



Nuclear, Missile & Space Digest

A Fortnightly Newsletter from the Indian Pugwash Society

Volume 13, Number 13

July 15, 2021



Convenor

Amb. Sujan R. Chinoy

Executive Council

Cdr. (Dr.) Probal K. Ghosh

Air Marshal S. G. Inamdar (Retd.)

Dr. Roshan Khanijo

Amb. R. Rajagopalan

Dr. Rajesh Rajagopalan

Shri Dinesh Kumar Yadvendra

Prepared by

Ms. Diya Deep Singh



Contents

India

- **Indian Navy, Air Force to participate in war games with US Navy's nuclear-powered aircraft carrier**
- **India chases away more drones in Jammu a day after blast at air base**
- **Groyne field built near Kalpakkam nuclear plant without CRZ clearance triggers controversy**
- **India test-launches new Agni-series nuclear-capable missile**
- **Construction begins on third stage of Kudankulam**

China

- **China informs IAEA Taishan nuke plant operates well, no radiation release or environmental concerns**
- **China launches first crewed mission for space station construction**
- **China's nuclear safety queried over Taishan reactor, but it wants to lead world by 2050**
- **China starts building underground lab**
- **China builds bunker to test whether nuclear waste can be dumped underground**
- **China voices opposition to Japan's nuclear wastewater plan at UN Human Rights Council**
- **China supports S. Korea's just position in condemning Japan's decision to dump wastewater into sea, urges Japan to withdraw mistaken plan: FM**

Pakistan

- **No need for nuclear deterrents once Kashmir issue is resolved: PM Imran**

USA

- **Biden, Putin discuss ambassadors, nuclear weapons and more**
- **Biden extends sanctions on N. Korea amid US outreach**
- **US officials double down on push for nuclear modernization**

- **Biden vows to Israel: No nuclear weapon for Iran on my watch**
- **Biden tells Israel president he won't tolerate nuclear Iran**
- **U.S. troops come under fire in Syria after strikes against Iran-backed militias**
- **Groups sue Biden admin over planned expansion of nuke work**

Europe

France

- **French power production lowered by workers protesting nuclear reform**
- **French minister says time running out on Iran nuclear talks**
- **France's Le Drian says waiting for Iran to make decision on nuclear deal**
- **France says Iran must resume co-operation with IAEA nuclear watchdog**

Germany

- **Iran, world powers making progress in nuclear talks - Germany's Maas**

UK

- **EDF calls for funding legislation for new UK nuclear power plant**

Russia

- **Kola II construction to start in 2028**
- **Russia says Iran nuclear deal is 'within reach' -TASS**

West Asia

Iran

- **Iran's Bushehr nuclear power plant temporarily shutdown - state TV**
- **President-elect Raisi issues warning over talks**
- **Iran says U.S. to lift oil sanctions, Germany cautious on matter**

- **Iran says nuclear deal salvageable but will not negotiate forever**
- **Iran refuses to give nuclear site images to IAEA**
- **Iran's recovery seen as modest with return to original nuclear deal - IIF**

Israel

- **Israel tells U.S. it has serious reservations about Iran nuclear deal**

Saudi Arabia

- **Saudi minister discussed Iran's nuclear program with IAEA chief -ministry**
- **Saudi Arabia says it will judge Iran's Raisi by 'reality on the ground'**

East Asia

North Korea

- **North Korea warns U.S. misinterpreting signals risks disappointment**

South Korea

- **Ruling party chief proposes small modular reactors as way of energy aid to nuke-free N. Korea**
- **NK hackers attacked S Korean atomic energy think tank**
- **S. Korea to speed up efforts to bag Czech nuclear plant project**
- **Seoul nuke envoy stresses need to resolve N.K. issue through dialogue**

Japan

- **As Japan reboots ageing Mihama nuclear reactor, experts express concern**

World/Misc

- **National security adviser Jake Sullivan says preventing Iran from obtaining nuclear weapon is 'paramount priority' for United States**
- **Iran elected a hard-liner president. What does that mean for the nuclear deal?**
- **IAEA wants 'immediate response' from Iran on extending monitoring deal**

- **IAEA demands Iran answer on monitoring, Iran says not obliged to reply**
- **Hardening stances by Iran and U.S. complicate negotiations to revive nuclear deal**

India

Indian Navy, Air Force to participate in war games with US Navy's nuclear-powered aircraft carrier

Abhishek Bhalla

India Today, June 22, 2021

Indian Naval warships and Indian Air Force fighter jets are set to conduct joint drills with the US Navy's nuclear-powered aircraft carriers in separate exercises to be held on June 23 and June 24. Indian Naval Ships, Kochi and Teg, along with P8I and MiG 29K aircraft, will participate in a Passage Exercise with the US Navy during its transit through Indian Ocean region. "The Indian Naval warships along with aircraft from Indian Navy and Indian Air Force will be engaged in joint multi-domain operations with the Carrier Strike Group comprising Nimitz class aircraft carrier Ronald Reagan, Arleigh Burke class guided missile destroyer, USS Halsey and Ticonderoga class guided missile cruiser USS Shiloh," the Indian Navy said in a statement.

High tempo operations during the exercise include advanced air defence exercises, cross deck helicopter operations, and anti-submarine exercises. The participating forces will endeavour to hone their war-fighting skills and enhance their interoperability as an integrated force to promote peace, security and stability in the maritime domain. "Indian Navy and US Navy regularly undertake a host of bilateral and multilateral exercises which underscore the shared values as partner navies, in ensuring commitment to an open, inclusive and a rule-based international order," the Indian Navy said. The IAF's exercise with the US CSG will focus on multiple areas including enhancing aspects of interoperability, nuances of international integrated maritime SAR operations, and exchange of best practices in the maritime airpower domain.

<https://www.indiatoday.in/india/story/indian-navy-air-force-participate-in-war-games-with-us-navy-1818159-2021-06-22>

India chases away more drones in Jammu a day after blast at air base

Reuters, June 28, 2021

Indian authorities said on Monday they had chased away two more drones from a military area in the Jammu and Kashmir region, a day after a blast at an air base that was suspected to have been delivered by commercially available quadcopters.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/idUSKCN2E41F9>

Groyne field built near Kalpakkam nuclear plant without CRZ clearance triggers controversy

The New Indian Express, June 26, 2021

The state fisheries department is building a groyne field (a row of stone structures laid vertically into the sea from the coast) in Pudupattinam village in Chengalpet district without obtaining mandatory Coastal Zone Regulation (CRZ) clearance. Pudupattinam is located on the southern end of the township at Kalpakkam and is only a few kilometres from the Indira Gandhi Centre for Atomic Research (IGCAR) and Madras Atomic Power Station (MAPS), which are critical installations undertaking projects of national importance.

