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India

Three-dimensional distribution of molecular & atomic hydrogen in galaxies can give clues to star formation and galaxy evolution

PIB Delhi, May 24, 2021

A scientist has estimated the three-dimensional distribution of molecular and atomic hydrogen in a nearby galaxy which can help lead to clues to the star formation processes and the evolution of the galaxy. Galaxies like the one we reside in, the Milky Way, consist of discs containing stars, molecular and atomic hydrogen, and helium. The molecular hydrogen gas collapses on itself in distinct pockets, forming stars, its temperature was found to be low --close to 10 kelvin, or -263 °C and thickness is about 60 to 240 light-years. The atomic hydrogen extends both above and below the discs. In a new study, a researcher from Raman Research Institute (RRI), Bengaluru, an autonomous organisation of the Department of Science and Technology (DST), Government of India, has carried out mathematical calculations on the computer and used publicly available astronomical data of a nearby galaxy to pin down the ratio of the narrow and diffuse gaseous components. The study, funded by the DST, Government of India, was published in the journal Monthly Notices of the Royal Astronomical Society.

“The molecular hydrogen gas converts to individual stars under the pull of gravity, thus holding clues to the star formation processes and the evolution of the galaxy,” said Narendra Nath Patra, the researcher. If a significant part of the gas extends beyond the thin disc of a few hundred light-years, it may explain why astronomers also observe stars at a few thousand light-years perpendicular to the galactic disc. It is also essential to understand why the gas has two components, he says, and maybe tell-tale signatures of supernovae or exploding stars. The researcher used the observed spectral lines of the CO molecule to infer the three-dimensional distribution of both the narrow disc component and the diffuse component of molecular hydrogen. Estimating how the ratio of the two components varies with the distance away from the centre of the galaxy, he found that the diffuse component makes up about 70 percent of the molecular hydrogen, and this fraction remains roughly constant along the radius of the disc. “This is the first time that such a calculation has been done for any galaxy,” he asserts.

<https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1721281>

Students from universities all over India attend ARIES Training School in Observational Astronomy

PIB Delhi, May 25, 2021

Nearly 100 students from more than 25 universities from all over India were introduced to various topics related to astronomy at an online training programme to develop capacity in the subject. They were taken through subject areas such as telescopes, star formation and evolution, exoplanets, solar physics, galactic and extragalactic astronomy, observing facilities at ARIES, 30-meter telescope project, and Aditya L1 space mission. The 8-day training programme for post-graduate students titled ‘ARIES Training School in Observational Astronomy (ATSOA) – 2021’ included hands-on and demonstration sessions on various astronomical data processing techniques such as photometry, spectroscopy, polarimetry, and machine learning every day. It was conducted by the Aryabhata Research Institute of Observational Sciences (ARIES), an autonomous institute under the Department of Science and Technology (DST) Govt. of India

The demonstration sessions were designed to help the students in getting a better understanding of the concepts covered during the lectures. The students also got to interact with ARIES scientists, post-

doctoral fellows, and research scholars about various opportunities in pursuing astronomy. The present understanding of the Universe depends not only on continuous growth of observational facilities but also on the number of people utilizing the data generated from these facilities. With technological advances, there are numerous operational and upcoming astronomical facilities in different electromagnetic spectrum bands all over the globe and in space. These facilities will be generating huge volumes of data, which require a growing number of researchers to exploit the data and improve the understanding of celestial bodies.

<https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1721649>

China

China successfully launches new ocean observation satellite

Xinhua, May 19, 2021

China sent a new ocean-monitoring satellite on Wednesday into orbit from the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center in northwest China. A Long March-4B rocket carrying the Haiyang-2D (HY-2D) satellite took off at 12:03 p.m. (Beijing Time), according to the launch center. The HY-2D will form a constellation with the HY-2B and HY-2C satellites to build an all-weather and round-the-clock dynamic ocean environment monitoring system of high frequency and medium and large scale.

The constellation will support the country's early warning and prediction of marine disasters, sustainable development and utilization of ocean resources, effective response to global climate change as well as ocean research. The HY-2D was developed by the China Academy of Space Technology, and the carrier rocket by the Shanghai Academy of Spaceflight Technology. Wednesday's launch was the 370th by the Long March rocket series.

http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2021-05/19/c_139955667.htm

Xi, Putin witness groundbreaking of key cooperative nuclear energy projects

Global Times, May 19, 2021

Chinese President Xi Jinping and Russian President Vladimir Putin witnessed via a video link the groundbreaking ceremony of four advanced nuclear reactors powered by Russia's third-generation nuclear technology in China. Observers said on Wednesday that the beginning of construction on the four new nuclear reactors, the biggest China-Russia nuclear energy cooperation project to date, marked a milestone in China-Russia nuclear energy cooperation and was a further proof that the two countries are moving closer in the face of escalating US sanctions and restrictions.

The four nuclear generating units – two at Tianwan Nuclear Power Plant in East China's Jiangsu Province and two at Xudapu Nuclear Plant in Northeast China's Liaoning – have a reported combined power generation output of 37.6 billion kilowatt hours a year upon completion, reducing carbon emissions 30.68 million tons. In 2020, nuclear energy power generation accounted for 4.9 percent of China's total power generation. The event on Wednesday also saw China's fleet of nuclear power reactors approved for or under construction, the world's largest, increasing to 23 from 19. The successful beginning of the construction of the four units demonstrated the major cooperation outcomes in high-end equipment manufacturing and science and technology innovation, and will

help promote and upgrade bilateral cooperation in various sectors, Chinese Foreign Ministry said. China-Russia energy cooperation and energy trade are expected to provide more impetus to the two countries' goal to further increase their bilateral trade. China and Russia have set a goal to lift bilateral trade volume to \$200 billion by 2024.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202105/1223888.shtml>

Xi, Putin witness launch of joint nuclear energy project, high-quality China-Russia cooperation boosted

Xinhua, May 20, 2021

Chinese President Xi Jinping and his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin on Wednesday witnessed the ground-breaking ceremony of a bilateral nuclear energy cooperation project, Tianwan nuclear power plant and Xudapu nuclear power plant, via video link. Xi arrived at the main venue of the Great Hall of the People at around 5:00 p.m. Beijing time and waved to Putin, who had joined in from the main venue of the Kremlin. He Lifeng, vice chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference and head of the National Development and Reform Commission, co-chaired the ceremony with Russian Deputy Prime Minister Alexander Novak.

