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- France, Germany closing in on arms exports pact
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- France says main priority is to de-escalate U.S.-Iran tensions
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- Britain, France, Germany blame Iran for Saudi attack: statement
- £3bn surge in cost of Hinkley nuclear plant 'could trigger industry crisis'
- Boris Johnson announces funding for world's first nuclear fusion plant
- Britain is 'at war every day' due to constant cyber attacks, Chief of the Defence Staff says

G. Russia

- Permission to dock: Russia's floating nuclear power plant reaches Arctic port it was built for
- World sleepwalking into total nuclear war as callous elites fear no bloodshed - Russian scholar
- Novovoronezh II-2 passes acceptance tests
- U.S. Says It Has Plans to 'Take Down' Western Russian Region's Air Defenses

- Russian Participants of Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Conference Denied US Visas – UN Ambassador
- Chernobyl used fuel store ready for commissioning
- Cleanup Crews Filmed Removing Russian Nuclear Blast Debris
- First fuel from Lepse leaves Nerpa shipyard
- Solution over nuclear deal with Iran may be achieved within months, Russian envoy says

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- Zarif: U.S. must return to nuclear deal if it wants a place at negotiating table
- Zarif: Whoever starts war will not be the one who finishes it
- Macron's efforts to yield result if Trump lifts sanctions: Rouhani
- Jannati says Iran will never surrender to U.S. 'maximum pressure'
- No new deal before compliance with current one, Zarif says
- Rouhani, Merkel discuss HOPE, accelerating INSTEX
- Trump threatens to tighten US sanctions against Iran
- Iran commits new breach of fraying nuclear deal, expands enrichment - IAEA
- Iran must not be the only party loyal to JCPOA: Rouhani
- Leader: Europeans have practically stayed committed to U.S. sanctions
- U.S. offered to remove all sanctions on Iran in exchange for talks -Iran president
- Lavrov: U.S. violated UN Resolution 2231 endorsing the Iran nuclear deal
- Chinese FM urges Persian Gulf states to form 'platform for dialogue'
- Finland says considers nuclear deal as basis for increasing ties
- Malaysian PM slams U.S. unilateral sanctions as 'privilege of the rich and powerful'
- NIOC to offer 2m barrels of gas condensate at IRENEX on Tuesday
- Iran calls sanctions 'crime against humanity'
- Nuclear deal 'worthless' if it does not benefit Iran: Vaezi
- Rouhani is not entitled to make changes to the JCPOA, says top MP

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- Russia detains two North Korean vessels after one opens fire: reports
- NK nuclear reactor shut down for enough time for re-fuelling: IAEA
- North Korea chief negotiator welcomes Trump's call for 'new method' at talks
- Trump's 'new method' on North Korea may indicate nuclear weapon first approach
- Trump says N. Korea must denuclearize to tap potential
- North Korea says lack of progress casts doubt on prospects for future summit with U.S.: KCNA
- North Korea urges US to turn words into action
- North Korea won't give up nuclear weapons: ex-Trump adviser Bolton
- G-77 adopts statement urging lifting of sanctions on Pyongyang: NK media

K. South Korea

- Seoul asked to offer 'big promises' to North Korea
- Moon's mission in New York: 'Get nuke talks restarted'
- Seoul stresses 'flexibility' to advance denuke talks
- Previously unidentified underground facilities identified at Yongbyon complex: 38 North
- 70% of S. Koreans expect Kim Busan trip to be positive for nuclear talks, cross-border ties
- S. Korean, Chinese foreign ministers reaffirm cooperation on North Korea
- S. Korea, Bulgaria to strengthen partnerships on nuclear energy, ICT

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- Tokyo refuses Seoul's help over North Korea firing
- Koizumi hopes son will push for abandonment of nuclear power
- SDF, U.S. Army stage first drill using missiles to avert sea attack
- Japan embassy posts radiation levels in Seoul and Fukushima
- Japan lists China as bigger threat than nuclear-armed North Korea

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- Fault lines should nix reactor proposal: group

N. Op-Ed

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- Decoding Pakistan's nuclear brinkmanship
- India vs. Pakistan Could Be a Nuclear War Where Billions Die
- India vs Pakistan nuclear showdown: Modi's £400m hypersonic push risks disastrous conflict
- Tactical Nuclear Weapons: A vital cog in Islamabad's scheme of things
- PM's message of peace vs Imran's warning of war at UNGA
- Crude hate speech, medieval mindset: India tears into Imran Khan's UN address

China

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- Could China's strict cyber controls gain international acceptance?
- Reaching for the STARS

Pakistan

- What does Pakistan's energy mix look like and what is its future?
- Beware the nuclear con man
- Moment of truth

USA

- During the Cold War, America Almost Had Its Battleships Carry Nuclear Weapons
- America's Nuclear Missile Submarines May Get Smaller Tactical Nukes
- The Reason Why America Isn't Ready to Protect Itself from Russian Hypersonic Missiles
- How the Top 5 Strange Myths About America's Nuclear Triad Are Wrong We break it down.
- How Artificial Intelligence Could Make Nuclear War More Likely
- Opinion: The truth behind small modular reactors
- Trump's Close-Call Diplomacy with Iran's President

Russia

- Explained: Why Russia built a floating nuclear plant; why some are nervous
- Everything You Wanted to Know About Russia's Nuclear Weapons and Strategy Class is now in session.
- Russia's Planned 85,000 Ton Aircraft Carrier Was Enormous
- Russia and America Wanted 'Nuclear Reactors' with Wings
- Three Mile Island's recent closure shows what people don't realize about nuclear power
- See This Strange Tank? It Was Russia's Plan to Fight Tank Battles During a Nuclear War

West Asia

Iran

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- Does Merkel follow Trump's footsteps on Iran?
- The Mossad Spy Chief Who Stole Iran's Secret Nuclear Archives #1: Yossi Cohen

East Asia

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- OPCON transfer
- Appeasing North Korea
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O. Misc/World

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- IAEA Concludes Long Term Operational Safety Review at South Africa's Koeberg Nuclear Power Plant
- 5 Terrible Ways That a Nuclear War Might Actually Happen
- KAERI becomes Asia's 1st IAEA-designated research center
- NICE Future Initiative encourages integrated approach
- Uganda says Russia to help it develop nuclear energy
- New nuclear countries face integrated challenges
- Dynamic contracted for ITER Tokamak Assembly
- Experts from Korea, Kazakhstan shed light on denuclearization

P. Think Tanks

- Optimizing IAEA Assistance: Consolidated Plan for Safety Presented at IAEA General Conference
- How Trump Can Escape His Iran Jam
- Much Ado About India's No-first-use Nuke Policy
- In other news: climate crisis, chemical weapons, nuclear brinkmanship, etc.

Q. Interviews and Original Documents

- Iran-related Designations; Issuance of Iran-related Frequently Asked Question
- Iran-related Designations; Counter Designations Sanctions are war, Zarif says
- U.S. Iran policy unlikely to change dramatically with Bolton ouster: Jahanpour

India

India's Right of Reply in 74th Session of the United Nations General Assembly General Debate

PIB Delhi, September 28, 2019

I take the floor to exercise India's right of reply to the statement made by the Prime Minister of Pakistan. Every word spoken from the podium of this august Assembly, it is believed, carries the weight of history. Unfortunately, what we heard today from Prime Minister Imran Khan of Pakistan was a callous portrayal of the world in binary terms. Us vs Them; Rich vs Poor; North vs South; Developed Vs Developing; Muslims vs Others. A script that fosters divisiveness at the United Nations. Attempts to sharpen differences and stir up hatred, are simply put - "hate speech".

Rarely has the General Assembly witnessed such misuse, rather abuse, of an opportunity to reflect. Words matter in diplomacy. Invocation of phrases such as "pogrom", "bloodbath", "racial superiority", "pick up the gun" and "fight to the end" reflect a medieval mindset and not a 21st century vision. Prime Minister Khan's threat of unleashing nuclear devastation qualifies as brinkmanship, not statesmanship. Even coming from the leader of a country that has monopolized the entire value chain of the industry of terrorism, Prime Minister Khan's justification of terrorism was brazen and incendiary.

For someone who was once a cricketer and believed in the gentleman's game, today's speech bordered on crudeness of the variety that is reminiscent of the guns of Darra Adam Khel. Now that Prime Minister Imran Khan has invited UN Observers to Pakistan to verify that there are no militant organisations in Pakistan, the world will hold him to that promise. Here are a few questions that Pakistan can respond to as a precursor to the proposed verification.

Can Pakistan confirm the fact that it is home to 130 UN designated terrorists and 25 terrorist entities listed by the UN, as of today? Will Pakistan acknowledge that it is the only Government in the world that

provides pension to an individual listed by the UN in the Al Qaeda and Da'esh Sanctions list! Can Pakistan explain why here in New York, its premier bank, the Habib Bank had to shut shop after it was fined millions of dollars over terror financing. Will Pakistan deny that the Financial Action Task Force has put the country on notice for its violations of more than 20 of the 27 key parameters?...

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1586538>

Chandrayaan-2: Less than a week to save Vikram

Rasheed Kappan, Deccan Herald, September 17, 2019

Vikram's date with destiny is just round the corner. In less than a week, darkness will descend on the South Polar region of the Moon, the location where the Chandrayaan-2 Lander was spotted by the Orbiter. Vikram had gone silent after a hard-landing on September 7

Virtually giving up hope, the Isro top brass has reportedly told the scientists concerned to instead focus on the Orbiter. Its life extended to 7.5 years, the Orbiter is now in ship shape to scan the lunar surface with multiple imaging payloads. For Vikram, however, the short period till September 20-21 is critical since its solar panels can work only as long as the sun is over the landing site. The panels can be switched on only if the Orbiter can establish contact.

<https://www.deccanherald.com/national/chandrayaan-2-less-than-a-week-to-save-vikram-761871.html>

Chandrayaan-2: ISRO panel to release report on Vikram lander soon

Amitabh Sinha, The Indian Express, September 18, 2019

With less than three days to go before Sun sets over the area where the Vikram lander of Chandrayaan-2 mission fell off after a failed landing attempt, the Indian Space Research Organisation seems to have all

but given up hopes of succeeding in its attempt to make contact with the spacecraft. In a cryptic message posted on its Twitter handle, its first since September 10 when it had said attempts were still being made to restore contact with the lander, ISRO thanked everyone for “standing by us”.

<https://indianexpress.com/article/technology/science/chandrayaan-2-isro-panel-to-release-report-on-vikram-lander-soon-6004482/>

The sun is setting on Vikram lander but not on Chandrayaan-2

Laura Winter, Al Jazeera, September 18, 2019

On Saturday, as the sun sets on the lunar South Pole, the shadows cast will darken any hope of communicating with India’s fatally damaged Vikram lander. The Indian space agency does not expect the onboard communications and scientific equipment to survive the South Pole’s 14 Earth days of lunar night when surface temperatures plunge to minus 180 degrees Celsius.

Despite the September 7 loss of the lander, India’s ambition to take its place among the spacefaring nations endeavouring to exploit the moon’s water and mineral riches has not cooled, but it has become more difficult to realise.

<https://www.aljazeera.com/ajimpact/india-vikram-lander-moon-badly-damaged-190919234735306.html>

Sivan terms Chandrayaan 2 mission a huge success

Satyasundar Barik, The Hindu, September 21, 2019

Even as all attempts to establish contact with lunar lander Vikram went in vain, ISRO chairperson K. Sivan on Saturday termed Chandrayaan 2 mission a huge success and asserted that it helped in mapping the entire lunar surface in great precision and detail.

“Chandrayaan 2 comprises a very big size science component and a small technology demonstration component, which include soft-landing near the South Pole of the Moon. The bulk of experiments carried out in the inter-planetary science is in the orbiter.

Initially, the orbiter’s life was only one year, but due to optimum mission operations, it has increased to 7.5 years. Now, scientists would receive 7.5 times data more than expected. It is really a huge success,” he said.

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/chandrayaan-2-mission-a-huge-success-isro-chief-k-sivan/article29476025.ece>

Chandrayaan 2: Vikram Out of Nasa Field of View as LRO Fails to Spot the Lander During 17 Sept Fly-By

Firstpost, September 23, 2019

A NASA satellite currently orbiting the Moon has reportedly failed to spot the Vikram lander near the South Polar region. This is where things went quiet after the lander had lost contact with Earth, a mere 2.1 kilometres from the Moon’s surface. Towards the end of the descent on 7 September, the lander, housing the Pragyan rover inside it, lost communication with ISRO and NASA minutes before its planned touch-down and crashed near its landing site.

Ten days later, NASA made an attempt to capture a photograph of the lander from an overhead fly-by. The Lunar Reconnaissance Orbiter’s Camera instrument (LROC) imaged the landing site of the lander as planned, according to a report by Aviation Week. However, “long shadows in the area” were thought to be obscuring the still-silent lunar lander.

NASA has admitted that the lander may not have been in the ‘field of view’ of the camera on-board its orbiter. The agency took its time processing, validating, analysing and reviewing the series of images captured by its LROC. The LRO’s deputy project scientist John Keller shared a statement confirming that the orbiter’s camera captured the images, according to CNET.

<https://www.firstpost.com/tech/science/chandrayaan-2-vikram-out-of-nasa-field-of-view-as-lro-fails-to-spot-the-lander-during-17-sept-fly-by-7386311.html>

Narendra Modi pitches for India's NSG entry

Sriram Lakshman, The Hindu, September 25, 2019

Prime Minister Narendra Modi made a pitch for India's membership of the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) in New York on Wednesday, as he addressed a largely business gathering in the Bloomberg Global Business Forum where he delivered the keynote address. The comments were made during a Q&A session with former New York City Mayor and businessman, Michael Bloomberg.

"One challenge that is before us today is that of nuclear energy, because, since we are not a member of the NSG, we do not really have the ability to get the fuel for producing nuclear energy," Mr. Modi said, as part of an answer on climate change and India's energy needs.

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/narendra-modi-pitches-for-indias-nsg-entry/article29512428.ece>

Planned for 6 months, India's Mars mission Mangalyaan completes 5 years

India Today, September 25, 2019

The Mangalyaan mission, which was initially meant to last six months, has completed five years of orbiting Mars and is likely to continue for some more time, says Indian Space Research Organisation (Isro) chief K Sivan.

In the last five years, the Mars Orbiter Mission (MOM), India's first interplanetary endeavour, helped India's space agency prepare a Martian Atlas based on the images provided by the orbiter, Sivan said. The Mangalyaan mission completed five years on Tuesday. "It's working and continuously sending pictures. It still has some time to go," Sivan said. Asked about Mangalyaan 2, he said work is going on and there is no decision on it yet. The Mars orbiter has sent thousands of pictures totalling two terabytes, an Isro official explained. The Mars Colour Camera took close distance images

of Phobos and Deimos, the two moons of Mars. MOM is the only Martian artificial satellite that could capture the full disc of Mars in one view frame and also takes images of the far side of Deimos, the space agency said.

<https://www.indiatoday.in/science/story/mangalyaan-mission-isro-completes-5-years-orbiting-mars-1602933-2019-09-25>

Chandrayaan 2 Vikram Lander had a hard-landing, may be hiding in a shadow: NASA

The Hindu, September 27, 2019

U.S. space agency National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) has officially said moon lander Vikram had a hard-landing and that its own orbiting spacecraft could not get clear pictures of Vikram's crash site during its recent flyover. NASA on Thursday night released a set of hazy lunar surface images of the southern site where the lander probably crashed on September 7. Vikram's precise location eluded the sharp camera of the Lunar Reconnaissance Orbiter (LRO) when it last flew over the probable site on September 17.

<https://www.thehindu.com/sci-tech/science/chandrayaan-2-vikram-lander-had-a-hard-landing-may-be-hiding-in-a-shadow-nasa/article29524424.ece>

Chandrayaan 2: NASA to capture Vikram's landing site on Moon again

Ribhu Mishra, Financial Express, September 28, 2019

The Lunar Reconnaissance Orbiter (LRO) of NASA has been circling the moon since 2009 and will pass over the landing location of Vikram Lander again on October 14 and make another attempt to spot ISRO's landing module.

As informed by the American Space agency NASA, its spacecraft flew over the landing location of India's Vikram lander of Chandrayaan 2 Mission. The Lunar Reconnaissance Orbiter (LRO) of NASA

passed over the location where Vikram lander module of India's Chandrayaan 2 Moon Mission was supposed to have landed but was unable to locate the missing spacecraft. The LRO, which is NASA's Moon-orbiter has been circling the Moon since 2009. NASA has informed that it will make another attempt to spot the Vikram Lander and will fly over its landing location again on October 14. The dusk before the beginning of the lunar night in the landing region of the Moon made the job tougher for the LRO as the low light and shadows did not allow proper investigation. There are possibilities that the Vikram Lander might be lying in the shadows of Craters in the region.

<https://www.financialexpress.com/lifestyle/science/chandrayaan-2-nasa-to-capture-vikrams-landing-site-on-moon-again/1720583/>

Current Nuclear Suppliers Group chair Kazakhstan pushing India's membership

Defence News, September 30, 2019

Kazakhstan as the current chair of the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) is assisting India to obtain membership of the coveted group, according to Bulat Sarsenbayev, who recently concluded his five year term as Kazakh Ambassador to India. Kazakhstan, one of uranium suppliers for Indian nuclear power plants, is also doing its best to enable India attain membership of NSG, according to Sarsenbayev who recently returned to Astana to join a senior position in government.

In a freewheeling interview before his departure Sarsenbayev spoke about the current state of the Kazakh-Indian partnership, the main areas of cooperation between the two countries and outlined the areas of promising cooperation.

<http://www.defencenews.in/article/Current-Nuclear-Suppliers-Group-chair-Kazakhstan-pushing-Indias-membership-707174>

China

Second parade rehearsal held; new weapons spotted

Ma Xiu, Global Times, September 15, 2019

A parade of weapons and equipment including nuclear, hypersonic and stealthy ones were spotted in Beijing early Sunday morning during the second rehearsal to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China, delighting online legions of patriotic military enthusiasts. Photos and videos began surfacing on Chinese mainland social media as early as Saturday morning as military hardware rolled into downtown Beijing districts to prepare to join in the massive late-night rehearsal. Type 99A tanks driving down Beijing boulevards were among the first images, their desert camouflage delighting enthusiasts who recalled the jungle look of previous parades.

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. Unlike the H-6K, its predecessor, it can refuel mid-air, extending its range, reports said. Military enthusiasts speculated the plane could carry and fire a ballistic missile in the air. A military expert who requested anonymity told the Global Times Sunday that some of the weapons and equipment under discussion were among the world's most advanced, showing China's rising capability to safeguard its sovereignty, territorial integrity and the fruits of peaceful development.

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

CNNC nuclear technology in spotlight at IAEA General Conference

China Daily, September 19, 2019

CNNC took the spotlight during the 63rd IAEA General Conference by demonstrating how it applies nuclear technology. The conference was held in Vienna on Sept 16 and will run until Sept 20. On Sept 17, a gathering of dignitaries visited the Chinese nuclear technology demonstration area to learn about nuclear technology recently being applied in industry, agriculture, medicine, and security in China. The delegation, accompanied by Yu Jianfeng, chairman of CNNC, included Cornel Feruta, acting director-general of IAEA, Zhang Jianhua, deputy director of the China Atomic Energy Authority, Liu Hua, deputy minister of the Ministry of Ecology and Environment, and Wang Qun, China's ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary and permanent representative to the United Nations and other international organizations in Vienna.

Feruta learned about CNNC's Nigerian Miniature Neutron Source Reactor (MNSR) conversion program, saying that China endeavors to deliver on its responsibility as a major power and plays an important role in helping prevent nuclear proliferation. He expressed hope that China would continue working with IAEA to explore more nuclear application possibilities. During the conference, Yu also met with a number of his counterparts

from Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Kazakhstan, Argentina, and Pakistan. In recent years, nuclear technology has begun being used on a large scale in irradiation processing, nuclear medicine, and public security in China. CNNC, with the approval of the China Atomic Energy Authority, demonstrated how nuclear technology has been applied in China over the past decade, with a special focus on how China uses nuclear technology to improve people's lives.

<https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/201909/19/WS5d8347f7a310cf3e3556c722.html>

China's rapid tech-rise over the past 70 years

Global Times, September 23, 2019

Over the past 70 years, China's science and technology industry has undergone an extraordinary path of development. Starting from scratch, the country has shown the world an example of how a backward player can grow into a world leader in the technology sector. With its heavy investment in research and development, China is now not only getting closer to the technological frontier in conventional areas such as electronics, machinery and automobiles, but is also driving technological innovations in emerging areas such as robotics, artificial intelligence, space technology and e-commerce.

The following data and information provide evidence to the rise of China's technological capabilities thus far. The total number of research and development (R&D) personnel in China ranks first in the world, as China pursues its policy that talent is the foundation of sci-tech innovation. In 2018, the total number of full-time R&D personnel in China reached 4.19 million, 6.2 times of that of 1991, according to data from the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS). In 2013, the total number of researchers in China surpassed that of the US, a country which is commonly recognized as the world's technology front-runner. China has since then, for six consecutive years, ranked first in the world for its number of researchers. For the eighth consecutive year in 2018, the number of applications for intellectual

property rights in China ranked first globally. In 2018, 4.32 million patent applications were made - 86 times more than in 1991 - and 2.45 million patents were granted - 98 times the number in 1991.