Totally, a row of seven groynes of varying measurements are planned. When The New Indian Express visited the site, work on four groynes was nearing completion and preparation was underway to start work on the fifth. These are hydraulic structures constructed to tackle coastal erosion, but in most cases groynes only transferred the problem of erosion towards the north of the structures--much like the breakwaters. Here, north of these structures is Kalpakkam township and further north comes the nuclear power plant. As per the design given by the Ocean Engineering Department of IIT Madras, the northernmost groyne will be built very close to the Kalpakkam township.

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/states/tamil-nadu/2021/jun/26/groyne-field-built-near-kalpakkam-nuclear-plant-without-crz-clearance-triggers-controversy-2321832.html>

India test-launches new Agni-series nuclear-capable missile

Rahul Bedi

Janes, June 28, 2021

India's government-run Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) test-launched the latest variant of its Agni family of nuclear-capable ballistic missiles on 28 June off the coast of the eastern state of Odisha. The DRDO test-launched a new Agni-class ballistic missile – designated Agni P – from Abdul Kalam Island off the coast of India's eastern state of Odisha on 28 June. Named 'Agni P' (Prime), the indigenously developed canisterised missile, which was launched from Abdul Kalam Island – formerly known as Wheeler Island – met “all mission objectives with a high level of accuracy”, said the Indian government's Press Information Bureau (PIB) in a statement, adding that the launch was tracked by various telemetry and radar stations.

The PIB described the Agni P as an “advanced variant of [the] Agni-class of missiles” with a range capability of between 1,000 km and 2,000 km. No further details were provided in the statement but official sources told Janes that the weapon is the first of a new generation of Agni-series medium-range ballistic missiles (MRBMs) to be tested by the DRDO following “extended development” over the past 2–3 years. Weighing about 23–25 tonnes, the two-stage, solid-fuelled Agni P incorporates technologies used in the 4,000 km-range Agni IV and 5,000 km-range Agni V missiles such as composite rocket motors, ring laser gyroscope-based inertial navigation systems, and micro-navigation systems, the sources told Janes . The missile, which is fitted with electro-mechanical actuators for guidance, is reported to have a circular error probable (CEP) of 10 m. Military sources said that since the missile is canisterised, it is capable of being launched from a rail or road-mobile platform anywhere in India.

<https://www.janes.com/defence-news/news-detail/india-test-launches-new-agni-series-nuclear-capable-missile>

Construction begins on third stage of Kudankulam

World Nuclear News, June 29, 2021

Construction of unit 5 of the Kudankulam nuclear power plant has formally begun with the pouring of first concrete for the foundation plate of the reactor building at the site in Tamil Nadu, India. It was launched today by Kamlesh Nilkanth Vyas, chairman of India's Atomic Energy Commission and secretary of the Department of Atomic Energy, in the presence of Rosatom Director General Alexey Likhachov and Satish Kumar Sharma, managing director of Nuclear Power Corporation of India Ltd (NPCIL), in a ceremony that had to be held via videoconference owing to COVID-19 restrictions.

Units 5 and 6 - both Russian-designed AES-92 VVER-1000 reactors - are the third phase of the Kudankulam Nuclear Power Plant, also known as KKNPP. Units 1 and 2 began commercial operations in 2014 and 2017, respectively. Construction of units 3 and 4 began in 2017 and those units are now around 50% complete, according to NPCIL. Units 5 and 6 are scheduled for completion in 66 months and 75 months, respectively. This timeline would see both units completed by 2027. Preliminary work has been completed, Rosatom said. This includes the concrete bedding for the reactor building foundations, the auxiliary reactor building (including the plant's main control room), the turbine building and power supply building, and emergency power supply and safety control systems.

<https://www.world-nuclear-news.org/Articles/Construction-begins-on-third-stage-of-Kudankulam>

China

China informs IAEA Taishan nuke plant operates well, no radiation release or environmental concerns

Chen Shasha and Lu Yameng
Global Times, Jun 16, 2021

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) confirmed on Wednesday that it has received information from the China Atomic Energy Authority (CAEA), saying that there has been no radiation release and no environmental concerns in the Taishan Nuclear Power Plant in South China's Shandong Province. In the notification to the IAEA, the CAEA said, "Unit 1 of the plant recently experienced a minor fuel rod cladding failure, which resulted in increased radioactivity in the unit's primary reactor coolant."

CAEA said to IAEA that the situation, a common phenomenon in nuclear power plant operations, was dealt with in accordance with accepted standards and procedures. According to on-site monitoring and an expert assessment, the unit's performance indicators, including the radioactivity of the primary reactor coolant, remain within the range of normal conditions and technical specifications. Monitoring of the radiation environment around the Taishan Nuclear Power Plant shows that the radiation levels around the plant are normal, indicating there is no leakage at the plant, China's Ministry of Ecology and Environment (MEE) said on Wednesday, refuting CNN's report on an alleged leak and clarifying the concerned issues.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202106/1226268.shtml>

China launches first crewed mission for space station construction

Xinhua, June 17, 2021

China on Thursday successfully launched the crewed spacecraft Shenzhou-12, which is expected to send three astronauts to its space station core module Tianhe for a three-month mission. It is China's seventh crewed mission to space and the first during the construction of China's space station. It is also the first in nearly five years after the country's last manned mission. The spacecraft, atop a Long March-2F carrier rocket, was launched from the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center in northwest China's Gobi Desert at 9:22 a.m. (Beijing Time), according to the China Manned Space Agency (CMSA).

The three astronauts are commander Nie Haisheng, a 56-year-old veteran who participated in the Shenzhou-6 and Shenzhou-10 missions, Liu Boming, 54, who was part of the Shenzhou-7 mission, and Tang Hongbo, 45, who is in his first space mission. The three astronauts are expected to set a new record for China's manned space mission duration, exceeding the 33 days kept by the Shenzhou-11 crew in 2016. The Shenzhou-12 spaceship will conduct a fast autonomous rendezvous and docking with the in-orbit space station core module Tianhe, forming a complex with Tianhe and the cargo craft Tianzhou-2. The astronauts will be stationed in the core module.

http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2021-06/17/c_1310012600.htm

China's nuclear safety queried over Taishan reactor, but it wants to lead world by 2050

Stephen Chen

South China Morning Post, June 21, 2021

China aims to become a dominant player in the world nuclear market in less than 30 years and have the highest safety standards and lowest costs, a government advisory body has said. For decades, China tried to catch up with safety standards in Western countries, led by the United States and France. But now China plans to challenge them, the Chinese Academy of Engineering (CAE) said in a report published. It comes two months after a slight increase in radioactivity was detected deep inside a reactor in Taishan, in the southern Chinese province of Guangdong, which later attracted international attention.

