 words
- EU urges Iran to 'reverse' scale-back from N-deal
- Iran 'inching' toward place where talks could be held: Pentagon chief
- Iran takes further step to scale back nuclear commitments
- Third step: Iran officially informs EU of plan to expand nuclear R&D
- Pompeo says Iran nuclear commitment cuts 'unacceptable'
- Iran further breaches nuclear deal, says it can exceed 20% enrichment
- IAEA found uranium traces at Iran 'atomic warehouse' — diplomats
- U.S. Says Iran possibly Conducting Secret Activities
- Rouhani to Merkel: Iran's interests must be guaranteed in nuclear deal
- Expert: Non-European trade partners better for Iran
- Talks with U.S. under sanctions meaningless, Rouhani says
- Through seeking talks with Iran, Trump intends the region to recognize Israel: ex-diplomat
- Iran says Bolton's Resignation Won't Lead to Talks With the US
- Iran Denounces 'US-Israel Plot' Over Nuclear Program

H. Israel

- UK and Israeli leaders agree on need to stop Iran getting nuclear weapon
- Netanyahu accuses Iran of destroying secret 'nuclear site'
- Netanyahu Sees US Stays "Very Very Tough" on Iran Despite Bolton Ouster
- Trump Should Not meet with Rouhani
- Israeli Ambassador Urges US to Stay the Course' on Pressuring Iran
- Europe is Propping up Iranian Terror While Demonizing Israel

I. Saudi Arabia

- U.S. energy secretary says nuclear power talks with new Saudi minister likely Monday

East Asia

J. Japan

- Japan urges nuke plants to prepare for decommissioning era
- Russia plans additional missile defense buildup on Kuril Islands
- Watchdog to restart probe into Fukushima nuclear accident
- Japan may have to dump radioactive water into the sea, minister says
- New environment minister says Japan should stop using nuclear power
- SDF, U.S. Army stage first drill using missiles to avert sea attack

K. North Korea

- NK-US nuclear talks will be delayed until end of year
- N. Korea continues to develop ICBM program: UN panel
- New cold war looms large between old foes
- U.S. hopes for North Korea talks in days, weeks: Pompeo
- North Korea says it will resume talks but adds pressure with new launches
- Working-level nuclear talks aimed at drafting summit agreement: pro-Pyongyang paper
- North Korea could warm up to talks after removal of 'war maniac' Bolton
- North Korea tested super-large multiple rocket launcher under Kim's guidance
- North Korea carried out super-large multiple rocket launcher test on Tuesday: KCNA
- U.S. imposes sanctions on North Korean hacking groups blamed for global attacks
- True colour as confrontation seeker fully betrayed
- Trump declines to comment on report Kim invited him to North Korea
- Department director for US Affairs of DPRK Foreign Ministry releases statement

L. South Korea

- Combined Forces Command to move to Pyeongtaek by 2021
- Nuke envoys of S. Korea, Russia hold talks on North Korea's denuclearization
- S. Korea seeks global support for NK denuclearization, peace on Korean Peninsula
- Defense chief vows strong military power to ensure peace

- S. Korea calls for int'l cooperation on Japan's Fukushima water discharge plan
- S. Korea, UAE to join hands on overseas nuke reactor projects
- S. Korea's top nuclear envoy visits Beijing for talks on N.K.
- Moon's mission in New York: 'Get nuke talks restarted'
- South Korea to develop anti-drone system amid standoff with North

M. Taiwan

- Nuclear safety drill at Ma-anshan to be held next week
- Surviving Han's nuclear policies

N. Misc

- Rooppur plant's cost higher as it is a new experience for Bangladesh

O. Op-Ed

India

- Irresponsible rhetoric: On Pakistan leaders' threats
- Chandrayaan 2: In its stellar journey, ISRO has achieved 'much more with much less'
- There is need & space, for recalibrating 'no first use'
- Move Over, Kim Jong Un: It's Time to Talk about South Asia
- Did India's Chandrayaan-2 Moon Lander Survive? The Chances Are Slim
- Indian Moon Probe's Failure Won't Stop an Asian Space Race that Threatens Regional Security
- Be proud of Chandrayaan-2: Rakesh Sharma
- Has Chandrayaan 2's Vikram Lander setback affected India's moon mission?

China

- China's nuclear capabilities maturing
- Navy sends its most capable combat ship on escort mission
- Domestic arms key to deterrence plan

Pakistan

- What Exactly Did Pakistan's Prime Minister Say About the Country's Nuclear Weapons?
- The dangers of calling Pakistan's 'nuclear bluff'
- India's nuclear posture
- Pakistan most dangerous country in the world: Ex-US defense secy James Mattis
- Divide and bleed
- A nuclear flashpoint
- Kashmir and Impending Nuclear Holocaust
- Going ballistic: Why Imran Khan's nuclear threat is a sign of Pakistani impotence
'Good Lord help us'

USA

- Forget Russia: America Nearly Built Its Own 'Skyfall' Nuclear Powered Cruise Missile
- The Secret History of the Push to Strike Iran

- After Trump, the United States Should Return to Obama's Iran Deal
- Can President Trump Really Tweet A Highly Classified Satellite Photo? Yep, He Can
- Why Trump shouldn't run the North Korea playbook on Iran

Russia

- Russia's Delta-Class Missile Submarines: One the Best Subs Ever?
- This Nuclear Submarine Freaks Russia Out: Meet the Astute-Class (Not American)
- Will Venezuela Become a Russian Missile Base?

West Asia

- Trump Solving the Iran Crisis Requires A "Deal of the Century"
- Iran Says Its Cruise Missiles Are Better Than America's. That can't be true? Can it?
- Maximum Pressure on Iran Has Failed
- Watch Out: Iran Has a New "Kia" Spy Drone. But how good is it?

EAST ASIA

Japan

- Japan-Russia talks on peace treaty, Northern Territories have whiff of futility
- Put state in charge of TEPCO's plan for reactor restarts

North Korea

- Uncertainty of nuclear talks

South Korea

- Bombs and weather: Trump drops another one
- Beijing-Seoul ties after Xi's Pyongyang visit

Taiwan

- Ian Easton On Taiwan: Why the US defends Taiwan

Interview

- Obama arms official: Nuclear deterrence must be strengthened
- Imran Khan on 'genocide' in Kashmir and possible war with India
- War b/w two nuclear states Pakistan, India to affect whole World: Dr. Firdous

P. Think Tanks

- What Happens If the Last Nuclear Arms Control Treaty Expires?
- The Last Nuclear Arms Treaty
- A Commonsense Policy for Avoiding a Disastrous Nuclear Decision
- India's Space Power: Revisiting the Anti-Satellite Test

Q. Original Documents and Reports

- China's nuclear power development maintains high-level safety: white paper
- Update to OFAC's list of Specially Designated Nationals (SDN) and Blocked Persons
- Executive Order Amending Counter Terrorism Sanctions Authorities; Counter
- Terrorism Designations and Designations Updates; Iran-related Designation; Syria

A. India

“Imran Khan Hypes Kashmir, Personally Attacks PM Modi”: Ex-US Envoy

NDTV, September 2, 2019

Tim Roemer, former US ambassador to India who was responsible for broadening and deepening the US-India partnership, has accused Pakistan PM Imran Khan of increasing the volatility of the region and urged that the US policy should “remain steady towards strategic ties with India”, and push Pakistan for “real results” on anti-terror cooperation.

In a tweet, tagging Imran’s opinion piece in the NYT where he has threatened the world with the spectre of a nuclear war over Kashmir, Roemer said: “Pakistan PM Imran Khan hypes the Kashmir situation, personally attacks PM Modi, and increases the volatility in the region. US policy should remain steady toward strategic relations with India, emphasize CT cooperation, and push Pakistan for real results.”

<https://www.ndtv.com/world-news/ex-us-envoy-says-imran-khan-hypes-kashmir-personally-attacks-pm-narendra-modi-2094081>

Chandrayaan 2 Completes Final In-Orbit Manoeuvre Before India’s Maiden Moon Landing On 7 Sept

First Post, September 4, 2019

The landing module of Chandrayaan 2, the Indian Space Research Organisation’s second mission to the moon, has completed its second and final in-orbit adjustment in lunar orbit. This manoeuvre was started at 3.45 am IST on 4 September, and lasted all of 9 seconds. With this success, the Vikram lander and Pragyan rover (the two components in the landing module) are now closer than ever to making their highly-anticipated soft-landing on 7 September.

From its previous elliptical orbit of 109 x 120 km orbit (*nearest* x *farthest* distance from the surface), the landing module has been lowered to a more suitable 35 x 101 km orbit around the moon. The Chandrayaan 2

orbiter continues to orbit the Moon in a higher, elliptical orbit of 96 x 125 km. ISRO confirmed that both orbiter and lander are healthy.

<https://www.firstpost.com/tech/science/chandrayaan-2-completes-final-in-orbit-manoevre-before-indias-maiden-moon-landing-on-7-sep-7276941.html>

Russia plans to set up above 20 nuclear power units in India in next 20 years

Livemint, September 4, 2019

Russia on Wednesday said that it is planning to set up more than 20 nuclear power units in India in the next 20 years. Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who arrived in Russia’s Far Eastern city of Vladivostok earlier today, gave a joint statement at the 20th Annual Summit between the two countries, along with Russian President Vladimir Putin by side. The two sides exchanged numerous agreements, including military and technical cooperation, energy and science, LNG Business and LNG supplies, and natural gas, in the presence of the two leaders.

<https://www.livemint.com/news/india/russia-plans-to-set-up-above-20-nuclear-power-units-in-india-in-next-20-years-1567600889899.html>

“India Will Not Balk At Using Strength To Defend Itself”: Rajnath Singh

NDTV, September 5, 2019

Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh has said that India will not balk at using its strength to defend itself, while addressing a defence dialogue in the South Korean capital of Seoul this morning. Rajnath Singh is on a three-day official visit to South Korea in the second leg of a two-nation tour which also involved Japan. He was addressing a special session of the Seoul Defence Dialogue on Thursday, excerpts of which he shared on his twitter handle.

The Defence Minister said, “Shared my views on the strong currents towards

peace that are present in the Korean Peninsula.” “India has never been an aggressor in its history, nor will it ever be. But that does not mean that India would balk at using its strength to defend itself,” he said.

<https://www.ndtv.com/india-news/india-will-not-balk-at-using-strength-to-defend-itself-rajnath-singh-2096033>

Explained: Chandrayaan-2, in perspective

Amitabh Sinha, The Indian Express, September 9, 2019

India's first attempt to land a spacecraft on the Moon has not been successful. The lander of Chandrayaan-2, called Vikram, did not slow down at the expected rate towards the latter part of its descent, and most likely hit the lunar surface at a speed greater than required for safe landing. The ground control station had lost contact with the lander when it was about 2.1 km above the Moon.

On Sunday, Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) chairman K Sivan was quoted as saying that the lander had been located on the Moon, and a thermal image of it had been taken by instruments on board the Chandrayaan-2 orbiter that is going around the Moon in a near-circular orbit of 100 km. He said efforts to re-establish contact with the lander had not yet been successful.

<https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/chandrayaan-2-moon-landing-in-perspective-5978328/>

Lander 'tilted' not broken, says ISRO

The Hindu, September 9, 2019

Chandrayaan-2's lander Vikram is unbroken but lying tilted on the surface of the moon after a hard landing very close to the scheduled touchdown site, an Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) official said on Monday.

Efforts are underway to see whether communication can be re-established with the lander but chances of that are bleak with

full system functionality a prerequisite to restoring contact, officials explained. “The lander is there (on the moon) as a single piece, not broken into pieces. It's in a tilted position,” an ISRO official said.

<https://www.thehindu.com/sci-tech/science/isro-not-losing-hope-continues-to-make-all-out-efforts-to-restore-link-with-lander-vikram/article29373720.ece>

Modi should correct Vajpayee wrong on nuclear 'no first use': Diplomat Jaimini Bhagwati

Nayanima Basu, The Print, September 12, 2019

The Modi government should rid India of its “no first use” doctrine and align its nuclear policies with those of the US, Russia and China, veteran diplomat Jaimini Bhagwati told ThePrint in an interview. “It was a purely defensive posture we are adopting. Are we less credible than the US? We need to take some decision that will bring short-term pain for long-term gain,” he said.

“We should get rid of it (no first use). I think things have to be fair. If other established nuclear weapon powers do not feel the need to make a declaration that should be your de-facto policy, it doesn't have to be your de jure policy,” Bhagwati added.

<https://theprint.in/defence/modi-should-correct-vajpayee-wrong-on-nuclear-no-first-use-diplomat-jaimini-bhagwati/290244/>

Chandrayaan 2: Nobel laureate entrusts Indian scientists, says 'they will soon master the setbacks of lunar mission'

Ribhu Mishra, Financial Express, September 12, 2019

Serge Haroche, a French physicist and a Nobel laureate on Wednesday said that he was quite certain about Indian scientists overcoming the setback faced on the lunar mission. Serge, who is in India, said this while talking about the loss of communication with Vikram lander of

Chandrayaan-2 during the soft landing process. The incident occurred just two minutes before the lander was scheduled to reach the lunar surface.

According to a report, Serge Haroche told HT that 'Science is full of surprises. It is like you are going to the unknown. The surprises that are found during this are sometimes good, sometimes bad. Success and failure are a part of it.'

<https://www.financialexpress.com/lifestyle/science/chandrayaan-2-nobel-laureate-entrusts-indian-scientists-says-they-will-soon-master-the-setbacks-of-lunar-mission/1704487/>

Devices onboard Chandrayaan-2 orbiter gamechangers

Akhil Kadidal, Deccan Herald, September 13, 2019

Former chairman of Isro A S Kiran Kumar on Thursday described the Chandrayaan-2 mission as a success, despite the loss of the Vikram lander on the lunar surface. "Yes, there is sadness because we came so close to making a landing on the moon, but the mission itself cannot be called a failure because, for one, it is still ongoing," Kumar said, speaking at the convocation of IISc.

Another improved instrument aboard Chandrayaan-2 is the dual-frequency synthetic aperture, which Kumar described as being the first of its kind sent into space. "With this instrument, we will be able to investigate permanently shadowed regions to see if water vapour is present," he said.

<https://www.deccanherald.com/state/devices-onboard-chandrayaan-2-orbiter-gamechangers-761252.html>

Chandrayaan 2: Here's how NASA is helping ISRO in reviving Vikram Lander

Ribhu Mishra, Financial Express, September 13, 2019

The American space agency, National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) has confirmed that it will be assisting ISRO in its quest to connect with the Vikram Lander. The Indian Space

Agency met with a glitch in the early hours of September 7 and lost contact with the Lander module Chandrayaan 2, minutes before its scheduled soft landing on Lunar surface. NASA, apart from the radio signal, will also be sharing pictures of the region of the Moon where the Vikram lander hard-landed. NASA has said that it would share before and after images of the region of the Moon where the Vikram lander of Chandrayaan 2 supposedly made a hard-landing in the wee hours of September 7.

According to a report published in the NYT, the US space agency has stated that it will 'share any before and after flyover imagery of the region around the targeted landing site of ISRO's Chandrayaan-2's Vikram Lander. NASA will be supporting the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) in their analysis. The US space agency is also trying to re-establish communication with the Vikram lander. Notable the lander has not responded or transmitted any signal since September 7.

<https://www.financialexpress.com/lifestyle/science/chandrayaan-2-heres-how-nasa-is-helping-isro-in-reviving-vikram-lander/1704983/>

B. China

China issues white paper on nuclear safety

Xinhua, September 3, 2019

China on Tuesday issued a white paper to introduce its approach to nuclear safety. Titled "Nuclear Safety in China," the white paper was released by the State Council Information Office to elaborate on China's basic principles and policies in the field, share the concepts and practices of regulation, and clarify its determination to promote global nuclear safety governance and the actions it has taken to achieve this, according to the document.

"China has always regarded nuclear safety as an important national responsibility, and integrated it into the entire process of nuclear energy development and utilization," it said. China's nuclear industry has always developed in line with the latest safety standards and maintained a good

safety record, pursuing an innovation-driven path of nuclear safety with Chinese characteristics. As an important advocate, promoter and participant in building a fair, collaborative and mutually beneficial international nuclear safety system, China has done a good job in ensuring its own nuclear safety, fulfilled its international obligations, and promoted bilateral and multilateral cooperation on nuclear safety, said the white paper. China has actively promoted the peaceful use of nuclear energy for the benefit of all humanity and contributed its wisdom and strength to global nuclear safety governance, it added. The main body of the white paper was divided into six sections: following a rational, coordinated and balanced nuclear safety strategy, building a policy and legal framework on nuclear safety, ensuring effective regulation of nuclear safety, maintaining high-level safety, co-building and sharing nuclear safety and building a community of shared future for nuclear safety.

http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2019-09/03/c_138360674.htm

China Focus: China issues white paper on nuclear safety, stressing int'l cooperation

Xinhua, September 3, 2019

China stated its stance on developing nuclear energy as an established policy in its first white paper on nuclear safety released on Tuesday, vowing to strengthen international cooperation and build a community of shared future for nuclear safety. Titled "Nuclear Safety in China," the white paper was released by the State Council Information Office to elaborate on China's basic principles and policies in the field, share the concepts and practices of regulation and clarify its determination to promote global nuclear safety governance and the actions it has taken to achieve this.

Upholding the central role of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in international nuclear cooperation, China has made continuous contributions

to the IAEA Nuclear Security Fund, with an aim to enhance the nuclear safety capacity of countries in Asia, Liu said. Through its National Research and Development Center for Nuclear and Radiation Safety Regulation, China has continued to help developing countries train nuclear safety personnel and carry out technical drills, lending support to their efforts to enhance their regulatory capacity and providing more public goods for improving global nuclear safety. While it is the common aspiration of all countries to peacefully utilize nuclear energy, it should also be a common responsibility of all countries to maintain nuclear safety, Liu said.

http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2019-09/03/c_138361737.htm

US ban for nuclear firm harms own interests

Xu Keyue, Global Times, September 3, 2019

The US unilateral ban on China General Nuclear Power Corp will only harm itself in the end, a Chinese nuclear safety official said at a press conference of the country's first comprehensive nuclear safety white paper on Tuesday after China's largest state-owned nuclear company was added to the US Entity List. The US in June added the Chinese state-owned nuclear giant and three of its subsidiaries to the US Entity List, saying these companies had allegedly acted contrary to US national security and barring US companies from selling products to those enterprises. China firmly opposes unilateralist and protectionist US policies that hurt the interest of other countries including China, Liu Hua, director of China's National Nuclear Safety Administration, said at the press conference.

China has set up three platforms for nuclear security research and innovation and conducted 39 studies in 13 fields on nuclear security technologies, according to the statement. The Hualong One nuclear reactor ranks among the highest in the

world in terms of safety design, the paper said. China and the US have cooperated on nuclear safety in a friendly and effective fashion for 35 years, Liu said. Chinese analysts interpreted the US ban as part of US actions to crack down on China's high-technology sector. Liu noted that the ban would in effect encourage Chinese companies to enhance development and innovation input and very likely hurt US companies. By June 2019, China had 47 nuclear power units in operation, ranking third in the world, and 11 nuclear power units under construction, to rank first in the world, the paper said.

<http://www.globaltimes.cn/content/1163568.shtml>

China to build lab for radioactive waste disposal

Hou Liqiang, China Daily, September 4, 2019

Work will soon begin on a potential site for a lab to accommodate China's radioactive waste. Experiments are to be conducted to determine if it is the right choice of site, according to the country's top nuclear safety watchdog. China uses concentrated disposal to deal with high-level radioactive waste. The disposal site should be located at least 400 meters underground and boast stable geological conditions that can keep this waste isolated from the humans for more than 10,000 years, said Liu Hua, head of the National Nuclear Safety Administration, on Wednesday.

"We have found a very good site," he told a news conference organized by the State Council Information Office. He said the lab will be built in accordance with requirements for deep geologic repositories, but construction will depend on data collected from experiments at the site. Jiang Guang, deputy head of the administration, said the construction of the lab in Gansu province will be launched as soon as possible and that experiments on the site will help identify disposal approaches that will be applied at other suitable sites. As of June, there are 47 nuclear power facilities in operation on the Chinese mainland and the

country is also building 11 new facilities, according to a comprehensive white paper on nuclear safety published by the State Council Information Office on Tuesday.

<https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/201909/04/WS5d6fc34da310cf3e35569bf9.html>

China's lunar rover travels over 284 meters on moon's far side

Xinhua, September 7, 2019

China's lunar rover Yutu-2 has driven 284.66 meters on the far side of the moon to conduct scientific exploration on the virgin territory. Both the lander and the rover of the Chang'e-4 probe switched to its dormant mode for the lunar night on Friday (Beijing time), according to the Lunar Exploration and Space Program Center of the China National Space Administration. 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. A lunar day equals 14 days on Earth, a lunar night the same length. The Chang'e-4 probe switches to dormant mode during the lunar night due to lack of solar power. During the ninth lunar day of the probe on the moon, the scientific instruments on the lander and rover worked well, and a new batch of 2.9 GB scientific detection data was sent to the core research team for analysis.

As a result of the tidal locking effect, the moon's revolution cycle is the same as its rotation cycle, and the same side always faces Earth. The far side of the moon has unique features, and scientists expect Chang'e-4 could bring breakthrough findings. The scientific tasks of the Chang'e-4 mission include low-frequency radio astronomical observation, surveying the terrain and landforms, detecting the mineral composition and shallow lunar surface structure and measuring neutron radiation and neutral atoms. The Chang'e-4 mission embodies China's hope to combine wisdom in space exploration with four payloads developed by the

Netherlands, Germany, Sweden and Saudi Arabia.

http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2019-09/07/c_138372596.htm

China sends H-6K bombers to Russia for strategic drills

Global Times, September 8, 2019

Russia on Saturday held a grand welcoming ceremony upon the arrival of Chinese armed forces, including well-anticipated Type 96A tanks and H-6K bombers, for the upcoming Tsentr-2019 (Center-2019) strategic drills. China dispatched more than 1,600 troops from the Western Theater Command and some other units of the People's Liberation Army (PLA), together with main battle equipment including Type 96A tanks, H-6K bombers, JH-7A fighter bombers, J-11 fighter jets, Il-76 and Y-9 transport planes and Z-10 attack helicopters, China Central Television reported Saturday.

<http://www.globaltimes.cn/content/1163929.shtml>

Chinese netizens encourage India's lunar dream despite failure

Wang Qi, Global Times, September 8, 2019

Chinese net users tipped their hats to Indian space scientists and encouraged them to continue to explore the universe after the country's second moon mission lost communication with the ground station. The country's moon lander was expected to make a soft-touchdown near the moon's South Pole on Saturday but diverged from the planned path less than 2.1 kilometers above the lunar surface and lost its communications with the mission control room. After the news was disclosed on China's Twitter-like Sina Weibo, Chinese netizens encouraged Indian scientists to not lose hope.

"Space exploration is being chased by all human beings. No matter which country has made a breakthrough, it deserves our praise, and those who have temporarily failed also deserve our encouragement," said a net user. Indian scientists have made great

efforts and sacrifices for space exploration. Keyboard warriors should stop laughing at those heroes, another user said. "We are all in the gutter, but some of us are looking at the stars. Any nations that bravely strive to further explore space deserve our respect," said a user on China's Quora-like Zhihu. Despite the loss of communication with the lander, the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) said that 90 to 95 percent of the mission's objectives have been accomplished and will continue to make contributions to lunar science, the Xinhua News Agency reported.

<http://www.globaltimes.cn/content/1163928.shtml>

Implementation phase of China-funded Egyptian satellite project kicks off

Xinhua, September 9, 2019

Egyptian and Chinese teams announced Sunday the start of the implementation phase of the China-funded "MisrSat II" satellite project. During the kick-off meeting, which was held at the Egyptian Space City near Egypt's new administrative capital, both sides signed the documents of launching the project that is funded by the Chinese government. On Saturday, a ceremony to launch the satellite project was held during the fourth China-Arab States Expo, being held in Yinchuan, capital of northwest China's Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region.

Egypt and China signed in January an agreement on a 72-million-U.S. dollar Chinese grant for Egypt's MisrSat II satellite, which is a small high-resolution remote sensing satellite. Egypt sees the project as another major cooperation between the two countries in the field of space after signing an agreement to build the Egyptian Satellite Assembly, Integration and Test Center which is expected to be fully established this year.

http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2019-09/09/c_138376065.htm

China's giant telescope picks up mysterious signals from deep space

Xinhua, September 9, 2019

Chinese astronomers have detected repeated fast radio bursts (FRB) - mysterious signals believed to be from a source about 3 billion light years from Earth - with the largest and most sensitive radio telescope ever built. Scientists detected the signals with the Five-hundred-meter Aperture Spherical Radio Telescope (FAST) and they are carefully cross-checking and processing them, according to researchers at the National Astronomical Observatories of the Chinese Academy of Sciences (NAOC). FRBs are the brightest bursts known in the universe. They are called "fast" because these blips are very short, only several milliseconds in duration. But there is no reasonable explanation for their origin.

