

Nuclear, Missile & Space Digest

Volume 15, Number 12

A Fortnightly Newsletter from the Indian Pugwash Society

June 30, 2023

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A. India

iCET initiative as important as India-US nuclear deal: US-India Business Council president Atul Keshap

ANI News, June 1, 2023

Terming the ties between India and the United States as “fantastic”, US-India Business Council President Atul Keshap has said that the two countries are on a path of strategic, economic and technological convergence and are increasing cooperation for developing future technologies of the 21st century.

In an interview with ANI, Atul Keshap called the US-India initiative on Critical and Emerging Technology (iCET) as “important as the nuclear deal.”

“Let’s keep in mind that for the last 25 years, our two countries have been on a path of strategic, economic and now technological convergence. We used to have a very difficult relationship back in the days when I joined the Foreign Service.

<https://www.aninews.in/news/world/us/icet-initiative-as-important-as-india-us-nuclear-deal-us-india-business-council-president-atul-keshap20230601165400/>

India Successfully Conducts Training Launch of ‘Agni-1’ Nuclear-Capable Ballistic Missile

Times of India, June 2, 2023

India conducted a “successful launch” of the medium-range Agni-1 missile from the APJ Abdul Kalam Island off the Odisha coast on Thursday, in yet another test of a nuclear-capable ballistic missile amid the continuing military confrontation with China in eastern Ladakh.

The “training launch” of the Agni-1, which has a strike range of 700km, was conducted by the tri-service Strategic Forces Command (SFC). “The missile is a proven system already inducted into the SFC, and is capable of striking targets with a very high degree of precision. The user launch successfully validated all

operational and technical parameters of the missile,” a defence ministry official said.

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/india-conducts-successful-launch-of-agni-1-missile/articleshow/100689789.cms?from=mdr#>

Lloyd Austin strengthens US-India defence partnership during visit

Mint, June 6, 2023

US Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin wrapped up his visit to India on Monday, aimed at strengthening the major defense partnership between the two countries and advancing cooperation in critical domains, the US Department of Defence said. The visit took place ahead of Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s official state visit to Washington. During his two-day visit, secretary Austin held crucial meetings with National Security Advisor Ajit Doval and Defence Minister Rajnath Singh. The discussions revolved around various regional security issues, with both sides expressing their commitment to close collaboration in order to achieve a free and open Indo-Pacific region.

<https://www.livemint.com/news/world/lloyd-austin-strengthens-us-india-defence-partnership-during-visit-11686066757201.html>

German, Indian companies sign accord on possible India submarine project

AP News, June 7, 2023

German and Indian companies signed an agreement Wednesday that envisions the possible building of six military submarines for India. The memorandum of understanding was signed in the presence of German Defense Minister Boris Pistorius, who was in India on a visit. The agreement calls for Germany’s Thyssenkrupp Marine Systems to engineer and design six non-nuclear submarines that would be built and delivered by India’s Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders with “significant local content.”

<https://apnews.com/article/germany-india-submarines-tkms-mazagon-bc3bc721f70c339f73b750431240511d>

India's nuke arsenal to get boost with 'Agni Prime' missile

Hindustan Times, June 9, 2023

India is set to induct a new ballistic missile capable of delivering nuclear warheads up to 2,000 km away, with the defence ministry on Thursday announcing that the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) conducted a crucial pre-induction launch of the Agni Prime missile from Dr APJ Abdul Kalam Island off the Odisha coast a day earlier. This was the Agni Prime's first pre-induction night launch and validated "the accuracy and reliability" of the weapon system, the defence ministry said.

<https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/indias-nuke-arsenal-to-get-boost-with-new-missile-101686248902788.html>

China fast expanding nuclear arsenal, but India confident of its strategic deterrence

Times of India, June 12, 2023

China continues to rapidly expand its nuclear weapons arsenal, as does Pakistan albeit slowly, but India remains confident of its strategic deterrence capabilities with induction of new-generation Agni ballistic missiles and nuclear-capable Rafale fighter jets. China now has 410 nuclear warheads, up from 350 in January 2022, while Pakistan has 170 and India 164, as per the latest assessment of the Stockholm International Peace Institute (SIPRI) released on Monday.

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/china-fast-expanding-nuclear-arsenal-but-india-confident-of-its-strategic-deterrence/articleshow/100946496.cms?from=mdr>

US NSA Jake Sullivan arrives in Delhi; jet engine deal likely on agenda

Mint, June 13, 2023

US national security adviser Jake Sullivan arrived in New Delhi on Tuesday as India and the US look to secure a landmark

defence deal ahead of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to America, starting 21 June. According to numerous reports, Sullivan, who is one of President Joe Biden's top foreign policy advisers, is in India to finalise a key technology deal that will allow General Electric to co-manufacture jet engines in India alongside Indian aeronautics major HAL. It is expected that the two countries will announce the deal during Prime Minister Modi's state visit to America. The deal will involve technology transfer to India and may require approval from US Congress, according to the media reports.

<https://www.livemint.com/news/world/us-nsa-jake-sullivan-arrives-in-delhi-jet-engine-deal-likely-on-agenda-11686652753781.html>

India prioritising longer-range nuclear weapons that can reach China; Pakistan remains primary focus: Report

Mint, June 13, 2023

The world's nine nuclear-armed nations, in a continuing global trend, have made significant strides in modernising their nuclear arsenals, with some deploying new nuclear-capable weapon systems. The United States, Russia, the United Kingdom, France, China, India, Pakistan, North Korea and Israel are all actively involved in this race for nuclear supremacy. The total global inventory of warheads reached an estimated 12,512 in January 2023, with approximately 9,576 warheads stockpiled for potential use, according to the latest data by The Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI). Among these, around 3,844 warheads were deployed with missiles and aircraft. Notably, Russia and the United States possess nearly 90% of all nuclear weapons, with their respective nuclear arsenals appearing to remain relatively stable in 2022.

<https://www.livemint.com/politics/news/india-prioritising-longer-range-nuclear-weapons-that-can-reach-china-pakistan-remains-primary-focus-report-11686637454265.html>

Indian Navy boosts defence industrial base

Naval Technology, June 13, 2023

Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers Ltd (GRSE), a Kolkata-based shipbuilding company, has launched two warships and has laid the keel for its third vessel on 13 June. The new vessels are anti-submarine warfare shallow water craft (ASWSWC). These ships will replace the Indian Navy's *Abhay*-class frigates and are designed to provide subsurface intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) in littoral waters. The Indian naval vessel market is witnessing steady growth. According to GlobalData's estimates, India is likely to spend \$35.3bn on procuring various types of naval vessels and surface combatants over 2023–2033. As a result, the naval vessels and surface combatants market in India is expected to register a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 4.4% during the forecast period.

<https://www.naval-technology.com/news/indian-navy-boosts-defence-industrial-base/>

India, US near deal to build fighter jet engines in boost to PM Modi's defence manufacturing plan

Economic Times, June 15, 2023

The US and India are likely to agree to jointly manufacture fighter jet engines in the South Asian nation when Prime Minister Narendra Modi visits Washington next week, a sign of closer military cooperation between the two countries in the face of China's growing assertiveness.

The deal is close to the finish line, according to people with knowledge of the matter, who asked not to be identified as the details are confidential. The White House is expected to clear the proposal from General Electric Co., the Massachusetts-based aerospace manufacturing giant, to produce the engines with state-owned Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd. for the Tejas light-combat aircraft, the people said. The jet engine agreement would fit in with Modi's wider push to boost defense manufacturing locally but with technology partnerships with

nations that are keen to draw New Delhi into their orbit as Russia's war in Ukraine drags on into a second year.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/defence/india-us-near-deal-to-build-fighter-jet-engines-in-boost-to-pm-modi-defence-manufacturing-plan/articleshow/101007631.cms>

India approves procurement of U.S. MQ-9B Sea Guardian drones

Reuters, June 15, 2023

India's defence ministry has approved the procurement of U.S.-made armed MQ-9B SeaGuardian drones, sources told Reuters on Thursday. India will buy 31 drones made by General Atomics worth slightly over \$3 billion, one of the sources said. India's defence ministry did not respond to a request for comment. The defence ministry's initial clearance for the procurement comes just days before Prime Minister Narendra Modi leaves for a state visit to the U.S. next week. According to the two sources, Indian defence ministry's apex body for capital procurement met on Thursday to approve the deal, which is expected to be announced when Modi meets U.S. President Joe Biden next week.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/aerospace-defense/india-approves-procurement-us-mq-9b-seaguardian-drones-sources-2023-06-15/>

B. Russia

Kremlin to Build Bomb Shelter in Elite Moscow Hospital

The Moscow Times, June 2, 2023

The Kremlin has signed a deal to build a bomb shelter on the grounds of Moscow's most elite hospital days after unprecedented drone strikes on the Russian capital, according to a procurement contract cited by The Moscow Times' Russian-language service. The 800-person bunker for VIP patients and personnel is expected to be constructed at the Moscow Central Clinical Hospital, a protected facility, in near-record time.