Chinese data suggested there was no leakage outside the reactor, but the event raised concerns about the safety of the booming nuclear sector in China, which is building seven to eight new reactors a year – far more than any other country. Amid reports of ‘radiological threat’, supplier says Chinese nuclear power plant operating safely. According to the academy’s strategic road map, drawn up by nuclear safety scientists, China could start to rival Western dominance by 2025 through safety improvements, including a new national laboratory on safety analysis. By 2035, China aims to match Western nations in a range of areas including international standard drafting, industrial software development and manufacture of equipment, with a “radical reduction on cost”. And by 2050, the road map describes China leading the setting of new industry standards for global nuclear power and taking “a bigger share in the international market”.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/science/article/3138214/chinas-nuclear-safety-queried-over-taishan-reactor-it-wants-lead>

China starts building underground lab

World Nuclear News, June 21, 2021

A ground-breaking ceremony was held at the Beishan site on 17 June. Among those attending the event were representatives of CAEA, the Ministry of Ecology and Environment, Gansu Province, Jiuquan City, Subei County, China National Nuclear Corporation, China Uranium Company Limited and Beijing Geological Research Institute of the Nuclear Industry. "This will be the world's largest underground laboratory with the most comprehensive functions and the widest participation," CAEA said. "It will provide an important scientific research platform for the construction of a deep geological repository for high-level radioactive waste, speed up the process of safe disposal of high-level radioactive waste, and ensure the healthy and sustainable development

of the nuclear industry."

The Beishan Underground Research Laboratory was one of 100 major scientific construction projects listed in China's 13th Five-Year Plan, covering 2016-2020. In 2019, the project was approved by the CAEA, with the Beijing Institute of Geology of the Nuclear Industry designated as the leader of the project. The laboratory's surface facilities will cover 247 hectares, with 2.39 hectares of gross floor space, its chief designer, Wang Ju, vice-president of the Beijing Research Institute of Uranium Geology said in an interview with China Daily in April. He said the underground complex will have a total structural volume of 514,200 square cubic meters, along with 13.4 kilometers of tunnels. The laboratory is estimated to cost over CNY2.72 billion (USD420 million) and take seven years to build. It is designed to operate for 50 years, and if its research proves successful and the site is suitable, an underground repository for high-level waste will be built near the laboratory by 2050. Wang said, "The lab will provide critical support in the safe geological disposal of high-level waste, which is crucial for the sustainable development of nuclear energy in China." Industrial scale disposal of low and intermediate-level waste is carried out at three sites in China: near Yumen, northwest Gansu province; at the Beilong repository in Guangdong province near the Daya Bay nuclear plant; and at Feifengshan, Sichuan province.

<https://world-nuclear-news.org/Articles/China-starts-building-underground-lab>

China builds bunker to test whether nuclear waste can be dumped underground

Echo Xie

South China Morning Post, June 23, 2021

Lab more than 500 metres underground in the Gobi Desert will be the world's largest of its kind. If research there is successful, a long-term underground dump for high-level radioactive waste could be built, helping to address a global problem. China has started building a laboratory deep underground in the Gobi Desert to assess whether it would be a suitable location for a nuclear waste dump, amid moves to expand its nuclear power capacity.

The Beishan Underground Research Laboratory in the northwestern province of Gansu will be used to research long-term storage of high-level radioactive waste. With its deepest level to be built 560 metres (1,837 feet) below ground, it will be the world's largest lab of its kind, according to the China Nuclear Energy Association, which promotes nuclear power. The world has about a quarter of a million tonnes of highly radioactive waste, all kept in "temporary" storage. No country has found a solution for permanent deep geological storage, with public opposition often a factor. China's attempt to find an answer comes at a time when it plans to build a fleet of new reactors. Disposal of high-level radioactive waste is becoming more critical as it uses more nuclear power and tries to become carbon neutral. The Chinese government aims by 2025 to expand the country's nuclear capacity by about 40 per cent from its late-2020 level. Nuclear power currently makes up only about 5 per cent of China's power generation.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/science/article/3138484/china-builds-bunker-test-whether-nuclear-waste-can-be-dumped>

China voices opposition to Japan's nuclear wastewater plan at UN Human Rights Council CGTN, June 24, 2021

China has raised complaints at the United Nations Human Rights Council over a Japanese decision

to dump radioactive wastewater into the sea. Jiang Duan, minister of the Chinese mission to the UN in Geneva, raised the issue during a discussion presided over by the UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Health. Japan has announced it will release more than a million tons of water contaminated following an accident at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant into the Pacific Ocean. Nearby countries including South Korea and Russia have expressed concern over the plans.

"Despite doubts and opposition from at home and abroad, Japan has unilaterally decided to release the Fukushima nuclear wastewater into the sea before exhausting all safe ways of disposal and without fully consulting with neighboring countries and the international community, which is extremely irresponsible," Jiang said.

<https://newseu.cgtn.com/news/2021-06-24/China-voices-opposition-to-Japan-s-nuclear-wastewater-plan-at-UN--11kY9iP460o/index.html>

China supports S. Korea's just position in condemning Japan's decision to dump wastewater into sea, urges Japan to withdraw mistaken plan: FM

Global Times, June 30, 2021

China's Foreign Ministry said Wednesday that China supports South Korea's just position in condemning Japan's decision to dump wastewater into the sea and urges Japan to withdraw its mistaken decision after a South Korean parliamentary committee on Tuesday approved a resolution condemning the plan. Over the past two months since Japan unilaterally made the decision to discharge the contaminated radioactive water from the Fukushima nuclear power plant into the sea, Pacific Rim countries including China and South Korea, as well as the international organizations including the Pacific Islands Forum have all expressed grave concerns over Japan's decision, said Wang Wenbin, spokesperson of the ministry, at a press conference on Wednesday.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202106/1227512.shtml>

Pakistan

No need for nuclear deterrents once Kashmir issue is resolved: PM Imran

Dawn, June 21, 2021

Prime Minister Imran Khan has said that once the Kashmir issue is resolved, there will no longer be any need for nuclear deterrents. He said this while speaking to journalist Jonathan Swan on Axios on HBO. "Intelligence analysts say Pakistan has the fastest growing nuclear arsenal anywhere in the world. Why?" the interviewer questioned. "I don't know where they've come up with this. Pakistan's nuclear arsenal is simply a deterrent, to protect ourselves," he said, adding that he was "not sure" whether it was growing. "As far as I know, it's not an offensive thing. Any country which has a neighbour seven times its size would be worried."