Heads of relevant departments, local officials and constructor representatives of China and Russia attended the ceremony from the sub-venue of Tianwan nuclear power plant in Lianyungang City, east China's Jiangsu Province, sub-venue of Xudapu nuclear power plant in Huludao City, northeast China's Liaoning Province, and two Russian sub-venues. The heads of the companies of both countries reported on the progress of the project to the two heads of state. Xi and Putin delivered their speeches respectively. Speaking at the ceremony, xi extended congratulations on the launch of the China-Russia nuclear energy cooperation project and paid high respect to the constructors from the two countries. Noting that this year marks the 20th anniversary of the signing of the China-Russia Treaty of Good-Neighborliness and Friendly Cooperation, xi said that he and President Putin have agreed to advance the development of bilateral relations to a higher level and expand the ties to broader fields.

http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2021-05/20/c_139956899.htm

Xi says to build closer community with Pakistan in new era

Xinhua, May 21, 2021

Chinese President Xi Jinping said Friday that he stands ready to work with Pakistani President Arif Alvi to deepen bilateral strategic communication and pragmatic cooperation and promote high quality operation of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor. He made the remarks in an exchange of congratulatory messages with Alvi on the 70th anniversary of the establishment of China Pakistan diplomatic relations. He is willing to join hands with the Pakistani leader to build a closer China-Pakistan community with a shared future in the new era for the benefit of both countries and their people.

http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2021-05/21/c_139960868.htm

President Xi says China supports Iran's reasonable demands on nuclear issue in phone talks

with Rouhani

Global Times, May 24, 2021

Chinese President Xi Jinping spoke on the phone with Iranian president Hassan Rouhani on Mon, reiterating China's support for reasonable demands of the Iranian side concerning nuclear issue and willing to enhance coordination with Iran in safeguarding mutual benefits.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202105/1224337.shtml>

China urged to increase sea-based nuclear deterrent amid US intensified strategic threat

Zhang Hui

Global Times, May 28, 2021

Facing a serious strategic threat from the US, China was urged to increase the number of nuclear weapons, especially its sea-based nuclear deterrent of intercontinental submarine-launched ballistic missiles, to deter potential military action by US warmongers, Chinese military experts said after reports that the US' new defense budget will modernize its nuclear arsenal to deter China. Having a nuclear arsenal appropriate to China's position will help safeguard national security, sovereignty and development interests and establish a more stable and peaceful world order, which will be beneficial for the world, they said.

The US defense budget, set to be sent to Congress on Friday, is expected to include investments in troop readiness, space, and the Pacific Deterrence Initiative aimed at countering China's military existence in the region, and nuclear weapons technology, Reuters reported. However, Chinese military experts believe that US attempts of increasing military deployment in the Indo-Pacific region will not increase returns for the US as most countries in the region will not allow the flames of war initiated by the US to burn themselves. The US would buy ships and jets and develop and test hypersonic weapons and other "next-generation" weapons systems to build capabilities to counter Russia and China. The total national security budget will be \$753 billion, a 1.7 percent increase over the 2021 figure, Reuters said.

Some military experts said China should increase the number of its most advanced intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBM), the DF-41, which has the longest operational range among all Chinese ICBMs. Song said that strengthening sea-based strategic nuclear deterrence is also an important direction for China's future development, as these weapons are better at stealth and secondary nuclear strikes. China could use its most advanced submarine-launched ballistic missile (SLBM) to effectively counter the US threat, Song said. China just commissioned three PLA Navy warships, namely the Changzheng 18, the Dalian and the Hainan, at a naval port in Sanya, South China's Hainan Province in April. Observers identified the Changzheng 18 as a likely Type 09IV nuclear powered strategic ballistic missile submarine.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202105/1224773.shtml>

China maintains 'artificial sun' at 120 million Celsius for over 100 seconds, setting new world record

Yang Kunyi and Shen Weiduo

Global Times, May 28, 2021

China broke the record by keeping the Experimental Advanced Superconducting Tokamak (EAST) by achieving plasma temperature at 120 million Celsius for 101 seconds and 160 million Celsius for 20 seconds, a major step toward the test run of the fusion reactor. The Tokamak device is located at the Hefei Institutes of Physical Science of the Chinese Academy of Sciences. It is designed to replicate the nuclear fusion process that occurs naturally in the sun and starts to provide almost infinite clean energy through controlled nuclear fusion, which is often dubbed the "artificial sun." The achievement broke a previous record of maintaining the plasma temperature at 100 million C for 100 seconds. According to Li Miao, director of the physics department of the Southern University of Science and Technology in Shenzhen, it is a milestone in reaching the goal of keeping the temperature at a stable level for a long time.

"The breakthrough is significant progress, and the ultimate goal should be keeping the temperature at a stable level for a long time," Li told the Global Times, adding that the next milestone might be to maintain the stability for a week or more. Achieving a plasma temperature above 100 million C is one of the key challenges to harness the nuclear fusion. At the end of 2020, South Korea reached 100 million C for 20 seconds. The temperature at the core of the sun is widely believed to be 15 million C, meaning that the plasma at the device's core will be seven times hotter than that of the sun. The energy generated from nuclear fusion is the most reliable and clean energy, Lin Boqiang, director of the China Center for Energy Economics Research at Xiamen University, told the Global Times on Friday, adding that if the technology can be applied commercially, it will have huge economic benefits.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202105/1224755.shtml>

China's cargo craft successfully docks with space station module

Xinhua, May 30, 2021

China's cargo spacecraft Tianzhou-2, carrying supplies, equipment and propellant, successfully docked with the space station core module Tianhe on Sunday, according to the China Manned Space Agency (CMSA). At 5:01 a.m. (Beijing Time), Tianzhou-2 and Tianhe completed computer orchestrated rendezvous and docking. The whole process took approximately eight hours, the CMSA said. The Long March-7 Y3 rocket, carrying Tianzhou-2, blasted off from the Wenchang Spacecraft Launch Site on the coast of the southern island province of Hainan at 8:55 p.m. (Beijing Time). Combined with Tianhe, Tianzhou-2 will replenish Tianhe's propellant. Tests on space application project equipment will also be carried out as planned. China launched its space station core module Tianhe on April 29. The country plans to complete the verification of key technologies and the in-orbit construction of the space station through multiple launches within two years.

http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2021-05/30/c_139978001.htm

Spacewalks planned for Shenzhou missions

China Military Online, May 31, 2021

Astronauts on the upcoming Shenzhou XII mission will engage in spacewalks outside the Tianhe core module of China's Tiangong space station, a key figure in the nation's manned space endeavor said. Yang Liwei, the first Chinese in space and now deputy chief planner of the country's manned space program, told China Central Television on Sunday in Wenchang, Hainan province, that during their three-month journey with Tianhe, two of the three-member crew, whose names have yet to be disclosed, will exit from the core module to examine, maintain or repair equipment.