The detection of the repeated bursts might help shed light on the origin and physical mechanisms of FRBs, said researchers. Chinese scientists have installed a highly sensitive FRB backend on a 19-beam receiver on the giant telescope, and used it to observe an FRB source named FRB121102, which was first discovered by the Arecibo Observatory in 2015. From late August to the beginning of September, more than 100 bursts were detected from FRB121102, the highest number of bursts ever detected so far.

http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2019-09/09/c_138377523.htm

Polar observation satellite will debut soon

Zhao Lei, China Daily, September 9, 2019

Network will improve country's ability to monitor Arctic and Antarctic regions China will soon launch the first satellite in its space-based polar observation network in an attempt to improve the nation's polar research capability, according to project insiders. The BNU-1 will be lifted atop a Long March 4B carrier rocket from the Taiyuan Satellite Launch Center in Shanxi province before the end of this month, said Li Chun, BNU-1's project manager at

Aerospace Dongfanghong Development in Shenzhen, Guangdong province. The company, which designed and built the spacecraft, is part of the China Academy of Space Technology in Beijing.

<https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/201909/09/WS5d75a7d4a310cf3e3556a676.html>

Beijing deploys drones for South China Sea surveillance

Liu Zhen, South China Morning Post, September 9, 2019

A network of drones has been deployed by Beijing to watch over the islands and reefs of the disputed South China Sea. The network, run by the Ministry of Natural Resources, covers the uninhabited, hard-to-reach islands as well as the vast open waters of the area, according to the ministry's South Sea Bureau. The drone communication chain has "extremely enhanced our dynamic surveillance of the South China Sea, and expanded our reach to the high seas", the bureau said on its official website. The air-land system consists of numerous unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) carrying high-definition cameras, road-mobile communication vehicles which act as transmission relay stations, as well as a satellite-based maritime information communication network, according to the bureau.

The light drones are intended to supplement China's satellite remote sensing system - which is often affected by cloudy weather in the area - with higher definition, multi-angle, and real-time images. The communication vans can be driven or ferried to places that lack a land-based communication station and receive signals sent by the drones. The signals can then be uploaded to the satellite network as still images or live streams, to be displayed thousands of kilometres away at the bureau's command headquarters in the southern province of Guangdong.

https://www.scmp.com/news/china/military/article/3026577/beijing-deploys-drones-south-china-sea-surveillance?li_source=LI&li_medium=china_section_top_picks_for_you

Intrusion of Canadian warship raises China's ire

Dm Chan, Asia Times, September 11, 2019

China has questioned Canada's "intentions" behind sending a warship to traverse the Taiwan Strait, amid frosty relations between Beijing and Ottawa, Channel News Asia (CNA) reported. A Canadian Halifax-class frigate, the HMCS Ottawa, passed through the strategic waterway on Tuesday in a "freedom of navigation" operation, Taiwanese authorities said, the latest such voyage by a Western navy to anger Beijing. China views any passing through the narrow channel separating Taiwan and the Chinese mainland as a breach of its sovereignty — while the US and many other nations see the route as international space, CNA said. "The Chinese side does not limit the normal passage of foreign warships through the Taiwan Strait," Chinese foreign ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying said at a regular briefing. "But I don't know what special intentions the Canadian side has in deliberately making high-profile announcements about its warship (crossing the Taiwan Strait).

<https://www.asiatimes.com/2019/09/article/intrusion-of-canadian-warship-raises-chinas-ire/>

China and Russia to reach deals, including aerospace, nuclear energy: MOFCOM

Tu Lei, Global Times, September 12, 2019

China and Russia are expected to reach a number of deals when Chinese Premier Li Keqiang visits Russia next week, Gao Feng, spokesperson of China's Ministry of Commerce (MOFCOM) said on Thursday. Gao said the deals will include trade, investment, digital economy, agriculture, technology, aerospace and nuclear energy. "The trade cooperation of the two countries is speeding up, and continues to strive for high-quality development," Gao said.

Li will visit Russia from Monday to Thursday, the Chinese Foreign Ministry announced earlier, and it is widely believed that his visit will further strengthen and

broaden the China-Russia strategic partnership. Trade between China and Russia last year exceeded \$100 billion, and China has remained Russia's largest trading partner for nine consecutive years, data from MOFCOM showed. In the first eight months of the year, bilateral trade stood at \$70 billion, 4.5 percent higher than last year.

<http://www.globaltimes.cn/content/1164358.shtml>

China to build warship for Thailand

Liu Xuanzun, Global Times Published, September 12, 2019

China and Thailand have signed a deal that will see a Chinese shipbuilding company build a Type 071E landing platform dock (LPD) warship for the Thai navy, a move which shows deepened arms trade cooperation between the two countries, a Chinese military expert said on Wednesday. China and Thailand signed the agreement in Beijing on Monday, with the general manager of the China State Shipbuilding Corporation Limited (CSSC), Yang Jincheng, and the commander-in-chief of the Royal Thai Navy, Luechai Ruddit, participating, according to a statement CSSC released on Tuesday. This also marks the first time China has exported an LPD, the statement said.

<http://www.globaltimes.cn/content/1164339.shtml>

China, Malaysia to set up South China Sea mechanism

Reuters, September 12, 2019

China and Malaysia have agreed to set up a joint dialogue mechanism for the disputed South China Sea, the Chinese government's top diplomat said yesterday after meeting the Malaysian foreign minister. Chinese naval deployments in the strategic waterway, through which more than US\$3.4 trillion of goods are transported each year, have reignited

tension with Vietnam and the Philippines. Taiwan, Malaysia and Brunei also have competing claims in the South China Sea.

https://www.reuters.com/article/us-china-malaysia/china-malaysia-to-set-up-south-china-sea-dialogue-mechanism-idUSKCN1VX0JN_

China launches three new satellites

Xinhua, September 12, 2019

China sent a resource satellite and two small satellites into planned orbits from the Taiyuan Satellite Launch Center in north China's Shanxi Province on Thursday. They were launched on a Long March-4B carrier rocket at 11:26 a.m. (Beijing Time). The resource satellite, ZY-1 02D, will provide observation data for natural resources asset management, ecological monitoring, disaster prevention and control, environmental protection, urban construction, transportation and contingency management.

One of the two small satellites launched on the same rocket belongs to Beijing Normal University, and is named BNU-1, and the other belongs to a Shanghai-based private space technology company.

http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2019-09/12/c_138386379.htm

China's BeiDou has 39 satellites in orbit as construction to be completed next year

Yuan Yufei, China Military Online, September 12, 2019

"China will complete the comprehensive construction of the BeiDou global system as scheduled in 2020," said Yang Changfeng, chief designer of BeiDou Navigation Satellite System (BDS), at the 8th Annual Meeting of China Global Navigation Satellite System (GNSS) and Location Based Service (LBS), videlicet China BDS Application Forum, held in Zhengzhou, Henan Province on Tuesday. The theme of this conference is "BeiDou serves the world and integrates innovative applications". The basic system of BeiDou-3 has been completed and begun to provide global services on December 27,

2018. Since the beginning of this year, BeiDou has made great achievements in the world, especially in serving the Belt and Road Initiative.

China's satellite navigation industry will exceed 400 billion yuan by 2020. It is learned from the forum that BeiDou is now more than a business card of China, the application of which has become a strategic emerging industry with a global market. Yu introduced that the application of the application of BDS has become an economic growth point of strategic emerging industries. With the opening of global service and the establishment of BeiDou-3 system as an opportunity, China will continue to promote the integration and innovation of BDS. BeiDou will also usher in a golden period of deepening application.

http://english.pladaily.com.cn/view/2019-09/12/content_9620454.htm

First polar observation satellite launched into orbit

Zhao Lei, China Daily, September 12, 2019

China sent its first polar observation satellite into space on Thursday to strengthen the nation's polar research capability. The BNU-1, also known as Ice Pathfinder, was launched atop a Long March 4B carrier rocket at the Taiyuan Satellite Launch Center in North China's Shanxi province at 11:26 am with an optical remote-sensing satellite and a micro experimental satellite, according to China Great Wall Industry Corp, the satellites' launch service contractor. The mission marked the 310th launch of China's Long March carrier rocket series.

Developed and constructed by Aerospace Dongfanghong Development in Shenzhen, South China's Guangdong province, the BNU-1 weighs 16 kilograms and carries three experimental payloads – a multispectral camera, a high-resolution visible-light camera and an automatic identification system receiver, a device for ship identification. The satellite is tasked with observing and monitoring climates

and environments in the Antarctic and Arctic. It is expected to work in a sun-synchronous orbit more than 730 km above the Earth for up to two years, the China Academy of Space Technology, parent of Aerospace Dongfanhong Development, said in a statement.

<http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/201909/12/WS5d79c52ea310cf3e3556b39b.html>

China welcomes DPRK-U.S. dialogue resumption

Xinhua, September 13, 2019

China on Thursday said it welcomed the positive signals from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) on resuming talks with the United States, calling on the U.S. side to take practical measures to ease tensions and promote talks. State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi made the remarks when responding to a query at a joint news conference held Thursday with Malaysian Foreign Minister Saifuddin Abdullah. "This is an important step taken by the DPRK side to promote the process of political settlement of the Korean Peninsula issue, and China welcomes it," said Wang.

"Since last year, the DPRK has taken a series of positive measures, and on these grounds requested the U.S. to meet them halfway with a positive response. We think this is fair and reasonable," said Wang, who hoped that the U.S. side will also take practical measures in this regard, and make due efforts to ease tensions and promote talks. Also, the UN Security Council should consider initiating discussions on the reversible provisions of the DPRK sanctions resolution at an appropriate time, so as to help the DPRK ease the economic and livelihood difficulties caused by the sanctions, and create conditions and provide support for a political settlement of the Korean Peninsula issue, he suggested. China will continue to play a constructive role and make unremitting efforts to maintain peace and stability on the peninsula, promote the establishment of a peace mechanism on the peninsula and realize the denuclearization of the peninsula, he said.

<http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2019-09/13/>

[c_138387934.htm](#)

Second parade rehearsal held; new weapons spotted

Ma Xiu, Global Times, September 15, 2019

Type 15 tanks were also sighted on the streets of the capital city, suggesting that the lightweight tank will make its debut to the general public on October 1. Military observers identified Dongfeng-41 (DF-41) intercontinental ballistic missiles, capable of carrying 10 independently targetable nuclear warheads and hitting anywhere on Earth, according to Hong Kong Economic Times.

They also spotted the DF-17 ballistic missile, said to be carrying a hypersonic glide vehicle similar to Russia's Avangard, moving along the highway into Beijing. Meanwhile online videos and photos captured two types of drone: one aerodynamic design believed to be high supersonic and stealthy, the other with a fly wing stealth design: probably the Sharp Sword stealth attack drone seen test flying back in 2013. More mysterious was an image of a large autonomous underwater vehicle. Its mission remains unknown. Beijing residents also claimed to have spotted new anti-ship missiles, anti-aircraft missiles and cruise missiles. They also speculated they had identified a long-range multiple rocket launcher. During the rehearsal on Sunday morning, enthusiasts filmed warplanes including J-20 stealth fighters, Y-20 transport planes, early warning aircraft and special mission aircraft. A new bomber, the H-6N, was in the formations on Sunday.

<http://www.globaltimes.cn/content/1164470.shtml>

China ready to defend against drone attacks after Saudi Arabia oil hit

Liu Xuanzun and Liu Yang, Global Times, September 16, 2019

Chinese military observers turned their attention to the threats from drones after two major oil installations of Saudi Arabia

were attacked by drones on Saturday, saying on Monday China has a full range of countermeasures, including detection and interception systems. Ten drones attacked the oil installations, damaging facilities that process the vast majority of the country's crude output and raising the risk of a disruption in world oil supplies, the New York Times reported on Saturday. An anonymous Chinese military expert told the Global Times surprise was the key to the attacks' success. "If they had deployed a well-conditioned defense system, they would at least not suffer such a huge loss," the expert said. Drones, especially those with small, slow, low-flying characteristics, are difficult for traditional air defense systems to detect and intercept, so new systems must be developed to counter them, experts told the Global Times.

<http://www.globaltimes.cn/content/1164603.shtml>

China unveils supersonic spy drone during National Day military parade rehearsal

Liu Zhen, South China Morning Post, September 17, 2019

The photos, which have prompted discussion among military enthusiasts, show at least two types of unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) – identified as the DR-8 or Wuzhen 8, and the Sharp Sword stealth attack drone. The DR-8 would be expected to play a key role should there be a conflict with US aircraft carrier strike groups in the South China Sea or Western Pacific. The reconnaissance drone's appearance at the rehearsal drew attention partly because it loosely resembles a supersonic UAV that was retired by the US more than four decades ago – the D-21. The US used the drone for spying missions in China and a number of them crashed during operations, leaving their remnants scattered in various locations across the country. One of the crashed D-21s was put on display at Beijing's Military Museum a few years ago. The DR-8 reconnaissance drone has a role in assessing the strike impact of China's "aircraft carrier killer", the DF-21D anti-

ship ballistic missile, and the DF-26 ballistic missile.

According to Zhou Chenming, a Beijing-based military commentator, the DR-8 could travel faster than the D-21 – whose maximum speed is Mach 3.3 – letting it penetrate the enemy's air defences and return intact with intelligence. The PLA had been using the drone – which can reach strategic locations as far away as the Western Pacific, including Guam – for some time, according to Shanghai-based military commentator Shi Lao. China to show off advanced nuclear weapons in National Day parade "In fact, this UAV [the DR-8] entered into service a while ago," Shi said.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/military/article/3027534/china-unveils-supersonic-spy-drone-during-national-day-military>

Could a tiny Chinese magnetic sensor be up to the huge task of tracking submarines?

Stephen Chen, South China Morning Post, September 17, 2019

Chinese researchers have developed a sensor that might be able to track submarines. Photo: Handout Chinese researchers have developed a sensor that might be able to track submarines. Photo: Handout Chinese researchers have developed a compact sensor that can detect extremely weak magnetic fields and one day might be used to track submarines or act as a backup navigation system. The sensor, an atomic magnetometer developed by Professor Gu Sihong and his colleagues at the Wuhan Institute of Physics and Mathematics, can fit into a capsule the size of a bean and operate at room temperature, according to research published in the journal *Physical Review Applied*.

"Using microelectromechanical system technology, the sensor can be fabricated on the chip scale," Gu wrote. The device can pick up signals as weak as 20 femtotesla, or about one-fifth the strength

of the magnetic field generated by a human brain. Although other devices known as magnetic anomaly detectors are much more sensitive, they are bulkier and can only be mounted on planes or helicopters. Magnetic anomaly detectors used in anti-submarine warfare must operate at temperatures near absolute zero and require lasers, power supplies and gas chambers to achieve high sensitivity.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/science/article/3027502/could-tiny-chinese-magnetic-sensor-be-huge-task-tracking>

C. Pakistan

PM Imran seeks to quell talk of war with India

The Express Tribune, September 2, 2019

Prime Minister Imran Khan on Monday warned that Pakistan and India were the two nuclear-armed countries and any escalation of tensions between them could endanger the world. Addressing the International Sikh Convention at the Punjab Governor House, the prime minister denounced the idea of war, saying that he did not believe that war could solve any problem. "We both are nuclear-armed countries. If these tensions increase, the world could be in danger," Khan said. He, however, reiterated that Pakistan would never trigger a war.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2047675/1-pakistan-will-not-use-nuclear-arms-first-pm/>

PM Khan: Pakistan would not use nuclear weapons first, amid tensions with India

Asif Shahzad, Reuters, September 2, 2019

Pakistan would not use nuclear weapons first, Prime Minister Imran Khan said on Monday, amid tensions with arch-rival India after New Delhi revoked the special status of its part of the disputed Kashmir region.

"We both are nuclear-armed countries. If these tensions increase, the world could be in danger," Khan said, addressing members of the Sikh religious community in the eastern city of Lahore. "There will be no first from our side ever," he said.

The foreign ministry's spokesman subsequently said on Twitter that the comments were being taken out of context and did not represent a change in Pakistan's nuclear policy.

<https://in.reuters.com/article/india-kashmir-pakistan/pm-khan-pakistan-would-not-use-nuclear-weapons-first-amid-tensions-with-india-idINKCN1VN1JS>

No change in Pakistan's nuclear policy: FO

Radio Pakistan, September 3, 2019

Foreign Office, Spokesperson Dr. Mohammad Faisal has said that Prime Minister Imran Khan's comments on Pakistan's approach towards conflict between two nuclear armed states are being taken out of context. In a statement, he said, while conflict should not take place between two nuclear states, there's no change in Pakistan's nuclear policy.

<http://www.radio.gov.pk/03-09-2019/no-change-in-pakistans-nuclear-policy-fo>

No first use of N-weapons not policy: DG ISPR

Muhammad Anis, The News International, September 5, 2019

Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) Director General Major General Asif Ghafoor said on Wednesday that there is no policy of 'no first use' of strategic capability saying that use of nuclear capability is political but the nation should have the trust that Pakistan has that capability.

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/522403-no-first-use-of-n-weapons-not-policy-dg-ispr>

D. USA

U.S. Treasury warns anyone fueling Iran tanker risks being blacklisted

Timothy Gardner, Reuters, September 6, 2019

The U.S. Treasury Department on Thursday warned that anyone around the world who helps fuel Iranian vessels blacklisted by Washington runs the risk of being designated as well. The Treasury Department blacklisted the Adrian Darya, a tanker at the center of a confrontation between Washington and Tehran, on Aug. 30.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-iran-usa-fuel/u-s-treasury-warns-anyone-fueling-iran-tanker-risks-being-blacklisted-idUSKCN1VQ2O8>

Nuclear power is the 'silent giant' being invited finally to speak

World Nuclear News, September 6, 2019

This was the shared message of Agneta Rising and Kirill Komarov, respectively the director general and chairman of World Nuclear Association, at the opening of its *Symposium 2019* in London yesterday. "Energy is essential for promoting human development and global demand is projected to increase significantly in the coming decades," Rising said. "Securing access to modern and affordable energy is essential for all, lifting people out of poverty and promoting energy independence and economic growth. Nuclear energy is a proven solution with a long established track record.

"The 445 nuclear reactors in 30 countries are the low-carbon backbone of electricity systems, operating in the background, day in day out, often out of sight and out of mind, capable of generating an immense amount of clean power. They are the silent giants upon which we rely today.

<https://www.world-nuclear-news.org/Articles/Nuclear-power-is-the-silent-giant-being-invited-fi>

Not great, not terrible: US tests refurbished missiles after

admission nuclear refit lagging behind

Russian Times, September 7, 2019

The US Navy test-fired a volley of decades-old Trident II nuclear missiles, proving they can still fly days after a top official said the upgrade of bombs and warheads was lagging, and Russia offered to sell US some of its tech.

The USS Nebraska, an Ohio-class missile submarine, fired two missiles on Wednesday and another two on Friday, the Navy confirmed. All four missiles splashed into the target area off the Pacific island of Guam. The Trident II D5 submarine-launched ballistic missile was designed to last through 2024, but was recently refurbished to last into the 2040s, the Navy said. Their W76 warheads were recently upgraded as well.

<https://www.rt.com/usa/468222-us-tests-nuclear-missiles-submarine/>

Nuclear industry urges Trump to revive uranium mining with Cold War-era rule

Valerie Volcovici, Timothy Gardner, Reuters, September 7, 2019

The U.S. nuclear energy industry has called for the Trump administration to revive domestic uranium mining and enrichment by unlocking funds through a Cold War-era program, in a letter sent to a Cabinet-level working group.

The Aug. 18 letter from the Nuclear Energy Institute, or NEI, to national security adviser John Bolton and White House economic adviser Larry Kudlow, urges the Trump administration to authorize funds through the 1950 Defense Production Act to procure domestic fuel for defense requirements and boost federal reserves of uranium for nuclear power utilities.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-uranium-mining/nuclear-industry-urges-trump-to-revive-uranium-mining-with-cold-war-era-rule-idUSKCN1VR2O1>

U.S. hopes for North Korea talks in days, weeks – Pompeo

Reuters, September 8, 2019

The United States hopes to get back to denuclearisation talks with North Korea in the coming days or weeks, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said on Sunday. Negotiations aimed at dismantling Pyongyang's nuclear and missile programs have stalled since the collapse of a second summit between U.S. President Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un in the Vietnamese capital of Hanoi in February.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-northkorea-usa/u-s-hopes-for-north-korea-talks-in-days-weeks-pompeo-idUKKCN1VT0OT>

North Korea could warm up to talks after removal of 'war maniac' Bolton

David Brunnstrom, Reuters, September 11, 2019

In the past, Bolton has proposed using military force to overthrow the ruling Kim family and U.S. officials have said Bolton was responsible for the collapse of Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un's second summit in Vietnam in February. Trump announced he had fired Bolton a day after North Korea signaled a new willingness to resume stalled denuclearization talks with the United States, but then conducted the latest in a spate of missile launches here. Policy analysts say Bolton's departure could help U.S. efforts to revive the talks but will not make Washington's aim of persuading Pyongyang to give up its nuclear weapons any easier.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-trump-bolton-northkorea/north-korea-could-warm-up-to-talks-after-removal-of-war-maniac-bolton-idUSKCN1VV2N4>

USA begins first commercial testing of silicide fuel

World Nuclear News, September 11, 2019

The two assemblies contain chromium-coated zirconium cladding for enhanced oxidation and corrosion resistance, higher

density ADOPT pellets (Westinghouse's chromia and alumina doped UO₂ pellets) for improved fuel economics, and uranium silicide pellets. Uranium silicide has a higher density of fissile material and higher thermal conductivity than uranium oxide, providing benefits in terms of improved safety and better plant economics through longer fuel cycles and enhanced flexible power operation capability. The silicide pellets in the lead test assemblies are enclosed in a zirconium alloy cladding and were manufactured at the Idaho National Laboratory.

"Westinghouse's EnCore Fuel design was created to advance the future of the nuclear industry. We are very proud to have achieved this important programme milestone," Westinghouse President and Chief Executive Officer Patrick Fragman said. "Providing innovative products, solutions and services for our customers is at the forefront of all we do, and we are pleased to have partnered with Exelon to ultimately deliver greater efficiency and reliability through our new technology."

<https://www.world-nuclear-news.org/Articles/US-begins-first-commercial-testing-of-silicide-fue>

U.S. won't rule out Trump-Rouhani meeting after blaming Iran for Saudi attacks

Doina Chiacu, Reuters, September 15, 2019

The White House on Sunday did not rule out a potential meeting between President Donald Trump and Iranian President Hassan Rouhani, even after Washington accused Iran of being behind drone attacks on Saudi oil facilities.

White House adviser Kellyanne Conway said the attacks on Saturday "did not help" prospects for a meeting between the two leaders during the United Nations General Assembly this month but she left open the possibility it could happen.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-saudi-aramco-attacks-usa/us-wont-rule-out-trump-rouhani-meeting-after-blaming-iran-for-saudi-attacks-idUSKBN1W00H0>

E. Europe

Finland may allow \$2.9 billion nuclear waste fund to invest in stocks

Lefteris Karagiannopoulos, Reuters, September 2, 2019

Finland's 2.6 billion euro (\$2.90 billion) Nuclear Waste Management Fund could be allowed to invest in stocks and other higher risk assets in order to boost returns, the country's ministry of economic affairs and employment said on Monday. Built from annual payments by operators of nuclear plants, the fund guarantees that nuclear waste management can be arranged under all circumstances.

A working group tasked with assessing the investment activities concluded in a report that it could be broadened from its current restriction of only lending to the state and to energy suppliers. The ministry will now start drafting proposals and initiate discussions to amend existing regulations. The fund has grown steadily during its 35 years in operation, with a further increase expected following the commissioning of the Olkiluoto 3 nuclear reactor in 2020. However, moderate risk-taking and ensuring that there are, at all times, enough assets available to cover the costs of nuclear waste, should remain the leading principle, it added. The legislative process will likely be completed by the end of 2021.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-finland-nuclear-funds/finland-may-allow-2-9-billion-nuclear-waste-fund-to-invest-in-stocks-idUSKCN1VN1DW>

Restart of Scotland nuclear reactor where cracks found delayed again

Susanna Twidale, Reuters, September 3, 2019

EDF Energy has extended an outage at the Hunterston B-7 reactor on the west coast of Scotland to Jan. 15, 2020 from a previously scheduled Oct. 1, the British arm of French utility EDF said on its website. It has been offline since March 2018 after routine inspections found cracks in its graphite core.

Its restart has been delayed several times since.