<http://www.globaltimes.cn/content/1165224.shtml>

China launches two new BeiDou satellites

Xinhua, September 23, 2019

Launched on a Long March-3B carrier rocket, the two satellites entered the orbit. They are the 47th and 48th satellites of the BDS satellite family. China has successfully sent two satellites of BeiDou Navigation Satellite System (BDS) into space from the Xichang Satellite Launch Center in Sichuan Province at 05:10 a.m. Monday. Launched on a Long March-3B carrier rocket, the two satellites entered the orbit. They are the 47th and 48th satellites of the BDS satellite family.

The new satellites and the carrier rocket were developed by the China Academy of Space Technology and the China Academy of Launch Vehicle Technology, under the China Aerospace Science and Technology Corporation. After in-orbit tests, the new satellites will work with those BDS satellites already in orbit to improve positioning accuracy of the system. China will complete the BDS global network by 2020. Monday's launch was the 312th mission for the Long March series carrier rockets.

http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2019-09/23/c_138414787.htm

China's lunar rover discovers mysterious substance on moon's far side

Xinhua, September 24, 2019

China's lunar rover Yutu-2, or Jade Rabbit-2, discovered an unidentified substance in an impact crater on the far side of the moon. The discovery was made during Yutu-2's ninth lunar day of exploration on

the moon, according to the Lunar Exploration and Space Program Center of the China National Space Administration. The ground controllers designed a driving route for the rover to allow it to conduct scientific detection to the depth of the impact crater and the distribution of the ejecta, said the center.

“The Yutu-2 rover is expected to bring us more surprises and scientific discoveries,” said the center. The lander of the Chang’e-4 probe and the Yutu-2 rover have resumed work for the 10th lunar day on the far side of the moon after “sleeping” during the extremely cold lunar night. The lander woke up at 8:26 p.m. Monday, and the rover awoke at 8:30 p.m. Sunday (Beijing Time). Both are in normal working condition, according to the center.

http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2019-09/24/c_138417680.htm

China Launches First Amphibious Assault Ship

China Daily, September 25, 2019

China’s first amphibious assault ship was launched in Shanghai on Wednesday, coming closer to the completion of its construction project.

The People’s Liberation Army Navy said in a statement that after a brief ceremony starting at 9:20 am at an unidentified shipyard, waters began to be pumped into a dry dock in which the ship’s hull was built. Participants at the ceremony – officials from the central and Shanghai governments, officers from the Central Military Commission’s Equipment Development Department and the PLA Navy, executives of the State-owned conglomerate China State Shipbuilding Corp as well as the vessel’s designers and construction workers – applauded as they watched the launch process, the statement said, without providing more details about the event.

In shipbuilding terminology, launch refers to the process during which a nearly-finished ship is moved into water. It is one of the most important stages in a ship’s construction because once a ship is

launched, it means that its major structures have been readied and major work of the entire construction project has been done. According to the Navy, the new ship, whose name remains unknown as the Chinese military usually makes public a warship’s name at its commissioning ceremony, was domestically developed and constructed. It will have a strong capability to carry out amphibious combat and other tasks. The Navy added that in the next phase, engineers will start outfitting and fine-tuning the vessel’s equipment and then conduct mooring tests and sea trials.

<https://www.defense-aerospace.com/article-view/release/206187/china-launches-first-amphibious-ship.html>

China launches new satellite for air, ocean study

Deng Xiaoci, Global Times, September 25, 2019

China successfully launched a new satellite on Wednesday that will study the earth’s atmosphere, monitor the marine and space environment, help prevent and reduce disasters and conduct scientific experiments. A Long March-2D rocket blasted off from the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center in Northwest China’s Gansu Province at 8:54 am, carrying the satellite codenamed Yunhai-1 02, the satellite developer told the Global Times on Wednesday. The satellite and the launch vehicle were both developed by Shanghai Academy of Spaceflight Technology of the China Aerospace Science and Technology Corporation in Shanghai. The first Yunhai-1 meteorological satellite was sent into orbit in November 2016. The launch marked the 313th mission of the Long March carrier rocket family.

In December 2018, China sent six atmospheric environment research satellites of the Yunhai series into orbit. During the week before the 70th anniversary of the People’s Republic of China on October 1, China has sent three satellites into space including two that will form part of the constellation of China’s

self-developed BeiDou Navigation Satellite System, or BDS. China's BDS is one of the four space-based global navigation satellite systems in the world, which include the US-launched GPS, Russia's GLONASS and the European Union's Galileo. The BDS system started to provide global service at the end of 2018, as the construction of the BDS-3 primary system had been completed by then.

<http://www.globaltimes.cn/content/1165483.shtml>

China launches new satellite for environment detection

Xinhua, September 25, 2019

China sent a new satellite into planned orbit from the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center in northwest China's Gobi Desert on Wednesday. The Yunhai-1 02 satellite, launched on a Long March-2D carrier rocket at 8:54 a.m. (Beijing Time), will be mainly used for detecting the atmospheric and marine environment and space environment, as well as disaster control and other scientific experiments. Both the satellite and the carrier rocket were developed by the Shanghai Academy of Spaceflight Technology of the China Aerospace Science and Technology Corporation. The launch was the 313th mission of the Long March carrier rocket series.

http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2019-09/25/c_138420383.htm

Chinese FM calls for all-out efforts to solve Iran nuclear issue

Xinhua, September 26, 2019

Chinese State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi called on all relevant parties to enhance their sense of urgency and make all-out efforts to push for a political and diplomatic settlement of the Iran nuclear issue. Wang made the appeal during a meeting with foreign affairs officials from the European Union (EU), Iran, Russia, France, Germany and Britain on the sidelines of the United Nations (UN) General Assembly high-level week.

He said the U.S. maximum-pressure approach on Iran has prompted the current

crisis in the region, and if it goes unchecked there could be an even bigger crisis. In order to properly solve the crisis, Wang said relevant parties should uphold the fundamental principles of multilateralism. The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), endorsed by the UN Security Council, is an important outcome of multilateral diplomacy, said Wang. He said safeguarding the JCPOA, commonly known as the Iran nuclear deal, is to uphold multilateralism, the authority of UN Security Council, and the international order based on international law. All parties should never waver in their determination in face of whatever challenges and difficulties, he added. Wang said all parties should continue to honor the commitments under the JCPOA.

Ensuring a balance between rights and obligations prescribed in the JCPOA concerns the basic principle of equity and justice, Wang said. Wang said Iran should resume implementing the deal, while other parties should make every effort to safeguard Iran's legitimate economic benefits. China will continue its legitimate cooperation with Iran in such areas as economy, trade and energy, push ahead with the Arak heavy water reactor renovation project, and support EU-initiated payment system to facilitate trade with Iran, said Wang.

<https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/201909/26/WS5d8c2448a310cf3e3556d998.html>

Nuclear plant building cost rises

Wang Mingjie, China Daily Global, September 27, 2019

This week's news that the cost of the Hinkley Point C nuclear plant, being built with significant Chinese investment in the English county of Somerset, has risen has drawn a mixed response. Some pundits argue that it could send an alarming message to China, but others think it is a positive thing. On Wednesday, the project's lead investor, French utility company Electricite de France SA, also known as EDF, announced that the cost of building the new plant could be up to 2.9 billion pounds (\$3.58 billion) more than initially

anticipated, raising the total bill estimate to between 21.5 billion pounds to 22.5 billion pounds.

China General Nuclear Power Corp, or CGN, is investing 6 billion pounds into Hinkley, which had previously been reported to cost 18 billion pounds. Christopher Bovis, a professor of international business law at the University of Hull, said "The much-anticipated Chinese investment flow to the UK critical infrastructure would be tested from a different prism. "The project relied heavily on cost control mechanisms and the assurances by the parties to the provision of the infrastructure that they have secured concrete deals with their respective supply chains to ensure cost authentication and price systems which provide early and advanced awareness of movements detrimental to the project," he added.

<https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/201909/27/WS5d8dba5ba310cf3e3556de7e.html>

Japan sees N Korea missile, China space activity as threat

Mari Yamaguchi, AP News, September 27, 2019

Japan has raised its caution level about North Korea's missile capability, saying in a defense report that the country resumed missile tests while taking no concrete denuclearization steps and had succeeded in making miniaturized warheads. The annual defense paper, approved Friday by the Cabinet, underscores Japan's fear of being targeted by its neighbor. Its reaction to the North's recent tests contrasts with a low-key response from the United States.

"Taking into consideration its technological maturity acquired by nuclear tests, North Korea seems to have already achieved miniaturization of warheads to place atop ballistic missiles," said the report, which last year only mentioned it as a possibility. The North is now aiming to further increase missile ranges, improve accuracy and operational and surprise attack capability and diversify launching methods, it said. North Korea's military activity "still poses

serious and imminent threat" to Japan's security as well as international peace and safety, it said.

<https://www.apnews.com/e9eaf350aa3c4891b5cdd40a6e9074ee>

Chinese satellite "Monkey King" sheds new light on origin of cosmic rays

Yu Fei, Wang Juebin, Jiang Fang, Xinhua, September 28, 2019

A Chinese satellite, nicknamed Monkey King, is not only searching for the invisible dark matter, but also exploring the origin of the cosmic rays, high energy particles that travel through space at nearly the speed of light. An international research team has conducted a precise measurement of the spectrum of protons, the most abundant component of cosmic rays, in an energy range from 40 GeV to 100 TeV (one TeV is one trillion electron volts, corresponding to one trillion times the energy of visible light) with China's Dark Matter Particle Explorer (DAMPE), also known as Wukong or Monkey King.

This is the first time that an experiment directly measures the cosmic ray protons up to the energy of 100 TeV with high precision, according to the research team. The measured spectrum shows that the proton flux increases at hundreds of billions electron volts and then drops at around 14 TeV, indicating the existence of a new spectral feature of cosmic rays, said Chang Jin, the principal investigator of DAMPE and the director of the Purple Mountain Observatory (PMO) of the Chinese Academy of Sciences. "The new finding is of great importance in helping scientists understand the source and acceleration of cosmic rays in the Milky Way," said Yuan Qiang, a researcher at PMO.

http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2019-09/28/c_138430676.htm

Icebreaker, satellite and stations bridge polar research gap

Zhao Lei, China Daily, September 30, 2019

China's 35th expedition team to Antarctica provides supplies to the Zhongshan research station in December 2018. The people who overcame numerous difficulties to establish China's first scientific research outpost in Antarctica, Changcheng Station, 34 years ago were unlikely to have considered the possibility of turning it into a tourist attraction. That's because the southernmost continent was, for many years, as distant as Mars to Chinese scientists, let alone ordinary travelers. China was the last of the permanent members of the United Nations Security Council to establish an Antarctic station and was embarrassed at an international Antarctic research meeting before Changcheng Station came into being.

<https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/201909/30/WS5d9178efa310cf3e3556e5cf.html>

China's Yuanwang 3 sailing to Pacific Ocean for satellite monitoring missions

Xinhua, September 30, 2019

China's spacecraft tracking ship Yuanwang-3 is sailing to the Pacific Ocean to carry out maritime monitoring missions for the BeiDou-3 and other satellites. The ship departed Sunday from a port in east China's Jiangsu Province. It is the third voyage of the ship this year. Before the voyage, crew members completed preparation of supplies, carried out examinations and tests of the facilities and received tailored training to ensure the success of the missions.

This year, the ship has spent 83 days at sea and completed three missions, including maritime monitoring of a relay satellite Tianlian II and a BeiDou-3 satellite. Yuanwang-3, China's second-generation space tracking ship, mainly undertakes maritime tracking and monitoring tasks of high-, medium-, low-orbit satellites, spacecraft and space station. Since it was launched more than 20 years ago, the ship has made 52 voyages and completed 83

missions on the sea, including maritime tracking of the Shenzhou spacecraft, the Chang'e lunar probe and BeiDou satellites, maintaining a 100 percent success rate.

http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2019-09/30/c_138436515.htm

Pakistan

Pakistan Signs its Fourth Country Programme Framework (CPF) for 2020–2025

International Atomic Energy Agency, September 17, 2019

Muhammad Naeem, Chairman, Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission and Dazhu Yang, IAEA Deputy Director General and Head of the Department of Technical Cooperation, signed Pakistan's Country Programme Framework (CPF) for the period of 2020–2025 on 17 September 2019. A CPF is the frame of reference for the medium-term planning of technical cooperation between a Member State and the IAEA and identifies priority areas where the transfer of nuclear technology and technical cooperation resources will be directed to support national development goals.

<https://www.iaea.org/newscenter/news/pakistan-signs-its-fourth-country-programme-framework-cpf-for-2020-2025>

Pakistan showcases 'Atoms for Sustainable Development' at IAEA

The Express Tribune, September 20, 2019

Pakistan has organised a side-event during the ongoing 63rd General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in Vienna, to display an exhibition stall on "Atoms for Sustainable Development" to showcase the work the country has undertaken in peaceful uses of nuclear science and technology. Pakistan continues to utilise the enormous potential of nuclear technology for the socio-economic development of the country and in order to realise the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), a

press release issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs here on Thursday said.

“Pakistan continues to utilise the enormous potential of nuclear technology for the social-economic development of the country and in order to realise the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs),” said the statement “Nuclear technology applications are being used in diverse areas of electricity generation, health, agriculture, hydrology, industry, environment, and basic sciences,” it added.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2060728/1-pakistan-showcases-atoms-sustainable-development-iaea/>

Pakistan’s Khan says he is mediating with Iran after Trump asked him to help

Michelle Nichols, Reuters, September 25, 2019

Prime Minister Imran Khan of Pakistan said on Tuesday that U.S. President Donald Trump had asked him to help defuse tensions with Iran and that he had already spoken with Iranian President Hassan Rouhani in an attempt to mediate. The United States blames Iran for an attack on the world’s biggest crude oil processing facility in Saudi Arabia on Sept. 14 and has said they will present evidence to back that up. Yemen’s Iran-aligned Houthi group, which has been fighting a Saudi-led military coalition since 2015, has claimed responsibility. Iran denies involvement.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-iran-khan/pakistans-khan-says-he-is-mediating-with-iran-after-trump-asked-him-to-help-idUSKBN1W92W0>

Nuclear War Looms If India Does Not End Kashmir Curfew - Pakistan Prime Minister Khan

Zeeshan Aziz, Urdu Point, September 27, 2019

Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan warned the UN General Assembly on Friday that nuclear war could break out between his country and India over Kashmir if New Delhi did not lift the curfew it had imposed in that province.

“Two nuclear armed countries will come face to face like we did in February and before we head in that direction the United Nations has a responsibility. You were supposed to stop this happening,” Khan said. “What is the world community going to do?” If any conventional war broke out between India and Pakistan, the advantage would lie with India, which has seven times the population of Pakistan and that would remorselessly force Islamabad to eventually resort to the use of nuclear weapons, Khan explained.

<https://www.urdupoint.com/en/pakistan/nuclear-war-looms-if-india-does-not-end-kashm-722888.html>

Imran to ask UN to intervene and avoid nuclear conflict

Dawn, September 27, 2019

Prime Minister Imran Khan has said that he will ask the United Nations to intervene to defuse tensions between India and Pakistan over occupied Kashmir when he addresses the UN General Assembly on Friday. “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 said. “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.”

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1507596>

Rashid too warns of nuclear war

Dawn, September 29, 2019

After Prime Minister Imran Khan talked about the nuclear war between India and Pakistan in his address to UN General Assembly, Minister for Railways Sheikh Rashid also fears if Pakistan and India go to war it will be a nuclear war and the last one. He has rejected the reports about wrapping up of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and imposition of ban on the Pakistan Railways’ ML-1 (main line) project under the IMF loan package for the country.

“PM Imran Khan has beautifully explained the issue of Kashmir before the world

while speaking to the heads of states at the UN General Assembly on Friday. He has also told the world about the sentiments and reaction of the Kashmiris as well as the Pakistanis," Mr Rashid told the journalists at a press conference here at the railways headquarters on Saturday.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1507906/rashid-too-warns-of-nuclear-war>

USA

Princeton Science and Global security Programme Plan A

Alex Glaser, You Tube, September 6, 2019

Our team developed a simulation for a plausible escalating war between the United States and Russia using realistic nuclear force postures, targets and fatality estimates. It is estimated that there would be more than 90 million people dead and injured within the first few hours of the conflict.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2jy3JU-ORpo>

U.S. Satellites Detected Iran Relying Weapons Ahead Of Saudi Strike, Officials Say

Bill Chappell, NPR, September 17, 2019

U.S. surveillance satellites detected Iran readying drones and missiles at launch sites in Iran before Saudi oil facilities were attacked on Saturday, according to two Defense Department officials. The imagery has not been publicly released. The officials tell NPR that U.S. intelligence views the activity as "circumstantial evidence" that Iran launched the strike from its own soil.

Saudi Aramco has said the attacks on its plants in Abqaiq and Khurais were "a result of terrorist attacks with projectiles." Iranian-backed Houthi rebels in Yemen claimed responsibility for the attack, but U.S. officials have accused Iran of playing a key role.

<https://www.npr.org/2019/09/17/761539212/saudi-crisis-irans-supreme-leader-says-no-talks-with-u-s-during-u-n-visit>

U.S. tells Saudi Arabia: nuclear push depends on snap inspections deal

Reuters, September 17, 2019

The United States will only provide Saudi Arabia with nuclear technology if the kingdom signs an agreement with the U.N. atomic watchdog that allows for intrusive snap inspections, U.S. Energy Secretary Rick Perry repeated on Tuesday.

Saudi Arabia, the world's top oil exporter, says it aims to develop nuclear power to increase its energy mix, but growing tensions with its regional rival Iran have raised fears that it could use that technology to develop nuclear weapons.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-saudi-nuclear-usa/us-tells-saudi-arabia-nuclear-push-depends-on-snap-inspections-deal-idUSKBN1W2245>

US-Russia nuclear war would kill 34 million people within hours and is increasingly likely, Princeton study concludes

Jon Sharman, The Independent, September 17, 2019

More than 90 million people would be killed or injured in a nuclear war between the US and Russia if a conventional conflict went too far, according to a new simulation created by researchers. Such a scenario has become "dramatically" more plausible in the last two years because the two countries have dropped support for arms-control measures, according to a team from Princeton University.

The simulation, the result of a study at Princeton's Science and Global Security programme (SGS), suggests 34 million people would be killed and 57 million injured in the first hours of an all-out nuclear conflagration – not counting those left ill by fallout and other long-term problems.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/americas/us-russia-nuclear-war-trump-putin-simulation-europe-nato-a9109116.html>

U.S. senators urge Trump administration to end nuclear talks with Saudis

Timothy Gardner, Reuters, September 18, 2019

Two Democratic U.S. senators on Wednesday urged Trump administration officials to halt talks with Saudi Arabia on building nuclear reactors after weekend attacks that halved the country's oil output and increased instability in the Middle East.

U.S. Energy Secretary Rick Perry told reporters on Tuesday at a nuclear power conference in Vienna the United States would only provide Saudi Arabia with nuclear power technology if it signed an agreement with a U.N. watchdog allowing for intrusive snap inspections.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-saudi-nuclearpower/u-s-senators-urge-trump-administration-to-end-nuclear-talks-with-saudis-idUSKBN1W329R>

Exelon to close Three Mile Island nuclear plant in Pennsylvania on Friday

Reuters, September 20, 2019

U.S. energy company Exelon Corp (EXC.N) said it will shut the last reactor at the Three Mile Island power plant, site of the worst nuclear accident in U.S. history, at noon local time on Friday.

The company announced in May that it planned to shut the 45-year old unit in September due to inaction in the Pennsylvania legislature on a bill that would have subsidized the continued operation of nuclear power in the state.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-nuclear-threemileisland/exelon-to-close-three-mile-island-nuclear-plant-in-pennsylvania-on-friday-idUSKBN1W51FD>

Lightbridge demonstrates SMR fuel rod manufacturing

World Nuclear News, September 23, 2019

The demonstration included the production of several coextruded rods using an

internally developed and patented coextrusion process, Lightbridge said. The fuel rod design is expected to increase core performance, extend core life, lessen the number of refueling outages, and offer reduced levelised cost of electricity.

The fuel rods, which are 6 feet (1.8 metres) in length were coextruded from billets contained in a zirconium canister and resulted in a bonded cladding surrounding the surrogate fuel material core. The surrogate materials were designed to simulate the flow stresses, including temperatures and extrusion pressures, expected in the manufacture of the Lightbridge Fuel rods using a uranium-zirconium alloy.

<https://www.world-nuclear-news.org/Articles/Lightbridge-demonstrates-SMR-fuel-rod-manufacture>

Three Mile Island retired after 45 years

World Nuclear News, September 23, 2019

Operators took the 819 MWe (net) pressurised water reactor offline for the final time at midday on 20 September, after it set a site record of 709 continuous days in operation.