The astronauts will be launched in June with the Shenzhou XII spacecraft from the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center in northwestern China to dock with the currently unoccupied Tianhe module. Tianhe, the biggest and heaviest spacecraft China has made, was put into a low Earth orbit on April 29 by a Long March 5B heavy-lift rocket, which blasted off at the Wenchang Space

http://english.pladaily.com.cn/view/2021-05/31/content_10041998.htm

Pakistan

Karachi unit 2 inaugurated by Pakistan PM

World Nuclear News, May 21, 2021

The environmental and economic benefits from Pakistan's Karachi nuclear power plant will be "huge" in a country that is particularly vulnerable to climate change, Prime Minister Imran Khan said today as he formally inaugurated the first of two Hualong One unit at the site. Karachi 2 joins the five nuclear power plants already operating under the management of the Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission. Speaking from Islamabad by videolink in a ceremony that also marked the 70th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Pakistan and China, Khan said the plant's 1100 MW of clean energy would "almost double" Pakistan's nuclear power generation.

Karachi unit 3 - which like unit 2 is also an 1100 MW Hualong One unit supplied by China National Nuclear Corporation (CNNC) - is expected to generate electricity early next year, he said. The Karachi units are the first exports of the Hualong One, which is promoted on the international market as HPR1000. "It is worth mentioning here that clean, reliable and affordable power generation will also bring economic benefits to the country," Khan said.

<https://world-nuclear-news.org/Articles/Karachi-unit-2-inaugurated-by-Pakistan-PM>

Pak PM visits nuclear facility, expresses confidence in country's capability to defend itself

India Today, May 30, 2021

Pak PM visits nuclear facility, expresses confidence in the country's ability to defend itself
Imran Khan on Saturday visited a nuclear facility of the Strategic Forces Command, which is responsible for protection of nuclear assets. Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan on Saturday expressed full confidence in the country's nuclear capability to defend itself. Khan visited a nuclear facility of the Strategic Forces Command, which is responsible for protection of nuclear assets. Pakistan is committed to continue working towards the promotion of an environment of peace and stability at the regional and global levels, Khan was quoted as saying by an official statement issued by the prime minister's office.

During the visit, the prime minister was apprised of various facets of Pakistan's Strategic Programme, it said. Khan appreciated and acknowledged the efforts of the scientists and personnel associated with Pakistan's Strategic Programme and "expressed full confidence" in the country's "nuclear capability and protection to strengthen the national defence", the statement said. The visit came a day after Pakistan celebrated "Youm-e-Takbeer" (The day of greatness) to commemorate the nuclear tests it conducted on May 28, 1998 in response to India's Pokhran tests and establishing a "credible minimum nuclear deterrence".

<https://www.indiatoday.in/world/story/pak-pm-confidence-in-country-capability-to-defend-itself-1808561-2021-05-30>

USA

US goal remains complete denuclearization of Korean Peninsula: State Dept.

Yonhap

Korea Herald, May 20, 2021

The United States' goal is to completely denuclearize the Korean Peninsula, a State Department spokesperson said Wednesday, ahead of an upcoming summit this week between the leaders of South Korea and the United States. The summit between President Joe Biden and his South Korean counterpart, Moon Jae-in, is expected to partly focus on ways to bring North Korea back to the negotiating table. "When it comes to DPRK, I can't underscore enough that our goal remains clear -- that our goal is a complete denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula," Jalina Porter, principal deputy spokesperson, said in a telephonic press briefing. DPRK stands for North Korea's official name, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20210520000099&ACE_SEARCH=1

Lifting of US missile restrictions signifies Seoul's missile sovereignty, Washington's China strategy: experts

Yonhap

Korea Herald, May 22, 2021

The full lifting of US restrictions on South Korean missiles is expected to beef up Seoul's defense capabilities by allowing it to secure longer-range missiles that can fly beyond the Korean Peninsula, experts said Saturday. The decision is also seen as part of the US strategy to counter China, and South Korea's deployment of longer-range missiles could bring the country further into the great power game between Washington and Beijing, the experts said.

Following a summit with US President Joe Biden, President Moon Jae-in announced their decision to scrap the bilateral "missile guidelines," which ban South Korea from developing or possessing ballistic missiles with a maximum range greater than 800 kilometers.

http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20210522000103&ACE_SEARCH=1

US, South Korea 'deeply concerned' about North Korea

DW, May 22, 2021

US President Joe Biden has said he's "under no illusions" about the difficulty of getting North Korea to give up its nuclear weapons. The two presidents said they had agreed to a "shared approach" to North Korea the presidents of the United States and South Korea have said they are "deeply concerned" about secretive nuclear state North Korea. US President Joe Biden made the statement after he and South Korean President Moon Jae-in met for talks at the White House on Friday. Moon hailed the meeting, saying: "The world is welcoming America's return," — a reference to former president Donald Trump's non-interventionist America first policy.

<https://www.dw.com/en/us-south-korea-deeply-concerned-about-north-korea/a-57628372>

Biden makes strong case for engagement, but N. Korea unlikely to react soon: experts

Yonhap

Korea Herald, May 22, 2021

US President Joe Biden has demonstrated a clear commitment to engaging with North Korea by appointing a special envoy to specifically deal with North Korea issues, but whether the North will come to the table in the near future remains to be seen, US experts said Friday. In a joint press conference with South Korean President Moon Jae-in, Biden announced his appointment of Acting Assistant Secretary of State Sung Kim as "US special envoy for the DPRK" to "help drive all these efforts" toward denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. DPRK is short for North Korea's official name, Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Biden described Kim as a "career diplomat with deep policy expertise."

"Appointing Sung Kim as special envoy to North Korea is one pragmatic step. He is an experienced diplomat and, along with the other Biden appointments for posts that might affect issues related to North Korea, indicates a high priority for President Biden," said Celeste Arrington, associate professor of political science and international affairs at George Washington University. Kim is a career diplomat who has also served as US ambassador to South Korea. He also held his newly appointed position as special US representative for North Korea between 2014 and 2016 under the Barack Obama administration. Biden said the US will take "pragmatic" steps toward the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula.

"Our two nations also share a willingness to engage diplomatically with DPRK, to take pragmatic steps that will reduce tensions as we move toward our ultimate goal of denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula," he told the joint press conference. Arrington noted that Kim, along with other members of Biden's North Korea team, are "well-equipped with expertise and experience to try to take pragmatic steps to reopen dialogue with the North." Still, she cast doubt over the resumption of US-North Korea dialogue in the near future. "The summit strongly reaffirmed the US-ROK alliance, aspects of which the DPRK perceives as threatening. President Biden also stated that the North would have to show a serious commitment to discuss its nuclear arsenal. That seems unlikely to happen soon," said Arrington.

http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20210522000121&ACE_SEARCH=1

US ready to engage with North Korea: Blinken

Ahn Sung-mi

Korea Herald, May 24, 2021

The US has put the diplomatic ball in Pyongyang's court, with its Secretary of State Antony Blinken stressing that Washington is prepared to engage with North Korea to discuss denuclearization, but it remains uncertain whether the reclusive regime will respond. "We are waiting to see if Pyongyang actually wants to engage. The ball is in their court," Blinken said in an interview with ABC on Sunday, adding that Washington is prepared to pursue diplomacy with the North even as the sanctions remain in place.