All construction of what is officially termed a "civil defense protective structure" is

expected to be completed by Dec. 20 this year.

<https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2023/06/02/kremlin-to-build-bomb-shelter-in-elite-moscow-hospital-a81378>

Russia Claims Arrests in Ukrainian 'Dirty Bomb' Plot

The Moscow Times, June 6, 2023

Russia's domestic intelligence agency has made arrests in connection with alleged Ukrainian plans to drop "dirty bombs" on Russian energy facilities, state media reported Tuesday.

Russia's Federal Security Service (FSB) said two "pilots" of unknown nationality have been detained and "confessed to the committed and planned terrorist acts," according to the state-run TASS news agency.

The FSB said it had uncovered the alleged dirty bomb plot while investigating a thwarted Ukrainian drone strike on a Russian airfield northeast of Moscow.

<https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2023/06/06/russia-claims-arrests-in-ukrainian-dirty-bomb-plot-a81406>

Russian Defense Ministry Says 'Thwarted' Ukrainian Counteroffensive

The Moscow Times, June 6, 2023

Russia claimed Tuesday that it had repelled Kyiv's long-anticipated counteroffensive in eastern Ukraine after three days of fighting, Russian state-run media reported. "For three days, the Ukrainian regime has launched a long-promised offensive at different points along the frontlines," Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu said. "The offensive attempts were thwarted, the enemy was stopped, Russian soldiers and officers showed courage and heroism in the battles," he said, while claiming Kyiv had suffered "significant and incomparable casualties."

<https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2023/06/06/russian-defense-ministry-says-thwarted-ukrainian-counteroffensive-a81416>

Russia Blames Ukraine for Key Ammonia Pipeline Detonation

The Moscow Times, June 7, 2023

Moscow said Wednesday that a Ukrainian "sabotage" group had blown up the Tolyatti-Odesa pipeline that Russia used to export ammonia before the start of its 15-month offensive.

"A Ukrainian sabotage and reconnaissance group blew up the Tolyatti-Odesa ammonia pipeline" near the village of Masyutovka in the northeastern Kharkiv region on Monday evening, the Russian Defense Ministry said, adding that civilians had been injured.

Footage posted on social media showed white smoke coming out of the Tolyatti-Odesa pipeline, which is the world's longest ammonia pipeline and stretches roughly 2,500 kilometers.

<https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2023/06/07/russia-blames-ukraine-for-key-ammonia-pipeline-detonation-a81433>

SBU: Russian Sabotage Group Behind Kakhovka Dam Explosion

The Moscow Times, June 9, 2023

Ukraine's SBU security service on Friday published an intercepted phone call in which an alleged Russian soldier claims that Tuesday's explosion at the Kakhovka dam was organized by a Russian sabotage group.

"They [the Ukrainian military] didn't blow it up. That was our sabotage group. They wanted to scare [Ukrainians] with this dam," said the man identified by the SBU as a Russian soldier.

"But it didn't go according to plan, [they did] more than they planned to. The construction [of the dam] ... quickly collapsed."

<https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2023/06/09/sbu-russian-sabotage-group-behind-kakhovka-dam-explosion-a81463>

Russia-Iran Ties Are Transactional – And Warming Fast

The Moscow Times, June 9, 2023

Iran-Russia relations have entered a new era of mutual cooperation. Thanks to the war in Ukraine, Moscow and Tehran's interests – whether military, economic or geopolitical – have aligned to an extent not seen for many decades. The contrast with the period before the Russian invasion of Ukraine is striking. Since Feb. 24, 2022, bilateral political meetings have multiplied. High-level delegations are constantly traveling between the two countries. On the economic front, Russian exports to Iran rose 27% last year, and Russian imports from Iran increased 10%. Both sides have agreed to scale up trade in currencies other than the U.S. dollar, while Russia has pledged to invest an unprecedented \$40 billion in Iran's oil and gas sector. In addition, Moscow has bought a large number of Iranian military drones, which it used to attack Ukrainian cities and infrastructure, and possibly some short-range ballistic missiles. Significantly for the military capabilities of the Islamic Republic, Moscow finally allowed Tehran to purchase state-of-the-art Sukhoi Su-35 combat aircraft, as well as air defense and missile systems.

<https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2023/06/09/russia-iran-ties-are-transactional-and-warming-fast-a81414>

UN Visit to Ukraine Nuke Plant Delayed – Russia

The Moscow Times, June 14, 2023

A visit by UN nuclear chief Rafael Grossi to the Moscow-occupied Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant in Ukraine was delayed to Thursday, Russian officials said. Grossi was expected at Europe's largest atomic plant on Wednesday to assess any impacts to the site's safety after the destruction of the Kakhovka dam.

The breach of the dam, which formed a reservoir to provide cooling water for the plant, has exacerbated ongoing concerns over the facility. Kyiv did not confirm the delay and the International Atomic Energy

Agency did not confirm or deny the Russian reports.

<https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2023/06/14/un-visit-to-ukraine-nuke-plant-delayed-russia-a81505>

Deadly Russian Missile Strikes Hit Ukraine

The Moscow Times, June 14, 2023

Deadly Russian missile strikes hit southern and eastern Ukraine on Wednesday as the Western-backed country's air defenses fought back against Moscow's intensified attacks.

Russia fired four Kalibr missiles on the southern port city of Odesa from a warship in the Black Sea, Ukraine's air force said, with air defenses shooting down three of them.

One of the missiles hit a food warehouse, killing three employees and wounding seven, Oleg Kiper, the head of the region's military administration, said on Telegram.

<https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2023/06/14/deadly-russian-missile-strikes-hit-ukraine-a81498>

C. Pakistan

Karachi 3 receives operating licence

World Nuclear News, June 1, 2023

The Pakistan Nuclear Regulatory Authority (PNRA) has granted an operating licence for unit 3 of the Karachi nuclear power plant, the second of two Chinese-supplied Hualong One reactors at the site. Units 2 and 3 of the Karachi site - near Paradise Point in the province of Sindh - are the first exports of China National Nuclear Corporation's 1100 MWe Hualong One pressurised water reactor, which is also promoted on the international market as HPR1000. Construction of unit 2 began in 2015, with that of unit 3 following in May 2016. Karachi 2 achieved first criticality in February 2021 and was connected to the grid the following month after the

completion of commissioning tests. The then Prime Minister Imran Khan formally inaugurated unit 2 on 21 May 2021. Unit 2 was granted an operating licence by PNRA in June 2022.

<https://www.world-nuclear-news.org/Articles/Karachi-3-receives-operating-licence>

Pakistan in crisis: How secure are its nuclear weapons?

Indian Express, June 12, 2023

Pakistan seems to have made considerable progress in its nuclear security – both physical and access control, though it is difficult to verify these claims independently. But the vulnerability of these weapons stems more from the structural deficiencies in the nation’s governance mechanism. Security concerns about Pakistan’s nuclear weapons have troubled the international community for a long time. Among other threatening scenarios, the fear of rogue or disgruntled actors within the army gaining control of these weapons has been a constant concern. Experts have long claimed that the “insider-jihadi” collaboration poses the gravest threat to Pakistan’s nuclear weapons. The brazen attacks on Mehran Naval Base in 2011, Kamra Airforce Base in 2012, and PNS Zulfiqar in 2014 were glaring examples of insider-jihadi collaborations. The ever-impending possibility of these two potentially dangerous elements coming together and acquiring a nuclear weapon is perhaps one of the most underappreciated threats to international peace and security.

<https://indianexpress.com/article/opinion/columns/pakistan-crisis-secure-nuclear-weapons-8658431/>

Ahead of Modi’s visit to US, Russia signals its interest in deepening ties with India’s arch-rival Pakistan

Deccan Herald, June 13, 2023

Moscow has sent out a subtle message to New Delhi ahead of Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s visit to the United States

with President Vladimir Putin’s Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov promising to deepen and expand Russia’s relations with India’s troublesome neighbour Pakistan, including in the domains of security, politics and economy. Lavrov even said that Russia considered Pakistan as “a key international partner in the joint efforts to combat common security challenges and threats, including transborder crime and terrorism”. The comment is unlikely to go down well with New Delhi, which has been accusing Pakistan of exporting terror to India. New Delhi has also been dismissing Islamabad’s bid to play the victim and counter international criticism over the presence of terrorist infrastructure in Pakistan.