"Today we celebrate the proud legacy of TMI Unit 1 and the thousands of employees who shared our commitment to safety, operational excellence and environmental stewardship for nearly five decades," Bryan Hanson, Exelon senior vice president and chief nuclear officer, said.

"At a time when our communities are demanding more clean energy to address climate change, it's regrettable that state law does not support the continued operation of this safe and reliable source of carbon-free power. It's critical that we continue to pursue policy reform to prevent other carbon-free nuclear resources from being pushed out of the market by rules that fail to evenly value clean energy resources and at the same time allow emitting resources to pollute for free."

<https://www.world-nuclear-news.org/Articles/Three-Mile-Island-retires-after-45-years>

Trump asks what a third North Korean summit would yield

Steve Holland, Joyce Lee, Reuters, September 24, 2019

U.S. President Donald Trump and his South Korean counterpart Moon Jae-in held a summit in New York on Monday to discuss plans to restart U.S.-North Korea talks, as Seoul's spy agency said the negotiations could take place in two to three weeks.

Negotiations aimed at dismantling North Korea's nuclear and missile programs have stalled since a failed second summit between Trump and its leader Kim Jong Un in February. Pyongyang has said it is willing to restart working-level talks in late September, but no date or location have been set. Trump and Moon discussed ways to achieve practical results in the U.S.-North Korea working-level talks, Moon's office said, while Trump expressed his confidence that Kim will fulfill commitments made during the two summits, according to a White House statement.

<https://in.reuters.com/article/usa-korea-trump/trump-asks-what-a-third-north-korean-summit-would-yield-idINKBN1W82O5>

U.S. demands to change nuclear deal unacceptable: Iranian official

Reuters, September 24, 2019

U.S. demands to change a 2015 nuclear deal with world powers are unacceptable, a senior Iranian official told Reuters, as tensions have spiked between Washington and Tehran after an attack on oil facilities in Saudi Arabia on Sept. 14.

"We will never renegotiate a deal that took us years to reach ... Iran's leadership supports diplomacy but if Americans want to ease tension, they should lift sanctions and end pressure on Tehran," the senior official told Reuters on condition of anonymity.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-iran-unofficial/u-s-demands-to-change-nuclear-deal-unacceptable-iranian-official-idUSKBN1W8280>

White House Bars Iranian Officials From U.S. as Its Diplomatic Efforts Falter

Farnaz Fassihi, Lara Jakes and Edward Wong

The New York Times, September 25, 2019

The Trump administration barred senior Iranian government officials from entering the United States on Wednesday, just hours after a failed attempt to renew diplomacy with President Hassan Rouhani as he attended an annual gathering of world leaders in New York. The order followed a new round of American economic penalties against China, Iran's largest oil customer, to further squeeze the Iranian economy and force Tehran into new negotiations to limit its nuclear and military programs.

Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said the United States was still open to talking to Iran, and hoped to tamp down inflamed tensions after leaders in the United States, Europe and Arab nations blamed Tehran for attacks on oil fields in Saudi Arabia this month.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/09/25/world/middleeast/us-iran-rouhani-trump.html>

Romania and USA agree to nuclear cooperation

World Nuclear News, September 26, 2019

"This memorandum strengthens US-Romania ties in an area of cooperation that is deeply rooted in our mutual national security and strategic interests, and is supportive of our respective energy security goals," the US State Department said. "It signals our long-term commitment to working together to develop Romania's civil nuclear programme and jointly pursue the peaceful uses of nuclear energy."

The State Department said its nuclear cooperation MoUs are "diplomatic mechanisms that strengthen and expand strategic ties between the United States and a partner country by providing a

framework for cooperation on civil nuclear issues and for engagement between experts from government, industry, national laboratories and academic institutions”.

<https://www.world-nuclear-news.org/Articles/Romania-and-USA-agree-to-nuclear-cooperation>

No U.S.-North Korea talks possible by end September: Pompeo

Humeyra Pamuk, Reuters, September 26, 2019

U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said on Thursday the United States has not been able to arrange working-level meetings with North Korea in September, but Washington is ready to meet and believes it is important to do so. Negotiations aimed at dismantling North Korea’s nuclear and missile programs have stalled since a failed second summit between U.S. President Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un in February.

<https://in.reuters.com/article/usa-northkorea-pompeo/no-u-s-north-korea-talks-possible-by-end-september-pompeo-idINKBN1WB2I6>

Oil shipping rates soar as U.S. supertanker sanctions rattle crude trade

Florence Tan, Chen Aizhu, Jonathan Saul, Reuters, September 27, 2019

Key oil freight rates from the Middle East to Asia rocketed as much as 28% on Friday in a global oil shipping market spooked by United States sanctions on units of Chinese giant COSCO for alleged involvement in ferrying crude out of Iran.

In what the State Department called “one of the largest sanctions actions the U.S. has taken” since curbs were re-imposed on Iran in November last year, two units of COSCO were named alongside other companies in claims of involvement in sanctions-busting shipments of Iranian oil.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-iran-nuclear-usa-cosco-energy/oil-shipping-rates-soar-as-u-s-supertanker-sanctions-rattle-crude-trade-idUSKBN1WC07F>

North Korea won’t give up nuclear weapons: ex-Trump adviser Bolton

David Brunnstrom and Doina Chiacu, Reuters, September 30, 2019

North Korea has no intention of giving up its nuclear weapons and Pyongyang benefits from stalling in its standoff with Washington, U.S. President Donald Trump’s ousted national security adviser John Bolton said in a speech on Monday.

“It seems to be clear that (North Korea) has not made a strategic decision to give up its nuclear weapons. In fact, I think the contrary is true,” Bolton, a hardliner towards North Korea and Iran who was fired by Trump three weeks ago, said at Washington’s Center for Strategic and International Studies think tank.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-northkorea-bolton/north-korea-wont-give-up-nuclear-weapons-ex-trump-adviser-bolton-idUSKBN1WF1IE>

Europe

France

France to give iodine to more people living close to nuclear plants

Reuters, September 17, 2019

France will offer free iodine tablets to around 2.2 million people living close to nuclear plants to help protect them from radiation in case of an accident. Nuclear regulator ASN said on Tuesday people living within 10-20 km of one of utility EDF’s 19 nuclear plants, as well as some 200,000 institutions such as schools, will receive a letter in coming days informing them that they can pick up free iodine tablets from pharmacies. Five years after the nuclear disaster in Fukushima, Japan in 2011, France distributed free iodine to people living within 10 km of a nuclear plant, but is now widening that radius. French daily Les Echos quoted a nuclear information official as saying that in 2016 only about half of the people targeted bothered to pick up their iodine.

Nuclear accidents typically release radioactive iodine in the atmosphere. When inhaled or swallowed, it is absorbed by the thyroid gland, where it can lead to cancer in later years. By saturating the thyroid gland with stable iodine, it will no longer absorb radioactive iodine. The ASN said that in case of a nuclear accident, people living nearby need to seek shelter in buildings, monitor the situation via the media and not go and pick up their children at school. They also should limit telephone communication, take iodine and prepare for a possible evacuation.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-france-nuclear-power-iodine/france-to-give-iodine-to-more-people-living-close-to-nuclear-plants-idUSKBN1W2257>

France, Germany closing in on arms exports pact

Tangi Salaün, Leigh Thomas, Reuters, September 19, 2019

France and Germany said on Thursday they were close to an agreement on how to remove obstacles to exporting weapons manufactured in joint programs, after French firms called for easing German export restrictions. German curbs on arms exports to non-European Union or non-NATO countries have been a thorn in bilateral co-operation for years. Germany's SPD party, part of the ruling coalition, is particularly concerned about the trade. French firms, such as Nexter and Arquus, previously known as Renault Trucks Defense, say the restrictions have hindered deals and have urged the authorities to allow the export of equipment with German parts without requiring Berlin's green light.

Germany's ruling coalition agreed in 2018 to ban arms sales to countries involved in conflicts unless a waiver is granted. Germany extended by six months an embargo on sales to parties in the Yemen conflict, seen as a proxy war between Saudi Arabia and Iran. "On the issue of weapons' exports, we have a narrow dialogue with our German friends," French Finance and Economy Minister Bruno Le Maire told a news conference with his German counterpart. "We have found an agreement on this subject," he said, without elaborating. A French finance ministry

official said a deal was in the works and was expected to be signed in coming weeks.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-france-germany-arms/france-germany-closing-in-on-arms-exports-pact-idUSKBN1W42I7>

France says Houthi claim of Saudi attack lacks credibility

Reuters, September 19, 2019

France on Thursday appeared to dismiss claims by Yemeni Houthi rebels that they were behind an attack on Saudi oil facilities, and said Paris would renew efforts to defuse tensions between the U.S. and Iran at next week's U.N. General Assembly. France has been scrambling with its European partners to ease tensions between Washington and Tehran for months, but last weekend's attack has jeopardized those efforts, diplomats have said.

The Trump administration and Saudi Arabia have pointed the finger at Iran for the Sept. 14 raids, which hit the world's biggest crude oil processing facility and initially knocked out half of Saudi output. Yemen's Iran-aligned Houthi movement has claimed responsibility for the attack. Iran, which supports the Houthi group, has denied any involvement in the attacks.

"The Houthis ... announced that they launched this attack. That lacks credibility," French foreign minister Jean-Yves Le Drian, told C News television, adding that at this stage Paris would not draw conclusions that Iran was behind it. "There is an international investigation, let's wait for its results. I don't have a specific opinion before these results."

He said the Saudi investigation would be fast. France's Armed Forces Ministry spokeswoman said seven of its experts in explosives, surface-to-air defenses and missile trajectory had been sent to Saudi Arabia to help make an independent assessment of the attack.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-saudi-aramco-france/france-says-houthi-claim-of-saudi-attack-lacks-credibility-idUSKBN1W40L6>

France says main priority is to de-escalate U.S.-Iran tensions

John Irish, Reuters, September 23, 2019

France's foreign minister said on Sunday his country's main aim at this week's U.N. General Assembly meeting is to de-escalate tensions between the United States and Iran and that a meeting between their presidents was not the top priority. "The meeting between (U.S.) President (Donald) Trump and (Iranian) President (Hassan) Rouhani is not the number one subject. The priority subject is whether we can restart a de-escalation path with the different actors," Jean-Yves Le Drian told reporters.

France has led a European effort to try to defuse tensions between Washington and Tehran. But those efforts have stalled, with Iran reducing its commitments to a 2015 nuclear deal with world powers, from which Washington withdraw last year, and the United States refusing to ease sanctions that have strangled Iran's economy. An attack on Saudi oil facilities, which the United States has blamed on Iran, has also complicated matters. Hopes at the end of August that Trump and Rouhani could meet at the United Nations appear to have all but died.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-saudi-aramco-france/france-says-main-priority-is-to-de-escalate-u-s-iran-tensions-idUSKBN1W70TM>

Despite French, British pleas, few signs of U.S.-Iran detente

Parisa Hafezi, John Irish, Arshad Mohammed Reuters, September 27, 2019

Britain and France all but begged Iran to jump into the waters of a negotiation with the United States this week. Neither antagonist, however, showed much desire to discuss the many issues dividing them, from Iran's reawakening nuclear program to the U.S. sanctions squeezing the Iranian economy.

The absence of dialogue - let alone a presidential meeting - shows neither is yet willing to abandon core elements of policy: the U.S. belief that pressure will bring Iran to its knees, and Iran's refusal to capitulate

to U.S. duress. As a result, European and Gulf officials expect Washington to keep tightening its vise on Iran's economy and foresee more attacks in the Gulf - like the Sept. 14 strikes on Saudi oil facilities - that the West blames on Tehran despite its denials. French President Emmanuel Macron and British Prime Minister Boris Johnson teamed up on Tuesday to urge Iranian President Hassan Rouhani to meet U.S. President Donald Trump while they were all in New York this week for the U.N. General Assembly.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-iran-deadlock/despite-french-british-pleas-few-signs-of-u-s-iran-detente-idUSKBN1WC0BE>

UK

Boris Johnson calls for 'Trump deal' to replace Iran nuclear agreement

Rob Merrick, Independent, September 23, 2019

Boris Johnson has called for a new "Trump deal" to replace the Iran nuclear agreement, winning praise from the US president and potentially shattering EU unity. In extraordinary comments in New York, the prime minister attacked the existing "bad deal" - ending four years of the UK backing it as the best way to stop Tehran building a bomb. And he went further, telling US television: "I think there's one guy who can do a better deal, and one guy who understands how to get a difficult partner like Iran over the line, and that is the president of the United States.

"So I hope that there will be a Trump deal, to be totally honest with you." The comments delighted the US president, who lauded Mr Johnson by saying: "That's why he's a winner. That's why he's a man who's going to be successful in the UK. "Boris is a man, who...number one, he's a friend of mine, number two, he's very smart, very tough."

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/boris-johnson-trump-iran-deal-saudi-arabia-oil-attack-a9117521.html>

Britain, France, Germany blame Iran for Saudi attack: statement

Reuters, September 24, 2019

France, Britain and Germany said on Monday it is clear Iran was responsible for an attack on Saudi oil facilities on Sept. 14 and called on Tehran to agree to negotiations on its nuclear and missile programs as well as regional security issues. "The time has come for Iran to accept a long term negotiation framework for its nuclear program, as well as regional security issues, which include its missile programs," the three governments said in a joint statement.

French President Emmanuel Macron, British Prime Minister Boris Johnson and German Chancellor Angela Merkel met during the annual United Nations gathering of world leaders to coordinate their strategy on Iran as the European parties seek to save a 2015 nuclear deal and defuse tensions between Washington and Tehran. "It is clear to us that Iran bears responsibility for this attack. There is no other plausible explanation," a statement by the three leaders said. With Johnson laying the blame on Iran earlier in the day, it was the first time Paris and Berlin had done so.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-iran-europe/britain-france-germany-blame-iran-for-saudi-attack-statement-idUSKBN1W82I5>

£3bn surge in cost of Hinkley nuclear plant 'could trigger industry crisis'

The Telegraph, September 25, 2019

A shock £3bn surge in the cost of building Britain's next nuclear power plant could herald a crisis in the industry, former Energy Secretary Ed Davey has warned. The Hinkley Point C reactor being developed by French firm EDF is now projected to cost up to £22.5bn - £2.9bn more than initially expected - and could take more than a year longer than first hoped to build. It is due to come online in 2025.

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/business/2019/09/25/edf-warns-cost-hinkley-point-c-nuclear-power-plant-could-rise/>

Boris Johnson announces funding for world's first nuclear fusion plant

Owen Bennett, The Telegraph

Boris Johnson has announced the funding of the world's first nuclear fusion plant, which could power entire towns without creating greenhouse gases or radioactive waste. The Government will spend £220 million on the project, which it hopes will play a key role in reducing the UK's greenhouse gas emissions to net zero by 2050. Nuclear power currently comes from the fission process. Fusion power is a zero-carbon, combustion-free source of energy that generates electricity using hydrogen.

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2019/09/27/boris-johnson-announces-funding-worlds-first-nuclear-fusion/>

Britain is 'at war every day' due to constant cyber attacks, Chief of the Defence Staff says

The Telegraph, September 29, 2019

The Chief of the Defence Staff has said that Britain is "at war every day" due to constant cyber attacks from Russia and elsewhere. Distinctions between peace and war "don't exist any longer" in the modern world, General Sir Nick Carter has warned. Speaking at the Cliveden Literary Festival alongside former US General and CIA Director David Petraeus, the head of the armed forces stressed that it is no longer possible to draw a clear line between competition and conflict. "The changing character of warfare has exposed the distinctions that don't exist any longer between peace and war," General Carter said.

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2019/09/29/britain-war-every-day-due-constant-cyber-attacks-chief-defence/>

Russia

Permission to dock: Russia's floating nuclear power plant reaches Arctic port it was built for

Russia Times, September 15, 2019

After a 5,000-km sea ride, Russia's pioneering floating nuclear power plant has reached its final destination on the Arctic coast and will soon deliver megawatts and gigajoules of energy to consumers on land. The Akademik Lomonosov was towed from Murmansk, a major port city in northwestern Russia, all the way to the far eastern region of Chukotka, reaching a small town called Pevek on Saturday. The trip lasted 22 days and required a couple of tow boats to move the barge, which lacks its own propulsion, and an icebreaker to deliver the convoy safely through the chilly Arctic waters.

<https://www.rt.com/russia/468845-floating-nuclear-plant-docks/>

World sleepwalking into total nuclear war as callous elites fear no bloodshed – Russian scholar

Russian Times, September 16, 2019

Limiting nuclear arsenals doesn't make the world safer – not while the elites, who have never seen a big war, complacently believe they never will. This dangerous illusion invites apocalyptic conflict, a renowned scholar believes.

Humankind's history might be a history of wars, but for several decades there was a sort of lull, with no really big armed conflict affecting leading world powers. That is, in part, thanks to nuclear weapons. Fear of their power kept the Cold War from becoming a hot one and restricted the actual fighting to proxy conflicts. And that, in turn, has led to a situation where many of those currently in power don't take the threat of war with the gravity it deserves, says Sergey Karaganov, a researcher of international relations and a dean at Moscow's Higher School of Economics.

<https://www.rt.com/news/468899-nuclear-war-strategic-weapons/>

Novovoronezh II-2 passes acceptance tests

World Nuclear News, September 17, 2019

The unit was brought to the minimum controlled power level on 22 March, was first connected to the grid on 1 May and started pilot operation in June. It is expected to be put into commercial operation by year-end.

The acceptance tests were completed on schedule and demonstrated the safe and reliable operation of the unit's equipment and systems, Vladimir Povarov, director of the Novovoronezh nuclear power plant project, said. The unit has completed nearly five months at all stages of power supply and pilot operation, he added. The results of the tests will now be submitted to regulator Rostekhnadzor ahead of receiving an operating licence.

The five units at the existing Novovoronezh nuclear power plant were commissioned between 1964 and 1980. The first and second units were permanently decommissioned in 1988 and 1990. Unit 3 was decommissioned in 2016, while unit four was shut down for modernisation works and has since resumed operation. Unit 5 has recently undergone an upgrade and is licenced to operate until 2035.

<https://www.world-nuclear-news.org/Articles/Novovoronezh-II-2-passes-acceptance-tests>

U.S. Says It Has Plans to 'Take Down' Western Russian Region's Air Defenses

The Moscow Times, September 20, 2019

The United States military has a secret blueprint targeting the air defense system protecting Russia's westernmost territory of Kaliningrad, according to the U.S. Air Force's top commander in Europe.

NATO members perceive Russia's missile deployments in Kaliningrad as a threat at a time when tensions between Russia and its Western neighbors are running high over Moscow's 2014 annexation of Crimea

from Ukraine. Kaliningrad is a Baltic exclave bordered by Poland and Lithuania, both members of the Western military alliance.

Harrigian, who commands the U.S. Air Forces in Europe, said the plan “would be a multi-domain, very timely and effective capability that we would bring to ensure we have the access we need in that environment.”

<https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2019/09/20/us-says-it-has-plans-to-take-down-western-russian-regions-air-defenses-a67360>

Russian Participants of Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Conference Denied US Visas – UN Ambassador

Sputnik, September 23, 2019

The United States has denied visas not only to members of the Russia delegation planning to participate in the UN General Assembly, but also to participants of a planned conference on the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), Russian UN Ambassador Vassily Nebenzia has announced.

Russian upper house’s Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman Konstantin Kosachev said the US authorities did not provide visas to him and several other members of the Russian delegation. Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said that the visa refusal was a direct violation of the United States’ international obligations.

<https://sputniknews.com/us/201909251076883124-russian-participants-of-nuclear-test-ban-treaty-conference-denied-us-visas-un-ambassador/>

Chernobyl used fuel store ready for commissioning

World Nuclear News, September 24, 2019

The principal contractors on the ISF-2 facility project are Ukraine’s UTEM, Germany’s BNG and Italy’s Maloni. The project, supported by the Nuclear Safety Account managed by the London-headquartered European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, will provide for the

processing and storage of the used nuclear fuel from units 1, 2 and 3, which is required for the decommissioning of the Chernobyl plant.

Completion of cold testing was marked by the demonstration on 29 August of full functionality of the facility with no major issues or impediments to its licensed operation, Holtec said. This was confirmed at a working meeting by State Nuclear Regulatory Inspectorate of Ukraine on 6 September.

ISF-2 will formally enter commissioning once the operator - Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant (ChNPP) - obtains an individual operation licence from the regulator. This will initiate the campaign to dismember each of Chernobyl’s more than 21,000 fuel assemblies into three parts - two fuel bundles and an activated connecting rod - in a purpose-built ‘hot cell’ and place them in interim dry storage.

<https://www.world-nuclear-news.org/Articles/Chernobyl-used-fuel-store-ready-for-commissioning>

Cleanup Crews Filmed Removing Russian Nuclear Blast Debris

The Moscow Times, September 25, 2019

Helicopters, excavators and people wearing hazmat suits have been filmed near the site of a mysterious nuclear explosion at a Russian military site that has raised international concerns and safety fears.

