

NUCLEAR TESTING

Russia moves closer to ditching landmark treaty

AFP, Moscow

Russian lawmakers yesterday voted once more to revoke Moscow's ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, moving the country another step closer to abandoning the landmark agreement.

The 1996 treaty outlaws all nuclear explosions including live tests of nuclear weapons, but it has never come into force because some key countries – including the United States and China – have not ratified the treaty.

In a fast-track hearing in the State Duma yesterday, lawmakers voted unanimously to revoke Russia's ratification of the treaty in a combined second and third reading of the bill.

The initiative will next be voted on by Russia's upper house, the Federation Council, before being sent to President Vladimir Putin to sign into law.

Putin said earlier this month he was “not ready to say” whether Russia needed to carry out live nuclear tests.

Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov told reporters last week that Moscow would only resume nuclear tests if the United States did so first.

Although it never entered into force, the agreement has been ratified by 178 countries, including nuclear powers France and Britain, and has symbolic value.

Its backers say it established an international norm against live tests of nuclear weapons, but critics say the potential of the deal remains unrealised without key ratifications. Russia's parliament ratified the agreement in June 2000, six months after Putin first became president.



A woman reacts while holding a pillow as she stands amidst debris outside the site of the Ahli Arab hospital in central Gaza yesterday in the aftermath of an overnight strike there that killed nearly 500 Palestinians.

PHOTO: AFP

S Korea, US, Japan to hold joint air drills

AFP, Seoul

South Korea, the United States, and Japan will conduct a joint aerial drill this weekend involving a US nuclear-weapons-capable B-52 bomber, according to media reports yesterday.

The trilateral exercise on Sunday will be the first of its kind conducted near the Korean peninsula, an unnamed military source told Yonhap news agency.

An official at Seoul's defence ministry declined to confirm the reports, but said the three countries were expanding joint exercises “to counter missile and nuclear threats from North Korea”.

Pyeongyang views all such exercises as rehearsals for invasion and has repeatedly warned it would take “overwhelming” action in response. “The S Korea-US-Japan joint aerial exercise will consist of a formation flight with the US strategic bomber B-52 escorted by fighter jets of the three countries,” a source said.

Hunger doubles in Sudan

700,000 children suffering from acute malnutrition, says UN

AFP, Geneva

The number of Sudanese families going hungry has near-doubled after six months of fighting between rival generals, the United Nations said yesterday.

Thousands have been killed and millions displaced or forced to flee Sudan – while more than half of those remaining need humanitarian aid.

“The number of hungry families has almost doubled,” the UN's health and children's agencies said in a joint statement.

“700,000 children are suffering from severe acute malnutrition and 100,000 children require life-saving treatment for acute malnutrition with medical complications,” the World Health Organization and Unicef said.

The agencies warned that further health system disruptions caused by the conflict would result in “unacceptably high” numbers of preventable deaths among children and vulnerable populations.

SIDELINES OF BRI FORUM

World conflicts ‘strengthen’ Russia-China ties

Says Putin following meeting with Chinese counterpart; Xi warns West against decoupling from Beijing

AGENCIES

Russian leader Vladimir Putin said yesterday that world conflicts “strengthen” his country's relations with China, after talks with Xi Jinping that celebrated their nations' deepening political and economic ties.

Putin, on his first trip to a major global power since Russia's invasion of Ukraine, met his “old friend” Xi in Beijing on the sidelines of a major forum in an event overshadowed by conflict in the Middle East.

At a press conference following the talks, Putin said that global turmoil served to bring China and Russia even closer together, report AFP.

“All these outside factors are common threats and they strengthen Russian-Chinese cooperation,” he said.

The Russian leader also said he had “optimism” for the future of the relationship.

After the meeting, Putin was filmed accompanied by officers carrying the so-called nuclear briefcase which can be used to order a nuclear strike, according to Reuters.

Meanwhile, in his speech while opening the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) forum in Beijing yesterday, Xi warned against decoupling from China criticising Western efforts to reduce dependence on the Chinese economy.

Xi also lauded his grand plan launched 10 years ago of building global infrastructure and energy networks connecting Asia with Africa and Europe through overland and maritime routes, saying that “blueprints turned into real projects”.

On relations with Russia, Xi said that “political mutual trust between the two countries is continuously deepening”, according to Xinhua news agency, hailing their “close and effective strategic coordination”.

Xi noted that he had met with Putin 42 times in the past decade, saying they had “developed a good working relationship and a deep friendship”.

Putin is the guest of honour at the summit hosted by Xi in Beijing this week to celebrate his Belt and Road Initiative, a vast trade and infrastructure project.

Representatives of more than 130 countries, largely from the Global South, attended the BRI forum including several heads of state, of whom the most prominent was Xi's “dear friend” Putin.

“We stand against unilateral sanctions, economic coercion, decoupling and supply chain disruption,” Xi told more than 1,000 delegates gathered in an ornate conference room in the Great Hall of the People west of Tiananmen Square.