He went on to say that he was "completely against nuclear arms". "I always have been. We've had three wars against India and ever since we have had a nuclear deterrent, there has been no war between the two countries. We've had border skirmishes but we've never faced war. "The moment there is a settlement on Kashmir, the two neighbours would live as civilised people. We will not need to have nuclear deterrents."

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1630650>

USA

Biden, Putin discuss ambassadors, nuclear weapons and more

AP News, June 17, 2021

Presidents Joe Biden and Vladimir Putin of Russia spent more than three hours discussing issues Wednesday at their summit in Geneva. They ticked through their respective lists so quickly and in such “excruciating detail,” Biden says, that they looked at each other and thought, “OK, what next?” Biden and Putin agreed to return their respective ambassadors to Washington and Moscow in a bid to improve badly deteriorated diplomatic relations between their countries. Russia’s ambassador to the United States, Anatoly Antonov, left Washington in March amid a row after Biden called Putin a killer in a television interview and imposed new sanctions on Russia over its treatment of opposition figure Alexei Navalny.

John Sullivan, the U.S. ambassador to Russia, flew out of Moscow in April after public suggestions from Russian officials that he should leave to mirror Antonov’s departure. Both ambassadors were present at Wednesday’s summit. Putin also said the Russian foreign ministry and the U.S. State Department would begin consultations on other vexing diplomatic issues, including the closures of consulates in both countries and the employment status of Russian citizens working for U.S. missions in Russia.

<https://apnews.com/article/donald-trump-joe-biden-middle-east-europe-nuclear-weapons-d67aee227ce9c7e9482af48cc6a10222>

Biden extends sanctions on N. Korea amid US outreach

Yonhap

Korea Herald, June 22, 2021

US President Joe Biden said Monday he decided to extend US sanctions on North Korea for another year, a move that follows the latest US outreach to the reclusive nation for dialogue at any time and place. In a letter to the speaker of the US House of Representatives, Biden said the North's fissile material as well as its pursuit of nuclear and missile programs "continue to constitute an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States." "For this reason, I have determined that it is necessary to continue the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13466 with respect to North Korea," he said in the letter, released by the White House. The executive order declaring a national emergency with respect to North Korea first went into effect on June 26, 2008, under the George W. Bush administration.

http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20210622000231&ACE_SEARCH=1

US officials double down on push for nuclear modernization

Susan Montoya Bryan

AP News, June 25, 2021

A top U.S. nuclear security official and the leaders of three key national laboratories doubled down Friday on the push to modernize the country’s nuclear arsenal and the science and technology that back it up. During a virtual forum, the officials acknowledged global pressures that include more investment by Russia and China in nuclear weapons and advanced laser capabilities. They said the United States

is at a “tipping point” when it comes to maintaining its own arsenal and that boosting production capabilities cannot be put off.

The United States has an opportunity to re-imagine its entire nuclear enterprise — from how weapons are designed, engineered and produced to how related business systems are managed, said Kim Budil, the director of Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory in California. She said new technology and tools are being developed that will be key for speeding that process along and keeping costs down. She pointed to three-dimensional simulations that can be done in a day now, rather than months. Budil and the directors of Los Alamos and Sandia national laboratories, which are both in New Mexico, also talked about the global race to attract the next generation of scientists. “It’s true in computing, it’s true in materials, AI, machine learning — you name a critical technology and the competition in the (science and technology) arena is extraordinary on the international stage today,” Bidul said. “So it is something we think about, and it’s important that the U.S. establish not just our production infrastructure, which is critically important, but that we sustain that intellectual leadership that really is a vital part of our deterrent.”

<https://apnews.com/article/joe-biden-technology-science-government-and-politics-business-f47e399b7404977c3d55e056be6a893b>

Biden vows to Israel: No nuclear weapon for Iran on my watch

Andrea Shalal and Steve Holland
Reuters, June 27, 2021

U.S. President Joe Biden, in a meeting on Monday with Israeli President Reuven Rivlin, said his commitment to Israel is “iron-clad” and he looks forward to meeting with new Israeli Prime Minister Naftali Bennett soon. Biden, in his first meeting as president with a top Israeli official, also said Iran would not come to possess a nuclear weapon during his time in office. “My commitment to Israel is ... ironclad,” Biden told Rivlin at the start of their meeting in the Oval Office. He said the two officials would discuss a range of topics, including Iran. “What I can say to you is that Iran will never get a nuclear weapon on my watch,” Biden said.

The meeting took place just weeks after Bennett took over as Israel's new prime minister, replacing Benjamin Netanyahu. U.S. officials are working on setting up a meeting between Biden and Bennett in the coming weeks. “He’s going to invite the prime minister of Israel in the very next days in order to find a way to go forward and to exchange ideas,” Rivlin said of Biden after their meeting.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/biden-israeli-president-rivlin-discuss-iran-israel-defense-needs-2021-06-27/>

Biden tells Israel president he won’t tolerate nuclear Iran

Aamer Madhani and Josh Boak
AP News, June 28, 2021

President Joe Biden sought to assure Israel that he would not tolerate a nuclear Iran as he met with outgoing Israeli President Reuven Rivlin on Monday amid a major shakeup in Israeli politics and growing angst in Tel Aviv over the U.S. administration’s effort to reenter the Iran nuclear deal. Biden noted that he had ordered airstrikes a day earlier targeting facilities the U.S. military says were used by Iran-backed militia groups near the border between Iraq and Syria. The rhetoric seemed to underscore

that he would remain tough on malign Iran activity even as he seeks a diplomatic track to stem Tehran's nuclear program. "What I can say to you is that Iran will never get a nuclear weapon on my watch," Biden said at the White House meeting.

The meeting with Rivlin, who is making his final foreign trip of his presidency, took place just weeks after Naftali Bennett became Israel's new prime minister, replacing Benjamin Netanyahu. The Biden administration, meanwhile, has intensified efforts to revive Iran's 2015 accord with world powers to limit Tehran's ability to develop nuclear weapons.

