

Nuclear, Missile & Space Digest

Volume 15, Number 17

A Fortnightly Newsletter from the Indian Pugwash Society

September 15, 2023

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- Iran Presents New Drone, Claims It Can Fly for 24 Hours
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- Major Deal for Rafael: US Navy Planning to Procure Three Iron Dome Batteries
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- Kim Jong Un says nuclear weapons to be deployed to navy as U.S., allies start new drills
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- Radioactive material found as Australian border force raid Sydney home

A. India

Dr Jitendra Singh says, the exclusive findings and inputs of Chandrayaan-3 will benefit the entire World Community

PIB, August 17, 2023

Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Atomic Energy and Space, Dr Jitendra Singh today said, the exclusive findings and inputs of Chandrayaan-3 will benefit the entire World Community.

Speaking to the media after the Chandrayaan-3 mission achieved another historic feat when the "Vikram" lander module of the spacecraft, carrying the Pragyan rover, successfully detached itself from the propulsion module in its onward lunar journey, Dr Jitendra Singh said, even though the USA and the then USSR had started their Space journey long before us and America also landed a human being on the surface of Moon in 1969, it was nevertheless our Chandrayaan that brought home the pictures of water on the surface of Moon and startled the entire world including the Americans. We always heard imaginary fiction and asked ourselves whether there were any people living on the Moon, but for the first time Chandrayaan's findings prompted the world community to find scientific answers to these mysteries, he said.

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1949930>

DRDO ex-chief who weaponised India's nukes dies

Indian Express, August 17, 2023

Eminent scientist, former head of Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and a key player in the weaponisation of India's nuclear programme, V S Arunachalam, has passed away, his former colleagues said. He was 87 and was undergoing treatment for pneumonia and Parkinson's.

Arunachalam, who served as DRDO chief and scientific adviser to the defence minister for ten years between 1982 and 1992, passed

away in the United States where he had been living the life of an academic for a long time.

"He was one of the most inspiring leaders at the DRDO. It was under him that the DRDO transformed from a small projects organisation to a multi-mission organisation, planning and executing complex and sophisticated projects.

<https://indianexpress.com/article/india/drdo-ex-chief-who-weaponised-indias-nukes-dies-8895967/>

Chandrayaan-3 poised to unlock future energy source on the moon; know all about it

Business Today, August 19, 2023

Making significant progress towards India's lunar exploration ambitions, Chandrayaan-3 is advancing smoothly and is poised to touch down at the moon's southern pole on August 23rd.

Apathukatha Sivathanu Pillai, the former Chief Controller (R&D) of the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), conveyed optimism about the mission's success on Saturday. He stated, "Having transitioned from a near 100 km orbit to 30 km, the descent to the moon is underway. I am confident it will achieve complete success," in an interview with ANI.

<https://www.businesstoday.in/technology/news/story/chandrayaan-3-poised-to-unlock-future-energy-source-on-the-moon-394766-2023-08-19>

Chairman ISRO updates Minister Dr Jitendra Singh about the status and readiness of Chandrayaan-3 for the moon landing on Wednesday

PIB, August 21, 2023

Chairman, ISRO (Indian Space Research Organisation) and Secretary, Department of Space, Dr S. Somnath called on the Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Science & Technology; MoS PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr Jitendra Singh in New Delhi today and apprised

him of the status and readiness of Chandrayaan-3 for the moon landing scheduled on 23rd August 2023 in the evening.

Chairman ISRO briefed the Minister on the health status of Chandrayaan-3 and said that all systems are working perfectly and no contingencies are anticipated on Wednesday. In the next two days, the health of Chandrayaan-3 will be continuously monitored. The final sequence of landing will be loaded two days ahead and tested out, he said.

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1950803>

Minister Dr Jitendra Singh hails 'India on Moon', narrates further sequence of activities

PIB, August 23, 2023

This was the opening sentence of Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Science & Technology; MoS PMO, Personnel, Public grievances, Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr Jitendra Singh, who is also MoS Incharge Space, soon after the successful soft landing of Chandrayaan3 on the surface of Moon in the South Pole area, this evening.

Simultaneously, in a tweet which exactly coincided with the precise moment of the landing of Chandrayaan-3, Dr Jitendra Singh said, "While others fantasize Moon, we have felt the Moon. While others stuck in flight of dreams, Chandrayaan3 has actualised the dream. Tricolour flies high in lunar skies affirming India's resolve, as articulated by PM Modi, 'Sky is not the limit'".

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1951499>

India's space industry may grow from \$8 billion to \$16 billion in coming years: PM Modi

Mint, August 26, 2023

Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed the scientists of the Indian Space Research

Organisation (ISRO) at the ISRO Telemetry Tracking and Command Network (ISTRAC) in Bengaluru, noting that India's space industry is expected to grow from \$8 billion to \$16 billion in the coming years, reflecting a robust space sector.

PM Modi applauded the remarkable achievement of Chandrayaan-3 as a testament to India's scientific prowess in the infinite expanse of space and declared with pride, "India is on the Moon! We have our national pride placed on the Moon."

According to PM Modi, the touchdown moment of Chandrayaan-3 is one of the most inspiring moments of this century, for which he attributed this success to the dedicated scientists at ISRO.

<https://www.livemint.com/science/indias-space-industry-may-grow-from-8-billion-to-16-billion-in-coming-years-pm-modi-11693053170485.html>

Chandrayaan-3 mission is expected to send home information about Moon's atmosphere, soil, minerals etc which may be the first of its kind for the scientific community across the world and of far-reaching implications in the times to come, says Dr. Jitendra Singh

PIB, August 27, 2023

Chandrayaan-3 mission is expected to send home information about Moon's atmosphere, soil, minerals etc which may be the first of its kind for the scientific community across the world and of far-reaching implications in the times to come, said Union Minister of State for Space, Dr. Jitendra Singh today, adding that the Vikram Lander and Pragyan Rover have started performing the Mission objectives exactly as per the schedule.

In an exclusive interview to a media agency, Dr Jitendra Singh said, the main focus of the science payloads onboard Chandrayaan-3 is to provide an integrated assessment of the lunar surface features,

including the thermal properties and surface elements of the lunar topsoil (regolith) as well as the plasma environment near the surface, he said. It will also assess the lunar seismic activities and the impact of meteors on the lunar surface.

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1952703>

ISRO all set to launch first Sun mission

PIB, August 29, 2023

Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Science & Technology; MoS PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr Jitendra Singh said today that after close on the heels of successful Chandrayaan mission, India is ready with the first Sun Mission “Aditya-L1”, which ISRO is all set to launch, most likely on 2nd of September.

Addressing a public program in Mainpuri, Dr Jitendra Singh said, with the entire world celebrating India’s Chandrayaan mission, the popular interest in the Sun Mission has also increased manifold.

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1953242>

India’s Chandrayaan-3 moon rover reveals surprising sulfur find in lunar south pole soil

Space.com, August 30, 2023

India’s Chandrayaan-3 Vikram lander became the first craft to ever touch down at the lunar south pole on Aug. 23 – and the probe has wasted very little time scientifically exploring an environment that no mission from any country has ever visited.

Now, one instrument aboard the Chandrayaan-3 mission’s moon rover Pragyan has found surprising traces of sulfur within the lunar south pole’s soil.

Called Laser-Induced Breakdown Spectroscopy (LIBS) and created by the Laboratory for Electro-Optics Systems in Bangalore, that instrument probes the lunar

surface by quite literally obliterating it. To observe a substance, LIBS fires laser pulses at a sample, which then vaporizes the substance into a brief plasma. The instrument picks up light emitted from that plasma and analyzes the wavelengths to discern what elements lie within.

<https://www.space.com/chandrayaan-3-sulfur-surprising-composition-lunar-south-pole-soil>

India’s largest home-built nuclear plant starts operations, says PM Modi, calls it ‘milestone’

Mint, August 31, 2023

Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced on Thursday that the 700 MW nuclear power plant, developed entirely within India, located in Kakrapar, Gujarat, has commenced its operations at maximum capacity, calling it a “milestone”.

While the reactor at the Kakrapar Atomic Power Project (KAPP) had started commercial operations on June 30, it was operating only at 90 per cent of its capacity. On Thursday, August 31, it started operating at its full capacity.

Taking to X (formerly Twitter), PM Modi said, “India achieves another milestone. The first largest indigenous 700 MWe Kakrapar Nuclear Power Plant Unit-3 in Gujarat starts operations at full capacity. Congratulations to our scientists and engineers.”

<https://www.livemint.com/news/indias-largest-home-built-nuclear-plant-starts-operations-says-pm-modi-calls-it-milestone-11693500828276.html>

B. Russia

Russia sees nuclear weapons as only possible response to some threats – Lavrov

TASS, August 19, 2023

Possession of nuclear weapons in the context of deterrence is today the only possible response to some significant external threats to Russia’s security,

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said in an interview with the the International Affairs journal.

“Indeed, much has been said recently about the role of nuclear weapons in Russia’s foreign policy. I would like to remind you that the conditions for their possible use on our part are set out in doctrinal documents. It is important to understand them: Russia’s state policy in the field of nuclear deterrence is exclusively defensive,” he pointed out, “It is aimed at maintaining the potential of nuclear forces at the minimum level necessary for the guaranteed defense of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the state, preventing aggression against Russia and its allies.”

<https://tass.com/russia/1662459>

Japan increases military budget guided by NATO figures – top Russian security official

TASS, August 22, 2023

Japan is rapidly increasing its military budget and the purchases of offensive armaments being guided by NATO’s figures, Russian Security Council Secretary Nikolay Patrushev said.