Blinken's remarks come after US President Joe Biden's summit with South Korean President Moon Jae-in in Washington on Friday. At the meeting Biden demonstrated a clear willingness to engage in dialogue with Pyongyang toward the goal of the complete denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula and said he would meet the country's leader, Kim Jong-un, under the right conditions. The top diplomat echoed Biden's stance that the best chance of achieving the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula

was to “engage diplomatically with North Korea on a deliberate, calibrated approach where we seek to make progress toward that goal.” “I don’t think there’s going to be a grand bargain where this gets resolved in one fell swoop. It’s got to be clearly calibrated diplomacy, clear steps from the North Koreans, and it moves forward in that way,” he added.

http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20210524000799&ACE_SEARCH=1

75% of Americans think denuclearization deal with NK important: poll

Kim So-hyun

Korea Herald, May 25, 2021

Three out of 4 Americans think it is “very important” or “important” for the US to reach an agreement with North Korea on dismantling the North’s nuclear weapons, a survey of 1,000 American adults conducted earlier this month showed. Responses were consistent across political lines, with both Republicans (84 percent) and Democrats (79 percent) favoring an agreement, according to the poll conducted May 6 through 10 by the Korea Economic Institute of America, a Washington-based think tank. Also, 61 percent of the respondents said it was important for the US and South Korea to cooperate on North Korea-related issues and 69 percent said the US should follow South Korea’s lead in denuclearization talks with North Korea, the institute said in a report published last Friday, the day President Moon Jae-in and US President Joe Biden held their first face-to-face summit in Washington.

In its annual report on American attitudes toward the US-South Korea alliance and North Korea policy, the institute said 57 percent of the respondents saw North Korea as an “adversary.” Other adversaries identified in the survey were Russia (52 percent), China (48 percent) and Iran (48 percent). Forty-four percent of the respondents said South Korea was a “critical partner.” Other critical partners mentioned included Canada (70 percent), the UK (67 percent), Japan (50 percent), Australia (47 percent), Mexico (47 percent) and Israel (46 percent). Only 37 percent of the respondents said the US should play a role in reducing tensions between South Korea and Japan, with 28 percent saying the US should play no role and 34 percent saying they were not sure.

http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20210525000519&ACE_SEARCH=1

US tells Russia it will not rejoin Open Skies arms control pact

DW, May 28, 2021

Moscow has said Washington's refusal to rejoin the surveillance transparency pact is a "blow to the European security system." There had been hopes the Biden administration would reverse the withdrawal. Russia on Friday said it was "disappointed" with the US decision not to reenter the "Open Skies Treaty," which allows inspection flights over member countries' territories to monitor military activities.

The United States State Department on Thursday said it had informed Russia of the decision following a review of Moscow's compliance with the pact. "In concluding its review of the treaty, the United States [...] does not intend to seek to rejoin it, given Russia's failure to take any actions to return to compliance," a State Department statement said. The US officially pulled out of the treaty in November 2020 during the last months of former President Donald Trump's term in office. Moscow had hoped that President Joe Biden's administration would reverse the decision.

<https://www.dw.com/en/us-tells-russia-it-will-not-rejoin-open-skies-arms-control-pact/a-57698568>

N. Korean ICBMs pose 'real danger' to US homeland: Gen. Milley

Yonhap

Korea Herald, May 28, 2021

North Korea continues to build up its ballistic missile capability, which poses "real danger" to the US mainland, the top US military commander said Thursday. Army Gen. Mark Milley, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, also said the North is showing no signs of giving up its efforts to bolster its military capability. North Korea "continues to enhance its ballistic missile capability and possesses the technical capacity to present a real danger to the US homeland as well as our allies and partners across the Indo-Pacific," Milley said in written testimony to the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense. "They show no signs of moderation in their focus on military capability at the expense of their most vulnerable citizens and peace of the Korean Peninsula," he added,

His written testimony was submitted before a hearing on the defense budget request for fiscal year 2022. Also in attendance was Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin. Austin said the US will continue to focus on dealing with North Korean threats while putting diplomacy at the forefront.

http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20210528000112&ACE_SEARCH=1

US soldiers accidentally leak nuclear secrets via study apps — report

DW, May 29, 2021

Online study aids used by US soldiers stationed at nuclear bases around Europe have been found to contain sensitive details. An investigation by Bellingcat uncovered the leak. European disarmament activists argue that secrecy around US nukes in Europe inhibits debate on hosting weapons. Troops on US bases in Europe housing nuclear weapons have been using publicly accessible online flashcard apps to remember long and complex security protocols, the investigative website Bellingcat revealed on Friday. The military personnel turned to sites such as Quizlet, Chegg Prep and Cram to memorize codes, jargon and even the status of nuclear vaults, according to the report. While European governments generally refuse to confirm or deny the specific locations of US nuclear weapons being stored within their borders, leaked documents, photos and comments by retired officials often confirm the presence of the weapons. The latest leaks, however, have gone so far as to identify the exact number and location of the weapons within the bases, including whether the vaults they are stored in are "hot" — with live weapons — or "cold."

<https://www.dw.com/en/us-soldiers-accidentally-leak-nuclear-secrets-via-study-apps-report/a-57710899>

Russia**Russian diplomat calls Vienna talks 'unique'**

Tehran Times, May 22, 2021

Mikhail Ulyanov, the Russians ambassador to the Vienna-based international organizations, on Saturday described the talks on the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) in the Austrian capital as "unique". "The Vienna talks on #JCPOA are unique. The aim isn't to update an agreement or elaborate a new one," Ulyanov tweeted, according to the Mehr news agency "The goal is to restore a nearly ruined deal piece by piece. Was there a similar exercise in the history of international relations? I cannot recollect anything like that. Can you?" he added.

In an interview with Echo of Moscow on Saturday, Ulyanov also said that the Vienna talks on possible revival of the JCPOA may reach a final conclusion in early June. “The fact is that speculation is not a very correct action, but if you ask about my personal opinion, I can say that the first days of June are a realistic deadline,” the diplomat pointed out. “At least for now, it seems to me but when it comes to such work and complex relations, accurate prediction is impossible,” he said, adding, “I’m talking about what I feel about myself and my partners right now.” Earlier, Ulyanov had tweeted that the Vienna talks between Iran and Western countries were unique of their kind. The latest round of talks on the JCPOA Joint Commission was held on Wednesday afternoon. The participants called the talks productive.