Before the reactor can restart Britain's Office for Nuclear Regulation (ONR) must be satisfied with the company's safety case, showing the reactor would be safe to operate even in the unlikely event of an earthquake. The other reactor at the plant, which is more than 40 years old, was given approval to restart power production last month. The two reactors at full capacity can provide enough electricity to power more than 1.7 million homes.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/britain-nuclear/update-1-restart-of-scotland-nuclear-reactor-where-cracks-found-delayed-again-idUSL5N25U303>

China still pursuing nuclear fuel processing plant with Areva: official

Tom Daly, Reuters, September 3, 2019

China is still actively promoting a nuclear fuel processing project with France's Areva, the head of its nuclear safety watchdog said at a briefing on Tuesday, where he also criticized a U.S. blacklisting of Chinese nuclear firms. Commercial negotiations on the Areva project are "almost concluded," Liu Hua, the head of the National Nuclear Safety Administration and vice minister of ecology and environment, said at the briefing to introduce China's first white paper on nuclear safety. A formal go-ahead for the reprocessing plant would be a major boost for Areva, which has been discussing the project, valued at some \$12 billion, for more than a decade. Liu gave no indication whether a site had already been selected for the project, which has been repeatedly delayed, with a previously proposed venue in Lianyungang, in eastern China's Jiangsu province, canceled after protests.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-china-nuclear/china-still-pursuing-nuclear-fuel-processing-plant-with-areva-official-idUSKCN1VO088>

Iran and Europe unlikely to agree on nuclear pact in next few days: Rouhani

Parisa Hafezi, Reuters, September 4, 2019

President Hassan Rouhani said on Wednesday Iran was unlikely to reach a deal in the next few days with European parties to save the 2015 nuclear deal, state TV reported. "I think it is unlikely that we will reach a result with Europe by today or tomorrow," Rouhani said. "Europe will have another two-month to fulfil its commitments," he added.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-iran-nuclear-rouhani/iran-and-europe-unlikely-to-agree-on-nuclear-pact-in-next-few-days-rouhani-idUSKCN1VP0MK>

Trump Administration cool to French plan for \$15 billion Iranian credit line: officials

Arshad Mohammed, Susan Heavey, Reuters, September 4, 2019

The Trump administration views a French proposal to extend a \$15 billion credit line to Iran with some skepticism, U.S. officials said on Wednesday, adding that they had not seen any concrete proposal that would be in keeping with U.S. sanctions on Tehran. France has floated the idea of offering Iran about \$15 billion in credit lines until the end of this year if Tehran comes fully back into compliance with its 2015 nuclear deal, according to Western and Iranian sources.

Such a move would require approval by the United States, which under U.S. President Donald Trump pulled out of the pact and has since sought to pursue a "maximum pressure" campaign against Iran. Trump "is in close coordination with our partners and allies, listening to ideas, but we haven't seen anything yet that has any more prospects of becoming real than any of the other schemes that have been floated over the last year," the official added. Asked about the U.S. response to France's proposal, a spokeswoman for the French Foreign

Ministry said: "Many things still need to be resolved."

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-iran-usa-france-credit/trump-administration-cool-to-french-plan-for-15-billion-iranian-credit-line-officials-idUSKCN1VP245>

UK and Israeli leaders agree on need to stop Iran getting nuclear weapon

Guy Faulconbridge, Reuters, September 5, 2019

British Prime Minister Boris Johnson and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu agreed during a meeting in London on the need to prevent Iran acquiring a nuclear weapon, Downing Street said on Thursday.

"Both Prime Ministers agreed on the need to prevent Iran getting a nuclear weapon and stop wider destabilizing Iranian behavior. The Prime Minister stressed the need for dialogue and a diplomatic solution," a Downing Street spokeswoman said. Johnson also said he looked forward to seeing the United States' proposals for a viable Israel-Palestinian peace agreement, the spokeswoman said.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-britain-israel-iran/uk-and-israeli-leaders-agree-on-need-to-stop-iran-getting-nuclear-weapon-idUSKCN1VQ1WV>

Britain deeply concerned at Iran's plan for faster uranium enrichment

Alistair Smout, Reuters, September 5, 2019

Britain said on Thursday it was concerned and disappointed by Iran's plan to take another step away from a 2015 nuclear deal by starting to develop centrifuges to speed up uranium enrichment. "Iran's plan to suspend limits on nuclear research and development is deeply concerning," the Foreign Office said in a statement. "This third step away from its commitments under the nuclear deal is particularly

disappointing at a time when we and our European and international partners are working hard to de-escalate tensions with Iran."

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-iran-nuclear-britain/britain-deeply-concerned-at-irans-plan-for-faster-uranium-enrichment-idUSKCN1VQ2C5>

Germany urges Iran to change course on nuclear commitments

Paul Carrel, Reuters, September 6, 2019

Germany said on Friday it was not too late for Iran to change course after Tehran earlier said it had taken a step to further downgrade its commitments to a 2015 nuclear deal. "We urge Iran not to aggravate the situation further," a German Foreign Ministry spokesman told a regular news conference in Berlin. "It is not too late for Iran to leave the wrong path it has gone down."

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-iran-nuclear-start-germany/germany-urges-iran-to-change-course-on-nuclear-commitments-idUSKCN1VR14W>

France to pursue efforts to bring Iran to comply with nuclear deal-minister

Dominique Vidalon, Reuters, September 7, 2019

France will continue efforts to bring Iran into full compliance with a 2015 nuclear deal, French defence minister Florence Parly said, adding that U.S. and European moves to strengthen security in the Gulf must be "complementary and well coordinated". "We can only confirm our goal, which is to bring Iran to fully respect the Vienna deal," Parly told a news conference on Saturday with U.S. Defense Secretary Mark Esper in Paris.

"We must do everything we can to contribute to ease tensions with Iran and to ensure navigation safety," she added. France has ruled out joining a U.S.-led coalition of countries protecting oil tankers and cargo ships from threats posed by Iran

in the Strait of Hormuz, but has pushed for a European alternative.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/france-us-defence/france-to-pursue-efforts-to-bring-iran-to-comply-with-nuclear-deal-minister-idUSP6N25O00N>

France says Iran actions negative, but dialogue still open

John Irish, Reuters, September 8, 2019

Iran's decision to further reduce its commitments to the 2015 nuclear is reversible and France will continue to pursue dialogue to bring it back into full compliance, France's foreign minister said on Sunday. "The actions they have taken are negative but not definitive. They can come back and the path of dialogue is still open," Jean-Yves Le Drian told Europe. He said Iran was still several months away from a nuclear bomb.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-iran-nuclear-france/france-says-iran-actions-negative-but-dialogue-still-open-idUSKCN1VT08C>

Britain accuses Iran of selling Adrian Darya 1 tanker oil to Syria

William James, Reuters, September 10, 2019

Britain's foreign minister on Tuesday said Iranian tanker Adrian Darya had sold its crude oil to the Assad regime in Syria, breaking assurances it had given not to sell crude to the country. The vessel, formerly named Grace, was seized by British Royal Marine commandos on July 4 on suspicion of being en route to Syria. Gibraltar released it on Aug. 15 after receiving formal written assurances from Tehran that the ship would not discharge its 2.1 million barrels of oil in Syria. But Britain's foreign office said in a statement it was clear Iran had breached those assurances and that the oil had been transferred to Syria. The Trump administration last year unilaterally pulled out of a 2015 nuclear deal between Tehran and Western powers, and is pursuing a campaign to bring Iran's exports to zero.

Washington had warned any state against assisting the ship, saying it would consider that support for a terrorist organization, namely, Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps. The U.S. State Department on Tuesday stopped short of confirming whether Iran had sold the oil to Assad's regime, but strongly suggested it had.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-iran-tanker/britain-accuses-iran-of-selling-adrian-darya-1-tanker-oil-to-syria-idUSKCN1VV1XN>

EU creates defence and space branch 'to complement NATO'

Robin Emmott, Reuters, September 10, 2019

The creation of a defence branch in the European Commission, long resisted by Britain, is an attempt by President-elect Ursula von der Leyen to stem a decline in EU influence, as it faces heavy U.S. pressure to do more for its own security. Von der Leyen, a former German defence minister, said the plans would benefit the U.S.-led NATO alliance to which many EU states belong, adding: "NATO will always be (our) collective defence." Sylvie Goulard, a former long-time EU lawmaker currently at France's central bank, will be responsible for the new directorate general, as commissioner for industrial policy. Although von der Leyen gave few details, the defence arm will build on an EU military pact signed in late 2017 to integrate defence forces by working on new weapons and contributing to rapid deployments. Washington supports the initiative, but has also warned against shutting U.S. companies out of defence contracts.

With Britain, Europe's other main military power apart from France, set to leave the EU, Germany has backed the French-led effort to identify weak spots in European armies with the goal of filling those gaps together as a bloc. Space is also becoming an area where the EU wants to develop technology jointly, particularly as China, Russia and the United States develop space weapons that can shut down enemy missiles and air defences or destroy satellites. The plans will rely on a proposed 13-billion-

euro defence fund for developing and buying weapons together, with money from the EU's common budget for defence research. EU governments are expected to add to the fund to swell its size.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-eu-jobs-defence/eu-creates-defence-and-space-branch-to-complement-nato-idUSKCN1VV1CX>

Merkel: We'll keep trying to find solutions with Iran to avoid escalation

Michelle Martin, Tassilo Hummel, Reuters, September 11, 2019

Chancellor Angela Merkel said on Wednesday that Europe had decided to uphold the 2015 Iran nuclear deal and would keep trying to find solutions that averted escalation. "Step by step we will keep trying to find solutions with Iran that prevent an escalation of tensions in a globally sensitive region. That's our job," Merkel told the lower house of parliament.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-iran-germany/merkel-well-keep-trying-to-find-solutions-with-iran-to-avoid-escalation-idUSKCN1VW0SO>

French regulator puts EDF Flamanville nuclear plant on safety watch

Geert De Clercq, Reuters, September 11, 2019

French nuclear regulator ASN said it has put EDF's Flamanville 1 and 2 reactors under increased surveillance following a series of shortcomings in maintenance and contractor oversight. The ASN's action is the latest in a long series of technical and operational issues that have bedevilled EDF in recent months and raised new concerns about the state-controlled utility's safety culture. The regulator said in a statement there had been a high number of significant shortcomings in the Flamanville plant's maintenance and in the oversight of contractors in the plant, as well as insufficient quality of documentation.

EDF did not dispute the ASN's ruling. EDF's Belleville nuclear plant on the Loire river has also been under increased surveillance since 2017. The problems at the Flamanville 1 and 2 reactors are not directly related to the many problems with a third nuclear reactor that EDF is building on the same site. Flamanville 3 is a decade behind schedule and its cost has tripled to nearly 11 billion euros and is likely to rise further. Separately, EDF said on Tuesday it had found problems with weldings on the steam generators of some existing reactors, sending its shares down 6.8% on fears that the faults could lead to reactor closures. The shares recovered some of the losses to rise 5% on Wednesday. They are down 28% over the past 12 months, making EDF the second-worst performer in the Stoxx European Utilities index

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-edf-nuclearpower-flamanville/french-regulator-puts-edf-flamanville-nuclear-plant-on-safety-watch-idUSKCN1VW0Y5>

U.S. backs proposed \$6.5 billion sale of 32 F-35 Lockheed jets to Poland

Bryan Pietsch, Reuters, September 11, 2019

The U.S. State Department said on Wednesday it had approved a proposed sale of 32 Lockheed Martin Corp F-35 fighter jets worth \$6.5 billion to Poland. In April, the Pentagon told Congress it was considering selling the jets to the European nation, a NATO member, as well as Greece, Romania, Spain and Singapore.

The sale would boost Poland's contributions to NATO and reduce the country's dependence on Russian equipment, a State Department official said in a statement. During the Cold War, Poland, which shares borders with Russia and fellow NATO member Germany, belonged to the Soviet-led Warsaw Pact. The approval of the sale comes days after U.S. Vice President Mike Pence visited Poland, a key ally in the region, to commemorate the 80th anniversary of the start of World War Two. Under President Donald Trump, the United States has rolled out a "Buy American" plan that relaxed restrictions on sales and encouraged U.S.

officials to take a bigger role in increasing business overseas for the American weapons industry.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-poland-f-35/u-s-backs-proposed-6-5-billion-sale-of-32-f-35-lockheed-jets-to-poland-idUSKCN1VW29R>

France flags welding fault at five or more EDF nuclear reactors

Dominique Vidalon, Reuters, September 12, 2019

At least five nuclear reactors operated by French utility EDF might have problems with weldings on their steam generators, a fault which has raised fears of closures, France's nuclear regulator was quoted as saying. State-controlled EDF, whose shares were down 0.9% on Thursday, had said on Tuesday it had identified issues with weldings of some existing reactors, sparking a stock price fall of nearly 7%. France has the world's second-largest fleet of nuclear reactors behind the United States, but a spate of technical problems, coupled with hitches at reactors under construction, has tarnished EDF's image as a leader in nuclear technology. EDF has exported to China, Finland, South Africa and South Korea, with Britain also set to use its equipment.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-edf-safety/france-flags-welding-fault-at-five-or-more-edf-nuclear-reactors-idUSKCN1VX0N7>

Bosnia protects Una river to try to block Croatian nuclear waste plan

Maja Zuveta, Reuters, September 12, 2019

One of Bosnia's two regional governments on Thursday designated the Una river a nature park, seeking to head off plans being considered by Croatia to build a landfill site for radioactive waste near the border between the two countries. Trgovska Gora, located just 500 meters north of the Bosnian border and the river Una, has been identified by Croatia as one of four potential sites for dumping waste from the Krsko (NEK) nuclear power plant it shares with neighboring Slovenia. No final decision has been made, but Croatia

needs to take over half of the nuclear waste from NEK, which lies in Slovenia, by 2023. The plant was a joint venture of the two republics when both were part of Yugoslavia.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-bosnia-croatia-environment/bosnia-protects-una-river-to-try-to-block-croatian-nuclear-waste-plan-idUSKCN1VX1LV>

Britain's move to join U.S. Gulf mission frustrates European plans

Robin Emmott, John Irish, Reuters, September 13, 2019

Britain and France proposed a European-led maritime force in July that was to be independent of the United States. They won support from Denmark, Italy and Spain, who were wary of an American mission for fear of making U.S.-Iranian tensions worse. The proposal was announced after Iran seized a British-flagged tanker in the Strait, in what was then widely seen as retaliation for the seizure of an Iranian tanker in Gibraltar by British marines. The British-flagged Stena Impero is still being held by Iran, although Tehran has signaled it could release it soon. The Iranian tanker was released from Gibraltar last month. France will make a fresh attempt on Sept. 16 to set up a mission to protect merchant shipping in the Strait, through which a fifth of the world's oil passes, hoping to gather some 15 European countries in Paris to discuss a way forward.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-iran-europe/britains-move-to-join-u-s-gulf-mission-frustrates-european-plans-idUSKCN1VY10U>

European powers urge Iran to return to nuclear accord compliance

John Irish, Reuters, September 13, 2019

France, Britain and Germany, the European parties to Iran's nuclear accord, on Friday expressed deep concern at Tehran's violations of the 2015 deal and urged it to cooperate with the U.N. nuclear watchdog. "The International Atomic Energy Agency confirmed in its report of Sept. 8 that advanced centrifuges had been installed or

were being installed in Natanz. We are deeply concerned by these activities," the European powers said in their first joint statement since an IAEA briefing earlier this week. "We continue to support the JCPOA (nuclear accord) and urge Iran to reverse its activities that violate its JCPOA commitments, and to refrain from all further action." "We call on Iran to cooperate with the IAEA on all relevant matters."

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-iran-nuclear-europe/european-powers-urge-iran-to-return-to-nuclear-accord-compliance-idUSKCN1VY1VI>

F. Russia

Russia Backs French Efforts to Uphold Nuclear Deal

Financial Tribune, September 2, 2019

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov on Monday expressed support for France's efforts to defuse tensions over Iran's nuclear program, stressing that Tehran's decision to reduce its compliance with the 2015 nuclear deal is understandable.

French President Emmanuel Macron's efforts toward saving Tehran's nuclear agreement with world powers are "commendable" and are supported by Moscow, Russia's top diplomat said during a joint press conference with his Iranian counterpart, Mohammad Javad Zarif, in Moscow, according to a live broadcast by RT.

<https://financialtribune.com/articles/national/99706/russia-backs-french-efforts-to-uphold-nuclear-deal>

This Dangerous Russian Submarine Was Built to Sink U.S. Navy Aircraft Carriers

Sebastien Roblin, National Interest Blog, September 3, 2019

Russia's enormous Oscar-class nuclear attack submarines, known as the Project 949A, were designed during the Cold War with a specific mission in mind: to go

hunting for American aircraft carriers, the pride of American naval power.

Because each U.S. flattop is protected by its own little fleet of escorting warships—many of them specialized in antisubmarine warfare—the Oscar's primary game plan isn't to creep up close for a torpedo attack.

<https://nationalinterest.org/blog/buzz/dangerous-russian-submarine-was-built-sink-us-navy-aircraft-carriers-77591>

Test-ban body chief enters race to lead U.N. nuclear watchdog

Francois Murphy, Reuters, September 4, 2019

International Atomic Energy Agency Director General Yukiya Amano died in July as he was preparing to step down early because of an unspecified illness that had visibly weakened him over the previous year. His right-hand man, Cornel Feruta of Romania, is now acting director general and running to take over the position fully against Rafael Grossi, a veteran of nuclear diplomacy, currently Argentina's ambassador to the Vienna-based IAEA.

Slovakia's government has also approved a run by the head of its Nuclear Regulatory Authority, Marta Ziakova, a former chairwoman of the IAEA's two top decision-making bodies, the Board of Governors and the General Conference.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-un-nuclear-chief/test-ban-body-chief-enters-race-to-lead-u-n-nuclear-watchdog-idUSKCN1VP1CT>

Russian Nuclear Blast Debris Is Still Emitting Radiation, Reports Say

The Moscow Times, September 4, 2019

Journalists in northern Russia have measured high levels of radiation near two abandoned boats that were brought ashore following last month's mysterious accident during a test at a military site that has raised international concerns and safety fears.

Five nuclear engineers and two Defense Ministry employees were killed after a liquid

propulsion system exploded on a sea platform Aug. 8, leading to a brief spike in radiation by up to 16 times in nearby cities. News outlets have recently reported, citing U.S. intelligence and photographs from the site, that the blast occurred during a mission to salvage a nuclear-powered cruise missile from the bottom of the sea.

<https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2019/09/04/russian-nuclear-blast-components-still-emit-radiation-reports-say-a67131>

Putin Says Russia Will Produce New Missiles After Demise of Nuclear Pact

The Moscow Times, September 5, 2019

President Vladimir Putin said on Thursday that Russia would produce missiles that were banned under a landmark Cold-War era nuclear pact that ended last month, but that Moscow would not deploy them unless the United States did so first.

Speaking at an economic forum in Russia's Far East, Putin said Moscow had urged the United States to de-escalate a spiralling arms race between the former Cold War foes, but that Washington had not responded. The Russian leader said he was concerned by U.S. talk of deploying missiles in Japan and South Korea, a deployment he said would cover parts of Russian territory. Tensions over nuclear arms control have been rising after Washington formally pulled out of the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty (INF) pact last month accusing Russia of violating it, allegations Moscow denied.

<https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2019/09/05/putin-says-russia-will-produce-new-missiles-after-demise-of-nuclear-pact-a67166>

Rosatom wins licence to build second nuclear reactor in Turkey

Geert De Clercq, Reuters, September 6, 2019

Russia's Rosatom has won a licence to start building the second of four planned nuclear reactors in Turkey and is preparing to install the first steel

equipment on the first unit this autumn, Deputy CEO Kirill Komarov said on Friday. The \$20 billion project to build four Russian-design reactors in Akkuyu on the Mediterranean is one of the largest nuclear new-build projects worldwide and will allow Turkey to join the small club of nations with civil nuclear energy.

<https://in.reuters.com/article/rosatom-nuclearpower-turkey/update-1-rosatom-wins-licence-to-build-second-nuclear-reactor-in-turkey-idINL5N25X42Y>

Rosatom says close to signing contract for Uzbekistan nuclear reactors

Geert De Clercq, Reuters, September 6, 2019

Russian nuclear reactor builder Rosatom is close to signing a commercial contract to building two nuclear reactors in Uzbekistan, Rosatom's head of international business said. Uzbekistan, a central Asian republic formerly part of the Soviet Union, signed a first intergovernmental agreement with Russia in 2017 for cooperation in civil nuclear, followed by a second intergovernmental agreement in September 2018 for the construction of two VVER-1200 Rosatom reactors.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/rosatom-nuclearpower-uzbekistan/rosatom-says-close-to-signing-contract-for-uzbekistan-nuclear-reactors-idUKL5N25X4RU>

'Russia to make efforts to preserve nuclear deal'

Tehran Times, September 6, 2019

"Russia has always been committed to the implementation of the JCPOA by all parties. For our part, we will push ahead with efforts to preserve the Iran deal at various levels, including the parliamentary one, and draft a working mechanism to salvage it," TASS quoted him as saying in a post on his Telegram channel. He also said that Washington is trying to force Iran to

abandon the nuclear deal and push the European Union towards reimposing sanctions.

"The United States is pursuing an obvious objective: to force Iran to abandon the nuclear deal altogether and therefore push Europeans towards restoring the anti-Iran package of restrictive measures under U.S. control. The White House hopes to achieve a regime change in Tehran by reimposing the U.S. and EU sanctions, strengthening Iran's political isolation and whipping up tensions in the Persian Gulf region in general," he said.

He also said that Washington's willingness to hold talks with Iran should not be taken seriously. "Unlike North Korea, Iran has neither nuclear weapons nor missiles capable of reaching U.S. territory. So, the only direct dialogue with Tehran that Washington could foster is unconditional surrender [under the U.S. scenario]," he said.

<https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/440006/Russia-to-make-efforts-to-preserve-nuclear-deal>

'Potentially Dangerous' Objects Found in Northern Russia After Accident

The Moscow Times, September 6, 2019

Potentially dangerous objects have been found in an area of northern Russia where an accident that released radiation occurred last month, Interfax news agency reported on Friday, citing regional authorities.

A test at a military site on Aug. 8 caused a brief rise in radiation levels in the nearby city of Severodvinsk. Russia's state weather agency subsequently said it had found the radioactive isotopes of strontium, barium and lanthanum in test samples.

<https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2019/09/06/potentially-dangerous-objects-found-in-northern-russia-after-accident-a67188>

Russia nearly ready for reciprocal response after U.S. missile test – RIA

Reuters, September 6, 2019

Russia is close to completing preparations for a like-for-like response following a U.S. missile test that was carried out last month, the RIA news agency cited Deputy Foreign Minister Alexander Grushko as saying on Tuesday.

The Pentagon said last month it had tested a conventionally-configured cruise missile that hit its target after more than 500 km (310 miles) of flight, its first such test since the demise of the landmark INF nuclear arms limitation treaty. (Reporting by Vladimir Soldatkin; writing by Tom Balmforth; Editing by Kevin Liffey)

<https://in.reuters.com/article/usa-pentagon-missiles-russia/russia-nearly-ready-for-reciprocal-response-after-us-missile-test-ria-idINR4N25V05F>

Russian Nuclear-Powered Cargo Ship Loaded With Seafood Approaches Norway

The Moscow Times, September 10, 2019

The world's only remaining civilian nuclear-powered cargo ship, the Sevmorput, is sailing south into the Norwegian Sea en route to St. Petersburg with 204 refrigerated containers of frozen fish from the Pacific aimed for the market in European Russia. The ship will arrive in St. Petersburg by the end of this week after sailing south along the coast of Norway through the Great Belt in Denmark and into the Baltic Sea.

"It's crucial for Rosatomflot to expand the geography of our work," says Mustafa Kaskha, director of the Murmansk-based, state-owned fleet of nuclear-powered icebreakers.

<https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2019/09/10/russian-nuclear-powered-cargo-ship-loaded-with-seafood-approaches-norway-a67218>

Russian Navy to get four nuclear subs next year — shipyard

TASS News Agency, September 10, 2019

The Russian Navy will get one nuclear submarine by the end of 2019 and four more - in 2020, Sevmash shipyard Director General Mikhail Budnichenko told reporters on Monday. "We will deliver one nuclear sub this year and four more - next year, strictly in line with the contract," he said.

Russian Deputy Defense Minister Alexei Krivoruchko said that next year, Sevmash is to deliver the special-purpose Belgorod nuclear-powered submarine, Project-955A (Borei-A class) Knyaz Vladimir strategic submarine and two Project 885M (Yasen-M class) nuclear-powered cruise missile submarines, the Kazan and the Novosibirsk.

<https://tass.com/defense/1077381>

Trump's 'Bolton-free' policy plans and Moscow's multilateral strategic model

TASS News Agency, September 12, 2019

US National Security Adviser John Bolton's firing will make Washington's policy even more "Trump-centric", but this is unlikely to result in any serious deterioration of the international climate. Ahead of launching his new presidential campaign, Donald Trump will prefer a more moderate policy than Bolton, a dyed-in-the-wool hawk, had advised him to pursue, experts told Vedomosti. The dismissal of Bolton, Trump's third national security adviser who got sacked over the past three years, came as a surprise that was welcomed by everyone. Bolton's views on foreign policy and US global actions conflicted with those of the president. He had been vigorously trying to influence Trump's foreign policy decisions and did not hesitate to argue with the president. The ex-White House adviser was a leading

foreign policy hawk, who insisted on getting tougher with Iran and Russia and was opposed to easing tensions with North Korea, said Andrei Kortunov, Director General of the Russian International Affairs Council (RIAC).

The last straw that had led to his firing was Bolton's attempt to stave off a deal with the Taliban and the withdrawal of forces from Afghanistan. Now Trump will solve international issues himself and Bolton's successor will be just a figurehead, expert in international relations Vladimir Frolov said. Washington's foreign policy could become even more impulsive, but will remain rather predictable, Frolov noted. Trump is set to continue his policy on curtailing US combat operations across the world and decreasing US involvement in global conflicts. Unlike Bolton, the president views diplomatic pressure as a means of achieving compromise rather than as a curtain-raiser for a military conflict, according to the expert. Now given a freer hand, the US president, who has called himself an expert dealmaker, is poised to strike "great deals" with authoritarian regimes. Meanwhile, he understands that foreign policy and military failures will be used against him in the 2020 presidential campaign.