Following the US’ example, Japan adopted a course toward militarization, Patrushev noted at a meeting on security issues in Russia’s Far East held in Magadan.

“Guided by NATO’s figures, the military budget and offensive arms purchases are being rapidly increased. There is even talk that the Japanese should have their own nuclear weapons,” Patrushev said.

<https://tass.com/defense/1663379>

Russia concerned over US not closing issue of nuclear tests – Russian diplomat

TASS, August 30, 2023

Russia is seriously worried over the fact that the United States is dodging signing the

Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), Dmitry Glukhov of Russia’s mission to the United Nations said on Tuesday.

“The beginning of the CTBT signing on September 24, 1996 was seen as a spark of hope that the era of nuclear tests is coming to an end. But, regrettably, more than a quarter of century after that, the treaty, which was called to put an end to all types of nuclear tests, has not come into force because eight states from Annex 2 to the treaty have not ratified it. We are especially concerned over this fact,” he said at a meeting of the UN General Assembly on the occasion of International Day Against Nuclear Tests.

<https://tass.com/politics/1667065>

Russia urges certain countries including US to ratify Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty

TASS, August 30, 2023

Russia is calling on certain countries including the US to ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty as soon as possible, Dmitry Glukhov, a member of the Russian permanent mission to the UN, said at a UN General Assembly meeting.

“We believe that the efforts of the international community, primarily the remaining 8 Annex 2 countries of the CTBT, should be focused on turning it into a functioning international legal instrument,” he said at the meeting dedicated to the International Day Against Nuclear Tests. “This is an absolute priority for nuclear non-proliferation and arms control.”

“We urge the leadership of the countries, on which the fate of the treaty depends, to show political will and responsibility by taking concrete decisions on its signing and ratification as soon as possible,” Glukhov said.

<https://tass.com/politics/1667073>

Russia's latest strategic sub begins transit to permanent base on Pacific coast – source

TASS, August 31, 2023

The latest Project 955A (Borei-A) nuclear-powered strategic missile-carrying submarine *Generalissimus Suvorov* embarked on its transit from the Northern Fleet to its permanent naval base on the Pacific coast, a source close to Russia's Defense Ministry told TASS on Thursday.

"Recently, the submarine cruiser *Generalissimus Suvorov* began its inter-fleet transit from the Northern Fleet to the Pacific Fleet to its permanent base in Kamchatka. The transit will last about two weeks," the source said.

TASS has no official confirmation of this information yet.

It was reported in January that the *Generalissimus Suvorov* had made a transit from Severodvinsk to its temporary base in the Northern Fleet.

<https://tass.com/defense/1668231>

C. China

China invited to witness Russia's Luna-25 launch, further space cooperation expected

Global Times, August 16, 2023

Wu Yanhua, the chief designer of China's major deep space exploration project, led a delegation to the Vostochny Cosmodrome in Russia's Far East to attend the launch event of the Luna-25 lunar lander at the invitation of Russia's state space agency Roscosmos. He congratulated Russia on its first lunar mission in nearly 50 years, and exchanged views on jointly deepening bilateral cooperation on deep space exploration. Yury Borisov, the director general of Roscosmos, warmly welcomed the delegation and introduced the development process, launch preparations and exploration tasks for Luna-25, as well as subsequent plans for the lunar exploration project.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202308/1296358.shtml>

Taiwan's secret missile for striking deep in China

Gabriel Honrada

Asia Times, August 17, 2023

Taiwan has just unveiled one of its secretive cruise missiles, part of a long-range arsenal that ensures conventional deterrence and counterstrike capabilities in the event of a Chinese invasion. The Warzone report further states that while it is unconfirmed that an HF-2E was launched from Jiupeng, the base is a known missile test facility and hub for Taiwan's National Chung-Shan Institute of Science and Technology (NCSIST), a top research institute understood to be responsible for the HF-2E's development.

<https://asiatimes.com/2023/08/taiwans-secret-missile-for-striking-deep-in-china/>

US tightens export controls of nuclear power items to China

Timothy Gardner

Reuters, August 18, 2023

The Biden administration has tightened controls on the export of materials and components for nuclear power plants to China, saying it would ensure the items were used only for peaceful purposes and not the proliferation of atomic weapons. The steps are among the latest signs of strained relations between Washington and Beijing, which have clashed over spying allegations, human rights, China's industrial policies, and U.S. export bans on advanced technologies.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/us/us-tightens-export-controls-nuclear-power-items-china-2023-08-18/>

U.S. nuclear boss says China's arms program not slowing down

Ken Moriyasu

Nikkei Asia, August 18, 2023

U.S. Strategic Command, the department responsible for America's nuclear weapons program, is monitoring China's nuclear development "day in and day out," its

chief said this week. What they observe from the command's headquarters at Offutt Air Force Base, Nebraska, is Beijing's determination to establish a full-fledged nuclear triad of land-, sea- and air-based delivery platforms. "We're not seeing any indication that they're slowing down," Gen. Anthony Cotton told a media roundtable on the sidelines of the 2023 U.S. Strategic Command Deterrence Symposium held in Omaha.

<https://asia.nikkei.com/Politics/Defense/U.S.-nuclear-boss-says-China-s-arms-program-not-slowing-down>

China launches new satellite for Earth observation

Xinhua, August 21, 2023

China sent a new Earth observation satellite into space from the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center in northwest China. It will be used in a variety of fields, including land surveys, urban planning, road network design, crop yield estimation and disaster relief. The launch marks the 484th flight mission of the Long March series carrier rockets.

<https://english.news.cn/20230821/6233c6396fcd4b9a9440557b8162ee82/c.html>

China's Taiwan invasion: Battle for the Strait will be a colossal missile duel

David Axe

The Telegraph, August 22, 2023

In the run-up to Taiwan's 1996 presidential election, China mobilised troops and fired missiles into the waters surrounding the Republic of China, attempting to frighten Taiwanese voters into supporting the pro-Beijing candidate. It was a clear threat to the island country, then transitioning to democratic government.

After 50 years of relentless expansion, the People's Liberation Army Navy has around 355 front-line warships. The US Navy by contrast has just 297 front-line ships. But American ships on average are much bigger and heavily-armed than Chinese ships. The

People's Republic of China decided years ago that land-based missiles were the cheap and easy way to close that firepower gap.

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2023/08/22/china-taiwan-war-invasion-missile-naval-battle/>

PLA navy's 'sharks' get stealthier, China on verge of producing 'world-class' nuclear submarines: Report

The Times of India, August 23, 2023

China's nuclear-powered submarines, nicknamed 'Sharks' by the PLA navy, are becoming stealthier and more capable, according to a recent report by the US Naval War College. The report claims that China is on the verge of producing "world-class" nuclear submarines that can rival the Russian Akula-I class SSN in terms of propulsion, quieting, sensors and weapons. The People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) is rapidly modernizing its submarine fleet, with a focus on stealth. The PLAN's new submarines are becoming increasingly difficult to detect, posing a growing threat to US and allied forces in the Indo-Pacific region.

One of the key areas of focus for the PLAN is the development of quieter submarines. Noise is one of the biggest challenges for submarine designers, as it can easily give away a submarine's position.

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/world/china/pla-navys-sharks-get-stealthier-china-on-verge-of-producing-world-class-nuclear-submarines-report/articleshow/102982747.cms?from=mdr>

China powering ahead in nuclear sector

Zheng Xin

China Daily, August 23, 2023

China has made significant strides and achieved substantial breakthroughs in the field of nuclear science and technology over the past five years, a top company executive said. The country, which is

becoming a notable player in the global nuclear landscape, has been actively developing nuclear power capacity, which is contributing to a more diversified energy mix that will help meet its growing energy needs while also reducing greenhouse gas emissions, said Yu Jianfeng, chairman of China National Nuclear Corp.

<https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202308/23/WS64e552b5a31035260b81daea.html>

China slams US call to ban anti-satellite missile tests as 'fake arms control'

Liu Zhen

South China Morning Post, August 23, 2023

Beijing accused a US proposal to ban anti-satellite weapons testing in space of promoting "fake arms control" and "real military expansion". The US proposal is opposed by China and Russia - both permanent members of the UN Security Council. The US, China, Russia and India have conducted the type of weapons tests that the proposal seeks to ban. Chinese foreign ministry spokesman Wang Wenbin said that the US commitment was deceptive since it "sets no substantial limit to US military forces in outer space", and Washington had already carried out enough direct-ascent missile tests and developed other types of anti-satellite weapons.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/diplomacy/article/3232073/china-slams-us-call-ban-anti-satellite-missile-tests-fake-arms-control>

How US agencies tracked China's nuclear programme

Vappala Balachandran

Outlook India, August 26, 2023

US archives indicated that the Chinese Embassy in New Delhi had reported to Beijing that its first nuclear test on 16 October 1964 at Lop Nor had given India's "anti-China policy a head-on blow and sent shock waves in India. Shastri (Prime Minister) tried to get various countries to censure us, but the Asian and African

countries did not go along with him". We still do not know whether our agencies were aware of this. George Washington University's National Security Archive (GWU NSA) revealed that the first American intelligence estimate on the Chinese test to President Lyndon Johnson was on April 17, 1964.

https://www.outlookindia.com/international/how-us-agencies-tracked-china-nuclear-programme-weekender_story-313578

D. Pakistan

Pakistan's national space policy should prioritize private sector participation in R&D: Speakers

The Nation, August 19, 2023

The Speakers at a seminar on Friday demanded that the country's National Space Policy should prioritize private sector participation in research and development (R&D), and encourage commercial sector involvement.