<https://apnews.com/article/joe-biden-israel-iran-middle-east-iran-nuclear-9020c188f46eaba856dc6c3bec910f06>

U.S. troops come under fire in Syria after strikes against Iran-backed militias

Idrees Ali and Phil Stewart

Reuters, June 29, 2021

U.S. troops came under rocket fire in Syria on Monday, but escaped injury, in apparent retaliation for weekend U.S. air strikes against Iran-aligned militia in Syria and Iraq. A U.S. military spokesman said U.S. forces had responded to the multiple rockets by firing back at the positions in self-defense. "There are no (U.S.) injuries and damage is being assessed," Colonel Wayne Marotto said, referring to the rocket attack. He did not say who was responsible for the attack on U.S. troops.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/us-says-its-strikes-iran-backed-militia-iraq-syria-were-necessary-2021-06-28/>

Groups sue Biden admin over planned expansion of nuke work

Michelle Liu

AP News, June 29, 2021

Watchdog groups sued the Biden administration Tuesday over its plans to produce plutonium cores for the U.S. nuclear stockpile, arguing federal agencies have failed to conduct a detailed environmental review of potential impacts around installations in New Mexico and South Carolina. A lawsuit filed against the Energy Department and the National Nuclear Security Administration calls on the federal agency that oversees U.S. nuclear research and bombmaking to take a legally required "hard look" at impacts on local communities and possible alternatives before expanding manufacturing of the plutonium cores used to trigger nuclear weapons.

The suit comes as U.S. officials have doubled down on a push to modernize the country's nuclear arsenal and the science and technology that accompany it, citing global security concerns. The nuclear agency has said most of the plutonium cores currently in the stockpile date back to the 1970s and 1980s.

<https://apnews.com/article/environment-and-nature-government-and-politics-d0bd1b824d1f42c591ea3d2f87374b17>

Europe

France

French power production lowered by workers protesting nuclear reform

Reuters, June 22

Strikes by workers protesting against a French nuclear reform plan had cut nuclear power generation by about 2.5 gigawatts by 1350 GMT Tuesday plus 800 megawatts at hydropower stations, data from power group EDF (EDF.PA) showed. That represents around 5.7% of available production capacity as of Tuesday afternoon, data from RTE and EDF showed. EDF said about 10.5% of workers participated in Tuesday's action. France was a net power exporter throughout the day on Tuesday, the data showed.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/energy/french-power-production-lowered-by-workers-protesting-nuclear-reform-2021-06-22/>

French minister says time running out on Iran nuclear talks

Reuters, June 23, 2021

Talks on Iran's nuclear program need to end quickly because time is running out, French junior minister Franck Riester said on Wednesday. Riester told parliament that difficult decisions would need to be taken in coming days or weeks if negotiations do not advance.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/french-minister-says-time-running-out-iran-nuclear-talks-2021-06-23/>

France's Le Drian says waiting for Iran to make decision on nuclear deal

Reuters, June 25, 2021

Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian on Friday said France was waiting for Iran to take the last-step decisions needed to breathe new life into Iran's 2015 nuclear deal. "We're waiting for Iranian authorities to take the final difficult decisions to allow for the revival of the 2015 nuclear deal," Le Drian told a joint news conference with U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken in Paris.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/frances-le-drian-says-waiting-iran-make-decision-nuclear-deal-2021-06-25/>

France says Iran must resume co-operation with IAEA nuclear watchdog

Reuters, June 28, 2021

Iran must resume co-operating with the International Atomic Energy Agency nuclear watchdog and immediately restore full access to it, said the French foreign ministry on Monday. The French foreign ministry added it regretted the lack of confirmation by Iran of a monitoring deal with the IAEA. Iran said on Monday that it had yet to decide whether to extend a monitoring deal with the U.N. nuclear watchdog which lapsed last week, amid Washington's warning that Tehran's failure to renew it would complicate talks to revive its 2015 nuclear accord.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/france-says-iran-must-resume-co-operation-with-iaea-nuclear-watchdog-2021-06-28/>

Germany

Iran, world powers making progress in nuclear talks - Germany's Maas

Reuters, June 23, 2021

Iran and world powers have been making progress in talks to revive their 2015 nuclear accord but still have to overcome major hurdles, German Foreign Minister Heiko Maas said on Wednesday. "We are making progress but there are still some nuts to crack," Maas told a joint news conference with U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken, adding that a deal was possible even after the election victory of a hardline Iranian president.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/iran-world-powers-making-progress-nuclear-talks-germanys-maas-2021-06-23/>

UK

EDF calls for funding legislation for new UK nuclear power plant

Kate Holton

Reuters, June 23, 2021

France's EDF (EDF.PA) called on the British government to deliver the legislation that would underpin the financing of a new nuclear plant, Sizewell C, saying it was now essential. Simone Rossi, the UK head of EDF, said in an interview at the Reuters Events: Global Energy Transition conference, that lots of progress had been made on multiple fronts but the legislation underpinning the new financing scheme was now needed. "I am led to believe it is quite possible to have this legislation included in the second session of parliament this coming autumn," he said. "I would say this is an essential prerequisite for the project to be enabled because the project needs to be timely delivered and this legislation is now really, really essential."

Asked if his company had a Plan B in the event the government did not advance with the legislation, he said: "We do not really. I have to say that would be for the UK government to consider." "The main avenue has been drawn in terms of funding mechanism for this project, I think it's a very solid one, a very robust one. "It just requires enabling legislation. There is every reason to believe that this legislation will be making progress as planned."

<https://www.reuters.com/business/energy/reuters-events-edf-calls-uk-produce-sizewell-funding-legislation-2021-06-23/>

Russia

Kola II construction to start in 2028

World Nuclear News, June 2021

Russia's Rosatom plans to start construction of new units for the Kola II nuclear power plant project in 2028, with commissioning of the first unit set for 2034. The dates were announced by the Kola plant's director, Vasily Omelchuk, at an online press conference on 18 June. The existing four Kola units are VVER-440 reactors; 1 and 2 are V-230 models and 3 and 4 are of the V-213 type. Units 1-4 have received licence extensions to 2033, 2029, 2027 and 2029, respectively. Rosatom says Kola II will consist of two VVER-600 units.

Noting the need to replace capacity when units are retired, Omelchuk said the decision to build Kola II had been made at the end of the 1990s, "but was not implemented". At the same time, a site for the new units was chosen and preliminary investigations were carried out. The Kola nuclear power plant

was the first to be built in the harsh climatic conditions of the Arctic, Rosatom noted. Today, it transmits electricity across five power lines, providing reliable energy supply to the northern part of the Republic of Karelia - where most of the region's major industrial enterprises are located - as well as to more than half of the consumers in the Kola Peninsula. Replacement of the retiring capacity will not only enable economic and social development in the region, Rosatom said, but will also open up opportunities for the implementation of new industrial projects, including through additional investments.