<https://www.deccanherald.com/international/world-news-politics/ahead-of-modis-visit-to-us-russia-signals-its-interest-in-deepening-ties-with-indias-arch-rival-pakistan-1227393.html>

D. Europe

France, Germany Dispute Over Nuclear Energy Leaves EU Deadlocked on Renewables

Bloomberg, June 2, 2023

France is seeking to reopen negotiations over a key Green Deal law in an effort to ensure a greater role for nuclear in Europe’s energy transition, a move fiercely opposed by Germany, leaving the talks in deadlock.

The government in Paris has informed Sweden, which holds the EU’s rotating presidency, that it’s seeking changes to an agreement already brokered with other EU entities, according to officials with knowledge of the matter. Such a step would require revisiting talks with the bloc’s parliament and the European Commission.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2023-06-02/eu-in-deadlock-over-renewables-as-france-and-germany-lock-horns#xj4y7vzkg>

Deep borehole demo work to be conducted in Norway

World Nuclear News, June 9, 2023

The Deep Borehole Demonstration Center has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Norsk Kjernekraft to collaborate on demonstration of deep borehole disposal in Norway. The centre - launched earlier this year - has already begun demonstration work at a site in Cameron, Texas. The Deep Borehole Demonstration Center was founded in February as a non-profit organisation and is open to participation from governments, utilities, nuclear operators and research organisations interested in studying nuclear waste disposal technologies for worldwide deployment. Initial members include organisations representing waste disposal interests in nine countries, from both the public and private sectors. This includes the European Repository Development Organisation (ERDO).

<https://www.world-nuclear-news.org/Articles/Deep-borehole-demo-work-to-be-conducted-in-Norway>

France says nuclear power is 'non-negotiable'

Euractiv, June 9, 2023

French nuclear power is “an absolute red line” and non-negotiable, Finance Minister Bruno Le Maire said Thursday (8 June), following Franco-German disagreements over the role of nuclear energy in Europe.

Nuclear-reliant Paris has already irked Berlin by insisting on giving nuclear energy a starring role in European plans to produce more green technology in Europe.

“Nuclear power is an absolute red line for France, and France will not relinquish any of the competitive advantages linked to nuclear energy”, Le Maire insisted as he closed the annual conference of the French Electricity Union.

<https://www.euractiv.com/section/energy-environment/news/france-says-nuclear-power-is-non-negotiable/>

Slovakia submits bid for SMR feasibility study funding

World Nuclear News, June 13, 2023

The Ministry of Economy and Slovenské elektrárne have signed a memorandum of cooperation with a range of partners in the energy field to support the development of small modular reactors (SMRs) in Slovakia, including applying for funding from the USA's Project Phoenix. The other signatories of the memorandum were US Steel Košice, the Slovak Electricity Transmission System, VUJE, the Office of Nuclear Supervision and the Slovak Technical University in Bratislava.

<https://www.world-nuclear-news.org/Articles/Slovenske-elektrarne-pushes-ahead-on-SMR-plans>

Nuclearelectrica and partners sign MoU for NuScale plants

World Nuclear News, June 14, 2023

Nuclearelectrica, E-INFRA, Nova Power & Gas, Fluor Enterprises, Samsung C&T Corporation and NuScale Power have signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to collaborate to implement NuScale small modular reactor plants (SMR) in Romania and elsewhere in Central and Eastern Europe. Under the MoU the companies will work together to support the development of NuScale VOYGR power plants - which feature its SMRs - at a former coal-fired plant at Doice'ti in Romania and also at other potential locations across the region. Nuclearelectrica says that the SMR plant at Doice'ti - due to be the first NuScale one outside of the USA - will directly create 190 permanent jobs plus potentially thousands more for companies seeking to take advantage of a “clean, stable, affordable and safe energy source”.

<https://www.world-nuclear-news.org/Articles/Nuclearelectrica-and-partners-sign-MoU-for-NuScale>

Belarus starts taking delivery of Russian nuclear weapons

Reuters, June 14, 2023

Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko has said his country has started taking delivery of Russian tactical nuclear weapons, some of which he said were three times more powerful than the atomic bombs the US dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945. The deployment is Moscow's first move of such warheads - shorter-range less powerful nuclear weapons that could potentially be used on the battlefield - outside Russia since the fall of the Soviet Union. "We have missiles and bombs that we have received from Russia," Lukashenko said in an interview with the Rossiya-1 Russian state TV channel which was posted on the Belarusian Belta state news agency's Telegram channel.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/belarus-has-started-taking-delivery-russian-tactical-nuclear-weapons-president-2023-06-14/>

E. Ukraine

IAEA aims to expand team at Zaporizhzhia

World Nuclear News, June 5, 2023

International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Director General Rafael Mariano Grossi has said he hopes to "reinforce" the agency's team of experts at the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant to reflect its expanded role which includes monitoring compliance with the five safety and security principles outlined at the United Nations last week. In his statement to the IAEA board of governors, Grossi said he had "respectfully and solemnly asked both sides to observe" the five principles - which include agreement not to fire from, or at, the nuclear power plant, or to use it as a base for military personnel or equipment that could be used for an attack.

<https://www.world-nuclear-news.org/Articles/IAEA-preparing-to-expand-team-at-Zaporizhzhia>

IAEA: 'No immediate risk' to Zaporizhzhia from dam damage

World Nuclear News, June 6, 2023

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) says the impact of the damage to the dam on cooling water supplies to the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant is being monitored but alternative sources of water on-site should provide sufficient water for cooling "for some months" and means "our current assessment is that there is no immediate risk to the safety of the plant". In an update to the IAEA board of governors on Tuesday morning, Director General Rafael Mariano Grossi said the damage to the Nova Kakhovka dam - which Ukraine says was caused by the Russian shelling, and Russia blames on Ukraine - had led to a "significant reduction in the level of the reservoir used to supply cooling water" to Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant.

<https://www.world-nuclear-news.org/Articles/IAEA-No-immediate-risk-to-Zaporizhzhia-from-dam-da>

Ukraine Nuke Plant Safe for Now After Dam Break - IAEA

The Moscow Times, June 7, 2023

Ukraine's dam break is posing "no short-term risk" to Europe's biggest atomic plant, despite falling water levels in a reservoir used to cool its reactors, according to the UN nuclear watchdog agency.

Ukraine's Kakhovka hydroelectric dam was breached on Tuesday following an attack that Moscow and Kyiv have blamed on each other.

The Kakhovka dam sits on the Dnipro River, which feeds a reservoir providing cooling water for the Russian-occupied Zaporizhzhia nuclear power station, Europe's largest, some 150 kilometers (90 miles) upstream. The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) - which has a

team of experts at the plant – said late Tuesday that it saw “no short-term risk to nuclear safety and security.”

<https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2023/06/07/ukraine-nuke-plant-safe-for-now-after-dam-break-iaea-a81420>

Grossi to lead IAEA mission to Zaporizhzhia next week

World Nuclear News, June 7, 2023

International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Director General Rafael Mariano Grossi is to lead the latest rotation of its experts at the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant next week. It comes as the IAEA and nuclear experts in Ukraine and in Russia say there is no short-term risk to its safety and security as a result of the damaged Nova Kakhovka dam. The dam was damaged early on Tuesday, prompting widespread flooding and evacuations. The Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant - Ukraine and Europe’s largest - is about 140 kilometres upstream from the dam so not in an area directly affected by flooding. But the damage has led to a fall in the level of the reservoir, which is used to supply cooling water to the plant.

<https://www.world-nuclear-news.org/Articles/Grossi-to-lead-IAEA-mission-to-Zaporizhzhia-next-w>

Westinghouse to enhance safety of Ukrainian VVER-440s

World Nuclear News, June 14, 2023

Westinghouse has signed a contract with Ukraine’s Energoatom to design, manufacture and deliver long-term containment cooling systems (LCCS) as part of the modernisation of units 1 and 2 of the Rivne nuclear power plant. Meanwhile, Westinghouse is working with 11 European partners to create security of supply of fuel for VVER reactors operating in the EU and Ukraine. Westinghouse noted it will be the first time it delivers LCCS to support severe accident management at Russian-designed VVER-440 reactors. The systems will be manufactured by Westinghouse, using its patented solution specifically designed for

the global VVER-440 fleet, then delivered to the Rivne units next year.