"At the international level, the space sector is growing exponentially, with public-private partnerships (PPP) in R&D aimed at acquiring next-generation capabilities. To ensure the success of Pakistan's space programme, it is crucial for the national leadership to set goals, allocate resources, and develop a credible infrastructure." These were some of the key takeaways from the seminar titled 'Emerging Trends in Aerospace Power: Options for Pakistan' organised by the Centre for Aerospace & Security Studies (CASS), Lahore.

Director National Security, CASS, Lahore, Air Commodore (R) Khalid Iqbal delivered the introductory remarks. His speech was followed by a keynote address by former Chairman Space & Upper Atmosphere Research Commission (SUPARCO), Major General (R) Ahmed Bilal, who highlighted the prevalent global aerospace trends.

<https://www.nation.com.pk/19-Aug-2023/pakistan-s-national-space-policy-should-prioritize-private-sector-participation-in-r-d-speakers>

Chandrayaan-3 ignites space debate in Pakistan but it's BSc Generals who are calling the shots

The Print, August 25, 2023

A Bachelor of Science degree may be enough to head a space agency – in Pakistan. But there is a caveat. You have to be a Major General, serving or a retired one, with at least two stars. Since 2001, the chairman of SUPARCO has had four chiefs, and three of them have just about got a BSc degree. Only three-star major general Ahmed Bilal Husain has an MSc.

And India's Chandrayaan-3 success has its rival neighbour Pakistan introspecting on the missteps in its own rather earth-bound space programme, SUPARCO or Space & Upper Atmosphere Research Commission. But that's what happens when generals are in charge of lunar missions and space exploration.

<https://theprint.in/go-to-pakistan/chandrayan-iii-ignites-space-debate-in-pakistan-but-its-bsc-generals-who-are-calling-the-shots/1730661/>

E. Europe

Finland to Build EU's Largest Stockpile for Chemical and Nuclear Emergencies

Bloomberg, August 16, 2023

Finland will build up the largest strategic reserve of emergency supplies in the European Union after Russia's invasion of Ukraine sparked an effort within the bloc to boost its crisis preparedness.

The project, which received •242 million (\$264 million) in funding from the European Commission, will set up a strategic reserve intended for use by countries in the Northern and Eastern Europe in case of emergencies, Finland's Interior Ministry said in a statement on Wednesday.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2023-08-16/finland-to-stockpile-supplies-for-chemical-and-nuclear-emergencies#xj4y7vzkg>

Sellafield nuclear waste retrieval gets under way

BBC, August 16, 2023

Some of the UK's oldest nuclear waste has been removed from its original storage facility at Sellafield in what has been described as a "momentous" step.

The material, from the first nuclear reactors built in Cumbria, had been in a concrete silo built in the 1950s.

A robotic arm was used to retrieve the hazardous material and load it into a specially designed stainless steel box.

The waste is to be transferred to a newly built facility at the site.

Designed as a "locked vault" with no plan for retrieving its contents or decommissioning the building, the Pile Fuel Cladding Silo is the oldest waste store at Sellafield.

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-cumbria-66521223>

Sweden to lift parliamentary ban on uranium mining

Mining Technology, August 21, 2023

Sweden's Climate Minister Romina Pourmokhtari has announced plans to lift the country's ban on uranium mining and make way for greater nuclear energy capacity.

The Swedish Parliament has shown majority support for a lift on the ban, according to Pourmokhtari.

The government plans to build at least ten large reactors in the next 20 years to meet the demand for low-carbon energy. Swedish Prime Minister Ulf Kristersson told reporters in January that the government is "changing the legislation", which will increase nuclear investment in the country.

Swedish ministers decided to phase out nuclear generation in 1980 and have

historically taken an anti-nuclear stance. However, this policy was repealed in June 2010. Pourmokhtari is a public advocate of nuclear generation and says it should form a part of Sweden's future energy mix.

<https://www.mining-technology.com/news/sweden-lift-uranium-mining-ban/>

Poland's leader says Russia's moving tactical nuclear weapons to Belarus

ABC News, August 22, 2023

Poland's President Andrzej Duda confirmed Tuesday that Russia has begun shifting some short-range nuclear weapons to neighboring Belarus, a move that he said will change the security architecture of the region and the entire NATO military alliance.

Both Russian President Vladimir Putin and his Belarusian counterpart Alexander Lukashenko said last month that Moscow had already shipped some of its tactical nuclear weapons to Belarus after announcing the plan in March. The U.S. and NATO haven't confirmed the move.

NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg denounced Moscow's rhetoric as "dangerous and reckless," but said in July that the alliance hadn't seen any change in Russia's nuclear posture.

<https://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/polands-leader-russias-moving-tactical-nuclear-weapons-belarus-102450122>

The Nuclear Aged

Reuters, August 22, 2023

Shaken by the loss of Russian natural gas since the invasion of Ukraine, European countries are questioning whether they can extend the lives of their ageing nuclear reactors to maintain the supply of affordable, carbon-free electricity – but national regulators, companies and governments disagree on how long the atomic plants can be safely kept running.

Europe avoided large-scale blackouts last winter despite losing its largest supplier of

natural gas, but industry is still grappling with high electricity prices and concerns about supply.

Given warnings from the International Energy Agency that the coming winters will be particularly at risk from a global gas shortage, governments have turned their attention to another major energy source that would exacerbate the problem if it too is disrupted: Europe's ageing fleet of nuclear power plants.

<https://www.reuters.com/graphics/EUROPE-ENERGY/NUCLEARPOWER/gdvzwweqkpw/>

Bulgaria & Romania's plans for two new Danube hydropower plants raise environmental, nuclear fears

Euronews, August 22, 2023

Romania and Bulgaria are hoping to soon start building two new hydropower plants on the Danube River despite growing concerns over their impact on the environment and nuclear safety.

The first of the new plants would be located between Turnu Magurele (Romania) and Nikopol (Bulgaria) while the other would link the Romanian town of Calarasi to the Bulgarian city of Silistra. By the time they come into operation within the next ten to 15 years, they would add to the 700 dams and weirs already built along the Danube and its tributaries.

The river is the second-longest in Europe stretching more than 2,800 kms through 10 countries: Germany, Austria, Slovakia, Hungary, Croatia, Serbia, Bulgaria, Romania, Ukraine, and Moldova.

The governments of Bulgaria and Romania are championing the projects as a means to boost their energy sovereignty through the use of an abundant shared resource.

<https://www.euronews.com/my-europe/2023/08/22/bulgaria-romania-plans-for-two-new-danube-hydropower-plants-raise-environmental-nuclear-f>

France heatwave curbs cooling water supply to St Alban nuclear plant

Reuters, August 23, 2023

A heatwave curbing the availability of cooling water has prompted a production warning from operator EDF for the Saint Alban nuclear power plant on the Rhone river in eastern France for Aug. 26-27.

Similar warnings have been issued this summer at plants including those at Bugey and Tricastin, which are also on the Rhone.

The Saint Alban production warning likely refers to the plant's second reactor as its first reactor is offline for maintenance until Sept. 7. Authorities in France widened a heatwave red alert for the south of the country on Tuesday. Officials urged some mountain climbers to postpone their activities while grape pickers were advised to start and end their work in the morning to avoid the extreme heat.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/france-heatwave-curbs-cooling-water-supply-st-alban-nuclear-plant-2023-08-23/>

Studsvik considers SMR deployment at Nyköping site

World Nuclear News, August 24, 2023

Swedish nuclear technical services provider Studsvik has signed a memorandum of understanding with small modular reactor (SMR) project development company Kärnfull Next, which is investigating the possibility of constructing and operating SMRs on the Studsvik industrial site near Nyköping on Sweden's east coast. Kärnfull Next said the feasibility study began in May, and preliminary results suggest that the Studsvik area "has favourable conditions" for hosting commercial SMRs. The study, which is due to be completed in December, is evaluating "the financial, technological, environmental, and societal feasibility of flexible and state-of-the-art nuclear power production at the site".

<https://www.world-nuclear-news.org/Articles/Studsvik-considers-SMR-deployment-at-Nykoping-site>

Slovakia stops relying on Russia for nuclear fuel

Euractiv, August 28, 2023

A new deal with US firm Westinghouse means that 18 months after Russia invaded Ukraine, Slovakia has diversified its suppliers of crucial energy materials and is now looking to France for another source.

Almost 60% of energy produced by Slovakia comes from nuclear power plants, which, in turn, come exclusively from Russian nuclear fuel. That will no longer be the case after an international tender secured an agreement to supply Slovenské elektrárne with "the only fully Western alternative".

"Securing another supplier of nuclear fuel for our power plants is an important step towards strengthening Slovakia's energy security. Nuclear power plants are an important pillar in the energy mix of our country, so I consider it crucial to ensure diversification of nuclear fuel supplies for their stable operation," said Branislav Strýček, CEO of Slovenske elektrárni.

<https://www.euractiv.com/section/politics/news/slovakia-stops-relying-on-russia-for-nuclear-fuel/>

Airbase project could pave way for UK to host US nuclear weapons

The Guardian, August 29, 2023

The US air force has secured \$50m (£39m) funding next year for a project that could pave the way for American nuclear weapons to return to British soil for the first time in more than 15 years.

In justifying the expenditure on a 144-bed dormitory at RAF Lakenheath in Suffolk, the USAF told Congress the building was intended to "house the increase in enlisted personnel as the result of the potential surety mission", which is jargon typically used by the Pentagon to refer to handling of nuclear weapons, according to experts.