<https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/461222/Russian-diplomat-calls-Vienna-talks-unique>

West Asia

Iran

MP reveals Iran’s next step: Launching metal uranium factory

Tehran Times, May 16, 2021

In an interview with the Young Journalists Club news agency on Sunday, Abolfazl Amouei, spokesman for the parliament's National Security and Foreign Policy Committee, revealed that the next big step of Iran’s master plan is to develop its peaceful nuclear activities. Stating that the parliamentary law on Strategic Action for Lifting Sanctions has changed the approach of Western countries in putting pressure on Iran, he said that Iran’s next big step has been drawn within the framework of the law, and it is to launch a metal uranium factory in Isfahan.

“During our recent visit to the Isfahan nuclear industry complex, we observed the process of construction and operation of this plant. Effective steps have been taken, which is in its final stages, and we hope that the metal uranium plant will open in due course,” the MP said. Amouei stated that the Islamic Republic is currently implementing the parliamentary law on Strategic Action and if the Americans don’t change their policies in practice and stick to the policy of maximum pressure, Iran will not return to its JCPOA obligations unless the exact signs of change are seen. Reiterating Tehran’s position, he said, “There will be no change in Iran's nuclear program without the lifting of sanctions and careful verification.”

<https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/460969/MP-reveals-Iran-s-next-step-Launching-metal-uranium-factory>

Health must be a top priority in the Iran nuclear deal: The Lancet

Tehran Times, May 18, 2021

Unilateral U.S. sanctions against Iran in recent years have been harsh on the health and lives of Iranians, The Lancet wrote in a commentary on May 17. Many scholars have reported that sanctions markedly deteriorate people's health. Restrictions on financial transactions and trade undermine access to basic needs such as food, medicine, and medical supplies. Moreover, the impacts of sanctions on the economy have decreased the ability of Iranians to pay for life-saving services. Coping with the COVID-19 pandemic has multiplied the negative impact of the sanctions.

Following President Biden's inauguration, a new round of negotiations on returning to the Iran nuclear deal has begun. Two task forces have been defined in the preliminary negotiations: one to return sanctions imposed during the Trump administration and the other to return Iran to the Joint

Comprehensive Plan of Action commitments. Experience of previous negotiations has shown that reaching any agreement can take months. One area of mutual agreement is that people's health, as a human right, must be preserved under any sanction regime. Given the impact of current sanctions on citizens' health, immediate action is needed to review barriers to the equitable access of people to medicines and medical supplies.

<https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/461072/Health-must-be-a-top-priority-in-the-Iran-nuclear-deal-The-Lancet>

Iran ambassador, U.S. senator discuss lifting of sanctions

Tehran Times, May 19, 2021

Iran confirmed on Wednesday that a senior Iranian diplomat held a meeting with U.S. Senator Chris Murphy, saying the two sides discussed the need to lift the U.S. sanctions on Iran. Shahrokh Nazemi, head of the media office of Iran's permanent mission to the UN, said Iran's Ambassador to the UN Majid Takht Ravanchi held a virtual meeting with Senator Murphy on Tuesday afternoon in which they discussed the ongoing nuclear talks in Vienna. Takht Ravanchi underlined the need for practical removal of all U.S. sanctions on Iran which were imposed under various labels, calling the removal of sanctions "a key issue."

During the meeting, Iran's ambassador to the UN also clarified Tehran's position for a peaceful end to the war in Yemen. "In the talks, the Islamic Republic of Iran's will for a peaceful settlement of the war in Yemen was noted, and it was stressed that any solution to the Yemeni crisis must ensure the complete lifting of the siege and the unimpeded delivery of humanitarian aid to the country and a ceasefire," Nazemi said, according to Fars News.

<https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/461087/Iran-ambassador-U-S-senator-discuss-lifting-of-sanctions>

Zarif holds talks in Ireland

Tehran Times, May 19, 2021

In continuation of his European tour, Mohammad Javad Zarif, the Iranian Foreign Minister, arrived at Dublin on Wednesday. He met with his Irish counterpart Simon Coveney to discuss the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), as part of Ireland's role on the United Nations Security Council, according to the Irish Foreign Ministry. The Joint Commission of the JCPOA, which is holding talks in Vienna to possibly revive the 2015 nuclear deal, was to convene on Wednesday. Zarif also emphasized Iran's interest in the continuation of political and economic consultations, especially in the fields of agriculture, information technology and science and technology between the two countries.

<https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/461123/Zarif-holds-talks-in-Ireland>

JCPOA Joint Commission convenes as parties face unresolved key issues

Tehran Times, May 19, 2021

The Joint Commission meeting of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) continued on Wednesday Iran's chief negotiator, Seyyed Abbas Araghchi, said on Tuesday that significant progress has been made, yet the sides still disagree over key unresolved issues. The agenda was to discuss the list of the sanctions that the U.S. needs to lift. According to Araghchi, the draft of the agreement has

been edited and almost ready, yet some key decisions need to be made in the capitals. The parties expressed their satisfaction over the meeting, with the European Union political director Enrique Mora saying that the fourth round was “the most positive round yet.” Mora continued by saying that Iran’s agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) will be extended. He did not specify for how long. He called the nuclear deal “the key to stability in the region.”

<https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/461128/JCPOA-Joint-Commission-convenes-as-parties-face-unresolved-key>

Lawmakers to discuss Vienna talks amid nuclear deliberations

Tehran Times, May 22, 2021

Members of the Iranian Parliament’s National Security and Foreign Policy Committee will hold a meeting on Sunday with relevant officials to review the latest developments concerning the Vienna nuclear talks. The committee will hold a hearing session at first and then discuss the Vienna talks. Iranian Intelligence Minister Seyed Mahmoud Alavi is also expected to attend the meeting.

Iranian news media outlets did not specify which relevant officials will attend the meeting, but it is highly likely that Iran’s Deputy Foreign Minister Seyed Abbas Araghchi, who leads Iran’s negotiating team in Vienna, would attend the meeting to brief the lawmakers on the talks. Araghchi has just returned to Iran after concluding the fourth round of the Vienna talks, which are aimed at reviving the 2015 Iran nuclear deal officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). The last meeting of the JCPOA Joint Commission was held on Wednesday. After the meeting, Araghchi said good progress was made during the talks but they needed to return to capitals in order to make some final decisions.