<https://www.world-nuclear-news.org/Articles/Westinghouse-to-enhance-safety-of-Ukrainian-VVER-4>

Situation ‘Serious’ at Ukraine Plant – UN Nuclear Chief

The Moscow Times, June 15, 2023

UN nuclear chief Rafael Grossi on Thursday said the situation at the Moscow-occupied Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant in Ukraine was “serious,” but was being stabilized. Grossi arrived at Europe’s biggest nuclear plant to assess potential safety risks after the destruction of the Kakhovka dam, which caused huge floods and exacerbated fears for the facility’s safety. The dam formed a reservoir that provided the cooling water for the plant. “On the one hand, we can see that the situation is serious, the consequences (of the dam’s destruction) are there, and they are real,” Grossi, head of the International Atomic Energy Agency, said on a visit to the plant.

<https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2023/06/15/situation-serious-at-ukraine-plant-un-nuclear-chief-a81526>

F. United States of America

US announces \$46 million in funds to eight nuclear fusion companies

Reuters, June 1, 2023

Eight U.S. companies developing nuclear fusion energy will receive \$46 million in taxpayer funding to pursue pilot plants attempting to generate power from the process that fuels the sun and stars, the Department of Energy said on Wednesday.

Generating more energy from a fusion reaction than goes into the fusion plant to heat fuel to temperatures of more than 100 million Celsius has eluded scientists for decades. But more than 30 companies around the world are trying to generate power from fusion, which could one day

help the world slash emissions linked to climate change, without producing long-lasting radioactive waste.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/energy/us-announces-46-million-funds-eight-nuclear-fusion-companies-2023-05-31/>

White House Says Iran Nuclear Agreement Not a Priority

VOA News, June 1, 2023

White House National Security Council spokesman John Kirby told reporters Wednesday that the reviving the 2015 Iran nuclear deal is not a current focus of the Biden administration. Kirby said the United States remains committed to ensuring Iran does not obtain nuclear weapons and that President Joe Biden “still believes that a diplomatic solution to that would be highly preferable.” But Kirby said Iran was not negotiating in good faith and has shown “no inclination to move in that direction.”

<https://www.voanews.com/a/white-house-says-iran-nuclear-agreement-not-a-priority/7118254.html>

US has more military experience, but China has infrastructure to grow capabilities at a faster rate: Analysts

Channel News Asia, June 2, 2023

The United States may have more experience in military deployment, but China has the infrastructure in place to grow its military capabilities at a faster rate, experts told CNA on Friday (June 2).

The world is seeing its most significant bolstering of military might since World War II, with countries boosting their budgets, holding more joint military training, and increasing weapons manufacturing. Nuclear armament is also making a return, with implications for regional and global security, observers noted. They were speaking to CNA on the first day of this year’s Shangri-La Dialogue, which takes place from June 2 to 4 in Singapore. It involves 41 countries, with Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese delivering the keynote address on

Friday.

<https://www.channelnewsasia.com/world/united-states-has-more-military-experience-china-has-infrastructure-grow-capabilities-faster-rate-analysts-russia-ukraine-taiwan-asia-3533736>

US retaliates for Russia’s suspension of New START treaty by revoking visas of nuclear inspectors

AP News, June 2, 2023

The Biden administration is retaliating for Russia’s suspension of the New START nuclear treaty, announcing Thursday it is revoking the visas of Russian nuclear inspectors, denying pending applications for new monitors and canceling standard clearances for Russian aircraft to enter U.S. airspace. The State Department said it was taking those steps and others in response to Russia’s “ongoing violations” of New START, the last arms control treaty remaining between the two countries, which are currently at severe odds over the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

<https://apnews.com/article/us-russia-new-start-nuclear-16285354fcdc4f6a8ef18367620707e3>

US cuts data sharing with Russia under New START nuclear deal

Aljazeera, June 2, 2023

The United States will stop providing Russia with some notifications required under the New START nuclear arms control treaty, including updates on missile and launcher locations, in what Washington describes as a retaliatory “countermeasure” due to Moscow’s “violations” of the accord. The US state department said on Thursday that it had ceased providing the status and locations of its nuclear missiles and launchers but would continue to provide notification of the launch of intercontinental ballistic missiles and submarine-launched ballistic missiles. Russian inspection activities on US territory have ceased and visas issued and pending for Russian New START (Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty)

inspectors and their aircrews – as well as diplomatic clearance for Russian inspection aircraft – have been revoked, according to a state department fact sheet released on Thursday.

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/6/2/us-to-withhold-some-data-from-russia-under-new-start-nuclear-deal>

US to offer maintaining current nuclear weapons limit with Russia

Hindustan Times, June 2, 2023

National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan will deliver a speech at the annual National Arms Control Association meeting in Washington outlining the Biden administration's attempt to navigate a rapidly shifting strategic nuclear landscape, senior officials told reporters. With the last US-Russia arms control treaty – New START – largely moribund and due to expire in 2026, Sullivan will say that the United States is keen to forge a new treaty. In the meantime, however, Washington wants for the world's two leading nuclear powers to stick to the core of the treaty – a limit for each of 1,550 warheads.

"We will discuss the importance of maintaining kind of what we have left of New START," one official said.

<https://www.hindustantimes.com/world-news/united-states-maintaining-nuclear-weapons-limit-russia-ukraine-war-101685708186613.html>

Kremlin Says U.S. Statement On Nuclear Arms Control Is 'Positive'

Radio Free Europe Radio Liberty, June 5, 2023

The Kremlin said on June 5 that a statement by U.S. national-security adviser Jake Sullivan calling for bilateral arms control discussions was "positive", and that Russia remained open for dialogue. Sullivan said on June 2 that the United States would abide by the nuclear weapons limits set in the New START treaty, the last remaining nuclear arms reduction pact between the two Cold War rivals, until it expired in 2026 if Russia did the same. President Vladimir Putin

suspended Moscow's participation in the treaty in February.

<https://www.rferl.org/a/kremlin-nuclear-arms-control-us-statement-positive/32445230.html>

Amid Blinken visit, top Saudi diplomat says kingdom seeks U.S. nuclear aid

PBS, June 8, 2023

Saudi Arabia's foreign minister said after meeting with the visiting U.S. secretary of state on Thursday that while the kingdom would welcome U.S. aid in building its civilian nuclear program, "there are others that are bidding." Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan was responding to a question about recent news reports that Saudi Arabia is asking for U.S. aid in building its own nuclear program in exchange for establishing diplomatic relations with Israel. "It's no secret that we are developing our domestic civilian nuclear program and we would very much prefer to be able to have the U.S. as one of the bidders," he said. "Obviously we would like to build our program with the best technology in the world."

<https://www.pbs.org/newshour/world/amid-blinken-visit-top-saudi-diplomat-says-kingdom-seeks-u-s-nuclear-aid>

Assistant Secretary of Defense for Indo-Pacific Security Affairs Dr. Ely Ratner Participates in a CNAS Discussion on Building a Networked Security Architecture in the Indo-Pacific

U.S. Department of Defense, June 8, 2023

Welcome to day three of CNAS 2023 annual conference, American Power and Purpose. My name is Lisa Curtis, and I'm the director of the Indo-Pacific Security Program here at CNAS, and it's my great pleasure to welcome Dr. Ely Ratner, assistant Secretary of defense for Indo-Pacific security affairs. He's going to speak with us about building a networked security architecture in the Indo-Pacific. Ely was previously executive vice President

and director of studies here at CNAS, so it's really great to have him back.

<https://www.defense.gov/News/Transcripts/Transcript/Article/3423120/assistant-secretary-of-defense-for-indo-pacific-security-affairs-dr-ely-ratner/>

US-China Conflict: US Nuke Submarine Damaged In South China Sea Ops 'Stuck For Repairs' Due To Clogged Shipyards

The Eurasian Times, June 15, 2023

This prolonged timeline contributes to a mounting backlog of maintenance overhauls, a matter of concern for the United States as it confronts an expanding Chinese naval presence. The USS Connecticut, a state-of-the-art Seawolf submarine, encountered an uncharted seamount in October 2021, significantly damaging its bow and lower rudder. The estimated cost of repairs is approximately \$80 million, Bloomberg reported. However, the extended timeline for the submarine's return to service sheds light on underlying maintenance challenges faced by the Navy's shipyards.

<https://eurasianimes.com/us-china-conflict-us-uke-submarine-damaged-in-south-china/>

West Asia

G. Iran

Grossi: Progress Made in Implementation of Iran-IAEA Agreement

Fars News Agency, June 5, 2023

Grossi made the remarks while addressing the June meeting of the IAEA Board of Governors. In early May, the IAEA installed surveillance cameras in Iranian facilities where centrifuge equipment is produced, Rafael Mariano Grossi said. In order to monitor the level of uranium enrichment produced by Iran in the said facilities, the IAEA, for the first time, installed an enrichment monitoring device in the Fordow and Natanz nuclear sites, he added. These measures will help the agency quickly

identify any changes in enrichment levels at these facilities, Grossi said. Claiming that the progress had not been as great as he had hoped, he said, "What needs to happen now is a sustained and uninterrupted process that will lead to the fulfillment of all the commitments contained in the joint statement without further delay."