Construction of the dormitory is due to begin in June 2024 and last until February

2026, and is the latest in a series of signs that preparations are under way for the possible return of US nuclear weapons to UK territory.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2023/aug/29/surety-mission-50m-airbase-project-could-pave-way-for-uk-to-host-us-nuclear-weapons>

Austria's Foreign Minister Schallenberg: "Finally Ban Nuclear Tests!"

European Interest, August 29, 2023

On the occasion of the International Day Against Nuclear Tests on 29 August, Foreign Minister of Austria Alexander Schallenberg calls on the so-called key states – Egypt, China, India, Iran, Israel, North Korea, Pakistan, and the United States – to finally ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT).

"We need the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty more urgently than ever. It cannot be that eight states hold the key to our collective security and handle it so carelessly. I urge these key states to finally take this important step for global security," says Foreign Minister Alexander Schallenberg.

<https://www.europeaninterest.eu/article/austrias-foreign-minister-schallenberg-finally-ban-nuclear-tests/>

Bulgaria offers Slovenia new nuclear power plant project

Euractiv, August 30, 2023

Bulgaria offered Slovenia to join the project for the new reactors at the Kozloduy Nuclear Power Plant as an energy buyer or as an investor, an offer that was already made to Greece earlier this year.

Slovenia is preparing to increase its nuclear power capacity and is ready to learn from Bulgaria, which appears to be ahead of it in its plans to expand the Kozloduy NPP with two new American reactors.

"We are tying the project to a long-term energy demand forecast that covers the period at least until 2050. It shows that the

two new reactors, combined with extending the lives of the existing ones, will be enough to provide baseload power until we decide how we will develop our energy after the middle of the century", explained Bulgarian Prime Minister Nikolay Denkov.

<https://www.euractiv.com/section/politics/news/bulgaria-offers-slovenia-new-nuclear-power-plant-project/>

Tractebel, Hatch team up for nuclear new build

World Nuclear News, August 31, 2023

By collaborating, the two companies aim to provide "invaluable expertise" in the field of nuclear engineering and consultancy for nuclear projects. "This will ensure continuity in the expert teams that will work on nuclear new build projects in North America and Europe, which was identified as a key success factor by nuclear technology developers," the partners said.

Tractebel has over 60 years of nuclear engineering experience in Europe and now globally throughout the entire life cycle of nuclear installations, from design to decommissioning, as well as in industrial applications. Tractebel - a subsidiary of France's Engie - has been collaborating with EDF on the Nuward small modular reactor (SMR) project since 2021.

<https://world-nuclear-news.org/Articles/Tractebel,-Hatch-team-up-for-nuclear-new-build>

F. Belarus

Belarusian missile crews practice operation of Iskander missiles carrying special warheads

TASS, August 25, 2023

A unit of the Belarusian Missile Force, armed with Iskander-M tactical missile systems, is practicing the tasks of carrying out strikes with missiles carrying special warheads, the Defense Ministry has said. "At a range near Osipovichi, fire control instruction of servicemen from a missile

brigade is in progress. The emphasis is on the cohesion of crews. A unit of missile forces armed with the Iskander-M tactical systems and a unit of Tochka tactical systems are taking part in the training. In the course of the exercises, preparations for and conduct of combat operations as well as the fulfillment of training and combat tasks for the preparation and delivery of missile strikes with both conventional and special warheads are being practiced," the news release says.

<https://tass.com/defense/1665627>

Another Iskander-M tactical missile system commissioned to Belarusian army

TASS, August 30, 2023

Another Iskander missile complex was commissioned to the Belarusian Armed Forces, the Ministry of Defense of Belarus announced.

"Another set of the Iskander-M tactical missile system was commissioned to the Belarusian army," the Ministry press office said.

In the video footage, published by the press office, an unnamed deputy brigade commander notes that another "and not the last military train carrying the Iskander-M tactical system - the best in its class" arrived in Belarus. The officer added that the crew underwent a full training course in the use of a special missile payload in Russia.

On December 19, 2022, Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko announced that S-400 and Iskander missile systems were commissioned in the republic.

<https://tass.com/world/1667637>

G. Ukraine

Update 180 - IAEA Director General Statement on Situation in Ukraine

IAEA, August 22, 2023

Ukraine's Zaporizhzhya Nuclear Power Plant (ZNPP) has started pumping water

from a new groundwater well and plans to build more at the site in the coming month as part of efforts to ensure sufficient cooling for its six reactors after the destruction of the Kakhovka dam earlier this summer, Director General Rafael Mariano Grossi said today.

The collapse of the downstream dam on 6 June and the subsequent disappearance of much of the water in the Kakhovka reservoir, which the ZNPP had been using for its cooling needs, forced Europe's largest nuclear power plant (NPP) to take steps to protect the bodies of water still available to it - including a large cooling pond next to the site - and to start looking for alternative sources of water.

The IAEA team of experts at the site has been informed that the new well, whose location close to the plant's sprinkler ponds was selected after consultations with geological specialists, has already been commissioned and is now providing about 20 m³ of water per hour.

<https://www.iaea.org/newscenter/pressreleases/update-180-iaea-director-general-statement-on-situation-in-ukraine>

Groundwater extraction begins at Zaporizhzhia

World Nuclear News, August 23, 2023

The Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant (ZNPP) has started pumping water from a new groundwater well and plans to build more at the site as part of efforts to ensure sufficient cooling for its six reactors after the destruction of Ukraine's Kakhovka dam in early June. The collapse of the downstream dam on 6 June and the subsequent loss of much of the water in the Kakhovka reservoir, which the plant had been using for its cooling needs, forced the plant to take steps to protect the bodies of water still available to it, including a large cooling pond next to the site, and to start looking for alternative sources of water.

<https://world-nuclear-news.org/Articles/Groundwater-extraction-begins-at-Zaporizhzhia>

H. United States of America

US slams North Korea for using repression to build nuclear weapons

Reuters, August 17, 2023

The United States slammed North Korean leader Kim Jong Un at the United Nations on Thursday for using “repression and cruelty” and totalitarian rule to unlawfully develop nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles.

“We cannot have peace without human rights,” U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, Linda Thomas-Greenfield, told the Security Council, which met to publicly for the first time since 2017 to discuss human rights abuses in North Korea.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/us-slams-north-korea-using-repression-build-nuclear-weapons-2023-08-17/>

General Says Deterring Two ‘Near Peer’ Competitors Is Complex

U.S. Department of Defense, August 17, 2023

U.S. Strategic Command is focusing on extended deterrence during a time when the country faces two near-peer rivals, said Air Force Gen. Anthony J. Cotton yesterday. The command continually assesses the threats and examines the command “for sizing and the right force posture to meet the challenges which we would face,” he said during U.S. Strategic Command’s Deterrence Symposium in Omaha, Nebraska. Russia has long been a near-peer competitor to the United States, with around 5,900 nuclear weapons in manned bombers, intercontinental missiles and submarine-launched platforms.

<https://www.defense.gov/News/News-Stories/Article/Article/3496656/general-says-deterring-two-near-peer-competitors-is-complex/>

US nuclear posture unchanged amid Russian, Belarusian measures – Pentagon

TASS, August 18, 2023

The US administration currently sees no reason to change its strategic nuclear posture

over any measures taken by Russia and Belarus, Pentagon Spokesman Patrick Ryder has told reporters.

“I’m not going to get into any type of intelligence. We have seen those press reports coming out of Russia saying that they were going to do this,” he said, answering to a question about the possible deployment of Russian tactical nuclear weapons on the territory of Belarus and about Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko’s declared readiness to use the “entire arsenal” of his country in case of a military aggression against Belarus.

“I’m not going to comment on that specifically,” he continued. “I will tell you broadly speaking we have not seen anything that would cause us to change the posture of our own strategic forces.”

<https://tass.com/world/1662071>

Pentagon Tackling Nuclear Modernization With Proactive, Integrated Approach

U.S. Department of State, August 25, 2023

The Defense Department is instituting a forward-leaning, whole-of-department approach in accomplishing its top priority of maintaining the world’s foremost nuclear deterrence capability, a top Pentagon official said today.

Deborah G. Rosenblum, assistant secretary of defense for nuclear, chemical and biological defense programs and executive secretary of the Nuclear Weapons Council said her top priority is ensuring the entire DOD is aligned and proactive as it executes its nuclear modernization efforts. “This work is so important and so vital and is really a no-fail mission for us, we need to make sure that the senior-most leadership of the department remains focused on it, is actively working on it [and] is solving problems and challenges,” she said.

<https://www.defense.gov/News/News-Stories/Article/Article/3505989/pentagon-tackling-nuclear-modernization-with-proactive-integrated-approach/>

Why the US and Europe Still Buy Russian Nuclear Fuel

Bloomberg, August 27, 2023

The US and its European allies moved fast to choke exports of Russian oil, natural gas and coal after Vladimir Putin ordered troops into Ukraine. When it comes to atomic energy, however, Kremlin-controlled Rosatom Corp. continues to be the dominant source of fuel for the world's nuclear power stations — supplying about half of global demand for enriched uranium. Western nations are racing to reconstitute their own processing capacity, much of which withered amid a growing aversion to nuclear power following Japan's Fukushima meltdowns. But progress is likely to be slow.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2023-08-27/why-the-us-and-europe-still-buy-russian-nuclear-fuel#xj4y7vzkg>

US calls on nuclear weapons nations to declare, maintain moratoria on testing such weapons

TASS, August 29, 2023

The US is calling on all countries possessing nuclear weapons to declare or maintain a moratorium on the testing of these weapons, said Bonnie Jenkins, US Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security.