“After two weeks of negotiations, we will have a meeting to conclude, and then the delegations will return to the capitals for consultations,” Araghchi told Iran’s state media. He added, “There are a few key issues that need further review and decision-making in the capitals, and we hope that they will take place in the next few days and that we will be able to conclude on these issues in the next round of talks.” According to Araghchi, intensive talks and meetings were held at all levels. He said that Iran and its negotiating partners had bilateral and multilateral talks at expert and political levels. “During these discussions, we tried to reach a conclusion on the issues at stake, either to resolve the differences or to decrease them, and the result is that we are in a position where we can have a general conclusion,” he pointed out. He continued, “There are some key issues that need to be resolved and there is agreement on the rest; the texts have been well written and so now is the time to go back to the capitals and have the final consultations and then continue the negotiations.”

<https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/461205/Lawmakers-to-discuss-Vienna-talks-amid-nuclear-deliberations>

Parliament speaker says IAEA access to nuclear facilities should be cut off

Tehran Times, May 23, 2021

Iranian Parliament Speaker Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf said on Sunday that the three-month deal between Iran and the UN nuclear watchdog has expired and that the government should restrict the watchdog’s access to Iran’s nuclear facilities. Speaking at a Majlis open session on Sunday, the speaker said the International Atomic Energy Agency has no right to have access to the data of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran’s cameras. Qalibaf was responding to the remarks by Ali Reza Salimi, a member of the Majlis presiding board. Salimi said, “The International Atomic Energy Agency had

three months to fulfill its obligations, but this did not happen and their legal opportunity expired yesterday.”

Salimi also said that the Majlis should make sure that a nuclear law passed by the Majlis would be implemented. The lawmaker also asked Qalibaf to instruct the AEOI to delete the data stored by its cameras. Responding to Salimi, Qalibaf said, “We are determined that the strategic action act (the parliamentary nuclear law) to lift sanctions and protect the rights of the Iranian people be implemented at specific times and in accordance with the legislation, and the Leader has repeatedly emphasized this issue.” He added, “The Agency's three-month deadline was until May 22, and according to this, the International Atomic Energy Agency does not have the right to access the images and information of the Atomic Energy Organization, and this was discussed and decided yesterday.”

<https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/461252/Parliament-speaker-says-IAEA-access-to-nuclear-facilities-should>

Iran, IAEA deal to be extended ‘conditionally’: source

Tehran Times, May 23, 2021

An informed source at the Supreme National Security Council has said that the deal between Iran and United Nations’ International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) will be “conditionally” extended for a month, according to the Noor News Agency. The three-month monitoring deal between Tehran and the UN nuclear watchdog expired on Saturday. The IRNA news agency also quoted an unnamed official as saying, “If extended for a month and if during this period major powers ... accept Iran’s legal demands, then the data will be handed over to the Agency. Otherwise, the images will be deleted forever.” The possible extension is intended to give the Vienna talks a chance to possibly revive the 2015 nuclear deal, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). Delegate have said talks on revitalizing the JCPOA are progressing. However, they have said key issues remain unresolved.

<https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/461259/Iran-IAEA-deal-to-be-extended-conditionally-source>

Iran extends surveillance deal with IAEA

Tehran Times, May 24, 2021

Iran announced on Monday that it will extend a temporary deal with the UN nuclear watchdog for a period of one month to give the Vienna nuclear talks more time to move forward. “Due to the ongoing technical negotiations on the settlement of safeguards issues between Iran and the International Atomic Energy Agency, which are taking place in parallel with the Vienna talks, the storage of surveillance cameras data will continue for one month from May 24 so that the necessary opportunity is provided for the progress and conclusion of the negotiations,” Secretariat of Iran's Supreme National Security Council said in a statement on Monday.

The top security body also underlined the continued suspension of the voluntary implementation of the Additional Protocol to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in accordance with a parliamentary nuclear law obligating the Iranian government to restrict cooperation with the IAEA unless the West lifts sanctions on Iran. The nuclear law stipulates that the Iranian government should take certain nuclear measures such as raising the level of uranium enrichment to 20% and suspending the voluntary implementation of the Additional Protocol if the Western parties failed to honor their obligations under the 2015 nuclear deal, formally called the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). Iran’s deal with the IAEA came a few days before the nuclear law came into force.

<https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/461293/Iran-extends-surveillance-deal-with-IAEA>

Iran warns U.S., UK against appeasing Israel on JCPOA

Tehran Times, May 28, 2021

Iran has responded to comments by the American and British top diplomats on the 2015 Iran nuclear deal during their visits to Israel, warning them against appeasing Israel. Saeed Khatibzadeh, spokesman for Iran's Foreign Ministry, said in a tweet that the foreign ministers of the U.S. and the UK are trying to appease the sworn enemy of the nuclear deal, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

“To appease the sworn enemy of JCPOA, UK/US FMs spin goals of Vienna Talks. Disappointing! The brutal Israeli regime you try to placate has done its utmost to torpedo the deal. Instead of eroding your credibility, focus on reviving the original deal—the ONLY solution on the table,” Khatibzadeh said on Twitter. The spokesman was responding to remarks by UK Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab and U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken who both had called for a “stronger” deal with Iran during separate visits to Israel. During his visit to Israel, which came after the recent flare-up between the Gaza Strip and Israel, Blinken said the U.S. is seeking a “longer and stronger” deal with Iran.

In an interview with Israel's Channel 12, Blinken said, “if Iran returns to compliance with the deal, we would do the same. We would also seek to make it, as we say, longer and stronger. And we'd also work hard to engage the other issues where Iran is a very dangerous and problematic actor for us and for Israel – destabilizing activities in the region, proliferation of weapons, support for terrorist groups, et cetera. All of those things.” Raab also echoed the same thing during his visit to Israel. After a meeting with his Israeli counterpart Gabi Ashkenazi, Raab said the UK is committed to achieving a “stronger” deal with Iran.

<https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/461441/Iran-warns-U-S-UK-against-appeasing-Israel-on-JCPOA>

Zakani: JCPOA only limited to nuclear issue and not regional or defensive capabilities

Tehran Times, May 29, 2021

Speaking at a press conference on Saturday, Alireza Zakani, a presidential candidate, responded to many questions, including his foreign policy, possibility of sealing another JCPOA that would be “longer” and “stronger” as mentioned by the Europeans. Zakani began his conference by thanking the organizers of the conference. Responding to a question about his differences with other four candidates backed by the principlist faction, he said that he respects all candidates and wishes success for them but his plans are superior than others, calling his plans “developmental and all-inclusive.”

“My plans can be proved with facts and figures, along with opinion of experts,” he said. The presidential candidate stated that from the point of view of inclusiveness, his plans are more comprehensive than the other 6 candidates. In response to a question about the Vienna negotiations to possibly revive the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Actions (JCPOA) and the fate of the negotiations under his possible administration, Zakani said that the existence of the negotiations is decided by the leading politicians, Supreme National Security Council and the approval of the Leader of the Islamic Revolution. “If anyone says I can do this and that, it is wrong, as the collective wisdom of the Leading politicians and the approval of the Leader of the Islamic Revolution would decide the existence of the negotiations,” he explained.