<https://tass.com/pressreview/1077783>

Russia Is Building Submarines to Deliver a 'Radioactive Tsunami'

Mark Episkopos, National Interest Blog, September 13, 2019

The first special-purpose nuclear submarine to carry Russia's upcoming "Poseidon" thermonuclear torpedoes, Belgorod, will enter trials in June 2020 and is due to be commissioned several months later, while the Poseidon system itself is unlikely to enter service until the late 2020's.

"The vessel has already begun trials," Sevmash shipyard Director General Mikhail Budnichenko told Russian state news agency TASS earlier this week. "Besides, we have a schedule approved by the Defense Ministry, and the work is being carried out in strict compliance with this schedule... in

line with the schedule, the acceptance act is to be signed in September of the same year."

<https://nationalinterest.org/blog/buzz/russia-building-submarines-deliver-radioactive-tsunami-80381>

Leningrad II-2 fitted with dummy assemblies ahead of March fuel loading

World Nuclear News, September 13, 2019

"In loading the simulators [dummy assemblies] into the reactor, we've performed two tasks: we've worked out the transport and technological operations to transfer such important equipment from a special storage facility to the reactor building; and we've demonstrated the reliable operation and accuracy of the loading machine," Alexander Belyaev, chief engineer of Leningrad II, said in the company statement.

The dummy fuel assemblies, which will be in the reactor vessel until the beginning of next year, are necessary to confirm the geometry of the reactor core, to circulate the primary circuit and for a hot run the unit, Rosatom said.

<https://www.world-nuclear-news.org/Articles/Leningrad-II-2-fitted-with-fuel-assemblies>

Russia's first sea-borne nuclear power plant arrives to its base

Reuters, September 14, 2019

Russia's first-floating nuclear power plant has arrived to its permanent base near an isolated Russian town across the Bering Strait from Alaska, Russian state nuclear energy company Rosatom said on Saturday. Developed by Rosatom, the plant, known as "Akademik Lomonosov", set off on a 5,000 km (3,100 mile) journey on Aug. 23 through Arctic waters to reach the Chukotka region.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-russia-nuclear-floating/russias-first-sea-borne-nuclear-power-plant-arrives-to-its-base-idUSKBN1VZ0CY>

West Asia

G. Iran

Iran warns EU over nuclear commitments as deadline for further steps looms

Tuqa Khalid, Reuters, Septemeber 2, 2019

Iran has said it will breach the deal's limits on its nuclear activities one by one, ratcheting up pressure on the countries who still hope to save it. Tehran has threatened to take further steps by Sept. 6, such as enriching uranium to 20% or restarting mothballed centrifuges, machines that purify uranium for use as fuel in power plants or, if very highly enriched, in weapons.

Tehran is prepared to take a "stronger step" in reducing its commitments under the deal with world powers if European countries don't take action to save the pact, its foreign ministry's spokesman said on Monday. "The third step has been designed and will be stronger than the first and second steps to create balance between Iran's rights and commitments to the JCPOA," state news agency IRNA quoted the foreign ministry's spokesman Abbas Mousavi as saying on Monday. However, Iran had earlier stressed that these steps are "reversible" if the European signatories of the pact fulfilled their obligations.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-iran-nuclear-step/iran-warns-eu-over-nuclear-commitments-as-deadline-for-further-steps-looms-idUSKCN1VN000>

Iran says it closes gaps with France in talks on nuclear deal

Peter Graff, Reuters, September 2, 2019

Iran and France's views have become closer over Tehran's nuclear deal, mainly after phone calls between President Hassan Rouhani and his French counterpart Emmanuel Macron, Iran's government spokesman said on Monday. "Fortunately the points of views have become closer on many issues and now technical discussions

are being held on ways to carry out the Europeans' commitments (in the nuclear deal)," the spokesman, Ali Rabiei, said in remarks carried by state television, without giving details.

Since the United States pulled out of the 2015 nuclear deal last year, European parties to the pact have been trying to convince Iran to remain compliant by promising to shield its economic interests from U.S. sanctions.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-iran-france-spokesman/iran-says-it-closes-gaps-with-france-in-talks-on-nuclear-deal-idUSKCN1VN0NJ>

US won't waive sanctions to allow French-proposed Iran credit line

Saudi Gazette, September 4, 2019

A senior US official on Wednesday ruled out issuing waivers to Iran sanctions to permit a French-proposed credit line, which Tehran says could bring it back to full compliance with the nuclear deal. "We can't make it any more clear that we are committed to this campaign of maximum pressure and we are not looking to grant any exceptions or waivers," Brian Hook, the State Department coordinator on Iran, told reporters. He added, however, that he has not yet seen a "concrete" French proposal and could therefore not comment on the idea.

French President Emmanuel Macron has been seeking to ease soaring tensions by bringing some economic relief to Iran and last month appeared to draw President Donald Trump's interest when Macron said he hoped to arrange a summit between the US leader and his counterpart Hassan Rohani. Iran has been threatening to take new actions to curb its compliance with a 2015 denuclearization deal, from which Trump withdrew last year as he reimposed punishing sanctions.

<http://saudigazette.com.sa/article/576398/World/Mena/US-wont-waive-sanctions-to-allow-French-proposed-Iran-credit-line>

Defiant Iran pooh-poohs US sanctions on its space program

Saudi Gazette, September 4, 2019

Iran rejected on Wednesday as "ineffective" US sanctions imposed on Tehran's civilian space agency and two research organizations for allegedly being used to advance the country's disputed ballistic missile program. "Americans are addicted to sanctions. These sanctions are totally ineffective," Iran's semi-official Tasnim news agency quoted Foreign Ministry Mohammad Javad Zarif as saying.

The United States imposed sanctions on Iran's civilian space agency and two research organizations on Tuesday, saying they were being used to advance Tehran's ballistic missile program. The US Treasury sanctions targeted the Iran Space Agency, Iran Space Research Center and the Astronautics Research Institute, according to a statement on its website. "The United States will not allow Iran to use its space launch program as cover to advance its ballistic missile programs," Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said in a statement.

<http://saudigazette.com.sa/article/576358/World/Mena/Defiant-Iran-pooh-poohs-US-sanctions-on-its-space-program>

Iran gives Europe two more months to save nuclear deal

Saudi Gazette, September 4, 2019

Iran's President Hassan Rohani gave European powers another two months to save a 2015 nuclear deal on Wednesday, but warned that Tehran was still preparing for further significant breaches of the agreement if diplomatic efforts failed. His statement came as Iranian officials appeared to give a guarded welcome to a French proposal to save the atomic pact by offering Iran about \$15 billion in credit lines until the end of the year if Tehran comes fully back into compliance.

Rohani said talks with European powers were moving forward, raising hopes of at least a pause in a diplomatic confrontation between Iran and the West that has stoked

already heightened tensions across the region.

<http://saudigazette.com.sa/article/576359/World/Mena/Iran-gives-Europe-two-more-months-to-save-nuclear-deal>

Iran nuclear crisis in 300 words

BBC, September 5, 2019

What does the deal do? Iran has always insisted its nuclear programme is peaceful. But suspicions it was being used as a cover to develop a nuclear bomb prompted the UN Security Council, US and EU to impose crippling sanctions from 2010. Iran Accelerates Nuclear Research, Threatens to Boost Uranium Stockpile Move comes after Europe failed to meet a deadline to offset the impact of U.S. sanctions. In 2015, Iran reached a deal with six powers - the US, UK, France, China, Russia and Germany - that saw it limit its nuclear activities in return for sanctions relief.

The deal restricted Iran's enrichment of uranium, which is used to make reactor fuel but also nuclear weapons. It was also required to redesign a heavy-water reactor being built, whose spent fuel would contain plutonium suitable for a bomb, and allow international inspections. What prompted the latest crisis? President Donald Trump abandoned the deal in May 2018 and reinstated US sanctions. He wanted a new deal that would also curb Iran's ballistic missile programme and its involvement in regional conflicts. Iran refused and saw the value of its currency plummet and its inflation rate soar as the sanctions took effect. When the sanctions were tightened this May, Iran stopped abiding by some commitments in the deal.

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-48201138>

EU urges Iran to 'reverse' scale-back from N-deal

Saudi Gazette, September 5, 2019

The EU on Thursday urged Iran to reverse its scale-back of commitments to the nuclear accord struck with world powers

after the Islamic Republic announced it was ending curbs on atomic research. European Commission spokesman Carlos Martin Ruiz de Gordejuela told a media briefing in Brussels that the decision was "inconsistent" with the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, under which the accord is implemented.

"And in this context we urge Iran to reverse these steps and refrain from further measures that undermine the nuclear deal," he said. Meanwhile, Iran said on Thursday that it will announce details on Saturday of its latest scaling back of its commitments under a 2015 nuclear deal in response to sweeping US sanctions.

Atomic energy organization spokesman Behrouz Kamalvandi will hold a news conference to set out the details of Iran's third cut to its nuclear commitments since May, the semi-official ISNA news agency said.

<http://saudigazette.com.sa/article/576462/World/Mena/EU-urges-Iran-to-reverse-scale-back-from-N-deal>

Iran 'inching' toward place where talks could be held: Pentagon chief

Saudi Gazette, September 6, 2019

US Defense Secretary Mark Esper said on Friday that it appeared Iran was inching toward a place where talks could be held, days after US President Donald Trump left the door open to a possible meeting with Iranian President Hassan Rohani. Friction between the two countries has deepened since Trump last year withdrew from a 2015 international accord under which Iran had agreed to rein in its atomic program in exchange for relief from economic sanctions.

Washington has renewed and intensified its sanctions, slashing Iran's crude oil sales by more than 80 percent. "It seems in some ways that Iran is inching toward that place where we could have talks and hopefully it'll play out that way," Esper said at the Royal United Services Institute think-tank in London. Asked at a press conference later what he was basing his comments on, Esper said it was "in light of some of the comments

made by the Iranians in the wake of the G7."

<http://saudigazette.com.sa/article/576517/World/Mena/Iran-inching-toward-place-where-talks-could-be-held-Pentagon-chief>

Iran takes further step to scale back nuclear commitments

Saudi Gazette, September 6, 2019

Iran said on Friday it had taken a step to further downgrade its commitments to a 2015 nuclear deal with the world's most powerful nations, according to Iranian media, in retaliation to US sanctions reimposed on Tehran. Iran said on Wednesday it would begin developing centrifuges to speed up the enrichment of uranium, which can produce fuel for power plants or for atomic bombs. Tehran denies seeking nuclear weapons.

"Foreign Minister (Mohammad Javad) Zarif, in a letter to EU (European Union) policy chief (Federica Mogherini) announced that Iran has lifted all limitations on its (nuclear) Research and Development (R&D) activities," Iran's Students News Agency ISNA quoted Foreign Ministry spokesman Abbas Mousavi as saying. Under the deal, Iran is allowed limited research and development on advanced centrifuges, which accelerate the production of fissile material that can be used to make a nuclear bomb. Iran also agreed to limitations on specific research and development activities for eight years.

President Donald Trump pulled the United States out of the deal last year, arguing it did not go far enough, and reimposed sanctions that has slashed Iran's crude oil sales by more than 80 percent. Iran has responded by scaling back its nuclear commitments since May and has threatened to continue removing restraints on its nuclear program unless European parties to the pact did more to shield Iran's economy from the US penalties.

<http://saudigazette.com.sa/article/576524/World/Mena/Iran-takes-further-step-to-scale-back-nuclear-commitments>

Third step: Iran officially informs EU of plan to expand nuclear R&D

Tehran Times, September 6, 2019

In a letter to European Union foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini on Thursday, Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif announced that as a third step Iran stops implementing all commitments related to nuclear research and development (R&D) under the 2015 nuclear deal, officially known as the JCPOA. "Today, the Iranian foreign minister sent a letter to Mogherini, announcing that the Islamic Republic of Iran stops all commitments in the area of research and development under the JCPOA because of consequences of the United States' withdrawal from the deal and the three European countries' failure to implement their commitments," Foreign Ministry spokesman Abbas Mousavi said.

"In this letter, it has been said that this action is in line with Iran's rights under the JCPOA and within the paragraph 36 of it and is in response to violation of the JCPOA during the past 16 months." Mousavi added, "Technical details of Iran's action will be announced to the International Atomic Energy Agency." According to Mousavi, the final part of the letter said, "In order to show its good will, the Islamic Republic of Iran is prepared to continue negotiations at all levels with the parties remaining in the JCPOA, and return to the full implementation of the JCPOA in case the other parties implement all their JCPOA commitments."

<https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/439970/Third-step-Iran-officially-informs-EU-of-plan-to-expand-nuclear>

Pompeo says Iran nuclear commitment cuts 'unacceptable'

Saudi Gazette, September 6, 2019

US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said on Friday that Iran's latest reduction in commitments to a nuclear deal — made in retaliation for US sanctions — was "unacceptable." "They announced... that they're going to continue to do more research

and development on their nuclear weapon systems. Those things are unacceptable," Pompeo told Kansas City radio station KCMO.

Iranian President Hassan Rohani made the announcement on Wednesday and the country's atomic energy organization is set to hold a press conference on Saturday, as Tehran shows its frustration with the 2015 deal. Iran has been negotiating with European powers that hope to salvage the accord despite the reimposition of sanctions by the United States, which last year pulled out of the deal. Despite his hawkish stance, President Donald Trump has said he is willing to speak with Iran, a prospect proposed by France.

<http://saudigazette.com.sa/article/576563/World/Mena/Pompeo-says-Iran-nuclear-commitment-cuts-unacceptable>

Iran further breaches nuclear deal, says it can exceed 20% enrichment

Saudi Gazette, September 7, 2019

Iran said on Saturday it was now capable of raising uranium enrichment past the 20% level and had launched advanced centrifuge machines in further breaches of commitments to limit its nuclear activity under a 2015 deal with world powers. "We have started lifting limitations on our Research and Development imposed by the deal ... It will include development of more rapid and advanced centrifuges," Iranian nuclear agency spokesman Behrouz Kamalvandi told a televised news conference.

The 2015 pact curbed Iran's disputed nuclear program in exchange for relief from sanctions, but has unraveled since the United States pulled out of it last year and acted to strangle Iran's oil trade to push it into wider security concessions.

<http://saudigazette.com.sa/article/576663/World/Asia/Iran-further-breaches-nuclear-deal-says-it-can-exceed-20-enrichment>

IAEA found uranium traces at Iran 'atomic warehouse' — diplomats

Saudi Gazette, September 8, 2019

Samples taken by the UN nuclear watchdog at what Israel's prime minister called a "secret atomic warehouse" in Tehran showed traces of uranium that Iran has yet to explain, two diplomats who follow the agency's inspections work closely say. The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) is investigating the particles' origin and has asked Iran to explain the traces. But Tehran has not done so, according to the diplomats, stoking tensions between Washington and Tehran. US sanctions have slashed Iranian oil sales and Iran has responded by breaching its 2015 nuclear deal with world powers.

In a speech a year ago Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who vehemently opposed the deal, called on the IAEA to visit the site immediately, saying it had housed 15 kg (33 lb) of unspecified radioactive material that had since been removed. Reuters first reported in April that the IAEA, which is policing the nuclear deal, had inspected the site — a step it had said it takes "only when necessary" — and environmental samples taken there were sent off for analysis.

<http://saudigazette.com.sa/article/576763/World/Asia/IAEA-found-uranium-traces-at-Iran-atomic-warehouse-mdash-diplomats>

U.S. Says Iran possibly Conducting Secret Activities

Jerusalem Post, September 10, 2019

United States is accusing Iran of conducting "secret nuclear activities" after Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's speech last night, in which he announced that Israel had unveiled other secret sites in the Iranian nuclear program.

<https://www.jpost.com/Breaking-News/US-Iran-Possible-Secret-Nuclear-Operation-601206>

Rouhani to Merkel: Iran's interests must be guaranteed in nuclear deal

Tehran Times, May 11, 2019

In a phone conversation with German Chancellor Angela Merkel on Thursday, President Hassan Rouhani said that Iran's interests must be guaranteed in the nuclear deal, known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action. Rouhani said that the European Union states, especially Germany, France and UK, should announce their stance on guaranteeing Iran's interests in the JCPOA after Trump pulled the U.S. out of the international deal on Tuesday.

He said, "Iran's interests in issues related to the JCPOA such as sale of oil, gas and also banking relations should be guaranteed transparently and clearly." "These issues which can help preserving the JCPOA should be discussed by the Iranian and European foreign ministers and experts in future weeks," Rouhani asserted. Iranian Foreign Minister is scheduled to meet with his German, French and British counterparts in Brussels on Monday to discuss the fate of the nuclear agreement.

<https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/423437/Rouhani-to-Merkel-Iran-s-interests-must-be-guaranteed-in-nuclear>

Expert: Non-European trade partners better for Iran

Haniyeh Sadat Jafariyeh, Tehran Times, May 11, 2019

European countries have been looking to increase trade ties with Iran since the 5+1 countries and Iran struck a nuclear deal according to which Tehran agreed to limit its nuclear activities in exchange for termination of most economic sanctions. The multilateral deal, involving Iran, the European Union, Germany and the five permanent members of the UN Security

Council, was clinched in 2015 and went into force in January 2016.

Europeans have repeatedly affirmed that they would stick to the deal since it was signed and endorsed by the UN Security Council, however, under the present condition that President Donald Trump has pulled out the U.S. from the nuclear deal, known as the JCPOA, they need to find ways to limit any impact from possible U.S. sanctions to ensure their firms continue to do business with Tehran. One of their options would be restoring “blocking regulations”, a system from 1996 that would protect European firms. The regulations were agreed in 1996 as a countermeasure to the U.S. extraterritorial economic sanctions against Cuba, which EU governments said benefited U.S. foreign policy interests at the expense of European sovereignty.

<https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/423457/Expert-Non-European-trade-partners-better-for-Iran>

Talks with U.S. under sanctions meaningless, Rouhani says

Tehran Times, September 13, 2019

President Hassan Rouhani said on Wednesday that it makes no sense to hold talks with the United States when sanctions against Iran are in place. “From the viewpoint of the government, parliament and the people of Iran, negotiations with the United States make no sense when sanctions remain,” Rouhani said in a phone conversation with French President Emmanuel Macron.

Rouhani noted that the U.S. refrained from fulfilling its commitments by withdrawing from the 2015 nuclear deal, formally called the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action. Pointing to Iran’s third step in reducing its commitments under the deal, he said that the action has been done under the supervision of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and is reversible. The president once again urged the European Union, particularly France as a heavyweight

member of the 27-nation bloc, to play their part in preserving the deal.

<https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/440086/Talks-with-U-S-under-sanctions-meaningless-Rouhani-says>

Through seeking talks with Iran, Trump intends the region to recognize Israel: ex-diplomat

Tehran Times, September 15, 2019

Ahmad Dastmalchian, Iran’s former ambassador to Lebanon, has said that U.S. President Donald Trump’s objective in seeking talks with Iran is a recognition of the Zionist regime of Israel in the Middle East. “The United States seeks recognition of the Zionist regime in the region and uses various countries as slave on this path such as the view it has about Saudi Arabia, and seeking talks with Iran is in line with this objective of the United States,” ISNA quoted Dastmalchian as saying on Sunday.

“However, the resistance front counters them. The United States seeks to divide the regional countries, but the resistance front makes efforts for the countries to be independent from the United States and the Zionist regime,” he remarked. In a phone conversation with French President Emmanuel Macron on Wednesday, President Hassan Rouhani said it makes no sense to hold talks with the United States when sanctions against Iran are in place.

<https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/440179/Through-seeking-talks-with-Iran-Trump-intends-the-region-to>

Iran says Bolton’s Resignation Won’t Lead to Talks With the US

Reuters, September 11, 2019

The resignation of White House National Security Adviser John Bolton, a hawk on Iran, will not lead to talks between Washington and Tehran, Iran said on Wednesday. President Hassan Rouhani

urged the United States to end its policy of “maximum pressure” on his country, and said Tehran would cut its commitments to a 2015 nuclear deal further if necessary, state TV reported.

Last year, the United States pulled out of the nuclear deal, under which Iran agreed to curbs on its atomic program in return for access to world trade. Washington has since imposed what the administration calls a policy of “maximum pressure,” including sanctions aimed at halting all Iranian oil exports. Iran has responded with a series of steps to reduce its compliance with the nuclear deal, although it says it still aims to keep it in place. Trump has suggested he would be willing to hold talks with Iran to reach a new deal. Iran has long said talks are impossible unless Washington lifts its sanctions first.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-iran-nuclear-usa/iran-says-u-s-should-avoid-warmongers-after-bolton-departure-idUSKCN1VW0U5>

Iran Denounces ‘US-Israel Plot’ Over Nuclear Program

Reuters, September 12, 2019

Iran has denounced a “U.S.-Israeli plot” to put pressure on the U.N. nuclear watchdog, after the IAEA called in recent days for more cooperation from Tehran following what diplomats say was the detection of uranium particles at an undeclared site. The International Atomic Energy Agency has broad powers to inspect Iran under its 2015 nuclear agreement with major powers. The IAEA has issued its calls in recent days for Iran to cooperate, without saying specifically what prompted them, saying this is confidential. Diplomats told Reuters the agency wants Iran to explain how traces of uranium were found at a site that Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu described a year ago as a “secret atomic warehouse.”

“Since two days before this session of the Board, we are witnessing a U.S.-Israeli plot with the support of their affiliated media,” Iran’s ambassador to the IAEA, Kazem Gharibabadi, said in a statement to an IAEA

Board of Governors meeting that began on Monday. He singled out former U.S. National Security Adviser John Bolton, a hawk on Iran who left his job on Tuesday. On Saturday, hours before the IAEA’s acting chief flew to Tehran for a visit, Bolton had said that Iran “may be concealing nuclear material and/or activities.”

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-iran-nuclear-iaea/iran-denounces-u-s-israeli-plot-over-nuclear-program-idUSKCN1VW1Q7>

H. Israel

UK and Israeli leaders agree on need to stop Iran getting nuclear weapon

Reuters, September 5, 2019

British Prime Minister Boris Johnson and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu agreed during a meeting in London on the need to prevent Iran acquiring a nuclear weapon, Downing Street said on Thursday. “Both Prime Ministers agreed on the need to prevent Iran getting a nuclear weapon and stop wider destabilizing Iranian behavior. The Prime Minister stressed the need for dialogue and a diplomatic solution,” a Downing Street spokeswoman said.

Johnson also said he looked forward to seeing the United States’ proposals for a viable Israel-Palestinian peace agreement, the spokeswoman said.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-britain-israel-iran/uk-and-israeli-leaders-agree-on-need-to-stop-iran-getting-nuclear-weapon-idUSKCN1VQ1WV>

Netanyahu accuses Iran of destroying secret ‘nuclear site’

Saudi Gazette, September 9, 2019

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Monday accused Iran of having a previously undisclosed site aimed at developing nuclear weapons that it destroyed. Iran destroyed the site located near the city of Abadeh, south of Isfahan,

sometime between late June and late July after realizing that Israel had detected it, Netanyahu alleged. In an address on live television, with photos of the alleged site on a screen behind him, Netanyahu referred to an intelligence trove he had previously announced last year.

<http://saudigazette.com.sa/article/576845/World/Mena/Netanyahu-accuses-Iran-of-destroying-secret-nuclear-siteite>

Netanyahu Sees US Stays “Very Very Tough” on Iran Despite Bolton Ouster

Jerusalem Post, September 11, 2019

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu played down the impact of hawkish John Bolton’s exit from the post of US national security adviser, predicting on Wednesday that Washington would hold to a tough line on Iran. US President Donald Trump fired Bolton on Tuesday, citing policy disagreements. US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said immediately after that Trump might meet Iranian President Hassan Rouhani at the U.N. general assembly this month.

Netanyahu was among the most vocal champions of Trump’s withdrawal from the 2015 nuclear deal between Iran and major powers and has voiced misgivings about Western engagement with Tehran unless this leads to sweeping restrictions on sensitive nuclear projects.

<https://www.jpost.com/Breaking-News/Netanyahu-sees-US-stays-very-very-tough-on-Iran-despite-Bolton-ouster-601424>

Trump Should Not meet with Rouhani

Gil Hoffman, Jerusalem Post, September 11, 2019

Blue and White co-candidate for prime minister Yair Lapid called upon US President Donald Trump not to go through with his possible meeting with Iranian President Hassan Rouhani later this month in New York. Speaking in an interview with The

Jerusalem Post on Tuesday that will be published on Friday, Lapid differentiated himself from Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who said he would not object to such a meeting.

“The only method that can prevent Iran’s nuclearization is strong sanctions, and too many people will assume that such a meeting would result in lifting sanctions,” Lapid said. Netanyahu told reporters who accompanied him to London on Thursday: “Right now, the time is to apply pressure. Does that mean that after a month or two months of pressure, you can’t do it? I don’t rule it out, and I certainly don’t decide for the president of the United States when to meet and whom to meet with.”