"We were the first to sign the CTBT (the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty - TASS) open for signature in September 1996. Since then, the United States has maintained a zero-yield moratorium on nuclear testing and calls on all states possessing nuclear weapons to declare or maintain such a moratorium," she said at a UN General Assembly meeting dedicated to the International Day Against Nuclear Tests.

<https://tass.com/defense/1666969>

How China became the king of new nuclear power, and how the U.S. is trying to stage a comeback

CNBC, August 30, 2023

China has 21 nuclear reactors under construction which will have a capacity for

generating more than 21 gigawatts of electricity, according to the International Atomic Energy Agency. That is two and a half times more nuclear reactors under construction than any other country.

India has the second largest nuclear buildout right now, with eight reactors under construction that will be able to generate more than six gigawatts of electricity. Third place Turkey has four nuclear reactors under construction with a presumed capacity of 4.5 gigawatts.

The United States currently has one nuclear reactor under construction, the fourth reactor at the Vogtle power plant in Georgia, which will be able to generate just over 1 gigawatt. (For the sake of comparison, a gigawatt is about enough to power a mid-sized city.)

<https://www.cnbc.com/2023/08/30/how-china-became-king-of-new-nuclear-power-how-us-could-catch-up.html>

US Deploys B-1B Bombers for Separate Drills With South Korea, Japan

VOA News, August 30, 2023

The United States separately deployed B-1B bombers for joint drills with South Korea and Japan on Wednesday, as the three allies have stepped up responses to threats from North Korea.

A U.S. B-1B flew alongside South Korean FA-50 jets and U.S. Air Force F-16 fighters as part of ongoing Ulchi Freedom Shield exercises, South Korea's defense ministry said. It marked the 10th such flight by an American bomber this year.

North Korea routinely denounces the annual military drills as a rehearsal for war. The allies have stressed that the exercises are defensive.

Separately, two U.S. Air Force B-1Bs joined joint drills with 12 Japanese fighters, including four F-15 jets, according to Japan's defense ministry.

<https://www.voanews.com/a/us-deploys-b-1b-bombers-for-separate-drills-with-south-korea-japan/7246970.html>

West Asia

I. Iran

IRGC Commander Stresses Hybrid Defense Against Enemy's Warfare

Fars News Agency, August 18, 2023

Commander of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) Aerospace Force Brigadier General Amir Ali Hajizadeh underlined that Iran has prepared a hybrid defense strategy in the face of enemy's hybrid war.

General Hajizadeh made the remarks after meeting with the Commander-In-Chief of Iranian Armed Forces and Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei with a group of the IRGC staff on Thursday.

The IRGC Aerospace Force commander further said that the armed forces commander had told them in a previous meeting that he was happy with the IRGC's progress, but he expected more.

<https://www.farsnews.ir/en/news/14020527000540/IRGC-Cmmander-Sresses-Hybrid-Defense-Agains-Enemy's-Warfare>

Senior Commander: Iran Fully Monitoring Stealth US Fighters

Fars News Agency, August 19, 2023

A ranking Iranian Army general underscored the high capability of the country's radar systems to intercept all enemy airborne objects, and said Iran's air defense units have been fully monitoring US F-35 jets over the Persian Gulf in recent days.

"In the past few days, several American F-35 stealth fighter jets were flying over the Persian Gulf and were completely monitored by Iranian radars from the moment they took off," Deputy Commander of Operations of the Iranian Army Air Defense Force Brigadier General Reza Khajeh told FNA on Friday. "All the radars located in the South of the country were

monitoring the planes every moment," he added.

<https://www.farsnews.ir/en/news/14020528000294/Senir-Cmmander-Iran-Flly-Mniring-Sealh-US-Fighers>

Military Chief: World Powers Vying to Purchase Iran's Defense Equipment

Fars News Agency, August 22, 2023

Chief of Staff of the Iranian Armed Forces Major General Mohammad Baqeri praised the country's defense industry sector for its great progress in the past decades, and said that Tehran has manufactured such advanced defense equipment that the world military powers are vying to gain access to them.

Maj. Gen. Baqeri made the remarks in a message to Defense Minister Brigadier General Mohammad Reza Ashtiani, congratulating him on Iran's National Defense Industry Day on Monday.

Baqeri said Iran's defense industry has made great progress in various sectors such as the ground, naval and aerial battle, aerospace, missiles, drones, cyber and the artificial intelligence.

<https://www.farsnews.ir/en/news/14020531000204/Miliary-Chief-Wrld-Pwers-Vying-Prchase-Iran's-Defense-Eipmen>

Senior Commander Announces Iran's Readiness to Bolster Military Cooperation with Russia

Fars News Agency, August 22, 2023

Iranian Army Ground Force Commander Brigadier General Kioumars Heidari announced Tehran's readiness to boost collaboration with Moscow in military fields.

The top commander landed in Moscow at the head of a military delegation on Sunday to discuss cooperation between Iranian and Russian ground forces.

In a meeting with the Commander-in-Chief of the Russian Army's Ground Forces, General Oleg Salyukov, on Monday, Brig. Gen. Heidari stated his force is ready to enhance military ties with Moscow.

Salyukov, for his part, said Russia regards Iran as one of the key countries in West Asia and a strategic partner of Moscow.

<https://www.farsnews.ir/en/news/14020531000286/Senir-Cmmander-Annnces-Iran's-Readiness-Blser-Miliary-Cperain-wih>

Iran Showcases Indigenous Drone with 24Hrs Flight Endurance

Fars News Agency, August 22, 2023

Iran unveiled an advanced domestically-developed drone, dubbed "Mohajer 10", which has an operational radius of 2,000 kilometers and can continuously fly for up to 24 hours.

The unmanned aerial vehicle was put on display in the presence of President Seyed Ebrahim Rayeesi on Tuesday during a ceremony that marked the Defense Industry Day.

"Mohajer 10" has a maximum flight duration of 24 hours at an altitude of 7,000 meters and an operational radius of 2,000 kilometers. It also has a maximum fuel capacity of 450 liters and a maximum cargo weight of 300 kilograms.

The UVA, equipped with electronic warfare and intelligence systems, can fly at a maximum speed of 210 kilometers per hour and carry different kinds of ammunition and bombs.

<https://www.farsnews.ir/en/news/14020531000602/Iran-Shwcases-Indigens-Drne-wih-24Hrs-Fligh-Endrance>

DM: Iran to Send 2-3 Domestically-Developed Satellites into Orbit in Coming Months

Fars News Agency, August 23, 2023

Iranian Defense Minister Brigadier General Mohammad Reza Ashtiani praised the country's astonishing progress in the space

technology, and said that Tehran plans to launch two or three satellites by the end of the Iranian calendar year (ending in mid-March 2024).

Ashtiani stated on Tuesday that relevant organizations have been working to manufacture satellites and satellite carriers.

"We are involved in the development and launch of satellites. Under our plan, we will have 2 to 3 satellite launches this year, something we hope to be successful," he added.

Iran has taken giant strides in the field of science of technology in recent years, despite US sanctions, and is among the world's top 10 states capable of building and launching satellites.

<https://www.farsnews.ir/en/news/14020601000458/DM-Iran-Send-2-3-Dmesically-Develped-Saellies-in-Orbi-in-Cming-Mnhs>

Iran's Army Stages Large-Scale Electronic Warfare Drills

Fars News Agency, August 25, 2023

Iran's Army staged large-scale electronic warfare drills codenamed 'The Shield of the Guardians of Jurisprudence' in central areas of the country.

Various divisions of the Iranian Army launched a large-scale and joint military exercise involving electronic warfare units and featuring the country's domestically designed and manufactured radars, drones, micro aerial vehicles (MAVs), and other military equipment on Friday.

Units from the Army's Ground Force, Air Force, Navy, and Air Defense participated in the joint aerial maneuver, codenamed Separ-e Hafezan-e Velayat 1402 (the Shield of the Guardians of Jurisprudence 1402), whose headquarters were located in the central areas of the country.

<https://www.farsnews.ir/en/news/14020603000329/Iran's-Army-Sages-Large-Scale-Electrnic-Warfare-Drills>

Iran's nuclear organization unveils production of radionuclide

Tehran Times, August 27, 2023

The Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) on Sunday unveiled a domestic radionuclide with potential in a variety of disciplines.

Iranian nuclear specialists have successfully produced Cesium-137 radionuclide, which was previously imported.

The material, which has a variety of industrial and medicinal uses, was unveiled by Mohammad Eslami, the chief of the AEOI, during an expo in Tehran.

Radionuclides (or radioisotopes) are radioactive atomic variations of elements. They are mostly produced by exposing suitable target materials to the neutron flux in a nuclear reactor for an appropriate time.

Cesium-137 radionuclide has a half-life of 30 years and is found mostly in spent nuclear fuel and radioactive waste.

<https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/488427/Iran-s-nuclear-organization-unveils-production-of-radionuclide>

N. Chief Underlines Iran's Determination to Continue Manufacturing Radiopharmaceuticals

Fars News Agency, August 27, 2023

Head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) Mohammad Eslami praised Tehran's notable advancement in the nuclear industry, and underscored that his country will continue to produce radiopharmaceuticals to meet the health sector's demands. Eslami said on Saturday that radiopharmaceuticals have already helped the health staff treat patients, with these types of medicines currently being supplied to hospitals and medical centers on daily and weekly bases.

Iran has received "many demands from different countries" to provide them with radiopharmaceuticals, he added.

"Our exports have begun as well," the nuclear chief stated without elaborating on the target countries receiving the Iranian-made medicines.