<https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/461488/Zakani-JCPOA-only-limited-to-nuclear-issue-and-not-regional>

East Asia South Korea

Seoul, Tokyo likely to form consultative body on Fukushima wastewater release

Ahn Sung-mi

Korea Herald, May 16, 2021

South Korea and Japan are likely to form a joint consultative body to discuss Tokyo's controversial plan to dispose of radioactive water from the wrecked Fukushima nuclear plant by releasing it into the sea, media reports said Sunday. The Asahi Shimbun, citing diplomatic sources, reported that Seoul is said to have sounded out Tokyo on the possibility of establishing a consultative group between the two countries. The Japanese government is reviewing the proposal and leaning toward accepting the request, the report said.

The report added that Tokyo had conveyed to Seoul that it would take Seoul up on the offer when it received an official request. The envisioned group is expected to function at the pan-government level and include related agencies from both sides, as well as experts and the Tokyo Electric Power Company, the state-run operator of the plant. In response to the prospects of a new consultative group, the Korean Foreign Ministry said Friday that it was currently reviewing ways to hold bilateral consultations on the matter, though it declined to confirm details as the review was still underway. The ministry stressed its position that bilateral consultations are necessary to deliver Seoul's position and receive additional information, separately from the verification process through the International Atomic Energy Agency.

http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20210516000137&ACE_SEARCH=1

Moon's push for engagement with N. Korea could create tension with US: CRS report

Yonhap

Korea Herald, May 20, 2021

President Moon Jae-in's calls for aggressive engagement with North Korea could create tension with the United States, a recent congressional report said. The Congressional Research Service (CRS) report comes as Moon is in Washington this week for his first in-person summit talks with US President Joe Biden to discuss North Korea and alliance issues, as well as COVID-19 vaccine cooperation.

"Although Moon has welcomed the mention of diplomacy, his preference for more aggressive engagement with North Korea could create tensions with the United States," the report updated Tuesday said. "Moon has championed US-North Korea talks, which he views as critical to preventing military conflict and to realizing his goal of establishing a durable peace on the Korean Peninsula," it added. North Korea, however, has continued to test short- and medium-range missiles, and could in the near future abandon a moratorium on nuclear and long-range ballistic missile tests it has maintained since November 2017, the report said, citing concerns by experts.

http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20210520000684&ACE_SEARCH=1

Seoul, Washington to cooperate on overseas nuclear plant projects

Korea Herald, May 22, 2021 -

South Korea and the United States announced said Friday they will broaden cooperation in the nuclear energy sector to penetrate deeper into overseas markets. "We commit to develop cooperation in overseas nuclear markets, including joint participation in nuclear power plant projects, while ensuring the highest standards of international nuclear safety, security and nonproliferation are maintained," the two countries said in a joint statement. The statement came in line with the summit between South Korean President Moon Jae-in and US President Joe Biden held at the White House on Friday.

"As part of our earnest effort to ensure supply of nuclear power, the ROK and the United States commit to co-participate in overseas nuclear markets by promoting coordination in the supply chain," a separate fact sheet released by the two countries also said.

http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20210522000119&ACE_SEARCH=1

Chief nuke envoys of S. Korea, US hold phone talks on peninsula denuclearization

Yonhap

Korea herald, May 28, 2021

The top nuclear envoys of South Korea and the United States held their second phone talks in less than a week on Friday to discuss cooperation to achieve denuclearization and lasting peace on the Korean Peninsula, the foreign ministry said. Noh Kyu-duk, the ministry's special representative for Korean Peninsula peace and security affairs, and his US counterpart, Sung Kim, discussed follow-up efforts to last week's summit between Presidents Moon Jae-in and Joe Biden, where the leader's stressed diplomacy and dialogue as "essential" to denuclearization efforts.

"The two sides discussed ways for bilateral cooperation in actively implementing the results of the latest South Korea-US summit and making substantive progress toward complete denuclearization and the establishment of lasting peace on the peninsula," the ministry said in a press release. Noh and Kim held their first phone talks on Saturday, the day after Biden announced the appointment of Kim as Washington's point man on the North in what appears to be a move to signal US readiness to resume dialogue with the North.

http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20210528000549&ACE_SEARCH=1

National Assembly speaker meets Czech leaders, discusses nuclear power plant projects

Yonhap

Korea Herald, May 29, 2021

South Korean National Assembly Speaker Park Byeong-seug has met with political leaders of the Czech Republic to promote Seoul's nuclear power plant solutions, his office said Saturday. Park spoke with Czech Prime Minister Andrej Babis in Prague on Friday (local time) and emphasized that South Korea can be an ideal partner for the Czech Republic's nuclear power projects. "We are stronger than any other nation when it comes to construction time, cost and operation capabilities," Park said. "Our superb cybersecurity solutions can also be used in nuclear power plants." Park also held a joint conference with Czech Senate Speaker Milos Vystrelil and spoke with Chamber of Deputies Speaker Radek Vondracek to explain South Korea's intent to help the country construct nuclear power plants. "If South Korea wins the project, it can bolster ties between the two countries," Park said during his meeting with Vondracek.

http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20210529000050&ACE_SEARCH=1

Fire stops turbine at Shin-Kori 4 nuclear plant

Yonhap

Korea Herald, May 29, 2021

A fire stopped the operation of a turbine at a nuclear plant on the country's southeastern coast Saturday, officials said. There were no reports of casualties or radiation leaks. The fire broke out at the Shin-Kori 4 reactor in Ulsan, some 400 kilometers southeast of Seoul, at 9:28 a.m. and was extinguished about an hour later, according to the state-run Korea Hydro & Nuclear Power Co. The authorities suspect the fire started from an exciter of a turbine. The Nuclear Safety and Security Commission said it will dispatch its investigators to find out the exact cause of the fire. The commission added the radiation status around the power plant is maintaining its normal level.

http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20210529000068&ACE_SEARCH=1

North Korea

N. Korea keeps mum on S. Korea-US summit

Yonhap

Korea Herald, May 24, 2021

North Korea has stayed mum on the results of last week's summit between President Moon Jae-in and US President Joe Biden amid questions about how Pyongyang will react to Biden's willingness to engage diplomatically with the country. At the summit meeting on Friday (Washington time), the two leaders agreed to engage diplomatically with the North to work toward denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. They also reaffirmed that dialogue will be pushed based on previous agreements, including the 2018 Singapore deal between the North and the US.

http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20210524000202&ACE_SEARCH=1

NK continuing activities at Yongbyon but no clear sign of spent fuel rods transfer: 38 North

Yonhap

Korea Herald, May 30, 2021

North Korea appears to be continuing activities at its Yongbyon nuclear complex but no clear evidence has been detected to determine if spent fuel rods have been transferred from the storage facility to produce plutonium, a US think tank has said. The monitoring website 38 North made the assessment Friday, based on recent satellite imagery, also noting that minor activities have been spotted at the site's uranium enrichment plant while construction of a new wing of a lab building continued. "The coal-fired Thermal Plant, which supplies steam to the RCL, has remained in continuous operation since early March, although the smoke plume is somewhat diminished on the most recent satellite imagery," 38 North said. RCL stands for the Radiochemical Laboratory.