<https://www.jpost.com/International/Lapid-Trump-should-not-meet-with-Rouhani-601203>

Israeli Ambassador Urges US to Stay the Course’ on Pressuring Iran

Ron Kampeas, Jerusalem Post, September 11, 2019

Dermer, the Israeli ambassador to Washington, urged the United States to “stay the course” and increase pressure on Iran amid reports that the Trump administration is open to diplomatic initiatives with the Islamic Republic. “What is important now is to stay the course, stand up to Iran’s aggression and continue ratcheting up the pressure until Iran abandons its nuclear ambitions once and for all,” Dermer said Tuesday evening at a pre-Rosh Hashanah reception at the embassy. “Israel looks forward to working with the Trump administration to do just that in the year ahead.”

Dermer otherwise lavishly praised President Donald Trump for his increased sanctions on Iran as well as for other moves, including moving the U.S. Embassy to Jerusalem and recognizing Israel’s sovereignty over the Golan Heights.

<https://www.jpost.com/Middle-East/Israeli-ambassador-urges-US-to-stay-the-course-on-pressuring-Iran-601442>

Europe is Propping up Iranian Terror While Demonizing Israel

Jerusalem Post, September 12, 2019

It's not everyday that a world leader manages to wrestle the attention and agenda from Donald Trump. But at the recent G7 summit in Biarritz, France, French President Emmanuel Macron took center stage (at least for a few moments) with his surprise invitation to Iran's foreign minister, Jarad Zarif. Trump has been putting the squeeze on Iran, walking away last year from the 2015 Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action and ratcheting up sanctions on the Islamic Republic. In turn, Macron and other European leaders have been waging a two-front campaign — keep Iran tethered to the nuclear deal long enough to get Trump and the United States back on board.

In addition to the Zarif invitation, French officials this month reportedly proposed a \$15 billion letter of credit to compensate Iran for U.S. sanctions and incentivize that country to keep the terms of the 2015 deal. In order to understand how grievous a mistake this is, Macron just has to follow the money released to Iran since the JCPOA was signed.

<https://www.jpost.com/International/Europe-is-propping-up-Iranian-terror-while-demonizing-Israel-601439>

I. Saudi Arabia

U.S. energy secretary says nuclear power talks with new Saudi minister likely Monday

Timothy Gardner, Reuters, September 13, 2019

U.S. Energy Secretary Rick Perry said on Friday he will meet the new Saudi energy minister on Monday and likely discuss plans the kingdom has to build nuclear reactors. Perry did not say where he would meet Energy Minister Prince Abdulaziz bin Salman, who took over from Khalid al-Falih on Sunday. But a U.S. official said the meeting would likely take place on the sidelines of an International Atomic Energy Agency meeting in Vienna next week.

The kingdom has so far resisted agreeing to standards that would block its ability to enrich uranium and reprocessing of plutonium, possible pathways to making an atomic weapon. On Monday, Prince Abdulaziz said the kingdom wanted to enrich uranium for its nuclear power program, potentially complicating talks with the Trump administration on the atomic pact and the role of U.S. companies. Perry told reporters at department headquarters on Friday the kingdom must agree to so-called 123 nonproliferation standards before coming to any agreement.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-energy-perry/u-s-energy-secretary-says-nuclear-power-talks-with-new-saudi-minister-likely-monday-idUSKCN1VY1S7>

East Asia

J. Japan

Japan urges nuke plants to prepare for decommissioning era

Mari Yamaguchi, AP News, September 2, 2019

Japan's nuclear policy-setting body adopted a report Monday saying the country is entering an era of massive nuclear plant decommissioning, urging plant operators to plan ahead to lower safety risks and costs requiring decades and billions of dollars. Twenty-four commercial reactors — or 40% of Japan's total — are designated for or are being decommissioned. Among them are four reactors at the Fukushima Dai-ichi plant that were severely damaged by the massive 2011 earthquake and tsunami that struck northeastern Japan

The annual nuclear white paper, adopted by the Japan Atomic Energy Commission, urges utilities to learn from U.S. and European examples, especially those of Germany, France and Britain. Japan hasn't yet completed the decommissioning of any reactors and doesn't have concrete plans for the final disposal of radioactive waste. "Taking into consideration further increase of nuclear facilities that will be

decommissioned, new technology and systems need to be developed in order to carry out the tasks efficiently and smoothly," the report said. "It's a whole new stage that we have to proceed to and tackle." Japanese utilities have opted to scrap aged reactors instead of investing in safety requirements under post-Fukushima standards. The decommissioning of a typical reactor costs nearly 60 billion yen (\$560 million) and takes several decades.

https://www.apnews.com/694bda3a08a44012b01c1a16a5cb1803_

Russia plans additional missile defense buildup on Kuril Islands

Mainichi Japan, September 3, 2019

Russia is planning to deploy additional missile systems on two islands in the northern portion of the Kuril Islands chain off Japan's Hokkaido in a bid to strengthen its defense capabilities in the region, an internal Russian government document showed Monday. The document, obtained by Kyodo News, revealed that new land-to-ship missile systems called the Bastion, with a range of more than 300 kilometers, would be deployed on Paramushir and Matua in the chain, which includes four Japan-claimed islands. The plan indicates Russia places strategic importance on the Kuril Islands in defending the Sea of Okhotsk and its nuclear force stronghold against the United States.

It also means a defense line stretching from the Kamchatka Peninsula to Hokkaido, which falls within the range of the missile defense systems, will be completed soon. The development is likely to hinder progress on talks on a postwar peace treaty between Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and Russian President Vladimir Putin, who are scheduled to meet Thursday in Vladivostok in Russia's Far East on the sidelines of an economic forum. With the United States seeking to deploy intermediate-range missiles in the Asia-Pacific region following the demise of the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty with Russia last month, tensions continue to heighten. The document dated December showed that the missile defense

systems would be moved from the Kamchatka Peninsula to Paramushir and Matua islands this year based on a presidential order.

It said a vessel-detection radio base and an air fleet would also be installed on Matua. Regarding the deployment of the missile systems on the two islands, a Russian government official said, "They have already been moved, and are now being prepared for operation." Tokyo has expressed opposition to a military buildup in the region surrounding the Russian-held, Japanese-claimed islands off Hokkaido, which are known as the Northern Territories in Japan and the Southern Kurils in Russia. A separate document obtained by Kyodo News late last year, thought to have been drawn up sometime after the summer, showed Russia's plans to set up a "unified defense system" along the islands chain with the deployment of additional missiles to Paramushir and Matua in 2020.

https://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20190903/p2g/00m/0in/008000c_

Watchdog to restart probe into Fukushima nuclear accident

Toshio Kawada, Asahi Shimbun, September 5, 2019

The Nuclear Regulation Authority (NRA) plans to restart its investigation into the 2011 disaster at the Fukushima No. 1 nuclear power plant now that radiation levels have dropped at the site. The NRA judged that investigators will be able to approach key equipment at the plant to obtain new information for an analysis into the causes of the accident. The nation's nuclear watchdog will compile a report on the results of the investigation within 2020, ahead of the 10th anniversary of the nuclear accident in March 2021.

An examination council whose members include outside experts will be reopened to conduct the investigation. The NRA was established after the Great East Japan Earthquake and tsunami on March 11,

2011, led to a triple meltdown at the plant operated by Tokyo Electric Power Co. The NRA's purpose was not only to strengthen safety standards at nuclear plants but also to clarify the causes of the Fukushima accident.

<http://www.asahi.com/ajw/articles/AJ201909050042.html>

Japan may have to dump radioactive water into the sea, minister says

Reuters, September 10, 2019

Japan's Tokyo Electric Power (9501.T) will have to dump radioactive water from its destroyed Fukushima nuclear power plant into the Pacific Ocean as it runs out of room to store it, the environment minister said on Tuesday. Tokyo Electric, or Tepco, has collected more than 1 million tonnes of contaminated water from the cooling pipes used to keep fuel cores from melting since the plant was crippled by an earthquake and tsunami in 2011. "The only option will be to drain it into the sea and dilute it," the minister, Yoshiaki Harada, told a news briefing in Tokyo.

"The whole of the government will discuss this, but I would like to offer my simple opinion." The government is awaiting a report from an expert panel before making a final decision on how to dispose of the radioactive water. Japan's Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshihide Suga, in a separate press briefing, described Harada's comments as "his personal opinion".

https://www.reuters.com/article/us-japan-fukushima-water/japan-may-have-to-dump-radioactive-water-into-the-sea-minister-says-idUSKCN1VV0CC_

New environment minister says Japan should stop using nuclear power

Reuters, September 12, 2019

Japan's newly installed environment minister, Shinjiro Koizumi, wants the country to close down nuclear reactors to avoid a repeat of the Fukushima catastrophe in 2011. The comments by the son of former

prime minister Junichiro Koizumi, himself an anti-nuclear advocate, are likely to prove controversial in the ruling Liberal Democratic Party, which supports a return to nuclear power under new safety rules imposed after Fukushima. "I would like to study how we will scrap them, not how to retain them," Shinjiro Koizumi said at his first news conference late on Wednesday after he was appointed by Prime Minister Shinzo Abe.

Japan's nuclear regulator is overseen by Koizumi's ministry. Three reactors at the Fukushima Daiichi station run by Tokyo Electric Power melted down after being hit by a massive earthquake and tsunami in March 2011, spewing radiation that forced 160,000 people to flee, many never to return. Most of Japan's nuclear reactors, which before Fukushima supplied about 30 percent of the country's electricity, are going through a re-licensing process under new safety standards imposed after the disaster highlighted regulatory and operational failings.

https://www.reuters.com/article/us-japan-nuclear-koizumi/new-environment-minister-says-japan-should-stop-using-nuclear-power-idUSKCN1VX01E_

SDF, U.S. Army stage first drill using missiles to avert sea attack

The Asahi Shimbun, September 18, 2019

Japanese and U.S. ground forces for the first time staged a simulated attack against an enemy ship using land-to-ship missiles at a training site in Kyushu. The joint exercise on Sept. 17 at the Oyanohara training area in Kumamoto Prefecture had China in mind as a potential target of future operations. It was the first joint exercise in Japan between the U.S. Army and the Ground Self-Defense Force involving land-to-ship missiles. A similar joint exercise was held last year in the United States. The U.S. side operated the high-mobility artillery rocket system (HIMARS) during the drill, which forms part of Orient Shield 19 joint exercises being held in various locations. A GSDF unit handled Type 12 surface-to-ship missiles (SSM) in the

exercise, with the training area serving as an outlying island under attack from a warship at sea.

China's growing maritime presence in the region was likely a key factor behind the joint exercise, analysts said. Against this background, the GSDF is stepping up efforts to protect southwestern islands off Kyushu by deploying a SSM unit to Amami-Oshima island off southern Kagoshima Prefecture. GSDF personnel have also been deployed to Miyakojima and Ishigakijima island. The SSM is capable of flying at low altitudes. Given that this year's joint exercise was held in an area facing China, it is likely designed to highlight the close cooperation between Japan and the United States in defense matters.

<http://www.asahi.com/ajw/articles/AJ201909180030.html>

K. North Korea

NK-US nuclear talks will be delayed until end of year

Lee Min-hyung, Korea Times, September 3, 2019

North Korea is unwilling to hold nuclear talks with the United States as of now, and will continue to delay the dialogue until the year-end deadline set by the North's young leader Kim Jong-un, experts said Tuesday. The negotiation between Washington and Pyongyang on the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula has faced ups and downs this year following the failure of the Hanoi summit between U.S. President Donald Trump and Kim in February. But with two of the world's most unpredictable leaders holding an unexpected "mini summit" at the inter-Korean border area on June 30, expectations resurfaced over the possible resumption of dialogue. At that time, the North also expressed its determination to resume working-level talks with the U.S. "in the next few weeks" following the meeting. Pyongyang, however, did not keep the promise, citing a number of excuses, such as a joint military exercise between Seoul and Washington.

Experts here said chances remain very slim

that the two sides will resume their working-level or high-level dialogue anytime soon, as they have yet to narrow their differences on denuclearization. Washington wants to sign a one-shot big deal to achieve complete denuclearization of the peninsula, but Pyongyang is still sticking to its previous position of taking a step-by-step approach. "As of now, the two countries are showing no signs of making concessions, so it is unlikely that the North will respond to the repeated U.S. calls to resume nuclear talks," said Park Won-gon, a professor of international politics at Handong Global University.

http://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/nation/2019/09/113_275052.html

N. Korea continues to develop ICBM program: UN panel

Yonhap, Korea Herald, September 6, 2019

North Korea's missile programs are designed to support its development of intercontinental ballistic missiles, a United Nations panel of experts said Thursday, underscoring the ongoing threat posed by the regime. The panel made the assessment in a new report for the UN Security Council committee monitoring sanctions implementation against North Korea, adding that the regime's nuclear weapons program also continues unabated. The report covers the period Feb. 2 - Aug. 2, and comes as US-North Korea denuclearization negotiations have stalled since the no-deal summit between US President Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong-un in February, with the two sides apart on how far the North needs to denuclearize in exchange for sanctions relief from the US. The experts in particular noted the significance of recent short-range ballistic missile tests by North Korea, which Trump has dismissed as "very standard."

The new class of SRBMs launched on May 4 and 9, as well as two missiles described by the North as a "new-type tactical guided weapon" launched on July 24, "are evidence of the DPRK's ability to master key components of ballistic missile systems,

including solid rocket fuel production, mobility through the use of different types of transporter erector launcher (TEL) and the capacity to penetrate ballistic missile defense systems," according to the document.

There is a "clear development progression from propellant for artillery rockets/SRBMs to solid propellant for ICBMs," the report says, adding that systems integration and internal synergies ensure that developments on the SRBM program benefit medium-range and intercontinental ballistic missile programs.

"With regard to missile engine development," the report says, "the DPRK's current goal appears to be to develop a solid-fueled first stage for its ICBM." To further support their case, the experts note that regular activity has been observed at ICBM bases close to the northern border, including at the Hojung-ri site, and that the North's priority is to secure the railway network supporting its ICBM brigades.

http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20190906000169&ACE_SEARCH=1

New cold war looms large between old foes

Pyongyang Times, September 7, 2019

The US, which officially announced the plan for organizing a space force in August last year, has set a goal of founding it as an independent service by 2020. The US president gave an instruction to the Defense Department to draft a bill on organizing the space force in February this year. Accordingly, he recently expressed his intention to build a space unit to deploy means of attack-oriented missile defence system in the outer space. The international community likens it to the Star Wars plan of the Reagan administration in the 1980s. A Polish Internet magazine said that the current US policy would be inefficient like that of the Reagan administration. The Russian foreign ministry published a press release, in which it noted that the plan would inevitably trigger an arms race in the outer space, which may have very negative

consequences for international security and stability. Recently, a missile race has been reproduced between the two nuclear powers. The US seceded from the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty on August 2 and Russia strongly responded to it. In the current circumstances, the two countries will step up missile development and tests like unreined horses and it would have a great impact on different countries of the world.

In recent years the US has deployed MK-41 launch device capable of launching intermediate-range cruise missiles and ground-based interceptor missile system Aegis Ashore in Romania on the pretext of "missile threat" from Iran. It also installed these weapon systems in Poland and the Czech Republic. And it openly reveals its intention to build missile bases in several Asian regions. In response Russia deployed mobile tactical missile system Iskander capable of delivering nuclear warheads in Kaliningrad neighbouring Poland. It also increases the number of such anti-aircraft rocket systems deployed for action as C-400, while pushing ahead with the development of 5G anti-aircraft missile system C-500 at the final stage. Russian President Putin in his annual message to the Federation Council made public a new-type ICBM Sarmat developed by his country, explaining that the missile can be launched in the direction of the South and North poles and is equipped with a latest system to neutralize MD systems. He also referred to the development of a new cruise missile and unmanned submarine in which small nuclear-powered engines are installed.

At present the relationship between Russia and the US has gone beyond mistrust and friction to hostility. The conflicting stands of the two countries aggravate the contradictions and are giving rise to a new era of confrontation. The Russia-US arms race that invites the second cold war has just begun.

<http://www.pyongyangtimes.com.kp/?bbs=31290>

U.S. hopes for North Korea talks in days, weeks: Pompeo

Reuters, September 8, 2019

The United States hopes to get back to denuclearization talks with North Korea in the coming days or weeks, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said on Sunday.

Negotiations aimed at dismantling Pyongyang's nuclear and missile programs have stalled since the collapse of a second summit between U.S. President Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un in the Vietnamese capital of Hanoi in February. Trump and Kim met again in June at the border between North Korea and South Korea and agreed to reopen working-level talks, but that has not happened. "We know Chairman Kim has continued to make the commitment to denuclearize. We are hopeful that in the coming days or perhaps weeks we'll be back at the negotiating table with them. That's the best outcome," Pompeo said in an interview with ABC's "This Week." North Korea has fired a series of short-range missiles in recent weeks in protest against U.S.-South Korea joint military exercises and the adoption of new weapons, complicating the reopening of the talks.

https://www.reuters.com/article/us-northkorea-usa/u-s-hopes-for-north-korea-talks-in-days-weeks-pompeo-idUSKCN1VT0OV_

North Korea says it will resume talks but adds pressure with new launches

Josh Smith, Joyce Lee, Reuters, September 10, 2019

North Korea fired a new round of short-range projectiles on Tuesday, South Korean officials said, only hours after it signaled a new willingness to resume stalled denuclearization talks with the United States. The launches were detected early in the morning by the South Korean military, which said they appeared to be short-range projectiles. The launches came hours after Vice Foreign Minister Choe Son Hui said in a statement carried by state media that North Korea was willing to have

"comprehensive discussions" with the United States in late September at a time and place to be agreed.

Choe warned that the United States needed to present a new approach or the talks could fall apart again. A U.S. State Department spokeswoman said she did not have any talks to announce at that time. Shares of South Korean construction firms with exposure to North Korea surged after the announcement that North Korea was willing to restart talks with the United States and continued to gain despite the latest launches. U.S. President Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un met at the demilitarized zone (DMZ) between the two Koreas in June and agreed to restart working-level negotiations that had been stalled since an unsuccessful second summit between the two leaders in Vietnam in February.

https://www.reuters.com/article/us-northkorea-missiles/north-korea-says-it-will-resume-talks-but-adds-pressure-with-new-launches-idUSKCN1VU2GW_

Working-level nuclear talks aimed at drafting summit agreement: pro-Pyongyang paper

Yonhap, Korea Herald, September 12, 2019

Working-level talks expected to take place between the United States and North Korea late this month are part of a process to draft an agreement to be signed at the next summit of the two countries, a pro-Pyongyang newspaper in Japan said Thursday.

Earlier this week, the North expressed a willingness to hold working-level talks with the U.S. in late September in what would mark a resumption of the negotiating process that reached a deadlock with February's no-deal summit between U.S. President Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong-un. The Choson Sinbo newspaper said the upcoming talks are a "process to discuss and fine-tune the content to be included in an agreement to be signed at a summit" and therefore, the negotiating teams bear a heavy responsibility. "Should a summit

between the DPRK and the U.S. take place, it will be an opportunity for the DPRK and the U.S., which threaten each other with nukes, to take a first step toward establishing a new relationship while resolving security concerns of each other," the paper said.

http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20190912000069&ACE_SEARCH=1

North Korea could warm up to talks after removal of 'war maniac' Bolton

David Brunnstrom, Reuters, September 11, 2019

Having once branded John Bolton a "war maniac", North Korean officials could see U.S. President Donald Trump's removal of his national security adviser as a chance to resume denuclearization talks without facing an unyielding hawk on the other side. In the past, Bolton has proposed using military force to overthrow the ruling Kim family and U.S. officials have said Bolton was responsible for the collapse of Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un's second summit in Vietnam in February. Trump announced he had fired Bolton a day after North Korea signaled a new willingness to resume stalled denuclearization talks with the United States, but then conducted the latest in a spate of missile launches here

Policy analysts say Bolton's departure could help U.S. efforts to revive the talks but will not make Washington's aim of persuading Pyongyang to give up its nuclear weapons any easier. "The timing could be convenient for U.S. diplomacy with North Korea," said Leif-Eric Easley, a professor at Seoul's Ewha University. "Pyongyang made its disdain for Bolton well known. Kim Jong Un can spin this personnel change in Washington as a win in North Korean domestic politics. That would increase the likelihood of denuclearization talks restarting soon."

Harry Kazianis, a North Korea expert at Washington's Center for the National Interest think tank, said Trump was now free to find a national security adviser opposed to wars of regime change and willing to back

a diplomatic track with North Korea. Indeed, Trump's North Korea envoy, Stephen Biegun, a firm advocate of engagement with Pyongyang, is among the names that have been floated as possible successors to Bolton.

https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-trump-bolton-northkorea/north-korea-could-warm-up-to-talks-after-removal-of-war-maniac-bolton-idUSKCN1VV2N4_

North Korea tested super-large multiple rocket launcher under Kim's guidance

Korea Times, September 11, 2019

North Korea said Wednesday that it tested a super-large multiple rocket launcher the previous day under the guidance of leader Kim Jong-un. On Tuesday, South Korea's military said that the North fired two short-range projectiles from its western region toward the east, saying both flew about 330 kilometers. Kim "gave field guidance to the test-fire of super-large multiple rocket launcher again on Tuesday," according to the Korean Central News Agency (KCNA). Kim also said that the latest test has finally verified the aspects related to its combat operation, characteristics of trajectory, accuracy and precise homing functions, adding the remaining step is to run a fire test "which is most vivid character in terms of the power of multiple rocket launcher." The KCNA, however, did not mention whether the test was a success.

Tuesday's firings marked the 10th weapons test North Korea has conducted this year. On Aug. 24, Pyongyang said it successfully test-fired a new super-large multiple rocket launcher. The latest weapons test came just hours after North Korea offered to resume nuclear talks with the U.S. North Korean Vice Foreign Minister Choe Son-hui said in a statement that the North is willing to sit down with the U.S. "at the time and place to be agreed late in September."

http://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/nation/2019/09/103_275469.html

North Korea carried out super-large multiple rocket launcher test on Tuesday: KCNA

Joyce Lee, Reuters, September 11, 2019

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un oversaw the testing of a super-large multiple rocket launcher on Tuesday, North Korean state media KCNA said on Wednesday. North Korea fired a new round of short-range projectiles on Tuesday, South Korean officials said, only hours after it signaled a new willingness to resume stalled denuclearization talks with the United States in late September. Kim, who had guided the testing of the same multiple rocket launcher before, said its capabilities have been “finally verified in terms of combat operation,” and what remains to be done with the rocket launcher is a “running fire test,” KCNA said, without elaborating on what the test would entail.

Kim ordered future tasks and ways to “steadily” attain cutting-edge national defense to officials that had joined him, including senior officials such as his sister Kim Yo Jong, KCNA said.

https://www.reuters.com/article/us-northkorea-missiles/north-korea-carried-out-super-large-multiple-rocket-launcher-test-on-tuesday-kcna-idUSKCN1VV2OW_

U.S. imposes sanctions on North Korean hacking groups blamed for global attacks

Reuters, September 13, 2019

The U.S. Treasury on Friday announced sanctions on three North Korean hacking groups it said were involved in the “WannaCry” ransomware attacks and hacking of international banks and customer accounts. The action blocks any U.S.-related assets of the groups and prohibits dealings with them. The Treasury statement said any foreign financial institution that knowingly facilitated significant transactions or services for them could also be subject to sanctions.

“Treasury is taking action against North Korean hacking groups that have been perpetrating cyber attacks to support illicit

weapon and missile programs,” said Sigal Mandelker, Treasury under secretary for Terrorism and Financial Intelligence. “We will continue to enforce existing U.S. and U.N. sanctions against North Korea and work with the international community to improve cybersecurity of financial networks.” The United States has been attempting to restart talks with North Korea, aimed at pressing the country to give up its nuclear weapons. The talks have been stalled over North Korean demands for concessions, including sanctions relief.

Earlier this month, North Korea denied U.N. allegations it had obtained \$2 billion through cyberattacks on banks and cryptocurrency exchanges, and accused the United States of spreading rumors. The Treasury statement said Lazarus Group was involved in the WannaCry ransomware attack that the United States, Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United Kingdom publicly attributed to North Korea in December 2017. It said WannaCry affected at least 150 countries and shut down about 300,000 computers, including many in Britain’s National Health Service (NHS). The NHS attack led to the cancellation of more than 19,000 appointments and ultimately cost the service over \$112 million, the biggest known ransomware attack in history.

https://www.reuters.com/article/us-northkorea-usa-sanctions/u-s-imposes-sanctions-on-north-korean-hacking-groups-blamed-for-global-attacks-idUSKCN1VY1RB_

True colour as confrontation seeker fully betrayed

Pyongyang Times, September 14, 2019

Recently, the south Korean military earmarked a record-high sum of military budget for the next year, which has been increased more than this year, and submitted it to the parliament on the pretext of coping with the north’s “threats of nukes and weapons of mass destruction” and “short-range missile launch”. Earlier, it brought out the “2020-2024 intermediate defence plan” focusing

on “coping with the north’s threats” and “securing strategic deterrence”. This year, the south Korean authorities have staged DPRK-targeted war exercises one after another in collusion with outside forces. Only the name of such war exercises as Key Resolve and Foal Eagle has been replaced, but their aggressive nature to mount a military attack on the DPRK remains unchanged. Last May, the commander of the US forces in south Korea said that over 100 joint drills have been conducted this year alone, while the National Intelligence Service announced on August 1 that south Korea conducted 10-odd rounds of test fire of missiles, whose range is longer and power is stronger than those of the north. This is a serious problem that should not go unnoticed. Despite opposition at home and abroad, the south Korean authorities staged a war game against the DPRK in replace of the Ulji Freedom Guardian joint military exercises in August.