<https://www.farsnews.ir/en/news/14020315000440/Grssi-Progress-Made-in-Implementain-f-Iran-IAEA-Agreemen>

Blinken says US won't let Iran get nuclear weapons

Alarabiya, June 5, 2023

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken told a powerful pro-Israel lobby group Monday that Saudi-Israeli normalization is deeply important for Washington and pledged that Iran would never be allowed to obtain nuclear weapons. "The United States has a real national security interest in promoting normalization between Israel and Saudi Arabia. We believe we can and indeed we must play an integral role in advancing it," Blinken told the American Israel Public Affairs Committee, or AIPAC. Speaking hours before departing for talks in Riyadh and Jeddah, Blinken said the administration of President Joe Biden was committed to the Abraham Accords, an initiative launched under previous president Donald Trump to persuade Arab countries to establish formal relations with the Jewish state.

<https://english.alarabiya.net/News/middle-east/2023/06/05/US-top-diplomat-All-options-on-table-to-stop-Iran-from-obtaining-nuclear-weapons>

IRGC navy disputes U.S. claims on 'harassment' of merchant ship

Tehran Times, June 6, 2023

Iran's Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) Navy on Monday refuted Western reports that a commercial ship was "harassed" by its boats in the Strait of Hormuz as the elite force responded to a distress signal and went to its rescue.

The statement was made by Brigadier General Abbas Gholamshahi, commander of the IRGC Navy's First Zone, after the U.S. navy claimed that its sailors and the Royal Navy of the United Kingdom came to the aid of a ship in the Strait of Hormuz after the so-called "harassment" of the Iranian force's fast-attack boats. According to General Gholamshahi, the hostile media outlets, in an unprofessional manner and in violation of media ethics, strived to spread false information, sow unrest and legitimize the "illegitimate and unjustifiable presence of the extra-regional countries in the Persian Gulf."

<https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/485465/IRGC-navy-disputes-U-S-claims-on-harassment-of-merchant-ship>

Advisor: Iran Not to Sign Nuclear Deal Until IAEA Closes All Files

Fars News Agency, June 6, 2023

Marandi, a media adviser to the Iranian negotiations team, told Al Mayadeen news channel that "the western governments were lying from the very beginning" about Iran's nuclear activity, stressing that today this has been proven. "The number of files in the International Atomic Energy Agency [regarding the Iranian nuclear project] has decreased" now that "the last two files have been closed," Marandi added. "The [nuclear agreement] text is basically ready and is awaiting both parties' signature," he revealed, adding that "the time is ripe for the deal". Marandi said that the current Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency is not independent.

<https://www.farsnews.ir/en/news/14020316000372/Advisr-Iran-N-Sign-Nclear-Deal-Unil-IAEA-Clses-All-Files>

Fattah's impact on the missile defense systems of the region

Tehran Times, June 6, 2023

The Islamic Revolution Guard Corps unveiled its first hypersonic missile, Fattah. With a range of 1400 kilometers and a speed equivalent to 13 Mach, or 16000 kilometers per hour, this missile also utilizes a solid fuel

spherical motor and a movable nozzle for maneuverability in all directions. Iran's achievement in designing and producing hypersonic missiles may be the most important news in the missile field in recent years, and the worst news for enemy defense systems, as this missile's high speed makes it very difficult for anti-missile defense systems to intercept it effectively. However, speed is not the only important component of hypersonic missiles; more importantly, their trajectory with guidance and control to reach their target and evade enemy defense systems with high maneuverability is crucial. With Iran's achievement of its desired range in ballistic missiles (2000 kilometers), Iranian manufacturers have focused on two other components: accuracy and power, which have led to improved accuracy of missiles and their guidance and control until they hit their target.

<https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/485468/Fattah-s-impact-on-the-missile-defense-systems-of-the-region>

Iran's Envoy Calls on E3 to Put Aside 'Provocative, Unconstructive' Attitudes

Fars News Agency, June 8, 2023

Iran's Representative to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Mohsen Naziri Asl once again underlined that his country's nuclear activities, including uranium enrichment at various levels, are solely for peaceful purposes, and further urged the European governments to refrain from "provocative and unconstructive" approaches towards Tehran's nuclear program. He made the statement at a session of the IAEA Board of Governors on Wednesday while explaining Iran's principled stance regarding the 2015 nuclear deal, calling on the European countries to avoid provocative and unconstructive approaches towards Tehran's peaceful nuclear program.

<https://www.farsnews.ir/en/news/14020318000159/Iran's-Envy-Calls-n-E3-P-Aside-'Provcaive-Uncnsrvice'-Aides>

Mission to UN: No Secret Nuclear Activities in Iran

Fars News Agency, June 10, 2023

Iran's Permanent Mission to the United Nations dismissed all accusations, including the UN nuclear watchdog's allegations, about the existence of undeclared nuclear activities or material in Iran. The Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) on Saturday quoted Iran's Permanent Mission to the UN as saying that all of the country's nuclear materials and activities have been fully declared to and verified by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), adding the agency's claim over undeclared materials is solely based on false and fabricated information of the Zionist regime.

<https://www.farsnews.ir/en/news/14020320000365/Missin-UN-N-Secre-Nclear-Aciviies-in-Iran>

Leader Calls for Commercialization of Iran's N. Products

Fars News Agency, June 11, 2023

Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei urged nuclear officials to take the necessary steps to commercialize domestically-built nuclear productions and services, saying that this indigenous industry is capable of luring foreign costumers in the nuclear-related market. Iran's Leader made the remarks in a meeting with a group of nuclear experts and officials in Tehran on Sunday. Ayatollah Khamenei underlined that Iranian nuclear managers, authorities and activists have over the past years set up important infrastructure for the country's nuclear industry.

<https://www.farsnews.ir/en/news/14020321000632/Leader-Calls-fr-Cmmmercializain-f-Iran's-N-Prdcs>

Iran triples arms exports

Tehran Times, June 11, 2023

Iranian Defense Minister Mohammad Reza Ashtiani has said that the ministry's exports of military defense products tripled in the

past Persian calendar year, which ended on March 20.

Brigadier General Ashtiani noted on Saturday that his ministry is working to improve Iran's military prowess by increasing the production of both military and civilian items and services, boosting the capability of missiles, drones, air defense, and electronic warfare, and pursuing defense diplomacy with a focus on export capacity building.

Speaking in a gathering of senior managers at the Defense Ministry, he stressed that "due to the efforts of the Defense Ministry, we registered a threefold increase in exports, a twofold rise in the production of civilian goods and services, and an 81 percent increase in military production last year."

<https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/485632/Iran-triples-arms-exports>

N. Chief: 1mln Patients Enjoy Treatment by Home-Made Radiopharmaceuticals

Fars News Agency, June 11, 2023

Head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) Mohammad Eslami lauded the country's achievement in the nuclear industry, and said that around 1 million patients benefit from home-grown radiopharmaceuticals in the field of diagnosis and treatment, especially for cancer. Eslami made the remarks before the launch of an exhibition showcasing Iran's latest achievements in the nuclear industry at Tehran's Imam Khomeini Hosseinieh on Sunday.

<https://www.farsnews.ir/en/news/14020321000738/N-Chief-mln-Paiens-Enjy-Treamen-by-Hme-Made-Radipharmaceicals>

AEOI Spokesman: Foreign Customers of Iran's Heavy Water Standing in Line

Fars News Agency, June 12, 2023

Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) Spokesman Behrouz Kamalvandi praised the high quality of the heavy

water produced in Iran, and further said that this indigenous nuclear material has lured foreign customers in the international market. "Many customers are looking for Iran's heavy water and the world countries are queuing to buy this product," Kamanvandi told reporters on Sunday. On the talks for the purchase of Iranian heavy water, the spokesperson stated that the customers propose more than 1,000 dollar per liter.

<https://www.farsnews.ir/en/news/14020322000167/AEOI-Spkesman-Freign-Csmers-f-Iran's-Heavy-Waer-Sanding-in-Line>

IRGC vessels equipped with 2,000-km-range missiles

Islamic Republic News Agency, June 12, 2023

Speaking on Monday in Tehran, Tangsiri said that the missiles have been mounted on the Iranian-made warship dubbed Martyr Soleimani. The commander said that the warship has been for the first time equipped with domestically-made vertical launch missiles as well as surface-to-surface cruise missiles with ranges from 40 to 2,000 kilometers. Tangsiri also spoke about the progress the Iranian missile industry has made after the 1979 Islamic Revolution. He said that the missiles Iran possessed before the Islamic Revolution had a maximum range of 40 km, but now they have a minimum range of 2,000 km.