The think tank said the provided information is "insufficient to definitively determine whether a new reprocessing campaign is underway or whether the activity is simply related to the processing of radioactive waste from previous campaigns." Still, the North's continued construction of a new wing of one of the laboratory buildings and expansion of other facilities demonstrate Pyongyang's "determination to continue their research and improve their capabilities at the Yongbyon complex," it said.

http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20210530000030&ACE_SEARCH=1

N. Korea says lifting of 'missile guidelines' on S. Korea reminder of US hostility

Yonhap

Korea Herald, May 31, 2021

North Korea on Monday slammed the US lifting of all restrictions on South Korean missiles as a "stark reminder" of Washington's hostile approach to Pyongyang, saying the recently unveiled US policy on the North is "just trickery." This marked the North's first reaction after South Korean President Moon Jae-in and US President Joe Biden agreed at their May 21 summit to use diplomacy to resolve the North's nuclear standoff and to terminate all "missile guideline" restrictions on the flight range and warhead weight of South Korean missiles. Still, the North's criticism appeared to be restrained as it was couched in a Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) article under the name of an international affairs critic, rather than official government statements.

"The US, doggedly branding the measures taken by the DPRK for self-defence as violation of UN 'resolutions,' grants its allies unlimited right to missile development. It is engrossed in confrontation despite its lip-service to dialogue," the article said. "The termination step is a stark reminder of the US hostile policy toward the DPRK and its shameful double-dealing," it said. "Lots of countries now view the US key DPRK policy, namely 'pragmatic approach' and 'maximum flexibility' produced by the Biden administration with much effort as just trickery."

http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20210531000132&ACE_SEARCH=1

Op-ed

The right is wrong. Reviving the Iran nuclear deal will enhance Israel's security.

Max Boot

Washington Post, May 26, 2021

If you listen to the right wing in Israel and the United States, the recent 11-day Gaza war makes a compelling case against concluding a nuclear deal with Iran. Forty-four Republican senators — nearly the whole caucus — sent a letter to President Biden on May 12 arguing that because Iran "is a longtime financial and material supporter of Hamas," the United States "engaging in active negotiations with Iran and potentially providing billions of dollars in sanctions relief will no doubt contribute to Iran's support of Hamas and other terrorist organizations who attack Americans and our allies."

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2021/05/26/gaza-war-isnt-an-argument-against-iran-nuclear-deal/>

World heading towards hybrid warfare: Pakistani expert

Tehran Times, May 29, 2021

A Pakistani researcher in Arms Control & Disarmament Centre (ACDC) believes that the world is heading towards hybrid warfare, which will push West Asian countries to design their cybersecurity policies. "I believe that the world is experiencing the rise of hybrid warfare where the classical warfare model is complemented by non-kinetic tactics," Aamna Rafiq tells the Tehran Times. "In the contemporary strategic landscape, states and non-state actors prefer synergized and tailored use of their

military, economic, political, civilian, and informational power to target the specific vulnerabilities of their adversaries."

Today, cyber wars are no longer hypothetical. Every event that was imagined in stories about cyberwar has now actually occurred. Cyberwar has left the pages of overblown science fiction open and the tabletops of Pentagon war games have become a reality. More than ever before, it's becoming clear that the threat of hacking goes beyond nuisance vandalism, criminal profiteering, and even espionage to include the sort of physical-world disruption that was once possible to accomplish only with military attacks and terroristic sabotage. "Cyberwarfare, espionage, disinformation, psychological warfare, religious warfare, separatist movements, regime change, resource warfare, lawfare, trade wars, terrorism, coercive diplomacy, and economic sanctions are few examples of these non-kinetic tactics," Rafiq argues.

<https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/461445/World-heading-towards-hybrid-warfare-Pakistani-expert>

World/Misc

Austrian FM says still major issues remain unresolved to revive JCPOA

Tehran Times, May 23, 2021

Austrian Foreign Minister Alexander Schallenberg has said important issues regarding a possible revival of the 2015 nuclear deal – JCPOA - still remain unresolved, ISNA reported on Sunday. Speaking with Der Standard, Schallenberg said the time to restore the nuclear deal is passing but “certain important issues are still open and unresolved.” He added it has been for a long time that Austria has been a good host for negotiations on Iran’s nuclear program. The chief Austrian diplomat said in his view the two major nuclear partners, Iran and the United States, are working hard to restore the deal even though still there is no direct talks between the two countries.

<https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/461265/Austrian-FM-says-still-major-issues-remain-unresolved-to-revive>

Reports

Chinese Nuclear and Missile Proliferation

CRS, May 17, 2021

The U.S. government has continued to express concerns about China’s record concerning the proliferation of nuclear- and missile-related technologies to other countries, with more recent focus on the threat of Chinese acquisition of U.S.-origin nuclear technology. (See CRS In Focus IF11050, New U.S. Policy Regarding Nuclear Exports to China, by Paul K. Kerr and Mary Beth D. Nikitin.) Official U.S. government reports indicate that the Chinese government has apparently ended its direct involvement in the transfer of nuclear- and missile-related items, but Chinese-based companies and individuals continue to export goods relevant to those items, particularly to Iran and North Korea. U.S. officials have also raised concerns about entities operating in China that provide other forms of support for proliferation-sensitive activities, such as illicit finance and money laundering.

<https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/IF/IF11737>

Contribute Articles

Indian Pugwash Society welcomes research articles from students, researchers and faculties on Space, Missile, nuclear technology, WMD proliferation, arms control, disarmament, export controls and other related issues. Articles should be crisply written and should address contemporary debates in the policy arena. Manuscripts submitted for the consideration of the Indian Pugwash Society should be original contributions and should not have been submitted for consideration anywhere else. For further assistance, please contact us at: indianpugwashsociety@gmail.com

The Indian Pugwash Society aims to promote the study, discussion, and knowledge of and to stimulate general interest in, and to diffuse knowledge in regards to problems relating on WMD proliferation, arms control, disarmament, space security, export controls, nuclear technology and other related issues. This newsletter is part of the project "Emerging Nuclear Order in Asia: Implications for India" sanctioned to us by Department of Atomic Energy-Board of Research in Nuclear Sciences (DAE-BRNS).

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