Meanwhile, the military continues to bring in F-35A stealth fighters after purchasing tanker planes and introduced a strategic nuclear submarine of the US. It is the unanimous opinion of the international community that the deployment of such attack weapons and war exercises compelled the DPRK to take due self-defensive countermeasures. Describing the DPRK’s countermeasures as “threats” and making them an excuse for arms buildup will only reveal the confrontational nature of the south Korean warlike forces who are going to confront with the fellow countrymen at any cost by force.

http://www.pyongyangtimes.com.kp/?bbs=31360_

Trump declines to comment on report Kim invited him to North Korea

Steve Holland, Hyonhee Shin, Reuters, September 16, 2019

U.S. President Donald Trump on Monday declined to comment on a newspaper report that North Korean leader Kim Jong Un had invited him to visit Pyongyang and said conditions were not ready yet for such a visit. “The relationship is very good but I don’t

want to comment on that,” Trump told reporters at the White House when asked whether Kim had invited him to North Korea.

A South Korean newspaper on Monday cited diplomatic sources as saying Kim had invited him to visit the North Korean capital in a letter sent in August amid stalled denuclearization talks. Trump said he would “probably not” be inclined to visit North Korea in the short term, but did not rule out an eventual visit. “I would do it ... at some time in a later future, and depending on what happens I’m sure he’ll love coming to the United States also. But, no, I don’t think it’s ready for that. I think we have a ways to go yet,” Trump said.

https://www.reuters.com/article/us-northkorea-usa-invite/trump-declines-to-comment-on-report-kim-invited-him-to-north-korea-idUSKBN1W100X_

Department director for US Affairs of DPRK Foreign Ministry releases statement

Pyongyang Times, September 17, 2019

The director of the Department of US Affairs of the Foreign Ministry of the DPRK Monday made public the following statement: It is fortunate that the US has repeatedly expressed its stand to tackle an issue through dialogue and negotiations. I hope that the working-level negotiations expected to be held in a few weeks will be a good meeting between the DPRK and the US. A proposal that the US put forward at the negotiations may improve the relations and, on the contrary, may add to the hostility towards each other.

In other words, the DPRK-US dialogue suggests two options—crisis and chance. In this sense, the upcoming working-level negotiations will be an occasion decisive of the future road of the DPRK-US dialogue. Clear and invariable is the DPRK’s stand. The discussion of denuclearization may be possible when threats and hurdles endangering our system security and obstructing our development are clearly removed beyond

all doubt. Whether the DPRK-US negotiations will be a window for chance or an occasion to precipitate crisis is entirely up to the US.

http://www.pyongyangtimes.com.kp/?bbs=31396_

L. South Korea

Combined Forces Command to move to Pyeongtaek by 2021

Park Han-na, Korea Herald, September 1, 2019

South Korea and the US seek to relocate their Combined Forces Command headquarters by the end of 2021 from Seoul to Pyeongtaek, Gyeonggi Province, ahead of the envisioned transfer of wartime operational control from Washington to Seoul, according to Defense Ministry officials Sunday. The tentative timeline was set by the allies following a meeting between Defense Minister Jeong Kyeong-doo and then acting US Defense Secretary Patrick Shanahan in Seoul in June when they agreed to move the CFC headquarters, currently located in Yongsan Garrison, Seoul, to Camp Humphreys, a US military complex in Pyeongtaek.

The relocation plan will receive final approval by the defense chiefs during talks scheduled to be held in October or November in Seoul, according to the officials. By the end of 2020, the US plans to set up the so-called Operation Center at Camp Humphreys in the building where the CFC will be housed. It will serve as the nerve center and will be connected to the US Indo-Pacific Command in Hawaii and the US military base in Japan's Okinawa through the "C4I" military communications systems.

http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20190901000213&ACE_SEARCH=1_

Nuke envoys of S. Korea, Russia hold talks on North Korea's denuclearization

Yonhap, Korea Herald, September 3, 2019

The top nuclear envoys of South Korea and Russia held talks in Russia on Tuesday on North Korea's denuclearization and other

peninsula issues, Seoul's foreign ministry said. Lee Do-hoon, special representative for Korean Peninsula peace and security affairs, met with his Russian counterpart, Igor Morgulov, in Russia's Far Eastern city of Vladivostok, the ministry said in a release. They discussed the current situation on the Korean Peninsula, including North Korea's latest series of missile launches and ways to facilitate a swift resumption of the stalled working-level negotiations between Pyongyang and Washington. In the talks, Lee was also briefed by Morgulov on his recent visit to Pyongyang last month, and the two sides agreed to work toward substantive progress for complete denuclearization and lasting peace on the Korean Peninsula, the ministry added.

The Russian vice foreign minister visited Pyongyang on Aug. 14-16 and met with North Korean officials, including his counterpart Choe Son-hui, and discussed topics of mutual concern in the region.

http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20190903000824&ACE_SEARCH=1_

S. Korea seeks global support for NK denuclearization, peace on Korean Peninsula

Yonhap, Korea Herald, September 4, 2019

South Korea's vice defense minister on Wednesday held a series of bilateral talks with his counterparts from foreign countries and asked for their continued support for efforts to denuclearize North Korea and build peace on the peninsula, his office said. On the sidelines of the 8th Seoul Defense Dialogue under way in Seoul, Vice Defense Minister Park Jae-min met with his counterparts from Singapore, Uzbekistan, the Philippines and Ethiopia, to share their assessment on the recent security situations in the region and discuss ways to deepen their defense ties, according to the ministry.

During the meeting with Singaporean vice defense chief Chan Yeng Kit, Park asked for Singapore's proactive support and cooperation to encourage North Korea to

give up its nuclear program and continue to engage in the ongoing peace process.

http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20190904000706&ACE_SEARCH=1

Defense chief vows strong military power to ensure peace

Yonhap, Korea Herald, September 5, 2019

Defense Minister Jeong Kyeong-doo pledged Thursday to build strong military capabilities to back the government's efforts to achieve peace and prosperity on the Korean Peninsula and beyond. "Despite last year's achievements for peace on the Korean Peninsula, many challenges still lie ahead, such as military tensions heightened by North Korea's recent firings of short-range ballistic missiles," Jeong said during an opening address at the eighth Seoul Defense Dialogue (SDD). Stressing that South Korea is seeking to build "peace through power," the minister vowed to "ensure strong defense power to protect our country and the people, to support the government's efforts (for diplomacy), to achieve peace and prosperity on the Korean Peninsula, Northeast Asia and the world."

Though the two Koreas "were not able to overcome military confrontation and tensions overnight which have lasted for the past 70 years," the minister said South Korea will continue endeavor to "build mutual trust with patience and prudence" with Pyongyang. North Korea has conducted a series of weapons tests, involving new types of short-range ballistic missiles, in recent months amid stalled talks with Washington on its nuclear weapons program. The minister also voiced concerns over "intensifying competition among countries in the region which pursue their own national interests by creating conflicts with neighboring countries," seen as a thinly-veiled criticism of Japan.

http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20190905000751&ACE_SEARCH=1

S. Korea calls for int'l cooperation on Japan's Fukushima water discharge plan

Yonhap, Korea Herald, September 5, 2019

South Korea on Thursday called for international cooperation to respond to a possible move by Japan to discharge contaminated water from its crippled Fukushima power plant into the Pacific Ocean. In a press conference held in Seoul, Choi Won-ho, the head of the Ministry of Science and ICT's big science policy division, said releasing tainted water from the nuke plant poses a grave threat to the global environment and health of people everywhere. "There is a pressing need to work together on this matter, and the government has taken steps to create an international cooperation system," he said. Seoul will send a letter outlining its grave concerns to neighboring countries and ask the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to play a greater role in this problem.

http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20190905000813&ACE_SEARCH=1

S. Korea, UAE to join hands on overseas nuke reactor projects

Yonhap, Korea Herald, September 10, 2019

South Korea's industry ministry said Tuesday it has agreed to join hands with the United Arab Emirates (UAE) to secure new nuclear reactor projects overseas. The state-run Korea Electric Power Corp. (KEPCO) signed a memorandum of understanding with Barakah One Co. to jointly win nuclear reactor projects, according to the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Energy. Barakah One Co. is a joint venture established by KEPCO and the Emirates Nuclear Energy Corp. South Korea has been building four reactors at the Barakah nuclear plant, located 270 kilometers from Abu Dhabi, since 2012. The first reactor was completed last year, with the three others also set to be completed in the near future.

The Barakah nuclear plant, which marked South Korea's first overseas nuclear project, is significant as it paved the ground for the two countries to deepen ties in many areas. The latest agreement signed between KEPCO and the Barakah One Co. will cover a wide range of cooperation, including construction, operation, investment and the fostering of experts, it added. South Korea plans to share its capabilities and experiences with the UAE, and seek to win new projects from other countries.

http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20190910000895&ACE_SEARCH=1

S. Korea's top nuclear envoy visits Beijing for talks on N.K.

Yonhap, Korea Herald, September 13, 2019

South Korea's chief nuclear envoy has held talks with a senior Chinese diplomat over North Korea and peninsula issues ahead of an expected resumption of nuclear dialogue between Washington and Pyongyang, Seoul's foreign ministry said Friday. Lee Do-hoon, special representative for Korean Peninsula peace and security affairs, met Chinese Vice Foreign Minister Luo Zhaohui in Beijing on Thursday and discussed the overall situation on the Korean Peninsula, the ministry said in a release. The two sides took note of how North Korea recently made public its intent to resume working-level talks with the United States and shared their evaluations on this development, it added.

They also shared the view that resumption of the nuclear negotiations is essential in making progress toward complete denuclearization and permanent peace on the Korean Peninsula, and they agreed to work toward achieving these goals. Luo, who was elevated to his post handling Asia affairs in May, is expected to double as Beijing's chief envoy on the North Korean nuclear issue. He accompanied Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi when he paid a visit to Pyongyang early this month.

http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20190913000044&ACE_SEARCH=1

Moon's mission in New York: 'Get nuke talks restarted'

Kim Yoo-chul, Korea Times, September 15, 2019

President Moon Jae-in will face his biggest challenge in New York next week in his signature "engagement-centric" North Korean policy, as he will be tasked with persuading U.S. President Donald Trump and leaders of allied countries for a "new approach" to restart nuclear disarmament talks with Pyongyang. Cheong Wa Dae spokeswoman Ko Min-jung said Moon will fly to New York Sept. 22 to attend this year's United Nations General Assembly meeting. During his stay, the President plans to hold a meeting with Trump, while preparatory work is underway for a possible trilateral summit with Trump and Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, presidential aides said Sunday.

Cheong Wa Dae will announce the key discussion points for Moon and Trump during their upcoming summit after it confers with the White House. Exploring ways to strengthen trilateral cooperation between Washington, Seoul and Tokyo will be an issue at the bilateral and possible trilateral talks as optimism has risen on rebooting talks with Pyongyang over denuclearization. "Trump will tell Moon about the importance of maintaining the trilateral military alliance of Washington, Seoul and Tokyo in terms of managing the North Korean nuclear issue. Also, the leaders could agree on the necessity of having a new approach toward the North to move the denuclearization process forward visibly and substantially," a Cheong Wa Dae official said.

http://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/nation/2019/09/113_275563.html

South Korea to develop anti-drone system amid standoff with North

Reuters, September 17, 2019

South Korea is to invest 88 billion won (\$74 million) to develop a weapons system by 2023 that can detect and strike drones,

its procurement agency said on Tuesday, after incidents of infiltration by North Korean spy drones.

The system, nicknamed Block-I, is designed to track and destroy small drones and other aircraft by locking invisible optical fiber razors on a target at close range, the Defense Acquisition Program Administration (DAPA) said. "We aim to improve the system so that it will ultimately be capable of intercepting a fighter jet and satellite," Song Chang-joon, a senior official at DAPA, said in a statement. A North Korean drone was found in 2017 on the South Korean side of the Demilitarized Zone separating the two Koreas. About 550 photographs of the site of a U.S. anti-missile defense system, taken with a built-in camera, were recovered from the drone, South Korean officials said.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-northkorea-southkorea-drone/south-korea-to-develop-anti-drone-system-amid-standoff-with-north-idUSKBN1W20G5>

M. Taiwan

Nuclear safety drill at Ma-anshan to be held next week

Taipei Times, September 6, 2019

A nuclear safety drill is to be held from Monday to Wednesday next week at the Ma-anshan Nuclear Power Plant in Pingtung County, focusing on the potential effects of an earthquake, Atomic Energy Council Deputy Minister Liu Wen-chung said on Monday. The council's annual safety drills alternate between the three operating nuclear power plants, with scenarios designed around the geographic location of each facility, Liu said. The exercises, which are to be held in collaboration with the National Science and Technology Center for Disaster Reduction, would include the evacuation of area residents by boat from Houbihu, Pingtung's largest fishing harbor, which is near the plant, Liu said. It would be the first time a maritime evacuation is conducted as part of the annual drills, council official Liao Chia-chun said.

Although the effects of an earthquake have always been part of the drill scenarios, this

year's exercises would focus on a disaster analysis by the center that includes the simulated collapse of buildings and roads, Liao said. Local government agencies, the Coast Guard Administration, the military and members of the public would take part in the drill, the council said. Foreign dignitaries as well as nuclear disaster experts from the US and Japan have been invited to observe the exercises, it added. On Tuesday, residents in or around the area are to be alerted via the government's cellphone-based disaster warning system, Liao said.

http://www.taipetimes.com/News/taiwan/archives/2019/09/04/2003721681_

Surviving Han's nuclear policies

Liu Jyh-jian, Taipei Times, September 6, 2019

In its first public policy meeting, which was streamed live, Kaohsiung Mayor Han Kuo-yu's presidential policy advisory team outlined its energy policy. It also signed a petition for a referendum on resuming work on the Fourth Nuclear Power Plant. Should Han get elected, he will restart work on this money pit. The presidential election and the signature drive for referendums on abolishing or resuming work at the Fourth Nuclear Power Plant that ends this month will be the focus of the fight for a nuclear-free homeland. The Democratic Progressive Party will no longer be able to avoid this issue as it did last year.

Han's team consists of many of former president Ma Ying-jeou's officials, who still cling to nuclear power. The combination of "Han fans" plus "nuclear fans" is a recipe for a farce full of "fake news" and empty promises. New Taipei City Mayor Hou You-yi has said that resumption of work at the Fourth Nuclear Power Plant is a non-issue, as the fuel rods have already been shipped to the US and resumption of construction would be very expensive. In a meeting with firefighters, he said that they would be unable to handle a nuclear disaster. The Chinese Nationalist Party's (KMT) Taipei

intelligentsia have never warmed to Han and do not accept using populism to manipulate energy issues.

<http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/editorials/archives/2019/09/06/2003721789>

N. Misc

Rooppur plant's cost higher as it is a new experience for Bangladesh

The Daily Star, September 8, 2019

Science and Technology Affairs Minister Yeafesh Osman today said that the installation cost of Rooppur Nuclear Power Plant (RNPP) is higher than that of India as Bangladesh is new to implement such a power plant.

The minister made the statement while responding to a tabled starred question from BNP MP Rumeen Farhana in the Parliament. She in her question said that the capital expenditure of the Rooppur Nuclear Power Plant is Tk 45,000 crore higher than that of Kudankulam Nuclear Power Plant in India.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/country/rooppur-nuclear-power-plant-cost-higher-it-new-experience-for-bangladesh-1797358>

O. Op-Ed

India

Irresponsible rhetoric: On Pakistan leaders' threats

The Hindu, September 2, 2019

Statements by senior functionaries of Pakistan including Prime Minister Imran Khan threatening war and violence against India and in Jammu and Kashmir are irresponsible, escalatory and dangerous. Mr. Khan has even spoken about the possibility of a nuclear war, albeit couched in language purportedly meant to be about the dangers of it, while a Minister went to the extent of announcing a time frame for starting a war. Several diplomats have called for jihad. Pakistan's reputation as a reckless nuclear

power is reinforced in all this, and its continuing support for Islamist terrorist outfits is not doing any good for the people of J&K. Pursuit of military parity with India has ruined Pakistan economically, though the compact of generals and clerics that controls it has flourished. These vested interests have placed Kashmir as central to Pakistan's national identity that they understand as exclusive and Islamist. Now under fire for being ineffective in the face of India's recent measures with regard to J&K, Mr. Khan and his allies are ratcheting up the rhetoric. The military that is in step with him, tested a surface-to-surface missile amid the tensions. Pakistan is trying to catch the world's attention and assuage the perilous passions its state policies have created in its society.

<https://www.thehindu.com/opinion/editorial/irresponsible-rhetoric/article29316555.ece>

Chandrayaan 2: In its stellar journey, ISRO has achieved 'much more with much less'

*Huma Siddiqui, Financial Express
September 7, 2019*

With Chandrayaan-2's successful Moon rendezvous by the Orbiter (though the partial mission of Lander is still not clear due to communication limbo presently), it may surprise many that within a short journey of just half a century, India has been established as a Space power to reckon with. The red planet Mars has already been approached, and Moon Missions Chandrayaan-1 and Chandrayaan-2 (partially) accomplished successfully, India is now destined to launch series of Space Missions in this coming 20s decade.

The Indian space agency has truly been a role model Organisation for India, a self driven and motivated Governmental agency, which shows wisdom to plan its own long term perspective and technological advancements. It is well known that every setback in Space research programme World over have only resulted in scientific re-strengthening of

foundation to achieve larger and more complex missions next.

<https://www.financialexpress.com/lifestyle/science/chandrayaan-2-in-its-stellar-journey-isro-has-achieved-much-more-with-much-less/1699343/>

There is need & space, for recalibrating 'no first use'

Seshadri Chari, Deccan Herald. September 7, 2019

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh's recent comment that India might have to rethink its nuclear 'No First Use' policy in the future raised a howl of protests. Those protesting assumed that the government is preparing to do away with NFU and open up the possibility of a nuclear first strike against Pakistan, which in turn could lead to both countries assuming hair-trigger alert postures. It would then take only one miscalculation or misreading on the part of either for a long nuclear winter to descend on the subcontinent.

Nuclear first use or first strike option has neither insulated nuclear powers against military setbacks nor given them any special advantage, if we go by the conflicts over the last few decades. Advocates of a nuclear India were, and continue to be, aware of the fall-out of the Cold War and the arms race that ran counter to the UN mandate of total disarmament and a nuclear weapons-free world.

Pakistan is developing low-yield warheads, which could be used by any one of the many 'non-state' actors on its eastern and western borders, with everything from Tel Aviv to Dhaka in their purview. There are also credible reports of Pakistan's security establishment clandestinely procuring and developing tactical nukes and short-range missiles that could 'accidentally' fall into the hands of jihadi forces.

<https://www.deccanherald.com/opinion/there-is-need-space-for-recalibrating-no-first-use-759854.html>

Move Over, Kim Jong Un: It's Time to Talk about South Asia

Abby Pokraka, National Interest Blog, September 9, 2019

Following the crisis, recordings suggest that both India and Pakistan contemplated using conventional ballistic missiles against each other. This would have been a serious and unpredictable escalation. Due to lightweight decoys, cooled shrouds and other measures to prevent detection, it is nearly impossible to tell if a particular ballistic missile is armed with a nuclear warhead or conventional warhead. In a crisis where these weapons are used, leaders are more likely to launch their own nuclear weapons immediately in retaliation rather than wait to see if the enemy's missiles result in a mushroom cloud before firing back.

While the possibility of war between two nuclear states rapidly escalated, the news cycle was focused on the Trump-Kim summit in Hanoi. Democrats' protests against President Donald Trump's state of emergency on the border and the Michael Cohen testimony before Congress. Aside from a few mentions on a news ticker, a violent and escalating conflict between India and Pakistan nearly slipped under the radar of the U.S. media.

<https://nationalinterest.org/feature/move-over-kim-jong-un-it%E2%80%99s-time-talk-about-south-asia-79176>

Did India's Chandrayaan-2 Moon Lander Survive? The Chances Are Slim

Kenneth Chang, The New York Times, September 10, 2019

India's first moon lander, which fell silent as it headed toward the lunar surface on Friday, has been located from orbit, the country's space agency says. That has created hope that it might be revived. If it did indeed land in working condition, that

would be an impressive feat. In the history of spaceflight, robotic probes that suffer a malfunction while landing on another world are not heard from again.

Chandrayaan-2 — India's second mission to the moon — consists of two parts: an orbiter that will conduct research in orbit for up to seven years, and a lander named Vikram (which also contained a rover, Pragyan). The lander and orbiter separated last week with the orbiter remaining in a circular orbit 60 miles above the moon, and the lander moving to a more elliptical path, coming within 20 miles of the surface.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/09/10/science/india-chandrayaan-2-vikram.html>

Indian Moon Probe's Failure Won't Stop an Asian Space Race that Threatens Regional Security

Wendy Whitman Cobb, National Interest Blog, September 11, 2019

On Sept. 7, India's Chandrayaan-2 lunar mission deployed its Vikram lander for an attempted landing at the Moon's south pole. Communications with the lander were lost just minutes prior to the scheduled landing. Recent imaging suggests that Vikram may have survived the landing intact, but it might be unable to communicate. No matter the outcome, the mission has already proved successful as Chandrayaan-2 continues to orbit the Moon.

This year alone, both China and India have landed, or attempted to land, probes on the Moon. These types of missions are one way to achieve international prestige. But they also peacefully demonstrate capabilities that could be used in conflict. From my perspective as a space policy analyst, India's space activities, combined with its escalating tensions with Pakistan, contribute to increasing regional tension.

India continues to feel pressure from its Chinese neighbor. Following China's anti-satellite test in 2008, India began development of its own space weapons. In March 2019, India successfully tested an anti-satellite weapon: a missile, launched from the ground, that destroyed one of its

own satellites in low Earth orbit. Like previous anti-satellite tests performed by the U.S., Russia and China, there were immediate concerns about debris. Despite this, India clearly intended to send a message to China and others, signaling their ability to not only protect their own satellites but destroy threatening Chinese ones as well.

<https://nationalinterest.org/blog/buzz/indian-moon-probe%E2%80%99s-failure-won%E2%80%99t-stop-asian-space-race-threatens-regional-security-79351>

Be proud of Chandrayaan-2: Rakesh Sharma

The Hindu, September 14, 2019

India can be proud of what it has achieved with the Chandrayaan-2 mission, despite the problems encountered with the Vikram lander, Wing Commander (Retd) Rakesh Sharma, India's first man in space, said on Friday.

"I think it was a wonderful mission. It had the entire nation riveted. I myself went to bed at four in the morning. I think we are all very proud that we've achieved what we've achieved," Mr. Sharma said on the sidelines of the fifth A.P.J. Abdul Kalam Lecture organised by the Indian Institute of Space Science and Technology (IIST) here.

"Things not coming through fully, well, that's part of any research and development activity. So that's par for the course. We are on the learning curve," Mr. Sharma told reporters here.

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Thiruvananthapuram/be-proud-of-chandrayaan-2-rakesh-sharma/article29411771.ece>

Has Chandrayaan 2's Vikram Lander setback affected India's moon mission?

Madhumathi D.S., The Hindu, September 15, 2019

Chandrayaan 2, comprising an orbiter, a lander and a rover, journeyed from earth for eight days and reached the moon's

vicinity on August 20. On September 2, the lander riding on the orbiter was separated and got into a closer orbit around the moon, moving pole-to-pole at a distance of 35 km x 100 km.

Mission planners at ISRO had divided the last critical 15-minute parabolic descent into four smaller phases. At 1.38 a.m. IST on September 7, the lander perfectly cleared the 'rough braking phase', swooping down from 30 km to 7.4 km of the lunar surface in 10 minutes. Its velocity had dropped as required from 1,640 metres a second to about 400 metres a second.

<https://www.thehindu.com/sci-tech/science/bengaluru-we-have-a-problem/article29418567.ece>

China

China's nuclear capabilities maturing

Aaron Tu, Jake Chung, Taipei Times, September 1, 2019

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. Beijing stands by its "one China" principle and refuses to acknowledge any form of "one

China, one Taiwan" or that Taiwan is an independent and sovereign nation, the report said. China has not abandoned the option of annexing Taiwan by force and its actions have posed an ever-increasing threat to Taiwan's military, it said. China remains dedicated to funding upgrades for its attack helicopters and armored vehicles, as well as developing the JL-3 intercontinental ballistic missile and other long-range submarine-launched missiles, it added.

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

Navy sends its most capable combat ship on escort mission

China Daily, September 10, 2019

One of the most moving episodes in the Chinese blockbuster *Wolf Warrior 2* is the one in which the captain of a Type 052D guided-missile destroyer shouts "Fire!" to order the launch of supersonic cruise missiles to hit rebel troops in an imaginary African nation holding Chinese hostages. However, this scenario could not have happened in real life because in the Gulf of Aden there have been no Type 052D destroyers

now considered the most capable combat ship in the People's Liberation Army Navy. Instead, the Navy has sent other vessels to the once pirate-plagued waters to protect civilian vessels for nearly 11 years.