<https://www.farsnews.ir/en/news/14020605000494/N-Chief-Underlines-Iran's-Determination-to-Continue-Manufacturing>

AEOI Head: Uranium Enrichment Continues Based on Domestic Law

Fars News Agency, August 27, 2023

Head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) Mohammad Eslami said Tehran carries on enrichment of uranium based on a framework established by the Iranian Parliament, and added that his country's interaction with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) is in progress within the framework of the Safeguards Agreement.

On the sidelines of a Sunday ceremony where Iran showcased new nuclear achievements, Eslami dismissed speculation that Tehran has reduced the amount of uranium it is enriching.

"[Uranium] enrichment is done based on the Strategic Action Plan and within the framework of the general policies of the Establishment," he stated.

<https://www.farsnews.ir/en/news/14020605000703/AEOI-Head-Uranium-Enrichment-Continues-Based-on-Domestic-Law>

Spokesman: Europeans Willing to Purchase Iranian Drones

Fars News Agency, August 27, 2023

Iranian Defense Ministry Spokesman Brigadier General Reza Talaei-Nik hailed the country's astonishing achievements in defense fields, and said that several European states are seeking to buy Tehran-manufactured unmanned aerial vehicles.

Brig. Gen. Talaei-Nik told Tasnim news agency on Saturday that there is a profusion of potential customers for the Iranian-made military drones.

Iran is prepared to export military drones after taking their production capacity and domestic needs into consideration, the military official added.

Iran is ready to export its unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) provided that “political and security considerations” do not apply to any customer and the country makes sure that its drones will not be intended for inappropriate use, Talaei-Nik emphasized.

<https://www.farsnews.ir/en/news/14020605000149/Spkesman-Erpeans-Willing-Prchase-Iranian-Drnes>

France seeking to return to Iran nuclear deal: Macron

Tehran Times, August 28, 2023

France would like to return to the 2015 nuclear deal with Iran and have clear information on Iran’s nuclear activities, President Emmanuel Macron said in a speech to French diplomats on Monday, Nour News reported.

The Iran nuclear deal, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) was an agreement signed between Iran and the 5+1 group of countries (U.S., UK, France, Russia, China and Germany) in July 2015.

The deal limited Iran’s nuclear activities under the condition that all nuclear-related economic and financial sanctions imposed by the West against the Islamic Republic be lifted. U.S. President Donald Trump unilaterally withdrew from the deal in 2018 and re-imposed sanctions against Iran.

<https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/488469/France-seeking-to-return-to-Iran-nuclear-deal-Macron>

Iranian Military Official: Indigenous Air Defense Shield Capable of Hitting 12 Targets Simultaneously

Fars News Agency, August 29, 2023

A senior military official said that the domestically-developed air defense system, ‘Tactical Saryad’, can intercept two dozen aerial targets at a distance of nearly 200 kilometers and simultaneously deal with a dozen target.

Deputy Defense Minister for Research and Industrial Affairs Afshin Naderi Sharif described the homegrown military gear as a deployable medium-range ground-based system, with special privileges over similar ones.

The air defense system is furnished with short-range self-protection capabilities in comparison with Khordad-3 and Khordad-15 systems, he stated.

<https://www.farsnews.ir/en/news/14020607000687/Iranian-Miliary-Official-Indigens-Air-Defense-Shield-Capable-f-Hiing>

Iran has no nuclear weapons: IAEA chief

Tehran Times, August 29, 2023

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Director General Rafael Grossi said on Monday that “Iran does not possess nuclear weapons.”

“Iran does not have nuclear weapons. A distinction must be made between having nuclear weapons and being able to create them,” Grossi said at a meeting of the Swedish Institute of International Affairs.

Grossi went on to say that in 2015 Iran and world powers reached an agreement, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), but the United States withdrew from it in 2018.

Grossi also noted that “the American move triggered Iran to abandon obligations over time. Although this agreement has not been declared dead, it has become an empty shell.”

<https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/488506/Iran-has-no-nuclear-weapons-IAEA-chief>

J. Israel

US Approves Historic Procurement of Israel’s Arrow 3 Defense System to Germany

Israel Defense, August 17, 2023

The United States government has granted official approval to the procurement of Israel’s Arrow 3 defense system to Germany.

The Israeli Ministry of Defense, German Federal Ministry of Defense, and Israel Aerospace Industries will sign the landmark \$3.5 billion defense agreement, marking Israel's largest-ever defense deal.

Defense Minister Yoav Gallant, the Director General of the Israel Ministry of Defense, Maj. Gen. (Res.) Eyal Zamir, and Director of the IMOD Directorate of Defense R&D (DDR&D), Brig. Gen. (Res.) Dr. Daniel Gold, were notified of this decision earlier today (Thursday), by the US Department of State.

<https://www.israeldefense.co.il/en/node/59285>

US-Israeli BIRD Foundation to Invest \$3.85M in Critical Infrastructure Cybersecurity Projects

Israel Defense, August 22, 2023

While the cybersecurity industry experienced record-breaking investments and continuous growth in recent years, most cyber companies have focused on developing solutions for banking and insurance companies, defense, eCommerce, and other verticals with generous budgets. Yet, cybersecurity requirements on the national level are growing at a rate faster than the industry can support. Many companies, utilities, and small and medium-sized ports and airports, have a constant need to adopt such enhanced cybersecurity solutions, though they must keep pace with the increasing number and complexity of requirements.

<https://www.israeldefense.co.il/en/node/59296>

Elbit Systems Awarded a \$55 Million Contract to Supply Counter UAS Solution to the Netherlands

Israel Defense, August 23, 2023

Elbit Systems announced that it was awarded a contract worth approximately \$55 million to supply multi-layered ReDrone Counter Unmanned Aerial Systems (C-UAS) to the Netherlands. The contract will be performed over a period of four years.

As part of the contract, Elbit Systems will supply several mobile, stationary, and deployed configurations of the ReDrone integrated Counter-UAS solution along with a logistic support package and training.

<https://www.israeldefense.co.il/en/node/59342>

Iran Presents New Drone, Claims It Can Fly for 24 Hours

Israel Defense, August 23, 2023

Iran unveiled its new combat UAV, the Mohajer-10, which it claims is capable of flying for 24 hours non-stop.

Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi unveiled the Mohajer-10 yesterday (Tuesday), during a ceremony marking "Defense Industry Day," threatening that Tehran will "cut off any hand involved in aggression" against the Islamic Republic.

A video accompanying the drone's display had a text saying "Prepare your shelters" in Hebrew and Persian.

IRNA, Iran's official news agency, says that the new drone has an operational range of 2,000 km, a maximum fuel capacity of 450 liters, a maximum payload weight of 300 kg, and a maximum speed of 210 km per hour.

<https://www.israeldefense.co.il/en/node/59346>

India Introduces New Frigate with Interceptors and Radars Made by IAI

Israel Defense, August 24, 2023

The President of India, Draupadi Murmu, launched the sixth frigate in Project 17A (Nilgiri Class) at the Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers Limited shipyard in Kolkata. The frigate has been named INS Vindhyagiri. According to Reuters, the program's scope is around 8 billion dollars.

The ship launching sequence is not linear, as construction is carried out simultaneously at two shipyards. The

launches began in 2020, while the launch of two more frigates in the series is planned for 2024. A total of seven frigates are planned in this series.

The frigate includes a Vertical Launch System (VLS) with 32 cells for Barak-8 missiles and an MF-STAR radar system manufactured by Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI).

<https://www.israeldefense.co.il/en/node/59351>

Major Deal for Rafael: US Navy Planning to Procure Three Iron Dome Batteries

Israel Defense, August 27, 2023

A major deal for Israel's Rafael Advanced Defense Systems: The U.S. Navy plans to acquire three Iron Dome batteries, including 44 launchers and 1,840 Tamir interceptors.

WAR ZONE reports that the exact value of the transaction is not known, but it is estimated to be around \$200 million. The Marines need Iron Dome for defense against rocket attacks, and these systems also have capabilities to defend against missiles and artillery.

The details of the purchase are published on the U.S. government website. The acquisition will be carried out by the Marines through Raytheon, which markets the system in the U.S. under the brand SKY HUNTER.

<https://www.israeldefense.co.il/en/node/59380>

Sikorsky to Build 8 New CH-53K Helicopters for Israel

Israel Defense, August 28, 2023

The U.S. Navy awarded Sikorsky, a Lockheed Martin company, a \$2.7 billion contract to build and deliver 35 additional CH-53K helicopters – the largest procurement to date for this multi-mission aircraft.

The agreement includes 12 U.S. Marine Corps Lot 7 aircraft, 15 U.S. Marine Corps Lot 8 aircraft, and eight aircraft for Israel. Sikorsky will begin delivering these aircraft in 2026.

These eight additional CH-53K helicopters for the Israeli Air Force follow the initial production announcement in 2022 for the first four aircraft under a U.S. Navy Foreign Military Sales (FMS) agreement.

<https://www.israeldefense.co.il/en/node/59384>

K. Saudi Arabia

The US Position on Saudi Arabia's Civilian Nuclear Program

Arab Center Washington DC, August 16, 2023

In June 2023, Saudi Minister of Foreign Affairs Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud affirmed the kingdom's intent to enrich uranium, part of its desire to develop a civilian nuclear program. Despite China and Russia having shown interest in partnering with Saudi Arabia on such an endeavor, Riyadh once again expressed a preference for a nuclear agreement with Washington. Importantly, it also requested a US commitment to Saudi security needs and reduced arms sales restrictions in exchange for potentially normalizing relations with Israel, a strategic goal for the Biden administration.