<https://world-nuclear-news.org/Articles/Kola-II-construction-to-start-in-2028>

Russia says Iran nuclear deal is 'within reach' -TASS

Reuters, June 25, 2021

Russia's Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov said on Friday a nuclear deal with Iran is "within reach", the TASS news agency cited him as saying.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/russia-says-iran-nuclear-deal-is-within-reach-tass-2021-06-25/>

West Asia

Iran

Iran's Bushehr nuclear power plant temporarily shutdown - state TV

Reuters, June 20, 2021

Iran's Bushehr nuclear power plant has been temporarily shutdown for technical overhaul, Iranian state TV said on Sunday.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/irans-bushehr-nuclear-power-plant-temporarily-shutdown-state-tv-2021-06-20/>

President-elect Raisi issues warning over talks

BBC, June 21, 2021

Ebrahim Raisi Iran's ballistic missile programme and regional issues were not up for discussion. Iran's president-elect has welcomed the negotiations with world powers aimed at reviving a 2015 nuclear deal but said they must guarantee national interests. At his first news conference since his victory in Friday's election, Ebrahim Raisi promised he would not allow the talks in Vienna to be dragged out. He also insisted that Iran's ballistic missile programme was "not negotiable". The nuclear deal has been close to collapse since the US abandoned it and reinstated sanctions three years ago.

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-57552639>

Iran says U.S. to lift oil sanctions, Germany cautious on matter

Humeyra Pamuk and Parisa Hafezi

Reuter, June 23, 2021

Iran said on Wednesday the United States had agreed to remove all sanctions on Iran's oil and shipping, although Germany cautioned that major issues remained at talks between Tehran and world powers to revive a 2015 nuclear deal. The Iranian remarks, by outgoing President Hassan Rouhani's chief of staff, echoed previous assertions by officials in Rouhani's pragmatist camp that Washington is prepared to make major concessions at the talks, under way since April in Vienna.

The talks adjourned on Sunday for a break, two days after Iran held a presidential election won by hardliner Ebrahim Raisi, the Iranian judiciary chief who is on a U.S. blacklist. Raisi is due to replace Rouhani in August.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/iran-official-says-us-has-agreed-lift-oil-shipping-sanctions-2021-06-23/>

Iran says nuclear deal salvageable but will not negotiate forever

Reuters, June 26, 2021

Iran said on Saturday it believes a reinstatement of its 2015 nuclear deal with major world powers is possible but warned that Tehran "will not negotiate forever". "Out of a steadfast commitment to salvage a deal that the US tried to torpedo, Iran has been the most active party in Vienna, proposing most drafts," Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh said on Twitter, referring to talks aimed at reviving the nuclear deal. Iran and the United States have been holding indirect talks on reviving the 2015 agreement between Tehran and six powers that imposed restrictions on Tehran's nuclear activities in exchange for lifting international sanctions.

Then U.S. President Donald Trump withdrew Washington from the agreement in 2018, but President Joe Biden has been seeking to revive it. Officials on all sides have said there are major issues to resolve before the deal can be reinstated. "Still believe a deal is possible, if the US decides to abandon Trump's failed legacy. Iran will not negotiate forever," Khatibzadeh tweeted.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/iran-says-nuclear-deal-salvageable-will-not-negotiate-forever-2021-06-26/>

Iran refuses to give nuclear site images to IAEA

Parisa Hafezi

Reuters, June 27, 2021

The speaker of Iran's parliament said on Sunday Tehran will never hand over images from inside of some Iranian nuclear sites to the U.N. nuclear watchdog as a monitoring agreement with the agency had expired, Iranian state media reported. "The agreement has expired ... any of the information recorded will never be given to the International Atomic Energy Agency and the data and images will remain in the possession of Iran," said Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf. The announcement could further complicate talks between Iran and six major powers on reviving a 2015 nuclear deal. Three years ago then U.S. President Donald Trump withdrew from the pact and reimposed crippling sanctions on Tehran; Iran reacted by violating many of the deal's restrictions on its nuclear programme.

A spokesman for parliament's National Security and Foreign Affairs Committee warned that "Iran will also turn off the IAEA cameras if the United States fails to remove all sanctions", the state-run Tehran Times newspaper's website reported.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/iran-says-nuclear-site-images-wont-be-given-iaea-deal-has-expired-2021-06-27/>

Iran's recovery seen as modest with return to original nuclear deal - IIF

Reuters, June 27, 2021

Iran's economic recovery is likely to be modest should it revive a 2015 nuclear deal with six world powers without expanding the scope of the pact, according to a trade body for the global financial industry. "The likely outcome for the JCPOA (Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action) negotiations is a return to the 2015 agreement, which would keep many sanctions in place. Such a limited agreement would deter significant investment by Western firms, making a sharp pickup in growth unlikely," it said.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/idUSKCN2E30AC>

Israel

Israel tells U.S. it has serious reservations about Iran nuclear deal

Humeyra Pamuk

Reuters, June 28, 2021

Israel has serious reservations about the Iran nuclear deal being put together in Vienna, new foreign minister Yair Lapid told his American counterpart, as he pledged to fix "the mistakes made" in U.S.-Israeli relations in recent years. In their first face-to-face meeting since Israel's new government was sworn in two weeks ago, U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken and Lapid had a very positive and warm discussion, according to U.S. officials.

The main topics were the nuclear deal and Israel's normalisation accords with Gulf Arab states, as well as humanitarian aid to Gaza and the status of East Jerusalem, a topic that helped fuel the latest wave of violence between the Israelis and Palestinians in May. "Israel has some serious reservations about the Iran nuclear deal that is being put together in Vienna. We believe the way to discuss those disagreements is through direct and professional conversations, not in press conferences," Lapid said in brief remarks ahead of the meeting in Rome.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/meeting-with-us-israel-expresses-serious-reservations-iran-nuclear-deal-2021-06-27/>

Saudi Arabia

Saudi minister discussed Iran's nuclear program with IAEA chief -ministry

Reuters, June 22, 2021

Saudi Arabia's foreign minister discussed with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) chief "the importance of imposing the necessary mechanisms for a rapid and comprehensive inspection of all Iranian nuclear sites," the foreign ministry wrote in a tweet on Monday. Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud, who is on an official visit to Vienna, also discussed with IAEA's Rafael Grossi "stopping Iranian policies and violations of international laws and norms that destabilize the security and stability of the region and the world," the ministry added.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/saudi-minister-discussed-irans-nuclear-program-with-iaea-chief-ministry-2021-06-21/>