That is about to change, as the Navy has decided to dispatch a Type 052D to take part in its latest escort mission. The CNS Xining, the fifth in the Type 052D class, is sailing toward the Gulf of Aden. The Xining, with the number 117 on its hull, was commissioned in January 2017. It is part of the PLA Navy's 33rd escort flotilla, together with CNS Weifang, a Type 054A guided-missile frigate and CNS Hoh Xil Hu, a Type 903A supply ship. All of the ships belong to the naval force of the PLA Northern Theater Command, known as the North Sea Fleet. The flotilla set sail from a naval base in Qingdao, Shandong

province, on Aug 29. It will travel at least 11,000 kilometers before reaching the Gulf of Aden in the next two weeks. The Navy began to carry out escort missions in the Gulf of Aden and the waters off Somalia in December 2008. In the past decade, it has sent 106 ships and more than 28,000 naval personnel to escort at least 6,700 Chinese and foreign ships, according to the Navy.

http://eng.mod.gov.cn/news/2019-09/10/content_4850137.htm

Domestic arms key to deterrence plan

Jason Pan, Taipei times, September 12, 2019

The Ministry of National Defense's annual National Defense Report, released yesterday, outlines the capability of domestic weapons, Taiwan's increasing role in regional security and strategies for countering the continual threat of China's military. The main theme of the report is the military as a "defender of peace," as it joins with Australia, Japan, South Korea, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand in promoting the US' Indo-Pacific strategy. The nation's indigenous defense industry has greatly evolved since President Tsai Ing-wen took office, ministry spokesman Shih Shun-wen told a news conference in Taipei. The industry's advancement has sustained existing projects and initiated new programs, including the manufacture of precision-fire missiles, unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), armored personnel carriers, Tuo Jiang-class guided-missile corvettes and submarines, the report said. "The main military threat still comes from China, as its top leaders have not renounced the use of force to invade Taiwan, have spent a substantial portion of the national budget on increasing its military strength and moved to quickly modernize its armed forces.

The report was released with a summarized, comic book version that targets the younger generation so that the public can understand the nation's defense programs and military strategies. For the first time, the report presents new coastal defense plans to repel a force invading across the Taiwan Strait.

<http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/front/archives/2019/09/12/2003722125>

Pakistan

What Exactly Did Pakistan's Prime Minister Say About the Country's Nuclear Weapons?

Ankit Panda, The Diplomat, September 3, 2019

Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan, speaking on Monday, caused a bit of a stir with comments that were initially reported as a pledge by Islamabad to not use its nuclear weapons first in any conflict with India. That's at least how it was reported by Reuters India, which headlined its story: "Pakistan would not use nuclear weapons first, amid tensions with India: PM Imran Khan."

That was an attention-grabbing headline. If Khan had said something to that effect, it would have represented a recalibration of standing Pakistani nuclear weapons policy for more than two decades. To deter a conventionally superior India, Pakistan had long relied on the first-use of nuclear weapons. Beginning in the late-2000s, Islamabad lowered the nuclear-use threshold in South Asia even lower by introducing low-yield nuclear weapons for battlefield use. The problem here was that Khan didn't exactly revisit Pakistani nuclear policy.

<https://thediplomat.com/2019/09/what-exactly-did-pakistans-prime-minister-say-about-the-countrys-nuclear-weapons/>

The dangers of calling Pakistan's 'nuclear bluff'

Inam UL Haque, The Express Tribune, September 3, 2019

Military strategists and planners talk with responsibility and maturity when the issue is nuclear weapons. In one of my previous articles, Back from the Brink of War with India: Key Takeaways for Pakistan, published on April 3, 2019, in this space, it was highlighted that decision-makers in the Indo-Pak context are forced to take popular and unwise decisions with the "decision space collapsing". This is extremely dangerous for India and

Pakistan, as they sit on a nuclear tinderbox. This piece discusses the pitfalls of nuclear decision-making and challenges some academic notions.

Strategic and military decision-making is science. However, in the Indo-Pak context, the ferocity of public sentiment and the ever-escalating passions make rational decision-making a tough call. After the media-generated jingoism after the Pulwama attack in February 2019, it was felt that Indian decision-makers under BJP and PM Modi, and duly supported by the ever argumentative army of defence and security analysts, seem to genuinely believe they would be able to browbeat Pakistan into the "new normal" on Kashmir and other issues, annexation being a planned sequel.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2047751/6-dangers-calling-pakistans-nuclear-bluff/>

India's nuclear posture

Naveed Ahmad, The News International, September 4, 2019

Whenever the lid blows off the Kashmir pressure cooker, a tsunami of public fury will unleash itself. India knew it and sees it even better now. If the curtain of fear falls and people take to the streets, the Indian military will take the trigger-happy course. Either way, strategists in India ponder as to how and when Pakistan responds. Islamabad has repeatedly warned the world of a nuclear war.

Around the same time came the stern reminder from Prime Minister Imran Khan, "Whether the world joins us or not, Pakistan will go to any lengths and its people will support [Kashmiris] till their last breath."

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/521805-india-s-nuclear-posture>

Pakistan most dangerous country in the world: Ex-US defense secy James Mattis

India Today, September 4, 2019

Formal US Defence secretary James Mattis has said that he considers Pakistan as the most dangerous country in the world. He

further said that Pakistani society is highly radicalized and its growing nuclear arsenal is a growing concern. Its leadership does not care about its people.

<https://www.indiatoday.in/programme/india-first/video/pakistan-most-dangerous-country-in-the-world-ex-us-defense-secy-james-mattis-indian-astronauts-to-train-in-russia-more-1595589-2019-09-04>

Divide and bleed

F.S. Aijazuddin, Dawn, September 05, 2019

In the past few weeks, there has been a curious inversion of postures in New Delhi and in Islamabad. Indian defence minister Rajnath Singh hinted broadly (the breadth of a nuclear warhead) that India will reconsider its nuclear strike option. It is prepared to strike first. Prime Minister Imran Khan has said that Pakistan won't initiate a military conflict. The common man is finding it hard to distinguish between peaceable hawks and aggressive doves.

Anyone with sense knows that India and Pakistan are not equals. They also admit the truth that India cannot annex Pakistan. It does not need over 200 million more ungovernable Muslims. That is why in 1971 it preferred the creation of Bangladesh rather than have a reunified Bengal. And it cannot incinerate Pakistan in a nuclear conflict without singeing itself. Pakistan cannot compete indefinitely with India's plans to improve its defence superiority. At best, Pakistan can use, as it has done in the past, operational expertise to correct the technical imbalance.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1503647/divide-and-bleed>

A nuclear flashpoint

Dr N Elahi, The News International, September 8, 2019

After the arbitrary and unlawful annexation of Kashmir by India, the risk of a nuclear war between India and Pakistan is not a very distant possibility.

Rather India has given two strong gestures to make it clear that it intends to use nuclear weapons in a war against Pakistan.

First, India made it public that its first domestically built nuclear-powered submarine had recently completed a "deterrence patrol", giving it the capability to fire nuclear weapons from land, air and sea. This could be a message both for Pakistan and China. China is equally annoyed over the annexation of Laddakh on which it has a long-standing claim.

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/523568-a-nuclear-flashpoint>

Kashmir and Impending Nuclear Holocaust

Asif Durrani, Daily Times, September 9, 2019

The former US President Bill Clinton described Kashmir as "nuclear flashpoint" after the Kargil mini-war between Pakistan and India. It happened at a time when both India and Pakistan had become declared Nuclear Weapons States (NWS). It was unprecedented in the post-World War-II global scenario that the two nuclear powers directly challenged each other in such a dangerous manner, except for the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962. The danger of war between India and Pakistan looms large even today as unresolved disputes, especially Jammu and Kashmir, continue to haunt both the states and any miscalculation on either side may spell disaster not only for the two countries but the entire world.

The above questions are not for the academic purposes but call for practical steps to protect the lives of innocent people who have no say in policymaking. Similarly, innocent Kashmiris are facing complete lockdown over a month now with no fault of theirs. They are being suppressed for raising voice for the right to self-determination, an inalienable right granted to them under UN Security Council's resolutions. The Hindutva leadership is certainly following a suicidal course in the conduct of relations with Pakistan without realizing that a war would not be a one-

sided affair as was evident when Pakistan retaliated immediately and decisively after Indian attack at Balakot. It is time for leaders on both sides to reflect and save their people from the devastations of war.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/463072/kashmir-and-impending-nuclear-holocaust/>

Going ballistic: Why Imran Khan's nuclear threat is a sign of Pakistani impotence

Rakesh Krishnan Simha, Business Today, September 9, 2019

Powerless to do anything after India revoked Article 370 and turned Jammu & Kashmir into a union territory, the Pakistani political-military leadership has been reduced to firing rockets on Twitter, trying to storm the Indian embassy in London, and issuing threats of nuclear war.

What's ironic is the Pakistan Army (which has 600,000 soldiers) urging Pashtuns to fight in Kashmir. A clash with India would be too much for the corrupt generals of the Pakistan Army. The conqueror of corner plots doesn't have the cojones to fight the powerful Indian Army. Having lost all four previous wars against India, the actual war would be well outside their comfort zone.

<https://www.businesstoday.in/opinion/columns/pakistan-nuclear-threat-war-imran-khan-pakistani-army-india-article-370-jammu-and-kashmir-narendra-modi/story/377963.html>

'Good Lord help us'

Tauseef Ahmed Khan, Daily Times, September 13, 2019

Over the past one year especially and from two and half years in general our serious national issues are now prime target of flagrant and comical statements. But it was never expected that our nuclear program and doctrine which is the most crucial part of our security and strategic apparatus will be discussed through such mirthful statements.

We must know what's Pakistan's nuclear doctrine which is not changed according to spokesperson and why foreign office is in panic to give clarifications on PM's statements about nuclear deterrence. PM's statement was headline of all papers that in case of Indo-Pak conflict we are not going to use nuclear weapons first. As we know from years, India's declared nuclear doctrine in case of conflict with Pakistan is not to strike first with nuclear bomb. Pakistan also have declared nuclear doctrine from years that we have established certain levels of national forbearance. one is internal level. If India will cross that level(attack in Pakistani territory and its installations or buildings with conventional or unconventional force or crossing of international border with conventional force) then we can use nuclear weapon. We have our economic threshold too: if India will stop or divert our river water or in case of naval blockade then we can also use nuclear bomb. These few points are considered our declared "nuclear doctrine". Now according to PM's statement it seems this old doctrine has been changed with "not to strike first" nuclear doctrine.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/465089/good-lord-help-us/>

USA

Forget Russia: America Nearly Built Its Own 'Skyfall' Nuclear Powered Cruise Missile

Sebastien Roblin, National Interest Blog, September 1, 2019

After days of speculation by Western analysts that a deadly accident on August 8 that briefly spiked radiation levels in northwestern Russia was tied to tests of an exotic nuclear-powered "Skyfall" nuclear-powered cruise missile, Russian sources confirmed to the New York Times the explosion of a "small nuclear reactor."

While there's a tactical rationale behind Russia's development of a fast, surface-skimming cruise missile with an unlimited range as a means of bypassing American missile defenses, it strikes many analysts as

an inordinately expensive, extremely technically challenging, and—evidently!—downright unsafe.

<https://nationalinterest.org/blog/buzz/forget-russia-america-nearly-built-its-own-skyfall-nuclear-powered-cruise-missile-77226>

The Secret History of the Push to Strike Iran

Ronen Bergman and Mark Mazzetti, The New York Times, September 4, 2019

In July of 2017, the White House was at a crossroads on the question of Iran. President Trump had made a campaign pledge to leave the "terrible" nuclear deal that President Barack Obama negotiated with Tehran, but prominent members of Trump's cabinet spent the early months of the administration pushing the mercurial president to negotiate a stronger agreement rather than scotch the deal entirely. Thus far, the forces for negotiation had prevailed.

But counterforces were also at work. Stephen K. Bannon, then still an influential adviser to the president, turned to John Bolton to draw up a new Iran strategy that would, as its first act, abrogate the Iran deal. Bolton, a Fox News commentator and former ambassador to the United Nations, had no official role in the administration as of yet, but Bannon saw him as an outside voice that could stiffen Trump's spine — a kind of back channel to the president who could convince Trump that his Iran policy was adrift.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/09/04/magazine/iran-strike-israel-america.html>

Can President Trump Really Tweet A Highly Classified Satellite Photo? Yep, He Can

Geoff Brumfiel, National Public Radio, September 5, 2019

The first thing Melissa Hanham did when she saw President Trump's tweet last week was take a screen grab. "My reaction was to immediately save the image to my phone just in case it got taken down," she

says. The wording on the tweet was cryptic: “The United States of America was not involved in the catastrophic accident during final launch preparations for the Safir [space launch vehicle] Launch at Semnan Launch Site One in Iran,” the president said. “I wish Iran best wishes and good luck in determining what happened at Site One.”

<https://www.npr.org/2019/09/05/758038714/can-president-trump-really-tweet-a-highly-classified-satellite-photo-yep-he-can>

After Trump, the United States Should Return to Obama’s Iran Deal

Edoardo Saravalle, Foreign Policy, September 10, 2019

The narrowing of the field for the 2020 U.S. Democratic Party presidential nomination has thrown the contenders’ policy differences into sharp relief. Nearly every candidate set to take the debate stage Thursday, however, agrees on at least one thing: The United States should reenter the Iran nuclear deal. But none of them have fully explained how they intend do so.

The accord, from which U.S. President Donald Trump withdrew in 2018, contained a complicated mix of U.S. and Iranian commitments—which means the precise way in which the United States might choose to rejoin matters just as much as the will to do so. Getting these nuts and bolts right would solidify the deal, lay the groundwork for progress to follow, and free up a new administration to pursue new foreign-policy priorities.

<https://foreignpolicy.com/2019/09/10/after-trump-the-united-states-should-return-to-obamas-iran-deal/>

Why Trump shouldn’t run the North Korea playbook on Iran

Wesley Rahn, Deutsche Welle, September 13, 2019

US President Donald Trump calls his administration’s strategy for keeping nuclear weapons away from Iran and containing a nuclear North Korea

“maximum pressure” — a tough-talking, sanction-heavy policy designed to force adversaries into compliance.

Trump’s former National Security Adviser John Bolton was a primary architect of maximum pressure. After his ouster earlier this week, there have been reports that Bolton was fired for his ultra-hawkish stance on Iran and North Korea.

<https://www.dw.com/en/why-trump-shouldnt-run-the-north-korea-playbook-on-iran/a-50414607>

Russia

Russia’s Delta-Class Missile Submarines: One the Best Subs Ever?

Robert Farley, National Interest Blog, September 7, 2019

The Soviet Union appreciated the need for a sea-based deterrent from an early point in the Cold War. The Soviet leadership worried that American superiority in delivery systems (initially in both numbers and accuracy) would render it vulnerable to a decapitating first strike, and more generally to nuclear blackmail. Accordingly, the USSR began experimenting with submarines equipped with strategic nuclear weapons in the mid-1950s. But technical problems made it difficult to make achievements. Generally speaking, the Soviets found themselves a few years behind the Americans in both submarine and missile technology.

In any case, arms control agreements with the United States, the end of the Cold War, and the collapse of the Russian economy made it impossible to maintain such a large fleet of boomers. The last Delta I left service in 1998, with the Delta IIs decommissioning at around the same time. The Delta III and Delta IV classes would remain the core of the Russian nuclear deterrent well into the twenty-first century, however. Due to the high operating cost of the Typhoon class subs, several Delta IIIs were refueled and kept

in service into the 2010s, although the last now appears to have left service.

<https://nationalinterest.org/blog/buzz/russias-delta-class-missile-submarines-one-best-subs-ever-78701>

This Nuclear Submarine Freaks Russia Out: Meet the Astute-Class (Not American)

Robert Farley, National Interest Blog, September 10, 2019

Key Point: The Astutes are among the most formidable submarines in the world, and certainly pose a major threat to any Russian designs on the North Atlantic or the Arctic.

Since the commissioning of HMS Dreadnought in 1963, the Royal Navy has maintained a formidable force of nuclear attack submarines. Indeed, HMS Conqueror is the only nuclear attack submarine (SSN) to ever sink an enemy warship in anger. But the Royal Navy has undergone a transformational crisis over the past decade, shrinking in size and changing in composition. The latest nuclear attack subs, the Astute class, have become a critical component of the future of the Royal Navy—but, given Russia's resurgence, are they enough?

<https://nationalinterest.org/blog/buzz/nuclear-submarine-freaks-russia-out-meet-astute-class-not-american-79306>

Will Venezuela Become a Russian Missile Base?

Michael Peck, National Interest Blog, September 13, 2019

With the United States developing a new generation of cruise missiles in response to alleged Russian arms control violations, a response from Moscow was inevitable.

But Russian missiles in Venezuela? That's what some Russian commentators are calling for in retaliation for the Trump administration withdrawing from the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty. The Pentagon has already tested a new ground-launched cruise missile with a

range of 500 kilometers (311 miles), which exceeds INF Treaty limits.

<https://nationalinterest.org/blog/buzz/will-venezuela-become-russian-missile-base-80561>

West Asia

Trump Solving the Iran Crisis Requires A "Deal of the Century"

Shahed Ghoreishi, The National Interest, September 2, 2019

With Tehran Washington needs to realize the positive ramifications that could only come after thorough innovative, high-level diplomacy with Iran. by Shahed Ghoreishi On August 13, Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Khamenei met with Houthi representatives in Tehran in what was a rare overt display of support. Since the Yemeni civil war began in 2015, Iran had kept the Houthis at arm's length. However, recent divisions within the Saudi coalition and the Houthis' success establishing themselves in Yemen changed the calculus. The public meeting was a clear sign of strengthening ties between Iran and the Houthis in the face of a divided adversary. Yemen isn't the only unstable nation-state in the region where the Iranians have gained major leverage. From Beirut to Kabul, Iran has managed to become a player of increasing significance. This is why it is as critical as ever for the United States to move beyond its animosity with Iran and move towards high-level diplomacy—regional allies included—in order to stabilize the region enough for the United States to be able to end its forever wars. The nuclear deal and the immediate need to deescalate tensions in the Persian Gulf should just be the beginning—not the ultimate goal. At the end of the day, Iran's regional role is essential to the United States pivoting away from the region and turning its attention to more pressing global matters better aligned with its actual interests.

https://nationalinterest.org/feature/solving-iran-crisis-requires-deal-century-tehran-77271_

Iran Says Its Cruise Missiles Are Better Than America's. That can't be true? Can it?

Michael Peck, The National Interest, September 6, 2019

The newest Iranian weapon, the Mobin, was displayed at the MAKS 2019 defense trade show in Russia in August. The cruise missile has a range of 450 kilometers (280 miles), a speed of 900 kilometers (560 miles) per hour, and a maximum altitude of 45,000 feet. It also features a warhead of up to 120 kilograms (265 pounds) and has a "low radar cross-section and high radar-evading capability," according to Iran's Fars News Agency.

In February, Iran unveiled the longer-range Hoveizeh cruise missile. "The range of the Hoveizeh missile is over 1,350 kilometers [840 miles] and it is good for targeting ground targets," said Iran's Defense Minister, Brigadier General Amir Hatami.

"The Hoveizeh ground-to-ground cruise missile has been test-fired in a 1,200-kilometer [745 mile] range and it managed to precisely hit the specified target," Hatami also said.

Hatami "mentioned rapid reaction, low flight altitude, high precision in navigation and high destruction power as among the main features of the missile," said Fars News.

Iran's Deputy Defense Minister, Brigadier General Qassem Taqizadeh, also claimed last week that Iran's cruise missiles were more accurate than America's. Taqizadeh said Iranian cruise missiles "enjoyed higher precision-striking power than the U.S.-made ones," according to Fars News.

<https://nationalinterest.org/blog/buzz/iran-says-its-cruise-missiles-are-better-america%E2%80%99s-78681>

Maximum Pressure on Iran Has Failed

Paul R. Pillar, The National Interest, September 14, 2019

It is a sure sign that the Trump administration's campaign to squeeze Iran

into submission is a failure when those who customarily favor pressuring Iran acknowledge that failure. Take what has become the administration's go-to rationale for the campaign in the face of other evidence that it is not working: the claim that U.S. sanctions have undercut Iran's "malign" activity in the Middle East by reducing the funds available for such activity. In a recent op-ed, Dennis Ross and Dana Stroul of the Washington Institute for Near East Policy debunk this notion by describing how and why a financial pinch on Iran does not translate into retrenchment in Iranian regional activity.

In Syria, for example, Iranian-backed militias "may be suffering from salary cuts, but less take-home pay has not led to a reduction in violence." The same pattern of reduced cash not leading to reduced armed activity is seen with Hezbollah in Lebanon and the Houthis in Yemen. And although the administration has tried to highlight reductions in Iran's military budget, assertive Iranian activity in the Persian Gulf such as sabotage or the seizure of foreign tankers has gone up, not down, since the start of the administration's pressure campaign. In short, Ross and Stroul accurately observe, Iran does what it does in the region "on the cheap." Its regional activity is not determined by the balance in its bank account.

<https://nationalinterest.org/blog/paul-pillar/maximum-pressure-iran-has-failed-80611>

Watch Out: Iran Has a New "Kia" Spy Drone. But how good is it?

The National Interest, September 13, 2019

Iran has unveiled the Kia high-precision drone that can locate and attack targets far from the country's borders, according to officials. Al Jazeera News reports. Iranian Brig. Gen. Alireza Sabahifard displayed the unmanned aerial vehicle (unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV)) at a ceremony in the capital, Tehran, saying it can fly more than 620 miles and climb to an altitude of 16,000 feet, according to state media. The jet-propelled drone comes

in two models capable of surveillance and reconnaissance missions and continuous flight for precision missions.

<https://nationalinterest.org/blog/buzz/watch-out-iran-has-new-kia-spy-drone-80506>

East Asia

Japan

Japan-Russia talks on peace treaty, Northern Territories have whiff of futility

Mainichi Japan, September 6, 2019

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe met for talks with Russian President Vladimir Putin on Sept. 5 on the sidelines of the Eastern Economic Forum in Vladivostok, in Russia's Far East. The last time they spoke face-to-face about hammering out a formal peace treaty was in Osaka in June, though there was no progress to be seen then. The two leaders' most recent tete-a-tete, too, seems to have produced no decisive movement, resulting in only a commitment to "working with a forward-facing attitude." The former Soviet Union launched hostilities against Japan in the dying days of World War II, and no peace treaty was signed between the two countries in the ensuing decades.

The issue that must be resolved before a peace treaty can be signed is the fate of the Northern Territories, a clutch of islands just off the coast of the northernmost prefecture of Hokkaido. Seized by the Soviets in 1945, the islands remain under Russian control but are claimed by Japan — and Abe and Putin do not see eye-to-eye on their return to Japanese sovereignty. The pair's Vladivostok talks did nothing to change this. In fact, circumstances surrounding to bilateral territorial talks are getting rougher, which forces us to ask: Is the government even able to sketch out a concrete resolution to this process?

https://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20190906/p2a/00m/0na/010000c_

Put state in charge of TEPCO's plan for reactor restarts

The Asahi Shimbun, September 10, 2019 at 15:45 JST

Tokyo Electric Power Co. has indicated it may decommission at least one aging idle reactor at its Kashiwazaki-Kariwa nuclear power plant in Niigata Prefecture if it can restart two new reactors at the site. TEPCO said it will start taking "steps within five years" that could result in the decommissioning of one or more of the No. 1 to No. 5 reactors after two newer and more powerful reactors, the No. 6 and No. 7 reactors, are brought back on stream. The company, operator of the disaster-stricken Fukushima No. 1 nuclear power plant, has been seeking to restart the two reactors after they passed safety screenings implemented by the Nuclear Regulation Authority.

Masahiro Sakurai, the mayor of Kashiwazaki, home to the seven-reactor plant, has demanded that the utility present a decommissioning plan for the other five reactors as a condition to agreeing to the restarts of the No. 6 and No. 7 reactors. TEPCO's announcement was a response to Sakurai's demand. In touching on the possibility of decommissioning for the first time, TEPCO did not go into specifics. Instead, the utility's announcement seemed designed to put pressure on the city to allow the two reactors to be restarted as an initial step. That is a baffling attitude.

http://www.asahi.com/ajw/articles/AJ201909100038.html_

North Korea

Uncertainty of nuclear talks

Korea Times, September 9, 2019, Tong Kim

The prospect of resuming nuclear talks between North Korea and the United States does not look good. Washington says it is ready to negotiate with Pyongyang on a working-level whenever they are ready. Two month ago, Trump said after his meeting with Kim Jong-un at Panmunjeom that Kim had agreed to hold working-level talks "in a few weeks." The United States is still waiting to hear

from the North on when or whether they will return to the table. A possible venue for such talks can be determined after the date is set. For logistical considerations (including travel cost), the North may prefer Panmunjeom for the talks. The problem is the North is not ready.