Putin and other foreign leaders sat with key Chinese officials from the 25-member Politburo on the front row, as Xi delivered his opening remarks.

Xi pushed against Western efforts to reduce dependence on Chinese economy, saying that, “our lives will not be better and our development will not be faster if we view the development of others as a threat and economic interdependence as a risk.”

Western leaders insist that their goal is to “de-risk”, not “decouple”, from China, saying that they want to diversify supply chains that have become overly dependent on the world's second-largest economy.

China's threats to Taiwan and the trade disruptions of the pandemic years have added urgency to the desire to limit their dependence on China.

Although BRI at first set out to connect China to Western Europe, senior EU figures were missing. The sole head of state present from the bloc was Hungary's populist Prime Minister Viktor Orban.

Other notable attendees included the Afghan Taliban administration's commerce minister Haji Nooruddin Azizi.

“China has more interest right now in developing Afghanistan at this moment, so we are more engaged with China. The Chinese have more interest in economic affairs, that's why we're here,” Azizi told a gaggle of reporters at the ceremony.



ATTACK THREATS

8 French airports evacuated

AFP, Paris

Airports across France were evacuated yesterday after emailed “threats of attack”, a police source told AFP, the latest in a series of similar alerts.

The evacuations at Lille, Lyon, Nantes, Nice, Toulouse and Beauvais airport near Paris would allow authorities to “clear up any doubts” whether the threats are real, the source said.

A spokeswoman for Strasbourg airport in eastern France also said the site was being evacuated after a “threatening email”.

The Palace of Versailles, a major tourist attraction outside Paris, was evacuated for the third time since Saturday for bomb disposal teams to check the site.

France is on high alert following Friday's fatal stabbing of a teacher in the northern city of Arras by a man claiming allegiance to the Islamic State group.

A second police source said that Nice, Lyon and Lille airports had resumed normal activity around midday.

A spokesman for France's DGAC aviation authority confirmed evacuations over bomb warnings only at Lille, Lyon, Toulouse and Beauvais, and was unable to give further details immediately.

The DGAC's online dashboard showed significant delays at Lille, Lyon and Toulouse.

A post on Nice airport's X (formerly Twitter) account said that “following an abandoned baggage item... a security perimeter was set up to allow the usual checks”.

India plans manned Moon mission by 2040

AFP, New Delhi

India plans to send a man to the Moon and set up a space station by 2040, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said, as the country ramps up its space programme. The premier's announcement comes as the world's most populous country readies for a key test flight due Saturday for its first crewed space mission. Modi told space agency officials that they should “build on the success of Indian space initiatives”. The country “should now aim for new and ambitious goals, including setting up ‘Bharatiya Antariksha Station’ (Indian Space Station) by 2035 and sending first Indian to moon by 2040,” he said in a statement late Tuesday. Modi asked them to develop plans for “a series of missions” to the Moon. India's current focus remains on its first manned mission into outer space, called Gaganyaan or “Skycraft”. The three-day mission, expected to take place next year, aims to send a three-member crew into Earth's orbit at a cost of about US\$1.08 billion, according to ISRO.

INSIDE JOB THEFTS

British Museum to digitise collection

REUTERS, London

The British Museum said yesterday it planned to digitise its entire collection, citing the need to secure public access to its vast catalogue after it reported in August that 2,000 artefacts had been stolen or were missing. The museum, one of the most visited in the world, has been dealing with the aftermath of the thefts, which highlighted internal failings and led to the exit of its director. “Essentially we were the victims of an inside job by someone we believe, who over a long period of time was stealing from the museum and who the museum had put trust in,” its Chair George Osborne told parliament's Culture, Media and Sport committee. “There are lots of lessons to be learned,” he added. Osborne estimated that about 350 artefacts were in the process of being returned. The museum, which holds treasures such as the Rosetta Stone and the Parthenon marbles, sacked a member of staff over the thefts, which are also being investigated by police.



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এসেনসিয়াল ড্রাগস্ কোম্পানী লিমিটেড

৩৯৫-৩৯৭, তেজগাঁও শিল্প এলাকা

ঢাকা- ১২০৮।

দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি

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সিকিউরিটি/ আনেষ্ট মানি	দরপত্র শিডিউলের মূল্যে (অফেরতখোয়াগ)	দরপত্র গ্রহণের শেষ তারিখ ও সময়	দরপত্র খোলার তারিখ ও সময়
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পক্ষে ব্যবস্থাপনা পরিচালক।

Prime Bank

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Due to our data center migration, all our banking and transaction services will remain temporarily suspended as per the below schedule:

FROM	TO
24 <sup>th</sup> October 2023, 2.00 am	28 <sup>th</sup> October 2023, 5.00 pm

We sincerely apologize for the inconvenience.  
We are committed to ensuring seamless and improved banking services to our customers.

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