A liquid propulsion system blast on Aug. 8 at a naval missile test facility in Nyonoksa has killed seven people and led to a brief radiation spike nearby. Reports citing U.S. intelligence and photographs from the site suggested that the blast happened during a mission to salvage a nuclear-powered cruise missile from the bottom of the sea.

<https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2019/09/25/cleanup-crews-filmed-removing-russian-nuclear-blast-debris-a67430>

First fuel from Lepshe leaves Nerpa shipyard

World Nuclear News, September 25, 2019

The Lepshe was a service ship for the Soviet icebreaker fleet from 1934 to 1988. It was used to refuel the nuclear icebreaker fleet from 1963 to 1981 and has since been used for the storage of used fuel and radioactive waste. The vessel was moved in September 2012 to the Nerpa shipyard in Snezhnogorsk in the Murmansk region of Russia for dismantling. It held 639 damaged and distorted used nuclear fuel assemblies which could not be removed from their specialised storage facilities and represented a serious radiological hazard for the region. Its decommissioning is being carried out with the support of the London-headquartered EBRD.

The Lepshe was dismantled to form two large storage packages, one of which held the used fuel and was moved into a containment shelter constructed for defueling operations and equipped with removal tools. The fuel is to be sent for reprocessing at the Mayak Chemical Combine in the Urals.

The EBRD announced today that the first shipment of six casks of used fuel assemblies was transported on board the Serebyanka service ship from the Nerpa shipyard to Atomflot's site in Murmansk. From there it will be transported for long-term safe storage at the Mayak nuclear facility. It is planned that a further five shipments of fuel will be completed by mid-2020 ensuring the complete removal of all used nuclear fuel from the Lepshe.

<https://www.world-nuclear-news.org/Articles/First-fuel-from-Lepshe-leaves-Nerpa-shipyard>

Solution over nuclear deal with Iran may be achieved within months, Russian envoy says

TASS News Agency, September 27, 2019

A positive solution for the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action dispute may be achieved within months, or else the situation will continue to get worse, Russia's representative at international organizations

in Vienna, Mikhail Ulyanov, told a news conference on Friday.

"Possibly we will achieve some positive solution [concerning the JCPOA] over several months to come, or else the situation will continue to get worse," Ulyanov said.

He recalled that tensions had soared after the United States on May 4 introduced a new package of sanctions against Iran's oil industry. Ulyanov believes that if Washington agrees to get back to the level of sanctions that existed at the end of April, the situation might improve considerably.

<https://tass.com/politics/1080186>

West Asia

Iran

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.

"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. 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. Rouhani said on September 3 that holding "bilateral" talks with the U.S. is not on the agenda.

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

Zarif: U.S. must return to nuclear deal if it wants a place at negotiating table

Tehran Times, September 18, 2019

Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Ali Khamenei said on Tuesday that there will be no negotiations between Iran and the United States at any level or any place. "All officials of the Islamic Republic of Iran unanimously agree that there will be no negotiations with America at any level either in New York or any other place," the Leader told his theology students.

He noted that the U.S. seeks to impose its demands through negotiations and prove that "policy of maximum pressure" against Iran has worked. "Policy of maximum pressure against the Iranian people is quite worthless and all the officials of the Islamic Republic of Iran unanimously believe that there will be no talks with the United States at any level," he said.

<https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/440228/Ayatollah-Khamenei-No-negotiations-with-U-S-at-any-level>

Zarif: Whoever starts war will not be the one who finishes it

Tehran Times, September 22, 2019

Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif has said any country that starts a war

against Iran "will not be the one who finishes it" as he said the U.S. is "posturing" by sending troops and defense equipment to Saudi Arabia following the September 14 attacks on a major Saudi Arabia oil facility. "I think it's posturing. I think it's all going the wrong direction in addressing this issue," Zarif said in response to a question on how Iran sees the development in an interview that was set to air Sunday on CBS' "Face the Nation."

The Trump administration has blamed Iran for the attack by the Yemenis on Saudi Arabia's Abqaiq plant and its Khurais oil field that adversely affected up to half of the supplies from the world's biggest oil exporter. President Donald Trump on Friday approved the deployment of U.S. troops and missile defense equipment to Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.

Secretary of State Mike Pompeo on Thursday said the attacks were an "act of war" while Trump announced he would "substantially increase" sanctions on Iran. Zarif denied that Iran had anything to do with the attacks and said if the United Nations launches an impartial investigation into the attack "the outcome will be that it was not launched from Iran"

<https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/440389/Zarif-Whoever-starts-war-will-not-be-the-one-who-finishes-it>

Macron's efforts to yield result if Trump lifts sanctions: Rouhani

Tehran Times, September 24, 2019

Iranian President Hassan Rouhani said on Tuesday that French President Emmanuel Macron's efforts to save the 2015 nuclear deal, known as the JCPOA, will yield result only if U.S. President Donald Trump lifts sanctions against Iran. Talking to reporters in New York, Rouhani said, "The continuation of sanctions that have been imposed as maximum pressure means setting preconditions to negotiation by the United States, while we believe that any precondition must be removed before any negotiation."

He also said, "It is a shame that the basis for accusing Iran of attacking Aramco is simply that they do not want to accept that the Yemeni army has the capability to launch missile and drone strikes." The president added, "This means that those who accuse Iran have no realistic estimation of the Yemeni military progresses, and have closed their eyes, relying merely on speculation". The president said strikes on the Saudi oil facilities shows the inefficiency of weapons that the U.S. has sold to the Saudi kingdom.

Rouhani said, "The weakness of American radars and massive defense equipment on the alleged route of these missiles and drones cannot be denied and the Yemenis have in fact humiliated the United States and warned suppliers of weapons to Saudis." In 2018, the Saudi military expenditure reached about 70 billion dollars, coming after the United States and China.

<https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/440489/Macron-s-efforts-to-yeild-result-if-Trump-lifts-sanctions-Rouhani>

Jannati says Iran will never surrender to U.S. 'maximum pressure'

Tehran Times, September 24, 2019

The United States intends to impose its wish on the Islamic Republic through negotiations but Iran will never surrender to Washington's "maximum pressure", Assembly of Experts Chairman Ahmad Jannati said on Tuesday. "The Americans negotiate to make us agree to whatever they say and we wouldn't emerge victorious in such negotiations," Jannati said, Tasnim reported. "They want to tie our hands and make us surrender but the Leader of the Revolution has said 'we won't give in to maximum pressure'," the top cleric added.

Jannati made the remarks while addressing a periodic session of the Assembly of Experts in Tehran on Tuesday. He underlined the effectiveness of "active resistance" when facing the enemies, saying such strategy has enabled the Lebanese Hezbollah to bring the Israeli regime and the U.S. to their knees.

<https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/440474/Jannati-says-Iran-will-never-surrender-to-U-S-maximum-pressure>

No new deal before compliance with current one, Zarif says

Tehran Times, September 24, 2019

Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif has said that there will be no talks on any new deal before compliance with the 2015 nuclear deal, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). "No new deal before compliance with the current one," Zarif wrote on his Twitter account.

Zarif's tweet came as a response to a joint statement by leaders of Britain, France and Germany on Monday in which they said, "The time has come for Iran to accept negotiation on a long-term framework for its nuclear program as well as on issues related to regional security, including its missiles program and other means of delivery."

<https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/440487/No-new-deal-before-compliance-with-current-one-Zarif-says>

Rouhani, Merkel discuss HOPE, accelerating INSTEX

Tehran Times, September 25, 2019

Iranian president and the German chancellor discussed the necessary measures for saving the 2015 nuclear deal - Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action - as well as Iran's regional peace plan, 'HOPE'. President Hassan Rouhani and German Chancellor Angela Merkel had a meeting Tuesday noon in New York on the sidelines of the 74th Session of the United Nations General Assembly and discussed deepening economic cooperation, as well as bilateral relations.

Rouhani and Merkel also discussed the Hormuz Peace Initiative (HOPE) and the critical regional conditions, emphasizing the development of relations in different fields of mutual interest. The Iranian president also stated that Germany has always been a very important partner to Iran and stressed the continuation of the long-standing friendly relations between the two countries. Rouhani went on to

highlight the responsibilities of other signatories to the JCPOA, including Germany, for saving the important international agreement after the United States' unilateral withdrawal. He also described the recent statement by France, Britain and Germany baseless accusations against Iran.

<https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/440496/Rouhani-Merkel-discuss-HOPE-accelerating-INSTEX>

Trump threatens to tighten US sanctions against Iran

Tehran Times, September 24, 2019

"As long as Iran's menacing behavior continues, sanctions will not be lifted. They will be tightened," Trump said Tuesday at the 74th session of the UN General Assembly in New York. Trump repeated his baseless accusations against Iran's civilian nuclear and ballistic missile programs, as well as Tehran's support for the people in the war-ravaged countries of Syria and Yemen. The US president also continued to criticize the 2015 nuclear agreement that he withdrew from last year, PressTvreported.

French President Emmanuel Macron expressed hope in late August that a long-anticipated meeting between the presidents of Iran and the United States would take place at the UN General Assembly. However, Iran has firmly stated that it won't sit for bilateral talks with Trump but is open to a multilateral meeting with the P5+1 - including the US - only if Washington ends its economic war against the Iranian nation. Trump's speech follows escalating tensions in the Middle East following attacks on Saudi Arabia's oil facilities. In his speech, Trump accused Iran of carrying out the attacks.

Iran has rejected claims of involvement in Yemen's retaliatory attacks on the kingdom's heart of the oil industry. Iranian President Hassan Rouhani arrived in New York on Monday to attend the UN General Assembly, where he plans to convey the message of Middle East peace to the world. "We hope in the very sensitive situation of the region today we would be able to convey the message of our regional nations, which

is the message of regional peace and end of any interference in the sensitive regions of the Persian Gulf and the Middle East," Rouhani said upon arrival at John F. Kennedy International Airport.

<https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/440491/Trump-threatens-to-tighten-US-sanctions-against-Iran>

Iran commits new breach of fraying nuclear deal, expands enrichment - IAEA

Francois Murphy, Reuters, September 26, 2019

Iran has committed a further breach of its nuclear deal with major powers by enriching uranium with advanced centrifuges, and plans to install more of those advanced machines than previously announced, a U.N. nuclear watchdog report showed on Thursday.

"On 25 September 2019, the Agency verified that all of the (centrifuge) cascades already installed in R&D lines 2 and 3 ... were accumulating, or had been prepared to accumulate, enriched uranium," the International Atomic Energy Agency said in the report to member states obtained by Reuters. Iran is breaching the restrictions of its landmark nuclear deal with major powers step by step in response to U.S. sanctions imposed on it since Washington pulled out of the agreement last year. The deal only allows Iran to accumulate enriched uranium with its first-generation IR-1 centrifuges.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-iran-nuclear-iaea/iran-commits-new-breach-of-nuclear-deal-expands-enrichment-iaea-report-idUSKBN1WB237>

Iran must not be the only party loyal to JCPOA: Rouhani

Tehran Times, September 27, 2019

Iranian President Hassan Rouhani said on Thursday that the European countries have either been unable or shown no will to save the 2015 nuclear deal, formally known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action. Talking in a press conference in

New York at the conclusion of his visit to the annual UN General Assembly, he said Iran cannot be the only country that pays the price for keeping the JCPOA alive. Under the JCPOA, Iran agreed to put limits on its nuclear activities in exchange for the termination of economic and financial changes.

On Iran's move to scale back its commitments, Rouhani said, "We reduced our commitments in two phases. We also started the third phase. We hope that we would reach an agreement by the end of the two-month deadline. We will take the next steps if Europeans are not able to fulfill their duties." "We were living up to our commitments fully and they kept decreasing their commitments. We wanted to create a balance, just as they were decreasing their commitments, we wished to decrease ours as well," CNN quoted him as saying, adding that the JCPOA included a formula that allowed for that.

<https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/440554/Iran-must-not-be-the-only-party-loyal-to-JCPOA-Rouhani>

Leader: Europeans have practically stayed committed to U.S. sanctions

Tehran Times, September 27, 2019

Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei said on Thursday that the Europeans have failed to meet their nuclear commitments and Iran should not pin hope on them. "Despite their commitments, the Europeans have practically stayed committed to sanctions of the United States and have taken no action. It is very unlikely that they will be able to do anything for the Islamic Republic. So, we should not pin hope on the Europeans," he said during a meeting with members of the Assembly of Experts.

"We must not at all place hope and trust on anyone except for the domestic forces."

"As frequently mentioned before, we should not at all place hope and trust on anyone except for the domestic forces, in particular, not on those that have raised the flag of hostility against the Islamic Republic and the

Islamic establishment, firstly led by the U.S., and next by the European countries," the khamenei.ir quoted the Leader as saying. He said that the motives of the European states do not differ from the motives behind the U.S. actions.

"These few European countries openly show hostility to the Islamic Republic. Their motives for hostility with the Islamic Republic are not inherently different from those of the United States; even though, the United States is quite peculiar," he stated.

<https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/440555/Leader-Europeans-have-practically-stayed-committed-to-U-S-sanctions>

U.S. offered to remove all sanctions on Iran in exchange for talks -Iran president

Reuters, September 27, 2019

The United States offered to remove all sanctions on Iran in exchange for talks, Iranian President Hassan Rouhani said on Friday upon returning to Tehran from the United Nations General Assembly in New York, according to his official website. "The German chancellor, the prime minister of England (Britain) and the president of France were in New York and all insisted that this meeting take place. And America says that I will lift the sanctions," Rouhani said. "It was up for debate what sanctions will be lifted and they had said clearly that we will lift all sanctions."

He added: "But this action wasn't in a manner that was acceptable, meaning that in the atmosphere of sanctions and the existence of sanctions and the toxic atmosphere of maximum pressure, even if we want to negotiate with the Americans in the 5+1 framework, no one can predict what the end and result of this negotiation will be."

<https://www.reuters.com/article/usa-iran-sanctions/u-s-offered-to-remove-all-sanctions-on-iran-in-exchange-for-talks-iran-president-idUSL5N2613K0>

Lavrov: U.S. violated UN Resolution 2231 endorsing the Iran nuclear deal

Tehran Times, September 28, 2019

“The U.S. pulled back from the JCPOA, embraced by United Nations Resolution 2231, renounced its commitments and began requesting from others to play by American principles,” Lavrov said in a speech to the UN General Assembly. In May 2018, U.S. President Donald Trump abandoned the JCPOA struck between Iran and world power according to which Iran was obligated to limit its nuclear activities in exchange for termination of economic and financial sanctions. Lavrov said Washington has killed other UN resolutions on the Middle East.

“It suggested waiting for some sort of ‘Deal of the Century’, meanwhile it is taking unilateral decisions on Jerusalem and the Golan Heights,” he stated, alluding to Washington’s recognition of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and also accepting the Golan Heights as part of Israel.

<https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/440605/Lavrov-U-S-violated-UN-Resolution-2231-endorsing-the-Iran-nuclear>

Chinese FM urges Persian Gulf states to form ‘platform for dialogue’

Tehran Times, September 28, 2019

The remarks by Wang came two days after the Iranian president at the UN headquarters in New York invited the countries directly affected by the recent incidents in the Persian Gulf region to join the “Hormuz Peace Endeavor (HOPE)”. China’s Wang says it is necessary to “ensure that this historic outcome (JCPOA) is not derailed.” Wang also said the 2015 deal on Iran’s nuclear program has an effect on global peace and security and asked all parties signatory to the deal to work jointly to keep it alive.

“The Iranian nuclear issue affects world peace and security. All parties need to work together to uphold the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) and ensure that this

historic outcome is not derailed,” CNN quoted Wang as telling the UN General Assembly.

<https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/440604/Chinese-FM-urges-Persian-Gulf-states-to-form-platform-for-dialogue>

Finland says considers nuclear deal as basis for increasing ties

Tehran Times, September 28, 2019

Finnish Foreign Minister Pekka Haavisto has said that Helsinki considers the 2015 nuclear deal, formally known as the JCPOA, as the cornerstone of expanding ties with Iran. “We support the JCPOA. We are concerned about the United States’ withdrawal from the deal and also Iran’s steps towards quitting the JCPOA,” he told IRNA in an interview published on Saturday.

Haavisto added, “We consider the JCPOA a good basis for bilateral cooperation. We believe that Europe can help Iran find a way out of the current crisis. Undoubtedly, we should continue dialogue and good relations.” In May 2018, President Donald Trump abandoned the nuclear deal and returned the previous sanctions and imposed new harsh ones. He even has introduced a total ban on Iran’s oil exports.

<https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/440597/Finland-says-considers-nuclear-deal-as-basis-for-increasing-ties>

Malaysian PM slams U.S. unilateral sanctions as ‘privilege of the rich and powerful’

Tehran Times, September 28, 2019

Malaysia’s Prime Minister Mahathir Bin Mohamad has criticized the United States for trying to force all countries to stop doing business with Iran. “We do not know under what laws sanctions are applied. It appears to be the privilege of the rich and the powerful,” Mahathir said, addressing the 74th session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York on Friday. According to the AFP, the outspoken 94-

year-old leader urged greater international control of sanctions, saying, "If you want to have sanctions, let us have a law to govern them."

"The fact is that when sanctions are applied to a country, other countries get sanctioned as well. Malaysia and many others lost a big market when sanctions were applied on Iran." U.S. President Donald Trump pulled out of the Iran nuclear deal, formally known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), in May 2018. He has since imposed more than 1,000 individual sanctions on Tehran, which culminated with an oil embargo this May. Zarif himself is also sanctioned.

<https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/440592/Malaysian-PM-slams-U-S-unilateral-sanctions-as-privilege-of>

NIOC to offer 2m barrels of gas condensate at IRENEX on Tuesday

Tehran Times, September 28, 2019

National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC) will offer two million barrels of gas condensate at Iran Energy Exchange (IRENEX) on Tuesday, IRIB reported. As announced by NIOC, the base price will be \$58.58 per barrel in this round of offering gas condensate at IRENEX which is the eleventh round.

The least amount of purchase for land transportation is set to be 1000 barrels or 110 tons and buyers can receive their cargo up to three months after the transaction, and the delivery of the cargo in other regions is subject to NIOC approval. Offering gas condensate at IRENEX came after the successful offering of crude oil at this market. The first offering was done on February 13, which failed to attract customers. Since the U.S.'s withdrew from Iran's nuclear pact in May 2018, vowing to drive Iran's oil exports down to zero, the Islamic Republic has been taking various measures to counter the U.S. actions and to keep its oil exports levels as high as possible. One of the main strategies that Iran chose to execute to help its oil exports afloat has been trying new ways to diversify the mechanism of oil sales, one of which is offering oil at the country's stock

market.

<https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/440579/NIOC-to-offer-2m-barrels-of-gas-condensate-at-IRENEX-on-Tuesday>

Iran calls sanctions 'crime against humanity'

Tehran Times, September 29, 2019

Esmail Baghaei Hamaneh, Tehran's ambassador and permanent representative to the UN office in Geneva, has called the consequences of unilateral sanctions against Iran "crime against humanity". During a speech at the 42th session of the UN Human Rights Council, he urged the United Nations to take actions in stopping the sanctions. U.S. President Donald Trump withdrew Washington from the 2015 nuclear deal in May 2018 and restored the previous sanctions against Iran and ordered new ones. Trump has described his government's sanctions against Iran an "economic war".

To strangle the Iranian economy, Trump has acknowledged that his administration has slapped the "harshest sanctions" against Iran that its kind has never been seen in history. In an interview with CNN aired on September 24, Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif said that sanctions are war.

<https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/440636/Iran-calls-sanctions-crime-against-humanity>

Nuclear deal 'worthless' if it does not benefit Iran: Vaezi

Tehran Times, September 29, 2019

Presidential chief of staff Mahmoud Vaezi says the nuclear deal, also known as Barjam in Iran, is worthless if it does not benefit Iran. Vaezi accompanied President Rouhani during his trip to New York for the Annual UN General Assembly conference. While in New York, Rouhani held separate meetings with leaders of Germany, France and Britain whose countries are signatory to the 2015 nuclear agreement.

“Barjam without its benefits is worthless for us and we told the Europeans that in order to preserve the agreement they should fulfil their commitments and shoulder the U.S. burden as well,” Vaezi said on Sunday, ISNA reported. He warned that Iran will continue to scale back its commitments under the nuclear deal if the other signatories to the deal do not fulfil their commitments. “We have announced loud and clear that if they fail to take any action we will take the next step,” the presidential chief of staff pointed out.

<https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/440619/Nuclear-deal-worthless-if-it-does-not-benefit-Iran-Vaezi>

Rouhani is not entitled to make changes to the JCPOA, says top MP

Tehran Times, September 29, 2019

A top lawmaker has said President Hassan Rouhani is not entitled to make any changes to the text of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), a nuclear deal struck in 2015 between Iran and six world powers.

“The president cannot add or remove even a word from Barjam (JCPOA) without permission from the Majlis,” Mehr on Sunday quoted Mohammadreza Pour-Ebrahimi as saying. “Raising these subjects is with the intention of creating a psychological war so that the Islamic Republic of Iran retreats from its principal stances and its rightful demands,” he added.