<https://en.irna.ir/news/85138523/IRGC-vessels-equipped-with-2-000-km-range-missiles>

President Rayeesi: Iran to Continue Supporting Nuclear Industry

Fars News Agency, June 12, 2023

Iranian President Seyed Ebrahim Rayeesi vowed to continue supporting the nuclear industry within the framework of Iran's national interests. President Rayeesi made the remarks addressing a cabinet session on Sunday. "The nuclear industry is among driving industries in the country," President Rayeesi said. He lauded grand achievements made by young Iranian scientists in the nuclear industry. "In line with serving

national interests, the administration considers itself duty-bound to support the nuclear industry," President Rayeesi added.

<https://www.farsnews.ir/en/news/14020322000333/Presiden-Rayeesi-Iran-Cnine-Sppring-Nclear-Indsry>

AEOI Head: 159 Nuclear Achievements Registered by Iranian Scientists Last Year

Fars News Agency, June 13, 2023

Head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) Mohammad Eslami praised the country's progress in the nuclear industry despite the US sanctions and threats, saying that his organization has recorded 159 nuclear achievements in the last Iranian calendar year. "Last year, we had 159 achievements. It was important for us to speed up the time needed to get results and ... turn an idea into a product," Eslami noted on Monday. The nuclear chief stated that the nuclear achievements were made by young Iranian experts in different fields – including irradiation systems, microwave, radiopharmaceuticals and plasma technology – in the past Persian calendar year (ending on March 20) in defiance of US sanctions as well as hurdles created by the West.

<https://www.farsnews.ir/en/news/14020323000490/AEOI-Head-59-Nclear-Achievemens-Regisered-by-Iranian-Scieniss-Las>

H. Israel

Rafael's C-Dome One Step Closer to Operational Capability

Israel Defense, June 6, 2023

Israeli defense giant Rafael, alongside the Israel Missile Defense Organization (IMDO) and in collaboration with the Israeli Navy, successfully completed a series of comprehensive tests for the naval version of the Iron Dome system, known as "C-Dome." According to the company statement, these tests mark a significant step towards achieving the final

operational capability of the C-Dome system on the Israeli Navy's Sa'ar 6-class corvettes. Throughout the rigorous testing process, the C-Dome system, installed on the Sa'ar 6 "Magen" corvettes, demonstrated its exceptional capability to intercept and neutralize advanced threats that pose a danger to Israel's strategic assets and infrastructure within its exclusive economic zone.

<https://www.israeldefense.co.il/en/node/58402>

Israeli Defense Ministry selects Leonardo's DRS RADA Technologies to supply tactical radar systems

Israel Defense, June 7, 2023

Leonardo DRS announced that its DRS RADA Technologies business unit has been selected to provide the Israeli Ministry of Defense with advanced mobile radars providing additional capabilities to defend against a range of emerging regional threats. The company will produce and deliver the radars to support existing Israeli Defense Force (IDF) air surveillance and early warning capabilities. These advanced systems are proven throughout the IDF and with allied military forces around the world.

"We are extremely proud to continue our support of the IDF by supplying these advanced, lifesaving capabilities," said Dubi Sella, senior vice president and general manager of the company's DRS RADA Technologies business unit.

<https://www.israeldefense.co.il/en/node/58415>

Will IWI supply its Negev 7 machine guns to the Indian Special Forces?

Israel Defense, June 7, 2023

Are the Special Forces of the Indian army about to be equipped with the Negev 7 light machine gun, produced by the Israeli company IWI (Israel Weapon Industries)?

According to an article in the German website Soldat & Technik, the Indian Special Forces are apparently looking for a new 7.62

x 51mm caliber machine gun. The website bases its information on a Request for Information (RFI) published at the end of May. The Indian Special Forces have long used the IWI Negev 5 in 5.56 x 45 mm caliber as their standard group and squad level machine gun. These are supplemented by 7.62 x 51 mm caliber FN MK 48 machine guns.

<https://www.israeldefense.co.il/en/node/58416>

Israel on verge of largest-ever defense deal, as Germany advances Arrow 3 purchase plans

Israel Defense, June 11, 2023

The German government will ask its lawmakers to release advance payment of up to 560 million euros this week, in order to buy Israel's Arrow 3 missile defense system. This, according to a Reuters report from Friday, which relies on exclusively seen documents. In total, Germany is expected to pay almost 4 billion euro (or \$4.3 billion) for this system, an exo-atmospheric interceptor for long-range threats developed by Israel Aerospace Industries. According to Reuters, Germany hopes to strike a deal by the end of 2025, and receive the systems by the end of 2025. Originally, the deal was supposed to close for about 3 billion euros. The report doesn't mention when exactly this is expected to take place. However, according to the Bundestag's official weekly schedule, a "National Security Session" is scheduled for Thursday, June 15th, at 09:00 am.

<https://www.israeldefense.co.il/en/node/58462>

MBDA Opens Missile Engineering Center in Abu Dhabi

Israel Defense, June 13, 2023

European multinational missile developer and manufacturer MBDA inaugurated the Missile Engineering Center in Abu Dhabi last week. The center's aim, according to the official press release, is to "strengthen the long-term partnership between the UAE and MBDA and to establish a bedrock for joint development of missile systems."

The Missile Engineering Center in the UAE is the first of its kind for MBDA outside Europe; it is operational with a joint team of engineers from Tawazun Technology Innovation and MBDA working on the next generation of the Smart Weapons family.

<https://www.israeldefense.co.il/en/node/58494>

Aeronautics Launches Orbiter 5 - a Tactical UAS with MALE Mission Capabilities

Israel Defense, June 14, 2023

Aeronautics, an Israeli designer, developer, and manufacturer of comprehensive solutions focused on Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS) for the global defense and HLS markets, is introducing the Orbiter 5 UAS at the Paris Air Show. This new innovative platform enables MALE mission capabilities in a tactical UAS, delivering a high-performance, multi-mission/multi-payload capabilities, and all in a cost-effective solution. According to Aeronautics, the Orbiter 5 provides an extended endurance time of more than 25 hours with multi-mission capabilities, enabled by its capacity to carry payload weight of more than 25k g, including two payloads simultaneously, and implementing advanced AI capabilities. In addition, the platform offers redundancy with a dual avionics system and a dual ignition engine for high degree of safety and ensures mission success.

<https://www.israeldefense.co.il/en/node/58514>

German Parliament Approves \$4.3 Billion Purchase of Israel's Arrow-3 Missile Defense Systems

Israel Defense, June 15, 2023

The German Bundestag and Budget Committee agreed yesterday (Wednesday) to release advance payments of up to 560 million euros, the first step in procuring the Arrow-3 missile defense system, developed by Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI).

In total, Germany is expected to pay almost 4 billion euro (or \$4.3 billion) for this system - an exo-atmospheric interceptor for long-

range threats developed by Israel Aerospace Industries. According to Reuters, Germany hopes to strike a deal by the end of 2025, and receive the systems by the end of 2025.

<https://www.israeldefense.co.il/en/node/58526>

Rafael Announces It Has Developed Hypersonic Missile Interceptor

Israel Defense, June 15, 2023

RAFAEL Advanced Defense Systems announced yesterday (Wednesday) that it has developed an advanced interceptor, named "Sky Sonic," as a groundbreaking defensive response to the growing threat of hypersonic missiles. This system will be officially unveiled for the first time at the Paris Air Show, one of the world's largest aerospace exhibitions, opening next week. The Sky Sonic interceptor represents a major technological leap in hypersonic missile defense. Designed with exceptional maneuverability and high-speed capabilities, it effectively neutralizes hypersonic missiles, which travel at ten times the speed of sound, with unmatched precision and stealth. RAFAEL's booth at the Paris Air Show will showcase the interceptor, highlighting the company's commitment to pushing the boundaries of air defense technology.

<https://www.israeldefense.co.il/en/node/58527>

Israel's Controp Signs Joint Venture Deal with India-based Paras Defence and Space Technologies

Israel Defense, June 15, 2023

Controp Precision Technologies, an Israel-based global EO/IR company, has signed an agreement with electronics producer Paras Defence and Space Technologies India to establish a new company in India. This Joint Venture (JV) will focus on manufacturing innovative, EO/IR advanced multi-domain solutions for various defense applications and in accordance with the Indian government. At the signing ceremony that was held in

Mumbai, in the presence of Controp CEO Hagay Azani, and Paras CEO Munjal Shah, a JV for the procurement of innovative, EO/IR state-of-the-art solutions for defense applications was established, in accordance with “Atmanirbhar Bharat” (Self-Reliance) initiative implemented by the Indian government for creating and boosting local independent capabilities.