Saudi Arabia says it will judge Iran's Raisi by 'reality on the ground'

Reuters, June 28, 2021

Saudi Arabia will judge Iranian President-elect Ebrahim Raisi's government by "the reality on the ground", the kingdom's foreign minister said on Tuesday, while adding that Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei has the final say on foreign policy. Raisi, a hardline judge who secured an expected election victory on Saturday, said on Monday he wanted to improve ties with Gulf Arab neighbours while calling on regional rival Saudi Arabia to immediately halt its intervention in Yemen.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/saudi-arabia-says-it-will-judge-irans-raisi-by-reality-ground-2021-06-22/>

East Asia

North Korea

North Korea warns U.S. misinterpreting signals risks disappointment

Josh Smith

Reuters, June 22, 2021

The sister of North Korean leader Kim Jong Un warned the United States on Tuesday it would be disappointed were it to seek comfort in comments by her brother, while a U.S. envoy met South Korea's president aiming to revive talks with North Korea. Kim Yo Jong, who is also a senior official in North Korea's ruling party, released a statement in state media saying the United States appeared to be interpreting signals from North Korea in the "wrong way." She was responding to U.S. national security adviser Jake Sullivan, who on Sunday said he saw as an "interesting signal" a recent speech by Kim Jong Un on preparing for both confrontation and diplomacy with the United States.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/us-skorea-consider-ending-controversial-north-korea-coordinating-group-2021-06-22/>

South Korea

Ruling party chief proposes small modular reactors as way of energy aid to nuke-free N. Korea

Yonhap

Korea Herald, June 16, 2021

The head of South Korea's ruling party on Wednesday proposed the installation of small modular reactors (SMRs) in North Korea, calling it a useful way to supply energy to the country when it is free from nuclear weapons. "Under the precondition of resolving the North Korean nuclear issue, SMRs could be a useful way to supply energy to North Korea that has many mountainous regions and a shortage of power transmission and distribution networks," Rep. Song Young-gil, chairman of the ruling Democratic Party (DP), said in his speech to a parliamentary plenary session.

"SMR is highly likely to emerge as an effective energy source for Middle Eastern nations or countries with heavy geographical restrictions." The party chief made the proposal as part of his broader vision to help his country attain carbon neutrality. "There are barriers to attaining complete carbon neutrality only based on renewable energy. It will be inevitable to come up with an energy mix that taps into hydrogen and nuclear energy (as well) for a pretty long while," Song noted.

http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20210616000545&ACE_SEARCH=1

NK hackers attacked S Korean atomic energy think tank

Kim So-hyun

Korea Herald, June 18, 2021

An opposition lawmaker claimed on Friday that a hacking unit of the North Korean intelligence agency attacked the internal network of a South Korean state-funded atomic energy think tank which holds critical information on nuclear power plants and nuclear materials. Rep. Ha Tae-keung of the People Power Party, who sits on the parliamentary intelligence committee, held a press conference Friday morning and disclosed information about the alleged cyberattacks on the Korea Atomic Energy Research Institute. According to the data, 13 unauthorized, external IPs accessed the internal network of KAERI on May 14.

A research group specializing in Pyongyang's cyberterrorist activities tracked the IPs and confirmed that some were connected to the server of a hacking unit called "kimsuky" under the North's Reconnaissance General Bureau, Ha said. Kimsuky is believed to have led hacking attacks on pharmaceutical companies such as AstraZeneca and Celltrion last year. The research group also confirmed that some of the IP addresses had previously used the email address of Moon Chung-in, former special advisor to President Moon Jae-in on foreign affairs, which suggests that they are related to the hacking incident of Moon's email in 2018, Ha said. "Had the nation's core technologies on nuclear power been leaked, it could be recorded as a mega security accident comparable to the hacking of the national defense network in 2016," he said. Ha also claimed that KAERI tried to cover up the recent hacking attempt by saying there was no such incident when he initially asked them. "It is impossible to not know that it happened. The government should disclose what happened," he said.

http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20210618000623&ACE_SEARCH=1

S. Korea to speed up efforts to bag Czech nuclear plant project

Yonhap

Korea Herald, June 19, 2021

South Korea's industry ministry said Saturday it will spare no efforts to win a nuclear plant project from the Czech Republic as the European country is open to have Asia's No. 4 economy as a potential partner. The remark came after Industry Minister Moon Sung-wook visited the European nation, where he met Czech Prime Minister Andrej Babis on Friday (Czech time) to discuss the two countries' possible cooperation in the nuclear energy segment. During the meeting, Babis pointed out that South Korean firms should have no hurdles in participating in the bid, compared with those from China or Russia that face concerns over security risks from the opposition parties in the Czech Republic, according to the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Energy.

The Czech Republic plans to build an additional reactor in the southern region of Dukovany. The official bidding process is expected to begin in 2022, with the construction set to start in 2029. The

ministry said the size of the project is estimated at around 8 trillion won (\$7 billion). Currently, the United States and France are also eyeing the project.

http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20210619000029&ACE_SEARCH=1

Seoul nuke envoy stresses need to resolve N.K. issue through dialogue

Yonhap

Korea Herald, June 22, 2021

South Korea's top nuclear negotiator stressed Tuesday the importance of resolving the North Korean nuclear issue through dialogue and diplomacy, casting it a great challenge to international security beyond the Korean Peninsula. Noh Kyu-duk, special representative for Korean Peninsula peace and security affairs, made the remark in a videoconference co-hosted by the French Institute for International and Strategic Affairs and the South Korean Embassy in France, as he explained Seoul's efforts to help resume the stalled nuclear talks between the United States and the North.

"Ambassador Noh said in the keynote speech that the international community reaffirmed the shared commitment toward achieving the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula through the recent South Korea-U.S. summit and the Group of Seven summit," the foreign ministry said. "He emphasized the importance of resolving the Korean Peninsula issue through dialogue and diplomacy," it said.

http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20210622000950&ACE_SEARCH=1

Japan

As Japan reboots ageing Mihama nuclear reactor, experts express concern

Aaron Sheldrick

Reuters, June 22, 2021

The head of a major inquiry into Japan's nuclear disaster and a former senior Cabinet adviser have sounded alarms over plans this week to restart a 44-year old reactor, saying the industry and government have not taken on board the lessons from Fukushima. Kansai Electric Power (9503.T), which serves Osaka and its industrial environs - an area with roughly the same economic output as Mexico - said it restarted the No. 3 reactor at its Mihama station in western Japan earlier on Wednesday.