According to Reuters, Rouhani told media in New York on Tuesday that he would be open to discussing with major powers “small changes, additions or amendments” to the nuclear deal if sanctions were taken away. However, Parviz Esmaeili, the presidential office’s director for communications and information, later criticized Reuters for misquoting Rouhani. “What Reuters quoted Rouhani as saying about his readiness to amend and make changes to the JCPOA is not accurate,” Esmaeili said in a tweet.

<https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/440612/Rouhani-is-not-entitled-to-make-changes-to-the-JCPOA-says-top>

Turkey

Turkey’s Erdogan says nuclear power should either be free for all or banned

Reuters, September 24, 2019

Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan on Tuesday said nuclear power should either be free for all states or banned completely, and warned that the “inequality” between states who have nuclear power and who do not undermines global balances. Turkey signed the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty in 1980, and has also signed the 1996 Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, which bans all nuclear detonations for any purpose. Erdogan has hinted in the past that he wanted the same protection for Turkey as Israel, which foreign analysts say possesses a sizable nuclear arsenal. Israel maintains a policy of ambiguity around the nuclear issue, refusing to confirm or deny its capabilities.

“The position of nuclear power should either be forbidden for all or permissible for everyone,” Erdogan told the United Nations General Assembly annual gathering of world leaders. In his speech, Erdogan also called on the international community to help securing peace and safety in the Syrian city of Idlib, adding that establishing a “safe zone” in northern Syria will save millions of lives. Turkey, which hosts 3.6 million Syrian refugees, controls parts of northern Syria where it says 350,000 Syrians have already returned. Turkey plans to resettle 1 million refugees in northern Syria and has warned that it may reopen the route for migrants into Europe if it does not receive adequate international support for the plan.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/un-assembly-turkey/turkeys-erdogan-says-nuclear-power-should-either-be-free-for-all-or-banned-idUSKBN1W924L>

East Asia

North Korea

Russia detains two North Korean vessels after one opens fire: reports

Reuters, September 17, 2019

Russian border guards have detained two North Korean boats in Russian territorial waters in the Sea of Japan after one of them attacked a Russian patrol, local media cited the Federal Security Service (FSB) as saying on Tuesday.

A Russian border patrol discovered two North Korean schooners and 11 motorboats fishing illegally off its far eastern coast and detained the first vessel, prompting the second one to open fire, the FSB was quoted as saying. "Both vessels have been detained," local media cited the FSB as saying, adding later that more than 80 North Koreans had been detained. Russia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs called in a top North Korean diplomatic representative in Moscow over the incident and he was later seen entering the ministry, RIA news agency reported.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-russia-northkorea-incident/russia-detains-two-north-korean-vessels-after-one-opens-fire-reports-idUSKBN1W21GQ>

NK nuclear reactor shut down for enough time for re-fuelling: IAEA

Yonhap, Korea Herald, September 18, 2019

North Korea's main plutonium-producing reactor has been shut down for enough time for it to be re-fuelled, the International Atomic Energy Agency said in a recent report, stressing Pyongyang's nuclear activities remain a cause for "serious concern." The 5-megawatt reactor at the North's Yongbyon nuclear complex showed signs of intermittent operation between mid-August and late November last year, but there have been no indications of operations there since early December, the agency said in the report submitted for its general conference this week.

The latest IAEA report also said there have been signs of use at the centrifuge

enrichment facility located in Yongbyon, though no indications of reprocessing activities were detected at the radiochemical lab in the plant. Mining, milling and concentration activities also appeared to have continued at "locations previously declared as the Pyongsan uranium mine and the Pyongsan uranium concentration plant," it said. The agency noted that it did not have access to Yongbyon and other facilities and that it cannot confirm the operational status or the purpose of the cited activities without such access. The IAEA used other information, such as satellite imagery, to monitor the North's nuclear program. "The continuation of the DPRK's nuclear programme is a clear violation of relevant UN Security Council resolutions and is deeply regrettable," the report said, urging Pyongyang to comply with its obligations under the resolutions. DPRK stands for the North's official name, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20190918000356&ACE_SEARCH=1

North Korea chief negotiator welcomes Trump's call for 'new method' at talks

Hyonhee Shin, David Brunnstrom, Reuters, September 20, 2019

North Korea's chief nuclear negotiator welcomed on Friday U.S. President Donald Trump's suggestion that a "new method" be used in talks on Pyongyang's nuclear weapons programs. Kim Myong Gil praised Trump's "wise political decision" to seek a new approach to the stalled talks without a "troublemaker" in the U.S. administration - an apparent reference to John Bolton, Trump's hawkish former national security adviser, who was fired last week.

Trump said on Wednesday Bolton's suggestion for a Libyan model of denuclearization for North Korea "set us back very badly," while his own diplomacy had resulted in the country freezing nuclear tests and returning remains of U.S. soldiers missing from the 1950-53 Korean War. "So I think John

really should take a look at how badly they've done in the past and maybe a new method would be very good," Trump said, when asked about news reports saying that Bolton thought talks with North Korea were doomed to failure.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-northkorea-usa/north-korea-chief-negotiator-welcomes-trumps-call-for-new-method-at-talks-idUSKBN1W50RT>

Trump's 'new method' on North Korea may indicate nuclear weapon first approach

Park Han-na, Korea Herald, September 23, 2019 - 17:03

The mood for dialogue between the US and North Korea has been heightened with US President Donald Trump's recent comment on the possible employment of a "new method" to break the deadlock in nuclear talks with Pyongyang. A "new method would be very good," Trump said on Sept. 18, criticizing the maximalist approach maintained by former US national security adviser John Bolton, who advocated the "Libyan model" in denuclearizing the regime.

Trump fired Bolton, who was described as a "war monger" by the North, two weeks ago over policy disagreement. Pyongyang has been demanding the US come up with a "new calculation method" before year-end for their talks to make progress following the collapse of a second summit between Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong-un in February. North Korean diplomat Kim Myong-gil, who will be leading a planned working-level talks with Washington, welcomed Trump's remark and hoped that it signals a shift in Washington's stance away from its demands at the February summit. Trump walked away from making a deal after North Korea rejected the US proposal that the regime give up its entire nuclear weapons program as well as its chemical and biological weapons. "At the moment I am not quite sure what he implied in his suggestion of 'new method,' but to me it seems he wanted to imply that a step-by-step solution starting with the things feasible

first while building trust in each other would be the best option," Kim said

http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20190923000711&ACE_SEARCH=1

Trump says N. Korea must denuclearize to tap potential

Yonhap, Korea Herald, September 25, 2019

US President Donald Trump said Tuesday that North Korea must denuclearize in order to tap its "tremendous" economic potential. In a speech to the UN General Assembly in New York, Trump said he delivered that message to North Korean leader Kim Jong-un. His remarks come as the United States and North Korea are expected to resume working-level denuclearization negotiations in the coming weeks. "I've told Kim Jong-un what I truly believe — that, like Iran, his country is full of tremendous, untapped potential, but that to realize that promise, North Korea must denuclearize," Trump said.

http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20190925000083&ACE_SEARCH=1

North Korea says lack of progress casts doubt on prospects for future summit with U.S.: KCNA

Joyce Lee, Reuters, September 27, 2019

North Korea said on Friday that a lack of progress in implementing agreements made between U.S. President Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un cast doubt on prospects for a future summit, state news agency KCNA said. "The U.S. has done nothing for implementing the joint statement" from the first summit between Trump and Kim in Singapore last year, KCNA said, quoting North Korean Foreign Ministry advisor Kim Kye Gwan.

The official criticized the joint military drills between U.S. and South Korea, as well as strengthened sanctions and pressure on North Korea. Negotiations aimed at dismantling North Korea's nuclear and missile programs have stalled since a failed second summit between

Trump and Kim in February. Pyongyang has said it is willing to restart working-level talks, but no date or location have been set.

Trump said on Monday that he would want to know what would result from a third summit with Kim before agreeing to hold it. The official's statement also pointed out that "politicians in Washington are obsessed with" the assertion that North Korea can get access to a bright future only when it abandons its nukes first, and the view that sanctions led North Korea to dialogue was "twisted."

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-northkorea-usa/north-korea-says-lack-of-progress-casts-doubt-on-prospects-for-future-summit-with-u-s-kcna-idUSKBN1WB2YG>

North Korea urges US to turn words into action

Park Han-na, Korea Herald, September 29, 2019

A North Korean envoy called on the United States to translate its promises into action ahead of upcoming working-level talks between the two countries to discuss the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. "The US should implement the North Korea-US joint agreement with sincerity and bold decision after great deliberation," Ri Ki-ho, a counselor at North Korea's Permanent Mission to the United Nations in New York, said at the 2019 Global Peace Forum on Korea, held at Columbia University in New York on Saturday. Speaking at the forum, held under the theme "Meaning of June 12 North Korea-US joint agreement and prospect of North Korea-US relations," he said Pyongyang had shown through concrete action its willingness to keep the pledges its leader Kim Jong-un and US President Donald Trump signed after their first summit in Singapore last year.

Ri was referring to the suspension of nuclear and intercontinental ballistic missile tests, the shutdown of the Punggye-ri nuclear test site and the return of the remains of US soldiers killed during the Korean War. "On the other hand, the United States did not take any action to implement the joint statement, saying that it would improve relations only in words," Ri said. The North Korean

diplomat said Washington's statement that international sanctions against the regime would remain in place contradicted its claims of openness to dialogue and trust-building.

"Denuclearization will become increasingly unavailable as long as the US maintains its hostility towards us," he said. Since early September, in a series of statements published under the name of North Korea's Vice Foreign Minister Choe Son-hui and Foreign Ministry adviser Kim Kye-gwan, among others, Pyongyang has pressured Washington to take a new approach to produce a breakthrough in the stalled nuclear diplomacy process.

http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20190929000177&ACE_SEARCH=1

North Korea won't give up nuclear weapons: ex-Trump adviser Bolton

David Brunnstrom, Doina Chiacu, Reuters, September 30, 2019

North Korea has no intention of giving up its nuclear weapons and Pyongyang benefits from stalling in its standoff with Washington, U.S. President Donald Trump's ousted national security adviser John Bolton said in a speech on Monday. "It seems to be clear that (North Korea) has not made a strategic decision to give up its nuclear weapons. In fact, I think the contrary is true," Bolton, a hardliner towards North Korea and Iran who was fired by Trump three weeks ago, said at Washington's Center for Strategic and International Studies think tank.

Under current circumstances, Bolton said, North Korean leader Kim Jong Un "will never give up the nuclear weapons voluntarily." In firing Bolton, Trump said he "disagreed strongly with many of his suggestions" and that the former adviser had made mistakes by demanding that Kim follow a "Libyan model" in which he would have to give up all his nuclear weapons unilaterally.

<https://reuters.com/article/us-usa-northkorea-bolton/north-korea-wont-give-up-nuclear-weapons-ex-trump-adviser-bolton-idUSKBN1WF1IE>

G-77 adopts statement urging lifting of sanctions on Pyongyang: NK media

Yonhap, Korea Herald, September 30, 2019

The members of the Group of 77 developing countries have adopted a statement opposing “unilateral” economic sanctions on North Korea that hamper its development and prosperity, Pyongyang’s state media said Monday. During the ministerial meeting of the G-77 held in New York on Friday on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly, the member states adopted a statement calling for the immediate lifting of sanctions on North Korea, according to the North’s radio network Korean Central Broadcasting Station.

The G-77 is an intergovernmental organization of developing countries in the UN that aims to promote economic interests of the member countries. The group was launched in 1964 with 77 founding members and has since been expanded to 134 member nations. Delegations from some 120 countries took part in the latest session, where the North’s representative also delivered an address vowing to further cooperate with other G-77 member states, the report said. North Korea is under a wide array of international sanctions for its nuclear and ballistic missile programs, including a UN-imposed cap on imports of refined petroleum products

http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20190930000229&ACE_SEARCH=1

South Korea

Seoul asked to offer ‘big promises’ to North Korea

Korea Times, September 15, 2019

The government is asking the United States and the governments of regional allies to promise not to launch military offensives against North Korea in order to convince Pyongyang to give up its nuclear weapons. Providing sanctions relief alone may be insufficient, as North Korean leader Kim Jong-un might not have thought out a clear cut plan regarding his regime’s nuclear disarmament despite repeated commitments

to denuclearize at previous inter-Korean and U.S.-North Korea summits.

There is a rationale that what Kim has done so far since the beginning of the process represents the opposite, given the continued missile testing. The United States Forces Korea (USFK) recently confirmed that North Korea’s Hwasong-15 inter-continental ballistic missile (ICBM) has the capability to strike targets on “any part of the U.S. mainland.” This enhanced warhead delivery technology when coupled with the 100 nuclear warheads – an estimate by the U.S.-based think tank RAND – that Pyongyang would have by 2020, could enhance its retaliatory threat. From that perspective, many think Kim can’t afford to drop what’s widely considered as the “only protection” to shield his regime from external aggression.

http://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/nation/2019/09/113_275576.html

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.

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

Seoul stresses 'flexibility' to advance denuke talks

Kim Yoo-chul, Korea Times, September 19, 2019

Ahead of working-level denuclearization talks between the United States and North Korea, a senior South Korean diplomat said "flexibility" was a key prerequisite to making "substantive progress. "If Washington and Pyongyang want to keep the negotiations alive and make substantive progress, they should show more flexibility," Lee Do-hoon, Seoul's chief nuclear envoy, told reporters at Incheon International Airport before departing for Washington, D.C., for talks with his U.S. counterpart Stephen Biegun, scheduled for Saturday (KST). "As North Korea has confirmed its willingness to return to the negotiations, there will be plenty of discussion points for Seoul and Washington. I plan to pass on some of our government's suggestions regarding the new round of talks between Pyongyang and Washington," Lee said without elaborating.

Lee added he doesn't plan to contact the North Koreans during his visit to Washington. "We've been told about North Korea's position in the upcoming dialogue from different viewpoints. South Korea will review this and discuss these mixed messages with the United States." North Korea recently laid out "conditions" for denuclearization ahead of the planned talks with the U.S. Its official Korean Central News Agency said Pyongyang was "hoping that the working-level negotiations will be held in a few weeks." A few days after this, a North Korean diplomat handling U.S. affairs called for "a complete removal of threats and hurdles regarding Pyongyang's system security" as a condition for the talks. That raised speculation that the North could ask the U.S. for a security guarantee and sanctions relief. The foreign ministry said Lee will meet other officials from the White House, State Department and think tanks during his visit.

http://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/nation/2019/09/113_275825.html

Previously unidentified underground facilities identified at Yongbyon complex: 38 North

Korea Herald, September 21, 2019

Two previously unidentified underground complexes have been identified at North Korea's mainstay nuclear compound in Yongbyon, north of Pyongyang, a US website monitoring the communist state has said. In an expert analysis of satellite imagery by Frank V. Pabian, 38 North on Thursday revealed the underground complexes, located east and southeast of Yongbyon across the Kuryong River, saying their purposes remain unknown.

The findings are based on the presence of tunnel entrances and visible spoil piles, which 38 North said have become far less obvious with time. "While it is impossible to remotely discern their purposes, their location within Yongbyon's security perimeter and subsequent camouflaging qualify them as subjects of interest for future inspection teams," the website said in the analysis.

One tunnel complex lies directly across the river from the 5 megawatt nuclear reactor, as indicated by the presence of excavated spoil piles, the website said. The other tunnel was excavated under a hillside along the Kuryong River, northeast of the abandoned 50 megawatt reactor area, it added. The analysis came as Washington and Pyongyang are preparing to resume their working-level nuclear negotiations as early as this month. Their talks may touch on the dismantlement of the Yongbyon facilities in return for US concessions.

http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20190921000045&ACE_SEARCH=1

70% of S. Koreans expect Kim Busan trip to be positive for nuclear talks, cross-border ties

Korea Herald, September 26, 2019

About 70 percent of South Koreans think that a trip to the South by North Korean leader Kim Jong-un for a summit with Southeast Asian leaders would have a

positive impact on denuclearization talks and inter-Korean relations, a survey showed. On Tuesday, the country's spy agency raised the possibility that Kim could visit the southern port city of Busan for the special summit that South Korea is to host in November for the leaders of the 10-nation Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

According to the survey of around 1,000 adults by the National Unification Advisory Council, 69.7 percent of those polled said that Kim's trip could have positive impact on denuclearization talks and inter-Korean relations, with 22.8 percent of them saying that the impact could be huge.

http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20190926000252&ACE_SEARCH=1

S. Korean, Chinese foreign ministers reaffirm cooperation on North Korea

Park Han-na, Korea Herald, September 26, 2019

The foreign ministers of South Korea and China met in New York on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly and agreed to continue their cooperation for denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs said Thursday.

In the 30-minute talks, Foreign Minister Kang Kyung-wha and her Chinese counterpart Wang Yi exchanged views on the current situation, including North Korea's nuclear program. "The two sides agreed that it is imperative to make substantive progress in denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula and the establishment of permanent peace through the swift resumption of US-North Korea working-level talks," the ministry said in a press release. The US and North Korea are expected to resume working-level talks in early October on abandoning Pyongyang's nuclear weapons.

http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20190926000739&ACE_SEARCH=1

S. Korea, Bulgaria to strengthen partnerships on nuclear energy, ICT

Korea Herald, September 27, 2019

The leaders of South Korea and Bulgaria agreed Friday to bolster strategic partnerships between the two nations in various fields, including nuclear energy, ICT and arms production. The accord came at summit talks here between President Moon Jae-in and visiting Prime Minister Boyko Borissov, according to Cheong Wa Dae. Moon began the Cheong Wa Dae summit by expressing his gratitude for Sofia's help in the search for missing South Koreans in a May river cruise boat sinking on the Danube River in Budapest.

He then noted that Bulgaria is actively seeking to draw more foreign direct investment, expand renewable energy use and modernize its weapon systems. "The two countries have great potential for broadening substantive cooperation in the trade, investment and energy fields," Moon said in his opening statement, which pool reporters were allowed to cover. In response, the Bulgarian prime minister expressed hope for closer ties on the education of a skilled workforce as well as trade and economy.

http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20190927000629&ACE_SEARCH=1

Japan

Tokyo refuses Seoul's help over North Korea firing

Yi Whan-woo, Korea Times, September 15, 2019

Japan did not ask South Korea for intelligence on North Korea's recent launch of two "unidentified projectiles" after Seoul ended its military information sharing pact with Tokyo. Political analysts in Seoul said Sunday the key motivation behind the silence was because it did not want to be viewed as seeking help to acquire classified information after the termination of the pact, commonly known

as GSOMIA, Aug. 22. However Tokyo seems fully capable of monitoring North Korea's military activities in cooperation with the United States and does not need to work with South Korea, they added.

Seoul's Ministry of National Defense (MND) and Joint Chief of Staff (JCS) have yet to finalize their assessment of the projectiles' maximum altitude and speed — two key pieces of information when analyzing the specifications of North Korean missiles or projectiles. "I think Japan is curious to know about North Korean projectiles last week but does not want to appear to be begging for help from the South," Shin In-kyun, president of the Korea Defense Network said. "This is why Japan has not asked for related information on the projectiles. It is as simple as that."

http://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/nation/2019/09/113_275568.html

Koizumi hopes son will push for abandonment of nuclear power

The Asahi Shimbun, September 16, 2019

Former Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi said he hopes his son in his new position in the Cabinet will wean Japan from nuclear power and expand the use of natural energy. In a speech here on Sept. 15, Koizumi said he was happy that his son, Shinjiro, 38, was appointed environment minister, his first Cabinet post, last week. "He has studied things more than I did," Koizumi said. "The environment is the most pressing issue. I want him to abandon nuclear power and turn Japan into a nation that can develop on natural energy."

Koizumi also reiterated that he made a mistake when he promoted nuclear power when he was prime minister from 2001 to 2006. Pro-nuclear advocates had said that nuclear power was safe, low-cost and clean, but Koizumi said the accident at the Fukushima No. 1 nuclear power plant in 2011 "proved all three 'virtues' false."

<http://www.asahi.com/ajw/articles/AJ201909160016.html>

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.

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

Japan embassy posts radiation levels in Seoul and Fukushima

The Asahi Shimbun, September 26, 2019

The Japanese Embassy in Seoul on Sept. 24 posted radiation levels in Fukushima Prefecture, site of the 2011 nuclear disaster, on its website to assuage safety concerns in South Korea. The website in Korean and Japanese rates radiation levels in the cities of Fukushima and Iwaki, Fukushima Prefecture, Tokyo's Shinjuku Ward and Seoul. It says radiation levels in the three Japanese cities are "on par with" major overseas cities, including Seoul.

On Sept. 25, the following air dose rates were detected: 0.133 microsievert per hour in Fukushima; 0.062 in Iwaki; 0.036 in Tokyo and 0.119 in Seoul. The data was provided by the Fukushima prefectural

government, the Tokyo metropolitan government, and the government-affiliated Korea Institute of Nuclear Safety just south of Seoul. The embassy said the data will be updated daily except on days when the diplomatic mission is closed.