<https://arabcenterdc.org/resource/the-us-position-on-saudi-arabias-civilian-nuclear-program/>

The US is quietly warning its Middle East partners about the cost of stocking up on Chinese-made weapons

Business Insider, August 18, 2023

US officials are warning about Chinese arms sales in the Middle East, saying they could undermine the US military's ability to integrate with its partners in the region.

China isn't offering weapons that would directly replace US arms, but the growing interest in what Beijing is selling reflects a longer-term desire by Middle Eastern countries to diversify their suppliers and their increasing concern about the US's commitment to the region, experts say.

Chinese arms sales in the Middle East have increased by 80% over the past decade, a result of Beijing's expanding relationships there and its willingness to deliver arms faster and with fewer stipulations than Washington.

<https://www.businessinsider.in/international/news/the-us-is-quietly-warning-its-middle-east-partners-about-the-cost-of-stocking-up-on-chinese-made-weapons/articleshow/102815298.cms>

Minister says Israel may be open to Saudi uranium enrichment under normalization deal

The Times of Israel, August 20, 2023

Strategic Affairs Minister Ron Dermer, a close confidant of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, has indicated that Israel may be open to the possibility of acquiescing to Saudi Arabia's reported demand to build a civil nuclear power plant, as part of a US-brokered normalization deal with Jerusalem.

Netanyahu's office later issued a clarification downplaying, although a source close to the premier was quoted by Hebrew media reiterating that Israel "doesn't rule out" the idea of Riyadh enriching uranium. In an interview with PBS posted on Friday, Dermer drew the distinction between pursuing nuclear energy for peaceful purposes and nuclear weapons.

<https://www.timesofisrael.com/minister-says-israel-may-be-open-to-saudi-uranium-enrichment-under-normalization-deal/>

'Too Dangerous': Israeli and U.S. Experts Warn Against Saudi Nuclear Enrichment Capability

Haaretz, August 22, 2023

Leading American and Israeli experts are warning the Biden administration not to accept Saudi demands for uranium enrichment on the Kingdom's soil as part of a future U.S.-Saudi-Israeli agreement.

<https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2023-08-22/ty-article/.premium/too-dangerous-israeli-and-u->

[s-experts-warn-against-saudi-nuclear-enrichment-capability/0000018a-1bc5-d19a-affb-3bef72a70000](https://www.businessinsider.in/international/news/a-potential-first-of-its-kind-fighter-jet-purchase-could-be-a-sign-saudi-arabia-isnt-happy-with-what-its-getting-from-the-us/articleshow/102910920.cms)

A potential first-of-its-kind fighter-jet purchase could be a sign Saudi Arabia isn't happy with what it's getting from the US

Business Insider, August 22, 2023

Saudi Arabia has spent decades building an enormous air force composed exclusively of advanced US and British fighter jets. But Riyadh's reported interest in potentially purchasing a large number of French jets may be a sign it doesn't think its longtime patrons are as reliable as before.

In December, France's *La Tribune* financial newspaper, citing unnamed sources, reported that Saudi Arabia was considering acquiring 100 to 200 Dassault Rafale fighters. The report came amid developments suggesting that the US and other nations might not provide military equipment to Riyadh in the future.

After Riyadh cut oil production in October, US lawmakers proposed legislation freezing all American arms sales to the kingdom, which could have grounded most of the Saudi air force and would further fray already strained US-Saudi relations.

<https://www.businessinsider.in/international/news/a-potential-first-of-its-kind-fighter-jet-purchase-could-be-a-sign-saudi-arabia-isnt-happy-with-what-its-getting-from-the-us/articleshow/102910920.cms>

Saudi Arabia considers Chinese bid for nuclear plant

The New Arab, August 25, 2023

Saudi Arabia is considering a Chinese bid to build a nuclear power plant, the *Wall Street Journal* reported on Friday, a decision that could derail U.S. plans in the kingdom. China National Nuclear Corp, a state-owned company known as CNNC, has bid to build a nuclear plant in Saudi

Arabia's Eastern Province, near the border with Qatar and the United Arab Emirates, the newspaper reported, citing Saudi officials familiar with the matter.

CNNC did not immediately respond to a request from *Reuters* for comment. The foreign ministries of both China and Saudi Arabia did not respond to requests for comment on the report.

<https://www.newarab.com/news/saudi-arabia-considers-chinese-bid-nuclear-plant>

There should be no Saudi uranium enrichment

Bulletin of Atomic Scientists, August 28, 2023

There is increasing talk of a United States-brokered "grand bargain" on Middle East security, the core of which would be normalization of ties between Israel and Saudi Arabia. It isn't clear what motivates Joe Biden to press for this deal now. The obvious goal would involve the eternal search for peace in the Middle East, but there are hints that such a bargain may have more to do with keeping the Saudis out of China's orbit. One thing we know, Biden's lieutenants are lobbying hard in the Senate for acceptance of some version of far-reaching demands from the Saudi crown prince, Mohammed bin Salman, among them access to uranium enrichment technology that would ostensibly provide fuel for future Saudi nuclear power plants. Indeed, enrichment is a step in the production of nuclear reactor fuel. It is also a vital part of one of two paths to the atomic bomb.

<https://thebulletin.org/2023/08/there-should-be-no-saudi-uranium-enrichment/>

Saudi Arabia considering Chinese bid to build nuclear plant, report says

Aljazeera, August 25, 2023

Saudi Arabia is considering a Chinese bid to build a nuclear power plant in the kingdom amid frustration over the United States' stipulations for supporting Riyadh's quest for nuclear power, the Wall Street Journal has reported.

China National Nuclear Corporation (CNNC), a state-owned firm, has proposed the construction of a nuclear plant near the border with Qatar and the United Arab Emirates, the newspaper reported on Thursday, citing unnamed Saudi officials.

Saudi officials hope the Chinese bid will push US President Joe Biden's administration to loosen its conditions for aiding the kingdom's nascent nuclear industry, including commitments not to enrich uranium or mine their own uranium deposits, the newspaper said.

<https://www.aljazeera.com/economy/2023/8/25/saudi-arabia-considering-chinese-bid-to-build-nuclear-plant-report-says>

L. Turkiye

Baykar CTO highlights role of AI in unmanned technologies

Daily Sabah, August 23, 2023

Selçuk Bayraktar, the chief technology officer (CTO) and chairperson of the board of the Turkish drone magnate Baykar, noted in an interview Wednesday that the firm is conducting more research on work on algorithms known as artificial intelligence (AI) to increase flight safety and enable the aircraft to perceive and understand their surroundings.

"Of course, we are mainly conducting these studies for our unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) platforms, but at the same time, we are preparing our flying car named 'Cezeri,'" Bayraktar told Demirören News Agency (DHA).

<https://www.dailysabah.com/business/tech/baykar-cto-highlights-role-of-ai-in-unmanned-technologies>

Türkiye, S. Arabia, Pakistan convene 1st defense committee meeting

Daily Sabah, August 24, 2023

The Trilateral Defense Committee of Türkiye, Saudi Arabia, and Pakistan held its inaugural meeting in Riyadh, the capital

of Saudi Arabia, according to the written statement made by the Ministry of Defense of Saudi Arabia, Anadolu Agency (AA) reported Thursday.

According to the statement, Deputy Defense Minister Celal Sami Tüfekci, Deputy Minister of Defense of Saudi Arabia Talal Bin Abdullah Bin Turki Al-Otaibi and Lieutenant General Muhammed Said from the Pakistan Armed Forces attended the meeting, which was held to improve cooperation in the field of defense.

<https://www.dailysabah.com/business/defense/turkiye-s-arabia-pakistan-convene-1st-defense-committee-meeting>

M. East Asia

Japan's Kishida Visits Fukushima Plant Ahead of Water Release

VOA News, August 20, 2023

Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida made a brief visit to the tsunami-wrecked Fukushima nuclear plant on Sunday to highlight the safety of an impending release of treated radioactive wastewater into the Pacific Ocean, a divisive plan that his government wants to start soon despite protests at home and abroad.

His trip comes hours after he returned home Saturday from a summit with U.S. and South Korean leaders at the American presidential retreat of Camp David. Before leaving Washington on Friday, Kishida said it is time to make a decision on the treated water's release date, which has not been set due to the controversy surrounding the plan.

Since the government announced the release plan two years ago, it has faced strong opposition from Japanese fishing organizations, which worry about further damage to the reputation of their seafood as they struggle to recover from the accident. Groups in South Korea and China have also raised concerns, turning it into a political and diplomatic issue.

<https://www.voanews.com/a/japan-s-kishida-visits-fukushima-plant-to-highlight-safety-before-start-of-treated-water-release-/7232565.html>

North Korea's Kim watches cruise missile launches as US, South Korea begin drills

ABC News, August 21, 2023

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un observed the test-firing of strategic cruise missiles, state media reported Monday, as the U.S. and South Korean militaries kicked off major annual drills that the North views as an invasion rehearsal.

The North's report on missile tests came three days after the leaders of the U.S., South Korea and Japan held their first stand-alone trilateral summit and agreed to increase their cooperation on their ballistic missile defenses to counter North Korea's evolving nuclear and missile threats.

During an inspection of a navy flotilla on an unspecified date, Kim boarded a patrol ship to review its weapons and preparations for combat, according to the official Korean Central News Agency. It said Kim later watched the ship's seamen conduct a drill of launching "strategic" cruise missiles, a word implying the weapons were developed to carry nuclear warheads.