<https://www.israeldefense.co.il/en/node/58525>

I. Qatar

Qatar says cooperation between global nuclear agency and Iran ‘only way’ to resolve issues

Doha News, June 8, 2023

Qatar said cooperation between the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and Iran is the only way to resolve all outstanding issues posing as an obstacle to the revival of the nuclear deal, Fars News Agency reported. Top Qatari official, Ahmed bin Hassan Al Hammadi suggested positive interaction between the two sides through full respect for the agency’s authority and Iran’s rights and commitments, remains the only way to resolve all outstanding issues. Al Hammadi, who serves as the Secretary-General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Qatar’s Governor to the IAEA, made the comments during a discussion on the implementation of monitoring, verification, and safeguards in Iran, at the ongoing session of the Board of Governors in Vienna.

<https://dohanews.co/qatar-says-cooperation-between-global-nuclear-agency-and-iran-only-way-to-resolve-issues/>

J. Saudi Arabia

IAEA recognizes Saudi Arabia’s role in Compass nuclear initiative

Arab News, June 3, 2023

Saudi Arabia has received a certificate of appreciation and gratitude from the International Atomic Energy Agency for its recent participation in the IAEA’s Comprehensive Capacity Building Initiative (Compass), a first-of-its-kind initiative. The

certificate of merit was handed over by IAEA Director General Rafael Grossi to Jalawi bin Nasser Al-Qahtani, Saudi Nuclear and Radiological Regulatory Commission representative, during a reception at the Saudi permanent delegation headquarters in Vienna on Friday. Compass was initiated in 2020 to help member countries strengthen the effectiveness of their safeguarding implementation and their respective system of accounting for and controlling nuclear material.

<https://www.arabnews.com/node/2315306/saudi-arabia>

Israel undecided on Saudi Arabia’s demand for civil nuclear technology

Al-Monitor, June 6, 2023

Israeli Energy Minister Israel Katz expressed on Monday reservations about Saudi Arabia’s plans to establish a US-backed nuclear power program, in a first public statement on the issue by a senior Israeli official. Katz made this statement as US Secretary of State Antony Blinken was preparing to fly to Saudi Arabia for talks expected to include discussions of the nuclear program for which the Saudis are seeking US technology and know-how. “Naturally, Israel does not encourage such things. I don’t think Israel should agree to such things, but there are contacts underway,” Katz told Ynet TV when asked about Israel’s stance on the Saudi demands that the US green-lights the nuclear program as a condition for the kingdom’s normalization of relations with Israel.

<https://www.al-monitor.com/originals/2023/06/israel-undecided-saudi-arabias-demand-civil-nuclear-technology#ixzz87JEYM5gj>

Source Speculates on Iran-Saudi Nuclear Cooperation

Tasnim News Agency, June 7, 2023

Iran’s Nour News raised the possibility of cooperation in the nuclear industry between Iran and Saudi Arabia, as the

two regional heavyweights have recently buried the hatchet after years of strained relations. "Despite Zionists' opposition to Saudi Arabia's nuclear advancement, cooperation in the field of peaceful nuclear technologies and transfer of experiences under supervision of IAEA, can be one of the main axes in the bilateral relations between Tehran and Riyadh," Nour News, affiliated with Iran's Supreme National Security Council, said in a post on its Twitter account on Tuesday. After several days of intensive negotiations hosted by China, Iran and Saudi Arabia clinched a deal on March 10 to restore diplomatic relations and reopen embassies and missions after seven years of estrangement.

<https://www.tasnimnews.com/en/news/2023/06/07/2907211/source-speculates-on-iran-saudi-nuclear-cooperation>

No secret that Saudi Arabia is developing civilian nuclear program: Prince Faisal

Alarabiya, June 8, 2023

Saudi Arabia is developing its civilian nuclear program and prefers to have the US as one of the bidders for that program, Riyadh's top diplomat said Thursday.

"There are others that are bidding, and obviously, we would like to build our program with the best technology in the world, and that will require a certain agreement to be in place," Prince Faisal bin Farhan said during a joint press conference with Secretary of State Antony Blinken. "We have differences of opinion [with the US], and so we're working on finding a mechanism for us to be able to work together on civilian nuclear technology. But, you know, we intend to move forward on that program," Prince Faisal said. Saudi Arabia has requested US technology to enrich the uranium Riyadh possesses to produce and then sell fuel. Otherwise, Saudi officials have said they could look to China, Russia or France for help, which are the countries Prince Faisal may have been alluding to.

<https://english.alarabiya.net/News/saudi-arabia/2023/06/08/No-secret-that-Saudi-Arabia-is->

developing-civilian-nuclear-program-Prince-Faisal

K. Türkiye

'Türkiye, IAEA cooperating on nuclear plant construction'

Daily Sabah, June 6, 2023

Türkiye is closely cooperating with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) regarding the construction of the Akkuyu Nuclear Power Plant, a Turkish envoy said on Monday. Speaking to Anadolu Agency (AA), Levent Eler, Türkiye's permanent representative at the U.N.'s office in Vienna, said Ankara and the agency are coordinating over the Akkuyu Nuclear Power Plant. He noted that as part of the coordination, IAEA Director General Rafael Grossi attended the ceremony marking the first delivery of nuclear fuel to the power plant on April 27.

<https://www.dailysabah.com/business/energy/turkiye-iaea-cooperating-on-nuclear-plant-construction>

Türkiye to revamp 1st aircraft factory in multimillion-dollar revival

Daily Sabah, June 12, 2023

Türkiye is set to revamp its first aircraft factory in the central Anatolian province of Kayseri by investing some TL 205 million (\$8.6 million) to produce aircraft and helicopter parts, a report said Monday.

The revival of the TOMTA^a Aviation and Technology will play a significant role and make a major contribution to Türkiye's aviation sector, according to information cited by Anadolu Agency (AA).

Main assembly parts such as the fuselage, wings, doors, control surfaces, landing gear, propellers, helicopter rotors and engine parts will be produced at TOMTA^a Aerospace, which was established by defense firm ASFAT, Erciyes Technopark,

Turkish Aerospace Industries (TAI) and the TOMTA^a Investment Partnership.

<https://www.dailysabah.com/business/defense/turkiye-to-revamp-1st-aircraft-factory-in-multi-million-dollar-revival>

Türkiye's Baykar, Kuwait finalize \$367M drone deal

Daily Sabah, June 13, 2023

Turkish drone magnate Baykar has finalized an export contract worth \$367 million with the Kuwaiti government on Bayraktar TB2 unmanned combat aerial vehicles (UCAVs), the company and the Kuwaiti army announced on Tuesday. "We have successfully completed the contract process with the Government of Kuwait on the export of domestically made Bayraktar TB2 UCAVs," Baykar said in a statement on Twitter.

<https://www.dailysabah.com/business/defense/turkiyes-baykar-kuwait-finalize-367m-drone-deal>

Bayraktar Akıncı UCAV hits target with precision guidance kit

Daily Sabah, June 15, 2023

Türkiye's most advanced and sophisticated drone, the Bayraktar Akıncı unmanned combat aerial vehicle (UCAV), conducted a firing test with a domestically developed Precision Guidance Kit (HGK). This marks the first launch of the HGK from an unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV). The kit was developed by the Defense Industries Research and Development Institute (SAGE) of the Scientific and Technological Research Council of Türkiye (TÜBİTAK), and the Baykar-manufactured drone fired HKG-82 during the test. Departing from Akıncı Flight Training and Test Center in the northwestern province of Tekirdağ's Çorlu district, Akıncı took off with the HKG-82 ammunition. Bayraktar Akıncı's HGK-82 ammunition struck the target with remarkable precision.

<https://www.dailysabah.com/business/defense/bayraktar-akinci-ucav-hits-target-with-precision-guidance-kit>

L. United Arab Emirates

MBDA opens Missile Engineering Centre in Abu Dhabi

Zawya, June 9, 2023

The Missile Engineering Centre was officially inaugurated on 6th June, in the presence of Tareq Al Hosani, Secretary-General of Tawazun Council, M. Nicolas Niemtchinow, Ambassador of France to the UAE, and M. Eric Béranger, Chief Executive Officer of MBDA. The aim of the Missile Engineering Centre is to strengthen the long-term partnership between the UAE and MBDA and to establish a bedrock for joint development of missile systems. This cooperation has the ultimate objective of offering missile systems at the right level of performance while leveraging and reinforcing the sovereign capabilities of the UAE defence industry through significant local content. The Missile Engineering Centre in the UAE is the first of its kind for MBDA outside Europe; it is operational with a joint team of engineers from Tawazun Technology Innovation and MBDA working on the next generation of the Smart Weapons family.