<http://www.asahi.com/ajw/articles/AJ201909260023.html>

Japan lists China as bigger threat than nuclear-armed North Korea

Tim Kelly, Reuters, September 27, 2019

China's growing military might has replaced North Korean belligerence as the main security threat to Japan, Tokyo's annual defense review indicated on Thursday, despite signs that Pyongyang could have nuclear-tipped ballistic missiles. The document's security assessment on China comes after a section on Japan's ally, the United States, the first time Beijing has achieved second place in the Defense White Paper and pushing North Korea into third position. Russia, deemed by Japan as its primary threat during the Cold War, was in fourth place. "The reality is that China is rapidly increasing military spending, and so people can grasp that we need more pages," Defense Minister Taro Kono said at a media briefing.

"China is deploying air and sea assets in the Western Pacific and through the Tsushima Strait into the Sea of Japan with greater frequency." China's Foreign Ministry expressed displeasure with the report. China will not accept Japan's "groundless criticism" of its normal national defense and military activities, spokesman Geng Shuang said at a press briefing in Beijing. Japan has raised defense spending by a tenth over the past seven years to counter military advances by Beijing and Pyongyang, including defenses against North Korean missiles which may carry nuclear warheads, the paper said.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-japan-defence/japan-promotes-china-as-bigger-threat-than-nuclear-armed-north-korea-idUSKBN1WC051>

Taiwan

Fault lines should nix reactor proposal: group

Taipei Times, September 24, 2019

A geological survey shows that there are five active fault lines near New Taipei City's Fourth Nuclear Power Plant, an academic said. The nation's Fourth Nuclear Power Plant should not be activated, because a geological survey has confirmed that it sits close to active fault lines, activists said yesterday. The survey shows that there are five active faults near the mothballed power plant in New Taipei City's Gongliao District, which has never been put into operation, National Taiwan University Department of Geosciences professor Chen Wen-shan said at a news conference.

For safety reasons, the plant should not be activated as recommended by Kaohsiung Mayor and Chinese Nationalist Party (KMT) presidential candidate Han Kuo-yu, as well as some advocates of nuclear energy, Chen added. If the government ultimately decides to proceed with the project, the plant would be incapable of withstanding a strong earthquake because it is not designed to do so, he said.

However, the survey that was carried out by the Ministry of Economic Affairs' Central Geological Survey (CGS) has not been made public, he said. In 2011, soon after a powerful earthquake and tsunami triggered the Fukushima Dai-ichi nuclear power plant disaster in Japan, the government instructed state-run Taiwan Power Co (Taipower) to task the CGS with conducting a survey of the Fourth Nuclear Power Plant area, Chen said.

<http://www.taipetimes.com/News/taiwan/archives/2019/09/24/2003722818>

*Op-Ed***India****India's 'No First Use' Nuclear Doctrine**

Rajiv Nayan, Institute for Defence Studies and Analysis, September 16, 2019

The August 16 statement of Defence Minister Rajnath Singh has once again brought India's 'no first use' (NFU) nuclear doctrine into the limelight. This was his first public statement on the issue after he assumed charge as Defence Minister in the second government of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, reelected in May 2019.

Earlier in November 2016, then Defence Minister Manohar Parrikar had also made a statement on India's NFU policy, which was twisted by sections of the media. Parrikar became a victim of an uninformed media trial. What he stated had been in discussion among sections of the strategic community for a long time. The idea of doctrinal change was mute but not completely absent during the United Progressive Alliance (UPA) Government. As the UPA Government was committed to mainstreaming India in the nuclear non-proliferation regime, any down blending of NFU policy was considered akin to diluting India's image as a responsible state. Although mainstreaming India in the global non-proliferation regime was an important task, the Indian policy making process failed to strike a balance between foreign policy and security imperatives.

<https://idsa.in/idsacomments/indias-no-first-use-nuclear-doctrine-rajiv-nayan-160919>

Decoding Pakistan's nuclear brinkmanship

Shalini Chawla, The Tribune, September 18, 2019

Pakistan's nuclear posturing suffered a blow to some extent with India's airstrikes in Balakot on February 26 in retaliation to the Pulwama terror attack. But it seems that Pakistan's reliance on nuclear weapons to serve its strategic objectives has not been altered. Its reliance on nuclear deterrence

has intensified, with constantly growing asymmetries between India and Pakistan over the last two decades.

Imran Khan has repeatedly flagged the possibility of a 'nuclear war' in the last one month. Highlighting the nuclear factor by Pakistan displays its immaturity and desperation to attract global attention towards Kashmir. Abrogation of Article 370 by India did leave Pakistan surprised and it has been reacting furiously on various fronts, displaying its anxiety to deal with Jammu and Kashmir's new status. Pakistan has launched a propaganda/narrative war and is making aggressive efforts to fallaciously project India as a state run by 'Nazi ideology' under Prime Minister Modi. Highlighting Kashmir at every possible international forum, it is leaving no opportunity/space to remind its economically stifled population about their right to fight for Kashmir and Kashmiris. Even though Pakistan is struggling with a low growth rate, high inflation and rising debt figures, and Imran's party has failed to deliver most of its election promises, the leading agenda for Imran is Kashmir and communication restrictions in the Valley.

<https://www.tribuneindia.com/news/comment/decoding-pakistan-s-nuclear-brinkmanship/834037.html>

India vs. Pakistan Could Be a Nuclear War Where Billions Die

Kyle Mizokami, National Interest Blog, September 22, 2019

It's distinctly possible that any future war between India and Pakistan would involve limited action on the ground and full-scale fighting at sea and in the air. India has the upper hand in both, particularly at sea where it would have the ability to blockade Pakistani ports. Pakistan imports 83% of its gasoline consumption, and without sizable reserves the economy would feel the effects of war very quickly. An economic victory, not a purely military one might be the best way to decisively end a war without the use of nuclear weapons.

With that scenario in mind, let's look at the five Indian weapons Pakistan would fear most in a war. INS Vikramaditya Aircraft Carrier Commissioned in November 2013, INS Vikramaditya is the newer and more modern of India's two aircraft carriers. In the event of war, Vikramaditya would lead an offensive at sea designed to sweep the Pakistani Navy from the field. The nightmare scenario for Pakistan would be Vikramaditya parked off the coast of Karachi, Pakistan's largest port, enforcing a naval blockade. Originally built for the Soviet Navy as the anti-submarine aviation cruiser Baku, Vikramaditya was mothballed in 1996 after it became clear post-Cold War Russia could not afford to operate her. The ship was purchased by India in 2004, to be upgraded by Russian shipbuilders to a true aircraft carrier complete with angled flight deck. The updated design deleted all cruiser armament, including two 100mm deck guns, 192 SA-N-9 surface to air missiles and 12 SS-N-12 Sandbox anti-ship missiles.

<https://nationalinterest.org/blog/buzz/india-vs-pakistan-could-be-nuclear-war-where-billions-die-82601>

India vs Pakistan nuclear showdown: Modi's £400m hypersonic push risks disastrous conflict

Ciaran Mcgrath, Express UK, September 22, 2019

India is "sending a serious message" to China, as well as paving the way for a nuclear first strike on neighbours Pakistan, with its estimated investment of more than £400million on cutting edge hypersonic weapons, an expert has warned, amid Islamabad leader Imran Khan's vow to "fight to the death" if tensions boil over into conflict.

However, while Yogesh Joshi, a research fellow at the Institute of South Asian Studies, at the National University of Singapore, acknowledged India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi was aiming to ensure his country had a place at the table in future international arms control talks, the strategy also increased the risks of a potentially deadly future confrontation by upsetting the delicate balance of power in south Asia.

India is estimated to have spent over \$500 million (£408million) on the research and development of hypersonic weapons, according to an analysis published by Jane's at IHS Markit last month. Programs include Shourya, Brahmos II and Hypersonic Technology Demonstrating Vehicle (HSTDV), with India collaborating with Russia for the development of Bramhos II. Funding for the Indian hypersonic weapons programs is expected to grow as they are still at the development and testing stage.

<https://www.express.co.uk/news/world/1180236/india-pakistan-nuclear-narendra-modi-imran-khan-china-hypersonic-missiles-wv3>

Tactical Nuclear Weapons: A vital cog in Islamabad's scheme of things

Vikas Sv, One India, September 23, 2019

Pakistan has developed Tactical Nuclear weapons for a specific reason and it has a big role to play in its strategy to counter India in the event of war. There is nothing new about Imran Khan hinting that Pakistan could lose a conventional war with India. Pakistan's military establishment always knew about it and has made contingency plans. The only thing new about it is that a leader at such a prominent post speaking about it openly.

<https://www.oneindia.com/india/tactical-nuclear-weapons-a-vital-cog-in-islamabad-s-scheme-of-things-2952663.html>

PM's message of peace vs Imran's warning of war at UNGA

Anirban Bhaumik, Deccan Herald, September 28, 2019

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday underlined India's message of peace and harmony in his address at the United Nations, even as his Pakistani counterpart Imran Khan used the same podium to warn the world of a nuclear war between the two South Asia.

With tension between the two neighbours escalating over Jammu and Kashmir over

the past few weeks, the UN was expected to witness a war of words between India and Pakistan, as Prime Ministers of the two South Asian nations were to address the General Assembly on the same day

<https://www.deccanherald.com/national/national-politics/pm-s-message-of-peace-vs-imran-s-warning-of-war-at-unga-764643.html>

Crude hate speech, medieval mindset: India tears into Imran Khan's UN address

Shubhajit Roy, Indian Express, September 29, 2019

Hours after Pakistan's Prime Minister Imran Khan repeated his nuclear threat against India and warned of a "bloodbath" in Jammu & Kashmir, New Delhi, in a sharp response, said Indian citizens did not need others to speak for them – and definitely not those who had "built an industry of terrorism from the ideology of hate".

"Pakistan's virulent reaction to the removal of an outdated and temporary provision that was hindering development and integration of the Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir stems from the fact that those who thrive on conflict never welcome the ray of peace. While Pakistan has ventured to upstream terrorism and downstream hate speech there, India is going ahead with mainstreaming development in Jammu and Kashmir," India said.

<https://indianexpress.com/article/india/imran-khans-unga-address-india-reply-kashmir-6037732/>

China

Did China just accidentally show off its new supersonic cruise missile?

Liu Zhen, South China Morning Post, September 27, 2019

China's military on Wednesday published a video containing a clip of what appeared to be the launch of a new type of supersonic cruise missile, only to withdraw the film and replace it with a version with that scene trimmed out. The original footage, which ran for just over a minute, was released on

social media by the People's Liberation Army Rocket Force as part of the celebrations for the 70th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China, which falls on Tuesday.

The film contained a two-second clip in which an unidentified missile with an unusual design is seen being fired from a launcher truck. However, in the later version, the scene is replaced with footage of two separate missile launches in a desert setting. The editing did not go unnoticed by China's military observers, several of whom suggested that the weapon in the original film might have been a never-before-seen supersonic cruise missile. In the clip the missile appears to have slim dorsal fins, foldable tail fins and additional propellant, all of which, according to one expert who asked not to be identified, suggests it is designed to fly long distances and faster than the speed of sound. "The new missile would probably have a range of more than 1,000km [680 miles]," the person said.

The PLA already has a land-attack subsonic cruise missile – the Changjian-10 – that has an operational range of more than 1,500km (932 miles), which is equivalent to that of a medium-range ballistic missile. Ballistic and cruise missiles differ in a number of ways but the latter tend to fly at lower altitudes and at slower speeds, making them more vulnerable to defence systems. However, the Rocket Force has made significant progress in the development of glider vehicles for its ballistic missiles, like the Dongfeng-17 (DF-17), which is now capable of gliding in outer atmosphere at upwards of five times the speed of sound, making it more able to evade missile defence systems.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/military/article/3030552/did-china-just-accidentally-show-its-new-supersonic-cruise>

Could China's strict cyber controls gain international acceptance?

Simone McCarthy, South China Morning Post, September 30, 2019

China's statement to the UN was followed by one from a group of 27 nations calling

for a “free, open” cyberspace. Photo: Shutterstock. When an open-ended working group met at the United Nations in New York in mid-September to discuss the future of cyberspace it did so with little fanfare. Just seven member states had submitted working papers to that meeting outlining their vision for what countries should and should not be allowed to do to each other and their own people in the online world. One of the countries to put forward its position was China, which used the forum to make what observers said was its most important UN submission on the topic yet – a detailed vision of its style of cyber governance in which states have sovereign right to maintain strict controls on internet and technology infrastructure for “social stability”. Under such a system, states have the right to censor, collect data, and restrict online access within their borders.

Domestic political considerations have played an influential role in how China wants to shape global policies on information and communications technology, according to Helena Legarda, an analyst at the Mercator Institute for China Studies. “If Beijing wants a [domestic] cyberspace that is secure and controllable, that would be substantially easier if it were able to introduce that concept of cyber sovereignty in international cyber governance,” she said. Since the governance conversations happened at the UN, “China is very involved” there, she said. But a closed or open internet is not the only battleground for the duelling ideologies of China and the bloc of 27. There are differences in how countries view tangible national security concerns such as cyber warfare. The major Western countries broadly maintain that existing international laws, including those that justify war in some situations, should be applied to the cyber realm.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/diplomacy/article/3030758/could-chinas-strict-cyber-controls-gain-international>

Reaching for the STARS

Zhao Lei, China Daily, September 30, 2019

China’s rapidly developing space program sets sights on Mars, Jupiter. The founders of

China’s space program could not have imagined one day sending a spacecraft to Mars when, back in the 1950s and ’60s, they struggled with great difficulty to establish the country’s space industry. Ordinary Chinese, who in those days mostly dreamed of having a small television set or a bicycle, had not thought about possibly seeing some of their compatriots eventually traveling in space. Today, Mars is one of the destinations on China’s agenda. The space authorities have even worked with the local government in Gansu province to construct a Mars simulation base in the barren, wind-swept hills of the province. The base was opened to the public in April. Researchers are racing against time to prepare for the country’s first exploration mission to Mars, scheduled for 2020.

According to the China National Space Administration, China’s first Martian probe will conduct scientific investigation of the Martian soil, geological structure, environment, atmosphere and water. Zhang Rongqiao, chief scientist of the Mars exploration program, said the farthest distance between Earth and Mars is about 400 million kilometers, so a probe must travel about seven months before reaching the Martian atmosphere in 2021.

<https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/201909/30/WS5d916982a310cf3e3556e535.html>

Pakistan

What does Pakistan’s energy mix look like and what is its future?

Jack Unwin, Power Technology, September 25, 2019

According to US government statistics, Pakistan’s energy mix is formed of 64% fossil fuels, 27% hydropower and 9% other renewables and nuclear power. While Pakistan has strong potential for producing renewable energy it is still far behind much of the world in developing these sources. In a country where over 50 million people still don’t have adequate access to electricity, how is Pakistan’s energy mix evolving?

<https://www.power-technology.com/features/pakistan-energy-mix/>

Beware the nuclear con man

Pervez Hoodbhoy, Dawn, September 28, 2019

Indian leaders of unbridled ambition and meagre wisdom have recently suggested that India might revoke its earlier policy of No First Use (NFU) of nuclear weapons. They should be forgiven. To stay in the public eye, South Asia's street-smart politicians need to make a lot of noise all the time. Most did not do very well in school and even fewer made it to college or university (and some ended up playing sports there).

India's hint at moving away from NFU towards counterforce owes to its increased military advantage over Pakistan. But hubris often paves the way to overconfidence and disaster. As every military commander worth his salt knows, all plans look fine until the battle begins. Last week a ragtag Houthi militia took out 50 per cent of Saudi Arabia's oil-producing capacity, underscoring how even a relatively ill-equipped force can wreck an adversary bristling with the most advanced weapons that limitless oil dollars could buy. Sellers of snake oil and con men do not deserve anyone's ears or respect. Whoever advocates a nuclear first strike should be quickly locked up in a mental asylum.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1507802>

Moment of truth

Ashraf Jehangir Qazi, The News International, September 28, 2019

The moment of truth is upon us. Who are we? What do we stand for? What is the worth of our word? Narendra Modi's miserable decision of August 5, 2019 to eviscerate the political identity of Kashmiris confronts Pakistan with these questions.

Pakistan's policies and arguments should rest on the overriding imperatives of international human rights law and international humanitarian law. India's escalating atrocities have already compelled Genocide Watch to issue a Genocide Alert regarding the situation in IOK. This raises the inherent risk of war between two nuclear weapons countries. Significantly,

India has chosen to reconsider its no-first-use of nuclear weapons against Pakistan.

Pakistan became a nuclear power precisely because the unresolved issue of Jammu and Kashmir threatened war between it and its much larger adversary, India. After the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan and within a year of Pakistan acquiring nuclear weapons status the Kargil conflict occurred. Since then Pakistan has faced increasing accusations of terrorism, undergone sanctions and lost credibility with many people in IOK.

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/533031-moment-of-truth>

USA

During the Cold War, America Almost Had Its Battleships Carry Nuclear Weapons

Kyle Mizokami, National Interest Blog, Sept 16, 2019

Although eventually abandoned, plans in the 1980s called for nuclear-armed battleships that would also carry U.S. Marines and Harrier jets. Nearly 900 feet long and displacing close to 60,000 tons, the battlewagons could fire a nine-gun broadside sending 18 tons of steel and explosives hurtling towards their targets.

The battleships were modernized to include cruise missiles, ship-killing missiles and Phalanx point-defense guns. Returned to the fleet, the ships saw action off the coasts of Lebanon and Iraq. At the end of the Cold War the battleships were retired again. All were slated to become museums.

<https://nationalinterest.org/blog/buzz/during-cold-war-america-almost-had-its-battleships-carry-nuclear-weapons-80936>

America's Nuclear Missile Submarines May Get Smaller Tactical Nukes

John R. Harvey, National Interest Blog, September 16, 2019

Low-yield nukes would give Washington more ways to deter its rivals, but also

might raise the chance of a nuclear device being used.

Just last month, in light of the upcoming House-Senate debate on U.S. nuclear modernization, Sen. Elizabeth Warren along with seventeen Democratic Senators wrote to the Senate Armed Services Committee urging support for three nuclear initiatives that were adopted in the House defense bill. Specifically, the initiatives (1) express the sense of Congress that the United States seeks to extend the New START Treaty with Russia, (2) deny funding for new INF-type missiles “until diplomatic and strategic planning steps are taken”, and (3) prohibit deployment of a lower-yield warhead for the Trident D-5 submarine-launched ballistic missile (SLBM).

<https://nationalinterest.org/blog/buzz/americas-nuclear-missile-submarines-may-get-smaller-tactical-nukes-80926>

The Reason Why America Isn't Ready to Protect Itself from Russian Hypersonic Missiles

Bishop Garrison and Preston Lann, National Interest Blog, September 18, 2019

Russia is developing hypersonic nuclear weapons, and Putin claims he offered to sell one to President Donald Trump. While the conversation between the two leaders was presented light-heartedly, the very real threat from Russian and Chinese hypersonic weapons systems continues to grow as both make significant advances in the development of hypersonic weapons that can escape and evade the Department of Defense's (DoD) Ballistic Missile Defense System. To counter this emerging hypersonic threat, the DoD's 2019 budget has allocated more than \$2 billion for hypersonic weapons development. However, the DoD's hypersonic weapons program currently suffers from large disparities in research and budget between its offensive and defensive capabilities development. While offensive capabilities are important, a strong defensive capability remains important to the protection of interests and assets.

The majority of DoD's funding for hypersonic weapons development currently

goes toward precision strike or offensive weapons, as opposed to missile defense programs. Next year's DoD budget for overall hypersonic investments is approximately \$2.6 billion, with defensive developments making up only about six percent (\$157.4 million) of that investment budget. Moreover, the budgetary figure for defensive developments will drop by almost a quarter in the coming years, from \$157.4 million next year to \$122 million by 2024.

<https://nationalinterest.org/blog/buzz/reason-why-america-isnt-ready-protect-itself-russian-hypersonic-missiles-81461>

How the Top 5 Strange Myths About America's Nuclear Triad Are Wrong We break it down.

Robert Gard Philip Coyle Greg Terryn John Isaacs, The National Interest, September 18, 2019

The Bulletin of Atomic Scientists announced last week that it has decided to move its famed “Doomsday Clock” three minutes closer to midnight or, in effect, closer to the “end of humanity.” While this year, the Bulletin focused on the threat from climate change, a spokesperson added that “a nuclear arms race resulting from modernization of huge arsenals pose extraordinary and undeniable threats to the continued existence of humanity.” Indeed, nuclear weapons still play a limited, yet very expensive, role in our national security. The Congressional Budget Office announced last week that the United States will spend about \$350 billion over the next decade to upgrade and maintain its arsenal.

But at the same time, there are also misconceptions about the purpose, status and effectiveness of our arsenal. Let's disarm some of those myths: 1. Nuclear weapons are the highest priority U.S. military forces: Out-going Secretary Hagel perpetuated this myth during his press conference announcing the results of a recent nuclear review: “Our nuclear deterrent plays a critical role in ensuring U.S. national security, and it's DOD's highest priority mission. No other

capability we have is more important.” While nuclear deterrence has been a vestige of U.S. defense policy since World War II, it clearly does not represent today’s highest priority for the DOD in terms of attention, planning or funding.