<https://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/north-koreas-kim-watches-cruise-missile-launches-us-102412318>

IAEA Director General Statement on Discharge of Fukushima Daiichi ALPS Treated Water

IAEA, August 22, 2023

The Government of Japan announced today that it requested Tokyo Electric Power Company Holdings (TEPCO) to promptly proceed with its preparations for the discharge into the sea of ALPS treated water stored at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station, in accordance with the implementation plan approved by Japan's Nuclear Regulation Authority. If there is no interference due to weather or sea conditions, the discharge into the sea is expected to start on 24 August.

Over the past two years the IAEA has conducted a detailed review of the safety related aspects of handling and discharge of ALPS treated water and issued its comprehensive report 4 July 2023.

<https://www.iaea.org/newscenter/pressreleases/iaea-director-general-statement-on-discharge-of-fukushima-daiichi-alps-treated-water>

IAEA to Regularly Inform Korea About its Monitoring of Fukushima Daiichi Treated Water Discharge

IAEA, August 22, 2023

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) will regularly inform the Republic of Korea (ROK) about the discharge of treated water from the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant into the sea, under an agreement which stresses the importance of transparency to address public concern in the country, Director General Rafael Mariano Grossi said today.

With this aim, the two sides have agreed to establish the IAEA-ROK Fukushima Information Mechanism (IKFIM) a few days before Japan is expected to begin the water discharge, providing a framework for the flow of information, Director General Grossi said.

Under IKFIM, the IAEA – which last month set up a permanent office at Fukushima Daiichi to monitor and assess the water discharge to ensure that the relevant international safety standards continue to be applied – will provide up-to-date information to ROK and facilitate visits by the country’s experts to the Agency’s office at the site. It also includes an arrangement for notifications in case of abnormal events.

<https://www.iaea.org/newscenter/pressreleases/iaea-to-regularly-inform-korea-about-its-monitoring-of-fukushima-daiichi-treated-water-discharge>

IAEA Director General Statement on Discharge of Fukushima Daiichi ALPS Treated Water

IAEA, August 24, 2023

Japan’s Tokyo Electric Power Company (TEPCO) today started discharging ALPS

treated water stored at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station into the sea, International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) experts present at the site confirmed.

As part of the IAEA’s multiyear safety review of the discharge, the IAEA team is present to monitor the discharge and assess Japan’s application of all relevant international safety standards for the water discharge.

“IAEA experts are there on the ground to serve as the eyes of the international community and ensure that the discharge is being carried out as planned consistent with IAEA safety standards,” said IAEA Director General Rafael Mariano Grossi. “Through our presence, we contribute to generating the necessary confidence that the process is carried out in a safe and transparent way”.

<https://www.iaea.org/newscenter/pressreleases/iaea-director-general-statement-on-discharge-of-fukushima-daiichi-alps-treated-water-0>

Reaction to Japan’s release of water from Fukushima nuclear plant

Reuters, August 24, 2023

Here are some reactions to Japan’s release of treated radioactive water from its destroyed Fukushima Daiichi nuclear plant on Thursday.

WEN-TI SUNG, POLITICAL SCIENTIST, AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL UNIVERSITY: “When dealing with economic slowdown at the grassroots and (the) centrifugal tendency among lying-flat officialdom, nationalism is the most convenient tool to rally the society and public health the most legitimate cause to rally around. “For public health, issues like the invisible and foreign threat of radiation is one of the few that cut across class, geographic, and ethnic lines.” ON SIGNIFICANCE FOR CHINA-JAPAN TIES: “The China-Japan thaw will have to wait. “Now that Japan and South Korea are able to put down their differences to form regular trilateral

talks with the United States, China is in no hurry to break the ice with Japan.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/reaction-japans-release-water-fukushima-nuclear-plant-2023-08-24/>

Outrage abroad and in Japan as Fukushima nuclear plant releases wastewater for second day

Euronews, August 25, 2023

Japan released wastewater from its Fukushima nuclear plant for a second day despite criticism from China and protests by angry citizens at home.

Japan began releasing wastewater from its Fukushima nuclear plant into the Pacific Ocean on Thursday, prompting China to ban all seafood imports from its neighbour.

The start of the discharge of water, equivalent to about 540 Olympic swimming pools over several decades, is a big step towards decommissioning the site 12 years after one of the world's worst nuclear accidents.

The water has been treated and according to the operator TEPCO, there is no health risk.

<https://www.euronews.com/2023/08/25/outrage-abroad-and-in-japan-as-fukushima-nuclear-plant-releases-wastewater-for-second-day>

Kim Jong Un says nuclear weapons to be deployed to navy as U.S., allies start new drills

NBC News, August 29, 2023

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un said his country's navy would become "a component of the state nuclear deterrence," state media said Tuesday, as the U.S., South Korea and Japan held a trilateral naval exercise to deal with North Korea's evolving nuclear threats.

The U.S. and South Korean militaries have been separately holding summer bilateral exercises since last week. North Korea views such U.S.-involved training as an invasion rehearsal, though Washington and its partners maintain their drills are defensive.

Kim said in a speech marking the country's Navy Day on Monday that the waters off the Korean Peninsula have been made unstable "with the danger of a nuclear war" because of U.S.-led hostilities, according to the official Korean Central News Agency.

<https://www.nbcnews.com/news/world/kim-jong-un-nuclear-weapons-deployed-north-korea-navy-rcna102287>

North Korean Navy to become part of nuclear deterrence force – Kim Jong-Un

TASS, August 29, 2023

North Korea plans to make the Korean People's Army (KPA) Navy a part of nuclear deterrence forces, North Korean leader Kim Jong-Un said during his visit to the naval command, dedicated to the day of the Navy.

"From now on, KPA's Navy will become a part of the national nuclear deterrence force, tasked with strategic missions," he said, according to KCNA. In addition, Kim Jong-Un said that all branches of the armed forces will "receive new equipment" in accordance with the "policy of expanded use of tactical nuclear weapons," aimed at building of nuclear armed forces. He did not specify what equipment he was referring to.

<https://tass.com/world/1666537>

North Korea conducts drills simulating tactical nuke strikes on targets in South Korea

TASS, August 31, 2023

North Korea conducted drills simulating tactical nuclear strikes on targets in South Korea, the Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) reported on Thursday.

"The KPA (Korean People's Army - TASS) staged a tactical nuclear strike drill simulating scorched earth strikes at major command centers and operational airfields of the "ROK" military gangsters on Wednesday night," it said.

As part of the drills, two tactical ballistic missiles were fired in the north-easterly direction from the territory of Pyongyang's international airport. They exploded at an altitude of 400 meter over the hypothetical targets.

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un watched the drills.

<https://tass.com/world/1667773>

Japan expresses protest to North Korea following missile launches

TASS, August 31, 2023

Japan has expressed protest to North Korea following the launch of two ballistic missiles in the early hours on Thursday.

"The launches of ballistic missiles violate the relevant UN Security Council resolutions and are a serious problem related to the issue of ensuring security of people in our country. With this in mind, we expressed a strong protest to North Korea," the office of the Japanese prime minister said in a press statement on Thursday.

According to Tokyo, the missiles flew from 350 to 400 kilometers to fall down outside Japan's exclusive economic zone in the Sea of Japan. The maximal altitude was about 50 kilometers.

According to a statement of the KPA (Korean People's Army) General Staff cited by the Korean Central News Agency (KCNA), the KPA conducted drills simulating tactical nuclear strikes on military targets in South Korea.

<https://tass.com/world/1667779>

North Korean leader studies plan for exercise envisaging seizure of South Korea – KCNA

TASS, August 31, 2023

North Korea's leader Kim Jong-un has studied a plan for exercises, presented by the

General Staff of the Korean People's Army (KPA), which implies "deflecting a surprise attack, launching a counteroffensive and capturing the entire territory of the southern part of the country," the Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) has said.

The country's leader visited the KPA General Staff's exercise control center on August 29 and reviewed progress in the comprehensive command and staff exercises. The drills were organized that day in response to "dangerous and provocative large-scale maneuvers" by the United States and the Republic of Korea that practiced a scenario of "total war against the DPRK".

<https://tass.com/world/1667877>

US, South Korean Air Forces hold exercises using live ammunition

TASS, August 31, 2023

The US and South Korean Air Forces on Thursday held joint exercises in which about 30 warplanes used live ammunition, the Yonhap news agency reported.

The air force drills took place as part of the Ulchi Freedom Shield exercise, which runs from August 21 to 31. South Korea engaged F-35A, F-15K, KF-16 fighter jets over the Yellow Sea. They used air-to-air missiles to intercept a notional enemy cruise missile. The F-15K and KF-16 fired guided bombs to strike sites of provocations. South Korean FA-50 fighter jets and US A-10 ground attack aircraft were also involved in the exercise.

On August 21, it was reported that North Korean leader Kim Jong Un boarded a Korean People's Army navy ship and inspected exercises to launch a sea-based strategic cruise missile.

<https://tass.com/defense/1668083>

N. Australia

Radioactive material found as Australian border force raid Sydney home

BBC, August 17, 2023

Three people have been taken to hospital after radioactive material was found inside a home in southern Sydney.

For several hours the home in Arncliffe was cordoned off with tape warning of a toxic, nuclear or biological hazard inside.

Australian Border Force (ABF) confirmed officials had carried out an operation with the assistance of fire crews.

Fire and Rescue New South Wales said “low level radioactive isotopes” had been found. The material was discovered in a suitable and effective container with no release of radiation, the brigade added in a statement.

“They were able to further seal the material without incident. Three occupants of the address were taken to hospital, purely for observation,” it said.

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-australia-66530479>

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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