The reactor is the oldest to be restarted since the 2011 Fukushima disaster and needed special approval to have its lifetime extended beyond the standard 40-year limit. Most reactors in Japan remain shut after the accident highlighted failings in regulation and oversight. Tatsujiro Suzuki, a former deputy chairman of the Cabinet Office's Atomic Energy Commission, told Reuters he has misgivings over how approval for the restart was obtained. He said he was concerned about a lack of transparency and the use of subsidies to sweeten local opinion to get the necessary restart approval.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/japan-reboots-44-year-old-nuclear-reactor-experts-sound-alarm-2021-06-22/>

World/Misc

National security adviser Jake Sullivan says preventing Iran from obtaining nuclear weapon is 'paramount priority' for United States

Felicia Sonmez, Marianna Sotomayor and Jeanne Whalen
Washington Post, June 20, 2021

National security adviser Jake Sullivan said Sunday that preventing Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon remains a “paramount priority” for the United States, emphasizing that diplomacy “is the best way to achieve that.” Sullivan weighed in on the issue during appearances on the Sunday morning news shows one day after the election of Iran’s new president, Ebrahim Raisi, who was previously the country’s ultraconservative judiciary chief.

“Well, I think what we need to do in the United States is keep our eye on the ball,” Sullivan said when asked about Iran on ABC News’s “This Week.” “And that is — our paramount priority right now is to prevent Iran from getting a nuclear weapon. We believe that diplomacy is the best way to achieve that, rather than military conflict. And so, we’re going to negotiate in a clear-eyed, firm way with the Iranians to see if we can arrive at an outcome that puts their nuclear program in a box.” Sullivan added that the United States believes the decision on whether to revive the 2015 nuclear deal lies not with Raisi but with Iran’s 82-year-old supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. “He was the same person before this election as he is after the election, so ultimately, it lies with him,” Sullivan said.

https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/sullivan-iran-nuclear-weapons/2021/06/20/20fa0c26-d1d0-11eb-ae54-515e2f63d37d_story.html

Iran elected a hard-liner president. What does that mean for the nuclear deal?

Henry Rome

Washington Post, June 21, 2021

Judiciary chief Ebrahim Raisi has been voted Iran’s next president in an election that had historically low turnout. Raisi is a hard-liner, closely aligned with Ayatollah Ali Khamenei’s anti-Western views. When Raisi takes office in August, he will chart a different course in foreign and domestic policy than President Hassan Rouhani, a relative moderate who aimed to expand Iran’s engagement with the world. No issue will be more important or sensitive than the 2015 nuclear agreement, the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). Since April, the United States, Iran and other parties have been negotiating a path to reviving the deal, which imposed limits on Iran’s nuclear program in exchange for relief from economic sanctions. The issues are complex and negotiations may not be completed when Raisi starts his term.

The hard-liner’s election probably does not mean the death of the JCPOA, which experts believe is in Iran’s economic interest. But the transition is likely to complicate the deal’s implementation and add additional barriers to subsequent negotiations. This may weigh on the longer-term sustainability of the deal.

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2021/06/21/iran-elected-hardliner-president-what-does-that-mean-nuclear-deal/>

IAEA wants 'immediate response' from Iran on extending monitoring deal

Francois Murphy

Reuters, June 25, 2021

Iran has not responded to the U.N. atomic watchdog on extending their monitoring agreement that expired overnight, the agency said on Friday, calling for an "immediate" answer on the issue that threatens to derail wider talks on the Iran nuclear deal. The agreement continues the International Atomic Energy Agency's collection of data on some of Tehran's activities, cushioning the blow of Iran's decision in February to reduce cooperation with the agency.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/no-reply-iran-extending-monitoring-deal-iaea-says-2021-06-25/>

IAEA demands Iran answer on monitoring, Iran says not obliged to reply

Francois Murphy and John Irish, Humeyra Pamuk
Reuters, June 25, 2021

The U.N. nuclear watchdog on Friday demanded an immediate reply from Iran on whether it would extend a monitoring agreement that expired overnight, prompting an Iranian envoy to respond that Tehran was under no obligation to provide an answer. The agreement continued the International Atomic Energy Agency's collection of data on some of Tehran's activities, cushioning the blow of Iran's decision in February to reduce cooperation with the agency. read more "An immediate response from Iran is needed in this regard," the IAEA said in a statement summarising a report by its chief Rafael Grossi to its 35-nation Board of Governors that was also seen by Reuters. Grossi wrote to Iran last week "to understand Iran's position regarding the possible continued collection, recording and retention of data", the report said. As of Friday, Iran had not indicated if it intended to maintain the arrangement, it said. Iran's ambassador to the IAEA, Kazem Gharibabadi, "said that Iran was not required to comply" with the IAEA head's request, Iran's semi-official news agency Tasnim reported.

Washington believes Tehran should engage the IAEA without further delay and a failure to do so would contradict Iran's stated desire for both to resume compliance with the 2015 Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action nuclear deal as soon as possible, said a U.S. State Department official. "Iran should engage the IAEA without further delay to ensure appropriate measures remain in place so the IAEA's continuity of knowledge on JCPOA monitoring can be readily re-established," the U.S. official said on condition of anonymity.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/us-blinken-says-lack-iaea-iran-monitoring-deal-serious-concern-2021-06-25/>

Hardening stances by Iran and U.S. complicate negotiations to revive nuclear deal

Kareem Fahim and Karen DeYoung
Washington Post, June 27, 2021

Iran's parliament speaker said Sunday that Tehran would never share with the U.N. nuclear watchdog recorded footage of activity at some of its nuclear sites, in a sign of the hardening rhetoric by both Iran and the United States during the prolonged and increasingly tense negotiations aimed at reviving a 2015 nuclear accord.

The comments by the parliament speaker, Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf, came days after the expiration of a separate agreement between Tehran and the International Atomic Energy Agency, or IAEA, that allows the U.N. agency to temporarily monitor Iran's nuclear activity. The deal was struck in February and renewed for a month in May.

https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle_east/iran-biden-nuclear-deal/2021/06/27/08507cf2-d750-11eb-8c87-ad6f27918c78_story.html

Contribute Articles

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

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

Disclaimer:

Data included in this newsletter is only for educational purpose and wider dissemination. All liabilities and rights belong to respective writers & authors.

Indian Pugwash Society
No.1, Development Enclave,
Rao Tula Ram Marg, Near USI, Delhi-110010
Tel. No (91-11) 2671-7983
Fax No. (91-11)2615-4192
Email: indianpugwashsociety@gmail.com