<https://nationalinterest.org/blog/buzz/how-top-5-strange-myths-about-americas-nuclear-triad-are-wrong-81466>

How Artificial Intelligence Could Make Nuclear War More Likely

Shravan Kumar reddy Apparigani, Herald Publicist, September 25, 2019

AI received’t begin a nuclear conflict—however nations uncertain about their deterrence skills, or the capabilities of a rival nation utilizing AI, simply may. Galerie Bilderwelt/Getty Photographs

In fact, each computing energy and class have grown by leaps and bounds since Ronald Reagan’s first time period. Right this moment’s common shopper smartphone is nearly unfathomably extra highly effective than Chilly Conflict-era nuclear weapons’ command-and-control expertise. Over the subsequent yr, the Pentagon will spend \$1 billion to develop synthetic intelligence (AI) expertise that can “compete, deter and, if vital, struggle and win the wars of the longer term” —together with, presumably, an apocalyptic state of affairs of the sort Petrov, a human, averted.

<https://heraldpublicist.com/how-artificial-intelligence-could-make-nuclear-war-more-likely/>

Opinion: The truth behind small modular reactors

Steve Thomas The Sumter Item, September 27, 2019

When things are going badly for nuclear power, the nuclear industry offers the promise of new technologies. The latest example is the Small Modular Reactor, with significantly lower power outputs compared to established reactor designs. As always with nuclear technologies, the public will be footing the bill for this latest folly.

An earlier round of public funding in many

countries went to companies that promoted large reactor designs that were supposed to power a “Nuclear Renaissance.” That renaissance flopped, and the cost and time overruns of these reactor designs at their flagship sites are, even by the standards of nuclear power, extraordinary - more than thrice the advertised costs and delays of up to a decade. These failures have led to the financial collapse of the two largest reactor vendors, Westinghouse and Areva.

<https://www.theitem.com/stories/opinion-the-truth-behind-small-modular-reactors,334082>

Trump’s Close-Call Diplomacy with Iran’s President

Robin Wright, The New Yorker, September 30, 2019

On the evening of Tuesday, September 24th, the President of France, Emmanuel Macron, went to see his Iranian counterpart, Hassan Rouhani, at the Millennium Hilton Hotel, across the street from the U.N. headquarters, in New York. The hotel is one of only three places that the Iranian leader could go in the city, because of U.S. sanctions. Macron intended to set up a three-way telephone conversation with Rouhani and President Trump. A team of technicians arrived to set up a secure line, in a meeting room on Rouhani’s floor, for the call at 9:30 *p.m.* The telephone conversation was supposed to cap twenty-four hours of frenetic diplomacy —including personal appeals to Rouhani by the British, Japanese, and Pakistani Prime Ministers and the German Chancellor —after months of quiet French diplomacy.

Earlier in the day, Macron, alongside the British Prime Minister, Boris Johnson, had urged Rouhani to talk with Trump. Their exchange was caught on video. “If he leaves the country without meeting President Trump, honestly, this is a lost opportunity,” Macron directed an interpreter to tell Rouhani, amid a scrum of diplomats and photographers. “Because he will not come back in a few months and President Trump will not go to Tehran.” Rouhani threw his head back

and laughed. “So they have to meet now!” Macron insisted. Johnson chimed in, as cameras flashed, “You need to be on the side of the swimming pool—and jump at the same time.”

<https://www.newyorker.com/news/news-desk/donald-trumps-close-call-diplomacy-with-irans-president-hassan-rouhani>

Russia

Explained: Why Russia built a floating nuclear plant; why some are nervous

The Indian Express, September 18, 2019

On Saturday, a Russian-built floating nuclear power plant completed its 5,000-km journey along the Northern Sea Route, causing excitement in the energy sector, but sparking fears among environmentalists over the safety of the Arctic region. The Akademik Lomonosov is a first-of-its-kind floating nuclear power station built in St Petersburg, the Russian port city on the Gulf of Finland. Three tugboats pulled it from the northern port of Murmansk for 5,000 kilometres to Chukotka, in Russia’s far east.

Named after the 18th-century Russian scientist Mikhail Lomonosov, the 21,000-tonne floating plant is 144 m long and 30 m wide, and contains two nuclear reactors of 35 MW each. It is a small plant compared to conventional land-based nuclear projects.

<https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/explained-why-russia-has-built-a-floating-nuclear-plant-why-some-are-nervous-6003209/>

Everything You Wanted to Know About Russia’s Nuclear Weapons and Strategy Class is now in session.

Tom Nichols, The National Interest, September 18, 2019

Americans don’t think very much about nuclear weapons, and they certainly don’t think very often about their own arsenal, at least until something goes wrong with it, like the recent scandals involving the U.S. ICBM force. The Obama administration completed a nuclear posture review in 2010, a

document that supposedly lays out the purpose and future of the U.S. nuclear arsenal. Like previous U.S. reviews conducted in 1994 and 2002, it sank without a trace. The fact of the matter is that nuclear weapons and their mission simply do not matter much to post-Cold War American leaders. Nuclear weapons, however, certainly matter to the Russians.

Nuclear arms have always been the source of superpower status for both Soviet and Russian leaders. This is especially true today: the Soviet collapse left the Russian Federation a country bereft of the usual indicators of a great power, including conventional military force or the ability to project it. Little wonder that Moscow still relies on its nuclear arsenal as one of the last vestiges of its right to be considered more than merely—in President Obama’s dismissive words—a “regional power.” (Or in the caustic words of Senator John McCain: “A gas station masquerading as a country.”) Today, nuclear weapons have retained not only their pride of place but an actual role in Russian military planning. Unlike the Americans, who see little use for nuclear weapons in the absence of the Soviet threat, the Russians—wisely or not—continue to think about nuclear arms as though they are useful in military conflicts, even the smallest. Some of this might only be the bluster of officers who have never overcome their Soviet training, but some of it is also clearly based on the Russian General Staff’s understanding of Russia’s military weakness against far superior adversaries, including the United States and NATO.

<https://nationalinterest.org/blog/buzz/everything-you-wanted-know-about-russias-nuclear-weapons-and-strategy-81476>

Russia’s Planned 85,000 Ton Aircraft Carrier Was Enormous

Paul Richard Huard, National Interest Blog, September 20, 2019

As a great power, Russia thought it deserved a great aircraft carrier. Had she ever sailed, the Soviet supercarrier *Ulyanovsk* would have been a naval behemoth more than 1,000 feet

long, with an 85,000-ton displacement and enough storage to carry an air group of up to 70 fixed and rotary wing aircraft. With a nuclear-powered engine—and working in conjunction with other Soviet surface warfare vessels and submarines—the supercarrier would have steamed through the oceans with a purpose.

<https://nationalinterest.org/blog/buzz/russias-planned-85000-ton-aircraft-carrier-was-enormous-81651>

Russia and America Wanted ‘Nuclear Reactors’ with Wings

Caleb Larson, National Interest Blog, September 21, 2019

The 1950s and 1960s were the United States’ and Soviet Union’s nuclear heyday. Unlocking the power of the atom was supposed to usher in a new era in human achievement. In many ways, it did—harnessing nuclear power offered nearly unlimited energy to countries in the exclusive nuclear club. But could the nuclear age transform aviation as well? The United States and USSR certainly thought so. Meet the Tu-95LAL and the Convair NB-36H—both of which carried onboard nuclear reactors.

<https://nationalinterest.org/blog/buzz/russia-and-america-wanted-nuclear-reactors-wings-82496>

Three Mile Island’s recent closure shows what people don’t realize about nuclear power

New York Post, September 22, 2019

Did you know that the Three Mile Island nuclear plant only shut down last Friday? Just like the coming closure of New York’s Indian Point plant, it’s bad news in the drive to reduce carbon emissions. The 1979 partial meltdown at TMI’s Unit Two is infamous as “America’s worst nuclear disaster,” often listed along with Russia’s Chernobyl and Japan’s Fukushima disasters. But it’s a not-so-bad “worst” when you learn that Unit One was completely undamaged, and indeed could have chugged along for another 15 years.

What prompted the Pennsylvania plant’s early shutdown? Abundant, cheap natural gas — thanks to fracking, which has been a huge boon to the Keystone State’s economy. So cheap that the nuclear power wasn’t cost-competitive without a subsidy from the state.

<https://nypost.com/2019/09/22/three-mile-islands-recent-closure-shows-what-people-dont-realize-about-nuclear-power/>

See This Strange Tank? It Was Russia’s Plan to Fight Tank Battles During a Nuclear War

Robert Beckhusen, National Interest Blog, September 25, 2019

Nuclear war and tanks are not exactly a winning combo. In a war that never happened, formations of heavy and rather odd-looking Soviet tanks would have powered through atomic explosions in breakthrough attacks into West Germany. Enter the Object 279 tank, a curious oddity from the late 1950s which was obsolete — despite its design principles deliberately reflecting the fear of a nuclear battlefield — by the time it was produced.

<https://nationalinterest.org/blog/buzz/see-strange-tank-it-was-russias-plan-fight-tank-battles-during-nuclear-war-83211>

West Asia

Iran

Rouhani: If U.S. seeks talks with Iran, ‘it must create the needed conditions’

Tehran Times, September 25, 2019

In an interview with Fox News aired on Tuesday, President Hassan Rouhani said if the U.S. administration is really seeking dialogue with Iran “it must create the needed conditions.” Iran has been insisting that the only path to negotiations between Tehran and Washington is that the United States must lift all the sanctions that it has illegally and unilaterally imposed on Iran. Rouhani said U.S. President Donald Trump has put away trust when he was

asked about a potential meeting in New York. Rouhani is in New York to attend the 74th UN General Assembly.

He said, "Why would we bump into one another? If we seek to pursue higher goals to benefit both countries, both people, it must be planned, and talks must be based on those plans." Rouhani continued, "Well, once we carried on negotiations with the United States of America for two years, and during a 17-day period, the foreign minister of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the U.S. Secretary of State had continuous talks without returning to their countries.

<https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/440498/Rouhani-If-U-S-seeks-talks-with-Iran-it-must-create-the-needed>

Does Merkel follow Trump's footsteps on Iran?

Tehran Times, September 27, 2019

It was Angela Merkel's first meeting with an Iranian president as she had avoided such meetings since coming to office in 2005. German media had attributed Merkel's reluctance to meet Iranian officials to what they described as Iran's international and regional stances, including its policy towards Israel. The meeting came shortly after more signs emerged pointing to collapse of the 2015 nuclear deal with Iran. Germany, France and the UK joined the U.S. in blaming Iran for the September 14 attacks on Saudi Arabia's key oil plants which Yemeni Houthis claimed responsibility.

In a joint statement they also said they continue to support the 2015 nuclear deal with Iran but they added the time has come for Iran to start talks on a longer-term, more comprehensive agreement dealing with Iran's nuclear program, its regional and missile program, just as Donald Trump's administration has pushed.

The statement drew a strong condemnation from Iran and Iran's Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif responded that Britain, France and Germany's "paralysis in fulfilling their obligations w/o US permission has been clear since May 2018," when Washington withdrew from the

accord. "No new deal before compliance w/ current one," Zarif wrote on his Twitter account. Following the meeting with the Iranian president, Merkel said Iran's demands for U.S. sanctions relief were "unrealistic". "I would welcome it if it came to talks between the United States and Iran but it won't work that all sanctions are first taken off the table and then there are talks. I think that is not realistic," Merkel said on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly.

<https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/440533/Does-Merkel-follow-Trump-s-footsteps-on-Iran>

The Mossad Spy Chief Who Stole Iran's Secret Nuclear Archives #1: Yossi Cohen

Yonah Jeremy Bob, Jerusalem Post, September 29, 2019

It was not the first time Mossad director Yossi Cohen took the elevator up to the CIA director's office on the seventh floor of the building known as Langley. But this meeting in March 2018 was different. This was not a regular courtesy call. Cohen was about to update one of his closest allies – CIA director Mike Pompeo – with information that had the potential to change the world and the course of history. In his three-and-a-half years as the Mossad's spy chief, Cohen, 58, has transformed the organization into a hard-hitting, risk-taking, history-altering machine.

This applies to the Iran arena, to hunting down Hamas's weapons development, and to convincing African nations as well as Sunni Arab states to go more public about their ties with Israel. He is the gutsy spy who personally ordered and managed the Mossad's daring raid to steal Iran's secret nuclear archives from the heart of Tehran in January 2018. His meeting with Pompeo two months later, but before anything was publicly revealed, was to update him on what the Mossad had found.

<https://www.jpost.com/Israel-News/Yossi-Cohen-The-Mossad-spy-chief-who-stole-Irans-secret-nuclear-archives-602811>

East Asia

Ian Easton On Taiwan: Why the US defends Taiwan

Taipei Times, September 24, 2019

Presidents Richard Nixon, Jimmy Carter, and Ronald Reagan cut deals with Beijing at the expense of Taipei. The result was the three US-PRC communiqués. To their credit, George W. Bush and Barack Obama avoided the pitfall of signing a fourth communiqué. 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.

It is not clear what the president's advisors told him. What is clear is that Trump subsequently signed the landmark Taiwan Travel Act, sent Marines to guard the AIT (the de facto American Embassy in Taipei), and personally approved a historic sale of new F-16 jet fighters to the island. By all accounts, US-Taiwan relations have never been better than they are now, and they are likely to get better still in the years ahead. This has all happened despite a massive Chinese influence and intimidation campaign. So, why does the United States government, even in one of its most idiosyncratic leadership moments, continue to consider Taiwan's future worth fighting for? At this point, we can only guess what President Trump really thinks about Taiwan. He has yet to address the public on this issue. But if actions speak louder than words (and tweets), then he must see tremendous value in this island democracy. What follows are six reasons why any American president should think defending

Taiwan is in the best interest of the United States.

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

OPCON transfer

Korea Herald, September 19, 2019 - 16:56

Retired South Korean generals recently proposed delaying the country's retaking of wartime operational control of its troops from the US and relocation of the South Korea-US Combined Forces Command's headquarters until North Korea's denuclearization is completed. Confirming the proposal had been made to Cheong Wa Dae, a presidential spokesperson said Monday that it was "just one of many opinions." But the view expressed by nearly all former generals who served as deputy CFC commanders is not something to be ignored.

Seoul and Washington are now eyeing 2022 as the target year for OPCON transfer, which calls for a South Korean general to command the CFC with a US general taking a supportive role. The two allies have also tentatively agreed to relocate the CFC headquarters in central Seoul to a sprawling US military complex in Pyeongtaek, Gyeonggi Province, 65 kilometers south of Seoul, by 2021.

http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20190919000299&ACE_SEARCH=1

Appeasing North Korea

Donald Kirk, Korea Times, September 19, 2019

Moon is not inclined to do more for them and might even like to do less while hoping for ever more contact with the North. It's out of the question that he would openly talk about North Korea's horrendous human rights violations, the quickest way to trigger a volley of denunciations in the North Korean media. Moon's reluctance to stand up against Kim Jong-un carries risks for his own political future. The chasm between right and left in South Korea is deepening in the wake of his

insistence on appointing a justice minister for whom he has a deep affection dating back to their days as dissidents fighting conservative governments. Cries for the ouster of the new minister after his wife's indictment for forging a certificate for her daughter, amid reports of financial shenanigans, are going to intensify in the run-up to National Assembly elections in April, the first and best test of Moon's power.

Through it all, South Korea should remain a safe haven for those fleeing the North. South Korean negotiators, in talks with the North Koreans, should be reminding them of the South's policy of protecting and shielding North Koreans who get to the South. The South Koreans should also never stop demanding that China view defectors as victims of the North's inhumane policies rather than as economic migrants. Moon may be less inclined to talk about refugee issues with the Chinese than he is with the North Koreans. He counts on China's President Xi Jinping to restrain Kim to encourage North-South talks and also another summit between Kim and President Donald Trump. It is also essential that China make a show of enforcing UN sanctions against North Korea as a brake on Kim's ambitions even though the Chinese go on providing the North with almost all its oil and much of its food while buying North Korean coal and other products.

Moon's policy of appeasement of North Korea is not likely to produce substantive results. For sure Kim is not giving up his nuclear program. There is no excuse for South Korea to stop welcoming refugees from the North, for not doing all possible to integrate them into life in South Korea and to make certain they have resources on which to fall back in hard times.

http://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/opinion/2019/09/137_275733.html

Opposing China's 'hybrid warfare'

Shawn Chen, Taipei Times, September 21, 2019

The Institute for National Defense and Security Research, the Ministry of National Defense's think tank, published an article in

the Chinese-language Defense Situation Monthly on Aug. 30 about the government's proposed legislative amendments to bar Chinese Communist Party (CCP) agents. The article indicated that China has been gaining a lot of attention in the past few years by using "sharp power" to infiltrate and divide democratic societies. In response, the US, Australia and other nations have enhanced or formulated new laws against foreign agents and infiltration.

Thanks to the rapid development of mass media and telecommunications technologies, the leaders of the aggressor and the opposition can influence people's awareness and the collective subconscious more effectively to trigger large-scale disturbances, illegal conduct and clandestine destructive actions. The most prominent characteristic of hybrid warfare is that the aggressor uses all available resources – technology, capital and personnel – to launch an invasive war. The goal is to bring about the collapse of the enemy state from within and destroy its military and economic potential through continuous psychological warfare aimed at achieving the greatest possible effect, seeking to achieve political goals with as little military involvement as possible. These tactics go beyond military occupation. In Taiwan, the fifth column consists of minor political parties that have fallen victim to China's "united front" tactics, such as the New Party and the China Unification Promotion Party, and other organizations affiliated with the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), such as the Concentric Patriotism Association and the dismantled CCP shrine in Changhua County's Ershuei Township.

<http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/editorials/archives/2019/09/21/2003722647>

Fruitless trip

Korea Herald, September 26, 2019

President Moon Jae-in's latest trip to the US for the UN General Assembly ended with no results to speak of. His calls for peace with North Korea sounded hollow and naive. His summit with US President

Donald Trump, held on the sidelines of the assembly in New York on Monday, was pointless. "Both leaders evaluated North Korea's will to resume dialogue positively, and reaffirmed that the spirit of the agreements of the US-North Korea Singapore summit is still valid," Cheong Wa Dae spokesperson Ko Min-jung said.

There was reportedly no mention of Trump's "new method" to break the deadlock in nuclear talks with the North. Before the summit, the words caused concern that Washington might accept Pyongyang's demands for considerable sanctions relief in exchange for the dismantlement of its old nuclear facilities in Yongbyon, while leaving its atomic bombs unaddressed. There was no concrete talk, either, about security guarantees for the current North Korean regime. There was no mention of Seoul's decision to terminate the General Security of Military Information Agreement with Japan, a bilateral accord on sharing military intelligence mostly on North Korea. Washington had expressed its strong dissatisfaction with the decision, denouncing the Moon administration for trying to knock down a military cooperation channel among the US, South Korea and Japan. If there was one meaningful statement at the summit, it was that "sanctions must be maintained."

http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20190926000585&ACE_SEARCH=1

Misc/World

IAEA and ASEAN strengthen cooperation

World Nuclear News, September 16, 2019

The use of nuclear science and technology for peaceful purposes is to become more widespread in Southeast Asia following the signing today of Practical Arrangements between the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). These Arrangements set out a framework for cooperation in areas of nuclear science, technology and applications, as well as of nuclear safety, security and safeguards, for a period of five years. They envisage that

the IAEA and ASEAN work together to develop and implement projects and research activities, exchange information and share experiences and best practices, and cooperate on training and capacity-building projects, including fellowships, scientific visits and expert missions.

"The Arrangements substantially broaden the areas of cooperation between our two organisations, including on the promotion of peaceful uses of nuclear science and technology," said Feruta. "They not only include policymakers and nuclear regulators who deal with nuclear safety, security and safeguards but also stakeholders from national and regional institutions working on social and social development in Southeast Asia."

<https://www.world-nuclear-news.org/Articles/IAEA-and-ASEAN-strengthen-cooperation>

IAEA Concludes Long Term Operational Safety Review at South Africa's Koeberg Nuclear Power Plant

International Atomic Energy Agency, September 16, 2019

An International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) team of experts has completed a review of long term operational safety at the Koeberg Nuclear Power Plant (NPP) in South Africa. The Pre-SALTO (Safety Aspects of Long Term Operation) review mission was requested by the Government of South Africa's Department of Energy.

Koeberg is South Africa's only nuclear power plant. It consists of two units and is operated by the public utility Eskom. Unit 1 went into commercial operation in 1984 and Unit 2 in 1985. Eskom is planning to extend operation of the units by 20 years for a total operational lifetime of 60 years each. The plant is currently carrying out a Periodic Safety Review to identify safety improvements for the Long Term Operation (LTO) period.