<https://www.zawya.com/en/business/technology-and-telecom/mbda-opens-missile-engineering-centre-in-abu-dhabi-ipucs3s8>

India, France, UAE hold maiden maritime exercise in Gulf of Oman

The Hindu, June 9, 2023

Navies of India, France and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) held the maiden trilateral maritime partnership exercise on June 7 and June 8 in the Gulf of Oman. "During the maiden edition of the exercise, a wide spectrum of operations at sea such as surface Warfare involving tactical firing and drills for Missile engagements, close quarter manoeuvres, advanced air defence exercise with French Rafale and UAE Dash-8 Maritime Patrol Aircraft (MPA), Helicopter cross landing operations, drills

for replenishment at sea were undertaken by the participating units,” the Navy said.

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/india-france-uae-hold-maiden-maritime-exercise-in-gulf-of-oman/article66950692.ece>

M. East Asia

China’s Micron Chips Ban Is Litmus Test for South Korea

VOA News, June 1, 2023

The semiconductor trade war between Washington and Beijing may ensnare Seoul as South Korea must decide between backing its closest ally or embracing a lucrative export opportunity presented by China, its top trading partner. The decision will reveal how closely South Korea is aligned with the U.S., its second-largest export market, experts said. The dilemma facing Seoul emerged after China announced that it was banning the use of U.S.-based Micron Technology’s broad range of computer memory and storage technologies. Liu Pengyu, a Chinese Embassy spokesperson in Washington, told VOA’s Korean Service on May 24 that Beijing’s cybersecurity regulators had assessed that Micron’s chips “pose a major security risk to China’s key information infrastructure supply chain and impact China’s national security.”

<https://www.voanews.com/a/china-s-micron-chips-ban-is-litmus-test-for-south-korea/7118446.html>

Ukraine’s Survival Is Vital to Japan, South Korea and Taiwan

Bloomberg, June 2, 2023

As the war in Ukraine runs longer, calls for the US to pull back from that conflict and refocus on Asia are getting louder. Interestingly, however, one hears less of that critique in Asia itself. America’s frontline allies in the region understand that what happens in Ukraine won’t stay there – it will either strengthen or weaken a larger global order on which they depend.

This became clear last month, when I traveled to Seoul for the Asian Leadership

Conference. At an event nominally focused on Asia, Ukraine was front and center.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/opinion/articles/2023-06-01/ukraine-victory-will-help-japan-south-korea-taiwan-against-china#xj4y7vzkg>

South Korea conducts drills on border islands near North Korea

Nikkei Asia, June 2, 2023

South Korea’s military has conducted defensive drills on islands near North Korean territory for the first time in six years, marking one of the biggest live-fire exercises staged in the border region. Personnel from the army, navy, air force and marines held drills on South Korea’s western islands in the Yellow Sea, including Baengnyeong and Yeonpyeong, according to local media. The islands are located near the Northern Limit Line, which serves as the de facto maritime boundary between the North and the South. Baengnyeong and Yeonpyeong are about 20 kilometers from the North Korean coast.

<https://asia.nikkei.com/Politics/Defense/South-Korea-conducts-drills-on-border-islands-near-North-Korea>

Interpreting North Korea’s Failed Satellite Launch

Crisis Group, June 2, 2023

At 6:27am on 31 May, North Korea launched its Chollima-1 rocket, intending to place in orbit the Malligyong-1, which it describes as a military reconnaissance satellite. The launch drew extensive international condemnation because many suspect that such a launch, which came after a six-year hiatus, is a disguised way for Pyongyang to test its long-range ballistic missile technology, rather than part of a genuine space program, as the regime claims. The rocket took off from the newly refurbished Sohae facility at Dongchang-ri in North Pyongan province, approximately 50km from the China-North Korea border. Flying on a southerly trajectory, it failed after six minutes and

fell harmlessly into the sea 200km west of the South Korean island of Eocheong-do.

<https://www.crisisgroup.org/asia/north-east-asia/korean-peninsula/interpreting-north-koreas-failed-satellite-launch>

AUKUS 'becoming concern' for ASEAN: Cambodian PM

Asia News Network, June 6, 2023

ASIA is becoming a dangerous geopolitical hotspot, with several countries announcing that they intend to send naval vessels towards Southeast Asia and on to the South China Sea, warned Prime Minister Hun Sen. "Heated geopolitical issues can easily escalate, namely to war. I am not just referring to the war between Russia and Ukraine, as there are rising tensions in Southeast Asia. For the time being, there are a number of nations that are intending to send their navies into the South China Sea," he noted.

<https://asianews.network/aucus-becoming-concern-for-asean-cambodian-pm/>

Japan enacts law to extend operating period of nuclear plants beyond 60-year limit

Nuclear Asia, June 7, 2023

In a move to cut carbon emissions and ensure stable electricity supplies, Japan's parliament has enacted legislation to allow nuclear reactors in the country to continue operating beyond the current limit of 60 years. The new bill passed last week allows nuclear plants to operate for longer than 60 years if approved by the country's Industry Minister and is subject to regular inspections by the Japanese Nuclear Regulation Authority. After the 2011 Fukushima nuclear power plant accident caused by the tsunami, Japan introduced stricter safety protocols that limit the operating life of nuclear reactors to 40 years in principle, which can be extended to up to 60 years.

<https://www.nuclearasia.com/news/japan-enacts-law-to-extend-operating-period-of-nuclear-plants-beyond-60-year-limit/5127/>

US to Cambodia: AUKUS Sub Deal Is Not Nuclear Proliferation

VOA News, June 7, 2023

The United States, responding to remarks made by Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen earlier in the week, said on Tuesday that the trilateral security alliance between Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States is not an effort to spread nuclear weapons in Southeast Asia and the Indo-Pacific region.

On Monday, Hun Sen said that the trilateral group known as AUKUS was "the starting point of a very dangerous arms race" as he objected to the coming of nuclear-powered submarines to the region. The three allies signed a deal in March to strengthen their presence in the Asia-Pacific region where China is expanding its military stance. The agreement calls for Australia to buy three nuclear-powered submarines from the United States.

<https://www.voanews.com/a/us-to-cambodia-aucus-sub-deal-is-not-nuclear-proliferation-/7126262.html>

Taiwan activates air defence as China aircraft enter zone

Reuters, June 8, 2023

Taiwan activated its defence systems on Thursday after reporting 37 Chinese military aircraft flying into the island's air defence zone, some of which then flew into the western Pacific, in Beijing's latest mass air incursion. China, which views democratically governed Taiwan as its own territory, has over the past three years regularly flown its air force into the skies near the island, though not into Taiwan's territorial air space. Taiwan's defence ministry said that from 5 a.m. (2100 GMT on Wednesday) it had detected 37 Chinese air force planes, including J-11 and J-16 fighters as well as nuclear-capable H-6 bombers, flying into the southwestern corner of its air defence identification zone, or ADIZ. The ADIZ is a broader area

Taiwan monitors and patrols to give its forces more time to respond to threats.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/dozens-chinese-military-aircraft-enter-taiwan-air-defence-zone-taiwan-defence-2023-06-08/>

North Korea fires two short-range missiles after warning of response to allied drills

Reuters, June 15, 2023

North Korea fired two short-range missiles off its east coast on Thursday, the South Korean military said, less than an hour after Pyongyang warned of an “inevitable” response to military drills staged earlier in the day by South Korean and U.S. troops.

The latest action by North Korea came as U.S. President Joe Biden’s national security adviser, Jake Sullivan, was in Tokyo for meetings with his Japanese and South Korean counterparts. In a meeting with South Korea’s national security adviser, Cho Tae-yong, and Japan’s National Security Advisor Takeo Akiba on Thursday, the three discussed North Korea’s missile programme and confirmed that they would work closely together to get Pyongyang to abandon its nuclear weapons, according to a readout of the meeting released by Japan.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/north-korea-fires-ballistic-missile-skorea-2023-06-15/>

N. Australia

AUKUS subs drifting toward a sea of controversy

Asia Times, June 8, 2023

Australia’s AUKUS nuclear-powered submarines will enjoy the freedom of navigation beyond Australian waters and freely be able to undertake Indo-Pacific patrols throughout the Pacific, Southeast Asia, the Indian Ocean and elsewhere.

This is clear from any analysis of the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), which has a total of 169 state parties. UNCLOS has been labeled a “package deal” – an “all-or-nothing” treaty

whereby states either accept or reject its terms and accompanying rights and entitlements. Expansive maritime zones give coastal states considerable new maritime entitlements and counter-balance against the guaranteed freedoms of navigation for ships of all states, which maritime powers value.

<https://asiatimes.com/2023/06/aucus-subs-drifting-toward-a-sea-of-controversy/>

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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