In April, the North Korean leader set a deadline by the end of 2019 to wait and see "if the U.S. changes its method of calculation," a proposition that the U.S. drops its position seeking an early big deal by which the North would denuclearize first in return for consequent sanctions relief and security guarantees. The big deal attempt was rejected and failed in Hanoi. But, Washington has not produced a transformed version of its negotiating strategy. The North is waiting to hear that the U.S. will accommodate the North Korean proposal for a phased process with reciprocal, corresponding measures toward the end state of "complete denuclearization." In the meantime, the North has conducted a series of provocative missile launches to test newly developed short-range ballistic missiles and long-range multiple rocket launchers, all capable of striking all of South Korea and western parts of Japan

http://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/opinion/2019/09/137_275348.html

South Korea

Bombs and weather: Trump drops another one

John M. Crisp, Korea Times, September 10, 2019

We have no shortage of serious global issues to worry about, but nearly all of them are made more threatening by the ominous, double-edged backdrop against which they play themselves out: nuclear weapons and climate change. India and Pakistan are not the first two countries to maintain a long-standing territorial dispute. Kim Jong-un isn't the first megalomaniacal dictator to bluster himself onto the world stage. But the irreversible fact of nuclear weapons elevates problems such as these into crises of the first

order. Nor is Great Abaco the first Caribbean island to be devastated by a hurricane. But it does represent another significant piece of evidence that as the world warms, the weather will become more extreme. We can expect stronger hurricanes, longer droughts in some areas, too much rainfall in others and a significant disruption of the weather with consequences that will be difficult to control.

These two menacing factors - nuclear weapons and climate change - came together in a peculiar way last month when Axios reported that President Donald Trump has suggested multiple times to senior Homeland Security officials and national security officers that we explore the possibility of using nuclear bombs to disrupt hurricanes before they hit land. "Why can't we do that?" Trump reportedly asked. It's an intriguing idea, and in fairness to Trump, he's not the first to suggest it. The Washington Post reports that just weeks after the atomic bombs were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the mayor of Miami Beach asked President Harry Truman to explore the possibility of using a nuclear bomb to disrupt hurricanes that threaten beachfront property. Scientists at the time quickly dismissed the idea, noting that dropping a bomb on a hurricane could have unpredictable consequences, including making the storm worse.

http://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/nation/2019/09/113_275422.html

Beijing-Seoul ties after Xi's Pyongyang visit

Lee Seong-hyon, Korea Times, September 17, 2019

There are some qualitative differences in the way China treats South Korea since Chinese leader Xi Jinping's visit to Pyongyang. The visit to Pyongyang, which took place in late June, itself was a significant event in Sino-North Korea ties; China signified it was raising its stake in the geopolitical dividends of the North Korea nuclear matter. Interestingly,

without any public announcement, China's dealings with South Korea have since also shown a nuanced shift.

First, the Chinese side did not highlight the THAAD issue in various academic and policy meetings between Seoul and Beijing. The majority of Chinese participants also underscored that the discord has yet to be fully resolved. The Chinese side expressed concerns over the possibility of additional THAAD battery deployment by Washington to U.S. military bases in South Korea. China's new 2019 Defense White Paper included a clause about THAAD. "The U.S. has severely destroyed the strategic balance of the region by deploying the THAAD system in South Korea, and inflicted severe damage on the strategic security interests of the regional countries," it said. To sum up, THAAD is still an important issue for China, but Beijing wants to improve ties with Seoul and it doesn't want THAAD to become an obstacle.

Second, China ratcheted up publicly recognizing and praising President Moon Jae-in's mediating role in the nuclear talks between the United States and North Korea. It is notable that the Chinese still praised Moon for his steadfast peace outreach effort in transforming the Korean Peninsula situation even during the recent negotiation impasse. Chinese note that 'With Xi Jinping's visit to North Korea, relations between North Korea and China have entered a new high period. They also expressed hope that the ties between Seoul and Beijing could be also further strengthened.

http://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/opinion/2019/09/137_275686.html

Taiwan

Ian Easton On Taiwan: Why the US defends Taiwan

Taipei Times, September 16, 2019

For many Asia-watchers, one of the biggest surprises of Donald Trump's last two years and eight months in high office has been that he hasn't sold Taiwan out in return for China's help on North Korea, a trade deal, or just because it would make Xi Jinping

(ÒnÑ s^)^ happy. In fact, the opposite has occurred. The Trump White House has arguably done more to help ensure Taiwan's continued freedom and independence from the People's Republic of China (PRC) than any administration in well over 40 years.

Presidents Richard Nixon, Jimmy Carter, and Ronald Reagan cut deals with Beijing at the expense of Taipei. The result was the three US-PRC communiques. To their credit, George W. Bush and Barack Obama avoided the pitfall of signing a fourth communique. However, both presidents were responsible for arms sales freezes and sought to curry favor with China by keeping Taiwan at a distance.

There were concerns that President Trump might follow in his predecessors' footsteps, or worse. He has a track record of being openly critical of democratic allies and skeptical of burdensome defense commitments. He's prone to ignore Congress, the intelligence community, and even his own foreign policy advisors. He's famous for his unpredictable and ruthless dealmaking, and he has demonstrated a high degree of tolerance for dictators like Chairman Xi. Indeed, at one point, Trump reportedly challenged his advisors to tell him why the US should defend Taiwan.

<http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/editorials/archives/2019/09/16/2003722357>

P. Interview

Obama arms official: Nuclear deterrence must be strengthened

Kenji Minemura, The Asahi Shimbun, September 10, 2019

Japanese optimism for nuclear disarmament has dwindled following recent events, including the ending of the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty. Their disappointment appears to be compounded because they held high hopes when U.S. President Barack Obama pledged to work toward a world without nuclear weapons. Frank Rose served as both assistant secretary of state for arms control, verification and compliance as

well as deputy assistant secretary of state for space and defense policy under Obama. Now a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, Rose was asked about recent developments regarding nuclear weapons under the administration of U.S. President Donald Trump.

Excerpts of the interview follow:

Q: Former President Obama won the Nobel Peace Prize for seeking a world without nuclear weapons, but such a world has not materialized. As one of the Obama administration officials in charge of arms control, what are your thoughts on that?

Rose: The president said, "We've got to take pragmatic steps to create the conditions for a world without nuclear weapons." But he also in the same speech said, "This may not happen in my lifetime." And secondly, "As long as nuclear weapons exist, the United States will maintain a safe, secure and effective deterrent to protect the United States and our allies." The Prague speech was a very carefully crafted speech, but unfortunately, people read what they wanted to read into the speech.

Q: As the only people that had atomic bombs dropped on them, many Japanese have been deeply disappointed just because they started to have hopes from the Obama speech. What's your view on that?

A: The majority of the Japanese public is of the view we need to reduce and ultimately eliminate nuclear weapons. That said, I think fundamentally we misjudged the security environment. What really drove the nuclear reductions in the 1990s was the collapse of the Soviet Union and Russia's subsequent financial difficulties. China and Russia have done major modernizations of their nuclear forces. We need to be realistic. I think we have returned to an era of great power competition. We're going to have to manage that competition, especially with regards to nuclear weapons and other strategic capabilities.

Q: But as a nuclear superpower, shouldn't the United States play a leading role in

working toward reducing the number of nuclear weapons in the world?

A: I think in the last 25 years, we've been too focused on reducing the numbers of weapons and not on enhancing a stable deterrence with the objective of preventing miscalculations. My No. 1 priority is preventing nuclear use. And if we don't reduce a single additional nuclear weapon, but we don't have a nuclear detonation, that's success.

Q: How do you assess the new nuclear posture review released by the Trump administration calling for strengthening the U.S. nuclear deterrent?

A: I don't agree with the Trump administration on many issues, but one issue I do agree with them is that we have returned to great power competition with Russia and China. And to successfully deter Russia and China in this new era, we need to modernize the U.S. strategic nuclear deterrent.

Q: How do you assess President Trump's policy toward North Korea?

A: There really was not much preparation for these meetings (between Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un). I have a hard time seeing the North Koreans giving up their nuclear weapons because fundamentally it's Kim Jong Un's ultimate insurance policy for regime survival.

Q: President Trump has frequently expressed dissatisfaction with the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty. Can Japan continue to trust being under the U.S. nuclear umbrella?

A: If Japan were attacked by another country, I believe the United States would meet its commitments and obligations of the treaty. But the more you publicly call those commitments into doubt, the less weight they have over time. And that's a concern that I have.

<http://www.asahi.com/ajw/articles/AJ201909100011.html>

Imran Khan on 'genocide' in Kashmir and possible war with India

Al Jazeera, September 14, 2019

It has been a year since the former cricketer-turned-politician Imran Khan became Pakistan's prime minister. Khan's campaign slogan was "Naya Pakistan" or "New Pakistan", a reflection of his promises to turn the country's economy around and end corruption. But the first year of his premiership has not gone as smoothly as he may have hoped or even expected, especially in terms of the economy. The Pakistani rupee has lost 35 percent of its value during his time in office. Khan's critics call him the prime minister of u-turns, as he has been forced to go back on many of his campaign pledges in an attempt to rescue the situation.

"I'm glad they say I'm a prime minister of u-turns. Only an idiot doesn't do any u-turns," Khan tells Al Jazeera. "Only a moron, when he's on a course and he comes across a brick wall, only that stupid idiot keeps banging his head against a brick wall. An intelligent person immediately revises his strategy and goes around it." But have any of these "u-turns" had a positive impact on the country? In terms of foreign affairs, Pakistan is closer than ever to its neighbour, China. But relations with its other neighbour, India, are at a new low. Asked whether these two nuclear countries are at risk of another major conflict, or even war, Khan tells Al Jazeera he "absolutely" believes war with India could be a possibility.

"Eight million Muslims in Kashmir are under siege for almost now six weeks. And why this can become a flashpoint between India and Pakistan is because what we already know India is trying to do is divert attention from their illegal annexation and their impending genocide on Kashmir," he says. "They are taking the attention away by blaming Pakistan for terrorism." "Pakistan would never start a war, and I am clear: I am a pacifist, I am anti-war, I believe that wars do not solve any problems," he says. But, he adds: "When two nuclear-armed countries fight, if they fight

a conventional war, there is every possibility that it is going to end up into nuclear war. The unthinkable." "If say Pakistan, God forbid, we are fighting a conventional war, we are losing, and if a country is stuck between the choice: either you surrender or you fight 'til death for your freedom, I know Pakistanis will fight to death for their freedom. So when a nuclear-armed country fights to the end, to the death, it has consequences."

"So that's why we have approached the United Nations, we are approaching every international forum, that they must act right now because this is a potential disaster that would go way beyond the Indian subcontinent." Until recently, Pakistan had made attempts to open dialogue with India "to live as civilised neighbours, to resolve our difference [over Kashmir] ... through a political settlement", but according to Khan, this is no longer the case. "We discovered that while we were trying to have dialogue, they were trying to push us in the blacklist in FATF [Financial Action Task Force] ... If Pakistan is pushed into the blacklist of FATF that means there will be sanctions on Pakistan. So they were trying to bankrupt us economically, so that's when we pulled back. And that's when we realised that this government is on an agenda ... to push Pakistan to disaster," says Khan.

"There is no question of talking to the Indian government right now after they revoked this article 370 of their own constitution and they annexed Kashmir illegally against the UN Security Council resolution which had guaranteed the people that they would be able to hold a referendum, a plebiscite, to decide their destiny." Khan has not only faced criticism about the country's ailing economy and his u-turns. Civil rights activists and journalists are saying that the space for dissent and freedom of expression has shrunk and that there was a crackdown against the media since he took office. "This is utter and utter nonsense," Khan says. "Pakistan is one of the freest places in the world in media the freedom that

journalists have in this country is unprecedented." Asked about his government's achievements after its first year in office, Khan says: "We are already in a new Pakistan ... This government has done things which no government has done before. But, as they say, Rome was not built in a day. When you start making these massive changes, reforms, it takes time. The time to judge a government is five years ... The first year was the most difficult period, but from now onwards people will start seeing the difference ... the direction of the country is now right."

<https://www.aljazeera.com/programmes/talktojazeera/2019/09/imran-khan-genocide-kashmir-war-india-190913134545416.html>

War b/w two nuclear states Pakistan, India to affect whole World: Dr. Firdous

Radio Pakistan, September 15, 2019

Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Information and Broadcasting Dr Firdous Ashiq Awan has said Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf government is taking steps to improve life of common man by introducing programmes like Ehsas and Sehat Insaf Cards. Talking to a private news channel, she said government is promoting export-oriented industry by taking ease of doing business initiatives to restore confidence of investors. She said today Pakistan is in safe hands as civil and military leaderships are on same page to steer the country out of crises.

She said reforms are being introduced in national institutions for better public services delivery. Firdous said Jammu and Kashmir is a national issue and all opposition parties should join hands with government for exposing Indian human rights violations in occupied Kashmir across the globe. She said the world powers like Russia and China are supporting Pakistan's stance. She said a war between the two nuclear states of South Asia would affect the whole world. To a question, she said foreign ministers of United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia had visited Pakistan and asked India to lift curfew in the occupied valley.

<https://www.radio.gov.pk/15-09-2019/war-between-two-nuclear-states-to-affect-the-whole-world-dr-firdous>

Q. Think Tanks

What Happens If the Last Nuclear Arms Control Treaty Expires?

Pranay Vaddi, Nicholas Blanchette, Garrett Hinck

Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, September 05, 2019

WHAT IS NEW START?

The New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (New START) is an agreement between the United States and Russia that limits certain nuclear weapons. It caps each country at the lowest levels of deployed long-range nuclear forces since early in the Cold War. These are nuclear weapons ready to be used on delivery systems (missiles and bombers) that can reach targets a continent away. Confused about New START and the INF Treaty? Explore the key differences below.

WHY DID BOTH COUNTRIES SIGN UP?

The treaty entered into force in 2011. The then president Barack Obama's administration successfully negotiated it as a follow-on to the original START Treaty, which was in effect from 1994 to 2009. The older START Treaty had expired without a replacement. Neither Russia nor the United States were carrying out START-related inspections and notifications during this gap between the agreements, so each country lost valuable insight into the other's nuclear forces.

Moscow and Washington both wanted provisions that allowed them to be flexible in the make-up of their nuclear arsenals, to inspect each other's nuclear bases, and to limit either side's ability to cheat and build a secret force of weapons to break out from the treaty. These provisions provided transparency into each side's nuclear operations and thereby reduced at least one major source of potential instability between them.

<https://carnegieendowment.org/2019/09/05/what-happens-if-last-nuclear-arms-control-treaty-expires-pub-79782>

The Last Nuclear Arms Treaty

Pranay Vaddi, Nicholas Blanchette, and Garrett Hinck

Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, September 05, 2019

Why New START Matters

New START is the only nuclear arms control treaty left between the United States and Russia. But it expires on February 5, 2021, unless extended by up to five years. Without it, there will be no limits on—or transparency into—the size and composition of the U.S. and Russian nuclear arsenals.

<https://carnegieendowment.org/publications/interactive/new-start>

A Commonsense Policy for Avoiding a Disastrous Nuclear Decision

James A. Winnefeld, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, September 10, 2019

Stable nuclear deterrence relies on the impossibility of one nation being able to successfully conduct a preemptive nuclear first strike on another. To this end, the United States has developed the capability to be able to respond while it is under attack, before the bulk of its nuclear forces, their command-and-control system, and even the president are destroyed. But the intense time pressure involved in accurately diagnosing, and then ordering and executing a response to a nuclear attack, could easily backfire catastrophically. Specifically, the time pressure inherent in this launch-under-attack approach creates two unacceptable risks: that the president might fail to respond to a real attack, or that he or she might order a nuclear response to a false warning. To address these risks, the president should be able to order a delayed response—an option I call “decide under attack.”

The United States fields three long-range nuclear strike capabilities, known as the

triad. Intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) are the quickest-reacting leg, submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs) the most survivable, and bombers the most flexible leg. The triad is the foundation for strategic stability, because all three legs cannot be destroyed at once.

<https://carnegieendowment.org/2019/09/10/commonsense-policy-for-avoiding-disastrous-nuclear-decision-pub-79799>

India's Space Power: Revisiting the Anti-Satellite Test

Shounak Set, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, September 6, 2019

Against the backdrop of former U.S. president Ronald Reagan's Star Wars program, Satish Dhawan, a pioneer of the Indian space program, observed that time would tell whether Indian activities in space would remain exclusively civilian and pacifist.¹ Around three decades later, on March 27, 2019, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi surprised the world with his announcement that India had become the fourth country to conduct an anti-satellite (ASAT) missile test (after the United States, Russia, and China). The test on March 27 was preceded by an unsuccessful one in February; but that doesn't eclipse the significance of the exercise. Only three publicly recorded ASAT tests have been conducted since the end of the Cold War, and, arguably (the possession of latent capabilities notwithstanding), it is the actual testing of a technology that represents a salient transformation in a country's capabilities.

Dubbed “Mission Shakti” (shakti denotes “power” in Sanskrit), the test entailed launching a ballistic missile into outer space to destroy an Indian satellite located about 300 kilometers above the earth's surface, in low earth orbit (LEO)—which ranges between 80 kilometers and 2,400 kilometers above the earth's surface, depending on contrasting definitions. The direct-ascent missile destroyed the satellite kinetically, in under three minutes, by the sheer impact of the collision rather than a warhead-induced explosion. India

reportedly adapted its missile defense interceptor, the Prithvi Defense Vehicle Mark-II, into an ASAT weapon, making it the third country to demonstrate the capability for a direct-ascent kinetic kill.² Though its technological antecedents have been engendered through the ballistic missile defense program since 2006, recent global and regional dynamics arguably catalyzed Mission Shakti. The ineluctable questions now revolve around the mission's intentions, impact, utility, and potential next steps.

<https://carnegieindia.org/2019/09/06/india-s-space-power-revisiting-anti-satellite-test-pub-79797>

Original Documents and reports

China's nuclear power development maintains high-level safety: white paper

Xinhua, September 3, 2019

In 2000, 2004, 2010 and 2016, the International Atomic Energy Agency conducted four comprehensive reviews of China's nuclear and radiation safety regulation, giving full recognition to China's good practices and experiences, the white paper said.

SAFE, EFFICIENT NUCLEAR POWER DEVELOPMENT

In accordance with the concept of multiple protective barriers and defense-in-depth, and with the aim of ensuring that they are completely safe and reliable, China uses the most advanced technology and the most stringent standards for the development of nuclear power, and strictly manages the entire life cycle of nuclear facilities from siting, design, construction, and operation to decommissioning. Since 1985, when the first nuclear power plant on the Chinese mainland, the Qinshan Nuclear Power Plant, began construction, China has adopted safe and reliable reactor technology, and learned from the experiences and lessons of major nuclear accidents abroad to make safety improvements. After more than 30 years, China has achieved independent design,

construction and operational capability in nuclear power, and entered a new stage of safe and efficient development.

China took the lead in the construction and operation of the GW-class pressurized water reactor, AP1000, using advanced passive safety systems, and the European advanced pressurized water reactor, EPR. The Hualong-1 nuclear reactor, a product of independent research and development, ranks among the highest in the world in terms of safety design, the white paper said. By June 2019, China had 47 nuclear power units in operation, ranking third in the world, and 11 nuclear power units under construction, ranking first in the world.

The performance indicators of nuclear power units are generally good. In the comprehensive ranking of similar units of the World Association of Nuclear Operators (WANO) in recent years, operating units in China have performed above the world median for more than 80 percent of the indicators, and have reached the world advanced level for more than 70 percent of the indicators. In 2018, China led the world with 12 operating units achieving full marks in WANO composite index, according to the white paper.

SAFE OPERATION OF OTHER KEY NUCLEAR FACILITIES

Based on its own strength and drawing on advanced international experience, China has designed and developed research reactors such as high-temperature gas-cooled reactors, fast reactors, small nuclear power reactors, molten salt reactors, and transmutation devices, according to the white paper. Nineteen operating civil research reactors and critical assemblies maintain safe and stable operation. "We have implemented the strategy of a closed nuclear fuel cycle and gradually established a complete nuclear fuel cycle system, including uranium mining and metallurgy, uranium conversion, uranium enrichment, processing of nuclear fuel elements, spent fuel reprocessing, and treatment and

disposal of radioactive waste," the white paper said. Eighteen civil nuclear fuel cycle facilities and two low- and intermediate-level radioactive solid waste disposal sites have a good safety record, according to the white paper.

CLASSIFICATION, SAFE DISPOSAL OF RADIOACTIVE WASTE

China implements radioactive waste classification: near-surface or medium-depth disposal of low- and intermediate-level radioactive waste in locations that meet the requirements of nuclear safety, and deep geological disposal of high-level radioactive waste in centralized locations, according to the white paper. To ensure permanent safety, nuclear facility operating organizations and radioactive waste disposal organizations carry out minimization and decontamination of radioactive waste in accordance with the law. All provinces and equivalent administrative units have built urban radioactive waste repositories for centralized storage and proper disposal of radioactive waste produced by nuclear technology.

"We will continue to promote the safe storage and treatment of spent fuel, enhance our capacity in the treatment and disposal of radioactive waste, carry out the decommissioning and environmental restoration of uranium mining and metallurgical facilities, and standardize the environmental management of waste rock, waste water, tailings and slag in uranium mining and metallurgy, so as to ensure that radiation is maintained at safe levels," the white paper said.

MARKEDLY IMPROVED SAFETY IN USE OF NUCLEAR TECHNOLOGY

China implements dynamic management of radioactive sources from cradle to grave, and brings all source-related units into the scope of government regulation, the white paper said. "We have established a national database for the management of nuclear technology utilization, taken measures to enhance the safety of radioactive sources, realized the real-time online monitoring of high-risk mobile sources, and improved the

safety level of nuclear technology utilization," the white paper said. As of this June, 142,607 radioactive sources and 181,293 radiation-emitting devices were in use in China, and a total of 73,070 units were engaged in the production, sale and use of radioisotopes and radiation-emitting devices.

One hundred percent of radioactive sources and radiation-emitting devices are subject to licensing management, and 100 percent of waste radioactive sources are safely stored. The annual incidence of radiation accidents from radioactive sources has continued to decline, from 6.2 per 10,000 sources in the 1990s to less than one per 10,000 sources at present, the lowest level in history, according to the white paper.

UPGRADED NUCLEAR SECURITY

China regards nuclear security as an important protective screen for nuclear safety and controls nuclear materials in accordance with the strictest standards, according to the white paper. Nuclear power plants, nuclear fuel cycle facilities, and radioactive source security systems are in line with international standards. The rules and regulations are sound and complete, and the mechanisms for non-proliferation and nuclear terrorism prevention are improving.

"We are building a nuclear security system for new nuclear facilities in accordance with the latest international standards, and have invested billions of yuan in special funds to upgrade the security system of the original nuclear facilities, thus greatly strengthening our prevention capabilities," the white paper said. To date there have been no incidents of theft, loss or illegal use of nuclear materials, according to the white paper.

GOOD RADIATION ENVIRONMENT QUALITY

The radiation environment monitoring data in China show that the radiation environment quality across the country is within the range of natural environmental radiation, and the activity concentration

levels of artificial radionuclides are normal. Surveillance monitoring data show that radiation in the environment around national nuclear facilities and nuclear technology utilization projects has not changed significantly compared with the level prior to construction, and the individual public dose is far lower than the national limit, according to the white paper.

http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2019-09/03/c_138360745.htm

Update to OFAC's list of Specially Designated Nationals (SDN) and Blocked Persons

US Department of Treasury, September 13, 2019

The SDN list has recently been updated. OFAC's Sanctions List Search tool employs fuzzy logic on its name search field to look for potential matches on the Specially Designated Nationals (SDN) List and on its Consolidated Sanctions List. This consolidated list includes the Non-SDN, Palestinian Legislative Council List "NS-PLC List," the Part 561 List, the Non-SDN Iran Sanctions Act List "NS-ISA List," the Foreign Sanctions Evaders List "FSE List," the Sectoral Sanctions Identifications List "SSI List," and the List of Persons Identified as Blocked Solely Pursuant to Executive Order 13599 "the 13599 Lis

<https://www.treasury.gov/resource-center/sanctions/SDN-List/Pages/default.aspx>

Executive Order Amending Counter Terrorism Sanctions Authorities; Counter Terrorism Designations and Designations Updates; Iran-related Designation; Syria

US Department of Treasury, September 10, 2019

Today, the President issued a new Executive Order (E.O.) "Modernizing Sanctions to Combat Terrorism." This E.O. amends E.O. 13224, "Blocking Property and Prohibiting Transactions with Persons Who Commit, Threaten to Commit, or Support Terrorism" and terminates the national emergency

declared in E.O. 12947, "Prohibiting Transactions with Terrorists Who Threaten to Disrupt the Middle East Peace Process." The amended E.O. strengthens and expands both the Department of State's and the Treasury's authorities to target terrorists and their supporters, including by imposing correspondent account or payable-through account sanctions on any foreign financial institution that knowingly conducted or facilitated any significant transaction for or on behalf of any Specially Designated Global Terrorist after the effective date.

<https://www.treasury.gov/resource-center/sanctions/OFAC-Enforcement/Pages/20190910.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).

Disclaimer:

Data included in this newsletter is only for educational purpose and wider dissemination. All liabilities and rights belong to respective writers & authors.

Prepared by :

**Ms Diya Deep Singh
Ms Raj Rajeshwari Singh
Ms Rishika Chauhan
Mr Varad Vatsal**

Indian Pugwash Society

No.1, Development Enclave,
Rao Tula Ram Marg, Near USI, Delhi-110010
Tel. No (91-11) 2671-7983
Fax No. (91-11)2615-4192
Email: indianpugwashsociety@gmail.com