<https://www.iaea.org/newscenter/pressreleases/iaea-concludes-long-term-operational-safety-review-at-south-africas-koeberg-nuclear-power-plant>

5 Terrible Ways That a Nuclear War Might Actually Happen

Tom Nichols, National Interest Blog, September 18, 2019

Of course, nuclear war is extremely unlikely. Although the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists has placed the hands of its famous clock at five minutes to midnight, that doesn't mean very much and never has. The fact of the matter is that world nuclear inventories, led by reductions in the United States and Russia, have never been lower, and none of the major powers expects a nuclear conflict in the way they did during the Cold War. To crib a line from Captain Jack Sparrow, however, nuclear war is not impossible, it's improbable, and a nuclear war could take place in more ways than you might think, sparked by any number of occurrences from a pure accident to an intentional strike.

A small regional war, awful as it would be, would not destroy the United States nor threaten the end of the human race. A nuclear conflict of any serious size in the Northern Hemisphere, however, would effectively mean the end of the modern era. Further human progress would be subordinated to the basic needs of survival for years, if not decades, to come. A war between India and Pakistan would kill millions and pollute the earth for an eternity. But it would not threaten to bring the entire global system to a halt, or potentially lead to the release of thousands of warheads against hundreds of cities across the globe, the "unthinkable" war for which Americans spent decades preparing, and for which we still maintain an arsenal of strategic weapons deliverable by air, land, and sea.

<https://nationalinterest.org/blog/buzz/5-terrible-ways-nuclear-war-might-actually-happen-81471>

KAERI becomes Asia's 1st IAEA-designated research center

Baek Byung-yeul, Korea Times, September 18, 2019

The Korea Atomic Energy Research Institute (KAERI) has been designated as a research center of the International Atomic Energy

Agency (IAEA), the first of its kind in the Asia-Pacific region, the state-run institute. KAERI said it was chosen for the IAEA's International Centres based on Research Reactors (ICERR) program on the sidelines of the international nuclear energy control body's 63rd general conference held in Vienna, Tuesday (local time).

The ICERR program was launched in 2014 to provide scientists with access to research reactor infrastructure and opportunities to carry out nuclear research. With the designation, KAERI will be able to offer a wide range of nuclear science facilities including its High-flux Advanced Neutron Application Reactor (HANARO) and education and training activities in nuclear science to researchers from IAEA members.

The IAES recognized the advancement of the HANARO saying the reactor "was a highly versatile research reactor which can be used for applications ranging from neutron activation analysis to the testing of new nuclear fuel types." "The ICERR scheme is designed to foster international cooperation and contribute to capacity-building by facilitating access to world-class research reactors and associated facilities," said Cornel Feruta, acting director general of the IAEA.

http://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/tech/2019/09/129_275759.html

NICE Future Initiative encourages integrated approach

World Nuclear News, September 18, 2019

Nuclear and renewable generation should be used in combination to make the most of their synergies in integrated systems to help the world meet carbon reduction goals and limit temperature rise, leaders from governmental and non-governmental organisations and industry said yesterday. Innovative nuclear technologies will play their part in integrated systems alongside renewables, with combined uses of heat and power, hydrogen production, desalination and industrial decarbonisation.

Nuclear Energy in Clean Energy Solutions - Telling our Story was hosted by NICE

Future at the 63rd IAEA General Conference in Vienna. The initiative - the name stands for Nuclear Innovation: Clean Energy Future - was launched in May 2018 at the 9th Clean Energy Ministerial in Denmark with the aim of ensuring nuclear energy is included in the forum's discussions about innovation and advanced clean energy systems of the future. The initiative, now in its second year, will encourage a vision for new, clean and reliable energy solutions for the near and long term.

The Flexible Nuclear Campaign, which has now been launched as part of the NICE Future initiative, aims to share experiences, provide role models and communicate the performance requirements for integrated systems of nuclear alongside renewables, session chair and US Department of Energy Office of Nuclear Energy Senior Advisor Suzie Jaworowski said. They discussed the role that small modular reactors (SMRs) in particular could potentially play in integrated systems that also make full use of the technology's attributes for non-electricity generation applications, such as desalination, hydrogen generation, and the decarbonisation of industrial processes.

<https://www.world-nuclear-news.org/Articles/NICE-Future-Initiative-encourages-integrated-appro>

Uganda says Russia to help it develop nuclear energy

Reuters, September 18, 2019

Uganda said on Wednesday it had signed an Inter-Governmental Agreement (IGA) with Russia to help the East African country build capacity to exploit nuclear technology for energy, medical and other peaceful purposes. The government of President Yoweri Museveni has previously said it is eager to use the country's uranium deposits to boost energy production capacity.

In May last year Uganda also signed a memorandum of understanding with China National Nuclear Corporation (CNNC) to help Uganda build capacity in the use of atomic energy for peaceful purposes.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-uganda-russia/uganda-says-russia-to-help-it-develop-nuclear-energy-idUSKBN1W328N>

New nuclear countries face integrated challenges

World Nuclear News, September 19, 2019

Spotlight on emerging and expanding nuclear countries, a side event to the 63rd IAEA General Conference in Vienna, was organised by Brazil with the support of World Nuclear Association. The event provided a forum for discussion by a panel of speakers drawn from the nuclear industry, governments and international organisations.

The event was opened by Brazil's Ambassador Marcel Fortuna Biato, President of Brazil's National Commission for Nuclear Energy (CNEN) Paulo Roberto Pertusi, International Atomic Energy Agency Deputy Director General Mikhail Chudakov, and World Nuclear Association Director General Agneta Rising. Chudakov said the event was "timely" for the sharing of experience as the world stands at a crossroads, with scientists warning of the consequences of global warming at the same time as energy demands are increasing. Nuclear energy was a reliable and sustainable source of energy, but a national programme required careful planning and a deep understanding and commitment to ensuring safety in operation, he said.

<https://www.world-nuclear-news.org/Articles/New-nuclear-countries-face-integrated-challenges>

Dynamic contracted for ITER Tokamak Assembly

World Nuclear News, September 30, 2019

The ITER Organisation is coordinating the construction of the International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor at Cadarache. This is a major international project to build a 500 MW tokamak fusion device (requiring an input of 50 MW) designed to prove the feasibility of fusion as a large-scale and carbon-free source of energy. The European Union is contributing almost half of the cost of its construction, while the other six members (China, India, Japan, South Korea, Russia and the USA) are contributing equally to the rest.

The TAC2 work will include complex lifting, positioning, welding and inspection of components and sub-systems such as the toroidal field coils, vacuum vessel sectors, thermal shields and ports, first in the Assembly Hall and then in the central Tokamak Pit.

<https://www.world-nuclear-news.org/Articles/Dynamic-contracted-for-ITER-Tokamak-Assembly>

Experts from Korea, Kazakhstan shed light on denuclearization

Kim Bo-gyung, Korea Herald, September 30, 2019

Defense and nuclear experts from South Korea and Kazakhstan shed light on Kazakhstan's denuclearization process in the 1990s as a reference for North Korea's denuclearization, experts said. "North Korea's denuclearization negotiation seemed to have hit a phase of stagnation, but recently there are signs of hope of reviving the talks," said Lee Geun, president of the Korea Foundation, in the opening remarks at the second Korea-Kazakhstan Denuclearization Forum in central Seoul last week. "You may know Kazakhstan is South Korea's strategic partner across sectors, including politics, economy and culture. We expect the serious 'denuclearization' issue to strengthen the relations of the two countries," Lee added.

The Korea Foundation and the Foundation of the First President of the Republic of Kazakhstan-Elbasy jointly hosted the forum, a follow-up to an earlier forum held in April in Kazakhstan, to exchange in-depth opinions on the role of Kazakhstan in North Korea's denuclearization and the future of denuclearization on the Korean Peninsula.

http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20190930000892&ACE_SEARCH=1

Think Tanks

Optimizing IAEA Assistance: Consolidated Plan for Safety Presented at IAEA General Conference

Laura Gill, International Atomic Energy Agency, September 18, 2019

A new, consolidated approach developed by the IAEA will streamline the Agency's support to countries in the field of nuclear safety. The Consolidated Plan for Safety was presented today during the Sixth Global Nuclear Safety and Security Network (GNSSN) Plenary Meeting, on the sidelines of the IAEA 63rd General Conference. The Consolidated Plan for Safety, or CPS, will help the IAEA and its Member States address challenges more efficiently and comprehensively, consolidating efforts and stakeholders that, in the past, coexisted separately.

<https://www.iaea.org/newscenter/news/optimizing-iaea-assistance-consolidated-plan-for-safety-presented-at-iaea-general-conference>

How Trump Can Escape His Iran Jam

Aaran David Miller, Steven Simon, Richard Sokolsky

Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, September 24, 2019

President Donald Trump has no good options with Iran in response to its recent strikes on critical Saudi oil facilities. The choices, thanks to his administration's diplomatic malpractice and campaign of maximum pressure, range from very bad to worse: Not responding forcefully gives some administration officials a severe case of reputational anxiety; in their telling, America will be exposed as a paper tiger if it fails to stand up to Iranian aggression and defend its regional partners. But a direct U.S. military strike against Iran would be infinitely worse because it would be untethered from any viable strategy to deter Iran from further attacks and could easily spiral out of control. The three of us

spent a combined total of 80 years working in government on U.S. Middle East policy.

We are, therefore, acutely aware of the U.S. obsession with maintaining its credibility by being tough. But it's our conviction that the only way out of this mess—if indeed there is one—is through negotiations, however poor their current prospects. If the U.S. and Iran can't find a way to climb down from the ladder of escalation they're on, the situation with Iran will likely go from really bad to a lot worse. Aaron David Miller is a senior fellow at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, focusing on U.S. foreign policy.

<https://carnegieendowment.org/2019/09/24/how-trump-can-escape-his-iran-jam-pub-79912>

Much Ado About India's No-first-use Nuke Policy

Toby Dalton, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, September 26, 2019

Indian Defence Minister Rajnath Singh made headlines in August when he appeared to nullify India's nuclear weapons no first use (NFU) policy. "Till today, our nuclear policy is 'no first use'. What happens in future depends on the circumstances," he said. In the context of Prime Minister Modi's effort to project a more muscular image, Singh's comments played well among Indian hawks. Internationally, however, a more aggressive Indian nuclear policy is raising concerns anew about nuclear conflict in South Asia.

An NFU policy essentially constitutes a promise, backed by a survivable nuclear arsenal, to only use nuclear weapons in response to a nuclear attack. The logic is simple and effective: you don't nuke me, and I won't nuke you. India and China both have declared no-first-use policies, whereas Pakistan and the United States, among others, do not rule out the first use of nuclear weapons in a conflict.

<https://carnegieendowment.org/2019/09/26/much-ado-about-india-s-no-first-use-nuke-policy-pub-79952>

In other news: climate crisis, chemical weapons, nuclear brinksmanship, etc.

Thomas Gaulkin, Bulletin of Atomic Scientists, September 27, 2019

The UN General Assembly opened its 74th session this week with the usual marathon of speeches by world leaders and meetings on issues ranging from climate change to the elimination of nuclear weapons. But in case you somehow missed it, the big news capturing most of the nation's attention this week are the revelations about Donald Trump's potentially incriminating call with the Ukrainian president, Volodymyr Zelenskyy. Nancy Pelosi's move to open an impeachment inquiry into the matter effectively preempted Trump's speech to the General Assembly on Tuesday.

Given the media frenzy around these developments, you might have also missed some other stories this week from around the UN meeting that would likely be making bigger headlines if they weren't competing with the possible upending of the American presidency. Here are just a few items worthy of your attention:

<https://thebulletin.org/2019/09/in-other-news-climate-crisis-chemical-weapons-nuclear-brinksmanship-etc/>

Interviews and Original Documents

Iran-related Designations; Issuance of Iran-related Frequently Asked Question

U.S. Department of the Treasury, Office Of Foreign Assets Control, September 25, 2019

Today, the Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) is publishing a new FAQ relating to a determination by the Secretary of State that COSCO Shipping Tanker (Dalian) Co. and COSCO Shipping Tanker (Dalian) Seaman & Ship Management Co. met the criteria for the imposition of sanctions under E.O. 13846. In addition, OFAC has updated its Specially Designated

Nationals (SDN) List with the information below. The following individuals have been added to OFAC's SDN List: LI, Yi (Chinese Simplified: NgUY),

<https://www.treasury.gov/resource-center/sanctions/OFAC-Enforcement/Pages/20190925.aspx>

Iran-related Designations; Counter Designations

U.S. Department of the Treasury, Office Of Foreign Assets Control, September 25, 2019

The following entities have been added to OFAC's SDN List: ETEMAD TEJARATE PARS CO., No. 101 Sohrevardi St., Tehran, Iran; Additional Sanctions Information - Subject to Secondary Sanctions [SDGT] (Linked To: MINISTRY OF DEFENSE AND ARMED FORCES LOGISTICS). NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND OF IRAN (a.k.a. NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND OF ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN (Arabic: *Īnā'P ÊæÓÚā āāĭ ĪāāæÑĪ ÇÓáÇāĭ ÇĪÑÇä*)), No. 25 Gandhi St., Building National Development Fund of Iran, Tehran 15176-55911, Iran; Additional Sanctions Information - Subject to Secondary Sanctions

<https://www.treasury.gov/resource-center/sanctions/OFAC-Enforcement/Pages/20190920.aspx>

Sanctions are war, Zarif says

Tehran Times, September 24, 2019

Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif has said that the United States' sanctions on Iran are "war".

Q: You have said there is possibility of all-out war. Can you expand on that?

A: Well, I said if there is an attack on Iran, there will be an all-out war. But I am trying as a diplomat and I think every other diplomat including my American counterpart should be trying the same to avoid war. This is our job.

Q: And do you think that war is in the edge? You smell war or you smell a retreat from a military offensive?

A: Well, I do not call it a retreat. I want to call it prudence and I hope that prudence

will prevail. Accusations will not be conducive to a solution in our region. There is a war that has been going on for four and half years in Yemen.

Q: The UAE is actually pulling back.

A: The UAE is sort of hedging, but they are moving in the right direction. We hope that Saudis will also understand. Nobody wants a humiliating situation for anybody because that is not sustainable. We want a situation where everybody feels that they have won.

Q: I know, because you have been doing a lot of interviews and you have denied point blank that Iran was responsible either for the tankers in June, July or for the Saudi oil fields. Are you just going to say it again despite the evidence?

A: There is no evidence. And it would be a miracle to produce evidence, because it did not take place. Had we been behind this, it would have been disaster for Saudi Arabia. Nothing that they could have been repaired. The reason I am taking this to Yemen is because it is Yemen. It is the Yemeni war. "Very few people are not ready to say that the most sophisticated American weaponry has been defeated by the Yemenis." **Q:** Do you think Yemenis did it? They said they did it.

Q: They said it but very few people believe it.

A: Because very few people are not ready to say that the most sophisticated American weaponry has been defeated by the Yemenis.

Q: You say you did not do it. I want to react to some of the statements coming from Iran. One of your top commanders in response to all of this has made threats to the United States and to the U.S. bases within range. Why would they making threats if they are not engaged in this kind of offensive action or you might call it defensive?

A: Because the United States has threatened to use force against Iran. This is the practice of the United States to say

all military options are on the table. Secretary Pompeo was the first which is absolutely incredible for a diplomat to make an accusation against Iran hours after the incident in Saudi Arabia. I have said it too. We have said it in a note to the United States that if the United States starts a war, it will not be the one ending it. We won't start a war. I can promise you that our military will not start a war. But we are very clear that if we are attacked, we will defend ourselves and there will not be a limited war.

Q: Another one of your commanders seem to be taunting the United States, saying the U.S. essentially nothing yet, we still have so many cards on the table. Again this statement seems to suggest that if it is not your government, maybe the revolutionary guards or hardliners are in fact to take on the U.S., Saudi Arabia?

A: That is their job. If our country is attacked, then they have to defend the country. And the threat is coming from the United States. So, we have to respond to the threat.

Q: Do you think that there's a new opportunity for diplomacy?

A: I always have to believe as a diplomat that there is new opportunities for diplomacy. I think what is important is to stop terrorizing the people of Iran through sanctions that are targeting the people of Iran. Sanctions that have been targeting food and medicine of the people of Iran. So, if the United States is serious about its offers of diplomacy, they would not have taken measures that they took the day before yesterday. Putting our central bank under new sanctions. Because as you know our central bank has been under sanctions for over a year.

Q: But the United States feels that it's either sanctions or war.

Sanctions are war. Because in a war, usually military targets are chosen. In sanctions, civilians are the targets. So, it's war. It's more than war. Let me go and address the United

States' saying that they want negotiations. The re-designation of our central bank has made it almost impossible for the United States to remove the central bank from the list. That means that not only this president but even the next president are boxed in this scenario of perpetual hostility against Iran. So, what is it to negotiate about if this president is incapable of undoing something that he did the day before yesterday?

Q: Foreign Minister, are you saying that there's a plan afoot to close the doors to negotiation by the U.S. president?

A: I think the only reason they re-designate our central bank is to make it impossible or very difficult for this president or his successor to remove their name from the list. The war is very high now and I think those who propose to President Trump wanted to close the door to negotiations not during his presidency but even after his presidency.

Q: So, let's just sort of take that piece by piece. I just first want to ask you one thing about the president having said that they were going to respond militarily and then calling it off at the last moment. In public, alongside Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, he floated this notion back then that it wasn't an order from the government, that this was a commander who shot down the drone. He was trying to say that this was a stupid act. I'm not going to respond to it because I bet it wasn't the government's intention. Was it the government's intention to shoot down that drone?

A: The government does not take a decision on a case by case basis because we don't have time to make a decision. You need to have a general order to the military person sitting in front of the missile system or behind it, depending on how you want to shoot it.

<https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/440485/Sanctions-are-war-Zarif-says>

U.S. Iran policy unlikely to change dramatically with Bolton ouster: Jahanpour

Javad Heirannia, Tehran Times, September 18, 2019

Professor Farhang Jahanpour, a part-time tutor on Middle Eastern affairs in the Department of Continuing Education at the University of Oxford, says “although Bolton led the most extreme stance against Iran in the Trump administration, he certainly was not the only person to hold such views towards Iran.”

Jahanpour, who was also a senior research scholar at Harvard University, argues that “U.S. policy towards Iran is not likely to change very much as the result of Bolton’s dismissal.”

Following is the full text of the interview:

Q: What is your assessment of John Bolton’s dismissal? Will the militant faction become a minority with his removal?

A: As is well-known, John Bolton was one of the most hawkish officials in the current U.S. administration. Even under President George W. Bush when the 9/11 attacks had created a strong feeling of nationalism and the desire for vengeance against the perpetrators of that crime, the U.S. Congress refused to ratify Bolton’s nomination as U.S. ambassador to the United Nations and he was appointed for a short time to that post during recess.

Bolton never saw a war that he did not like and he always pursued very hostile policies not only towards Iran but also towards China, Russia, North Korea, and even the European Union. His main policy was “bomb first, ask questions later.” He was the man who led the disastrous failed coup against President Nicolas Maduro of Venezuela, which greatly embarrassed the U.S. administration, while probably strengthening President Maduro.

Bolton sabotaged the nuclear deal with North Korea by saying that the only satisfactory deal would be one based on the

Libyan model (where Colonel Qadhafi got rid of his rudimentary nuclear program and was then attacked and killed). In an op-ed that Bolton penned in the Wall Street Journal in February 2018, entitled “The Legal Case for Striking North Korea First”, he argued that the threat from North Korea was imminent and the United States had to launch a preventive war before it was too late.

He was apparently the main force behind the cancellation of the landmark INF (Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces) Treaty, which had been signed by President Reagan and President Gorbachev and had prevented the two superpowers from developing intermediate-range nuclear weapons which would have made nuclear war more likely, with Europe being caught in the middle. The cancellation of that treaty has made the world a much more dangerous place.

The final straw was his hawkish stance towards Afghanistan and the Taliban. U.S. forces have been fighting in Afghanistan for 18 years with tens of thousands killed on both sides at a cost of over one trillion dollars. The result of all that sacrifice is that the Taliban is resurgent, occupying more than half of the country. If that war continues for another 18 years the situation will be the same or worse. It is clear that there is no military solution to the Afghan tragedy. President Trump’s instinct was to withdraw U.S. forces and to reach some sort of the deal with the Taliban, something that Bolton opposed.

Therefore, he was a very hawkish person with very dangerous extreme views, and his dismissal certainly is a welcome move, but whether his firing will mean that the militant faction will become a minority faction in the Trump administration remains to be seen.

Q: What effect will Bolton’s dismissal have on U.S. policy toward Iran?

A: While Bolton adopted a negative and extremist stance towards many

international issues, he harboured a special hostility towards Iran. His views of Iran mirrored those of Israel and Saudi Arabia, and maybe he was even less realistic than they were in his hostility. In a speech that he gave to the conference of the terrorist organisation, the Mojahedin-e Khalq (MEK), in 2017 he described them as a good alternative to the current Iranian government. He even promised he would celebrate their victory in Tehran with them before the year 2019. Meanwhile, he received tens of thousands of dollars in speaking fees from that organisation (or its backers).

<https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/440265/U-S-Iran-policy-unlikely-to-change-dramatically-with-Bolton>

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