

EURASIA DIGEST

Monthly Compilation of News from Russia, Central Asia & Europe

Vol 2 | Issue 11 | November 2022



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Oil Exports Helping Cushion Russian Economy - IMF

The IMF has [said](#) that Russia's recession will be less severe than expected due to oil exports and relatively stable domestic demand. Russian economy is now forecast to contract 3.4 per cent vis-à-vis the earlier projected 6 per cent. Meanwhile, Russia [increased](#) oil production in September vis-à-vis August by 1 per cent to nearly 10.8 million barrels per day. President Putin has also agreed with Turkish President Erdogan to create a “[gas hub](#)” in Turkey, from where Europe could obtain its gas supply.

Russia Conducted Strategic Nuclear Deterrence Drills

President Vladimir Putin oversaw [training exercises](#) of Russia's strategic nuclear deterrence forces in the Barents Sea and the Kamchatka Peninsula on 26 October. Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu said that the drills simulated “a massive nuclear strike in response to an enemy nuclear attack.” The drills, which take place annually, were the second such exercise this year, with the previous one taking place five days before the onset of Russia’s 24 February “special military operation” in Ukraine.

Russia and Norway Agreed on Barents Sea Fishing Quotas

Russia and Norway reached a [deal](#) on fishing quotas for 2023, a rare sign of cooperation amid heightened tensions over the war in Ukraine. Since 1976, the two countries have agreed on catch quotas in the Barents Sea which is home to prized cod stocks, off the coast of both countries. The announcement was made on the day Norwegian authorities said they had arrested a suspected Russian sleeper agent.

Russia Announced End of Mobilization

Russian Defence Minister Sergey Shoigu [announced](#) on 28 October that the partial mobilization declared to boost Russia’s military campaign in Ukraine had been completed. He said that 300,000 reservists had been mobilised during the five week-long campaign.

Russia Suspended Participation in Ukraine Grain Deal

Russia, on 30 October, [suspended](#) its participation in a landmark agreement that allowed grain exports from Ukraine, blaming drone attacks on Russian ships in Crimea. The agreement had allowed more than 9 million tons of Ukrainian grain to be exported.

Kyrgyzstan Cancelled CSTO Drills

On 9 October, [Bishkek](#) cancelled the Indestructible Brotherhood 2022 Exercises, scheduled from 10 October onwards. The participants were to join the drills in Kyrgyzstan after the completion of Kazakhstan CSTO exercises on 8 October. Probable reasons for this cancellation could be the Kyrgyz-Tajik border clashes in September and Armenia’s preoccupation with its border conflict with Azerbaijan.

Kazakhstan Hosted CICA Meeting

On 12 October, Astana [hosted](#) the sixth summit of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia (CICA). The key objective was to transform the conference into a full-fledged organisation, anchored to the adoption of the Astana Statement on cooperation, security, and the use of information and communications technology.

Uzbekistan President Visited Turkmenistan

On 20 October, Uzbekistan President Shavkat Mirziyoyev [made](#) an official visit to Turkmenistan. The visit focused on cooperation in the fields of trade, economics, energy, transport, water and agriculture. There were also discussions pertaining to deepening intra-Central Asian cooperation.

Kazakhstan Approved New Military Modernisation Doctrine

On 24 October, Kazakh President Qasym-Zhomart Tokayev [approved](#) a new military doctrine, in line with the evolving security and military threats. The doctrine provides for the development of special operation forces to increase the combat potential of the Kazakh armed forces and expand their interaction with special-purpose units of other state bodies. This step comes after the nation witnessed protests in January 2022 and the recent Russia-Ukraine crisis.

Germany to Keep Three Nuclear Power Plants Operational Till 2023

German Chancellor [Olaf Scholz](#) has asked the economy, environment and finance ministries to lay the legal framework to keep the country's three nuclear power plants operational until April 2023. Germany had planned to complete a phase-out of nuclear power by the end of this year, but a collapse in energy supplies from Russia has prompted the government to recalibrate the planned shutdown.

Rishi Sunak Took Over as UK Prime Minister

Rishi [Sunak](#) took over as UK's Prime Minister on 25 October, thereby becoming

the first non-white, Asian immigrant to lead the country. He took charge at a time when UK is facing an acute economic slowdown, inflation, energy crunch and heightened tensions over the Northern Ireland Protocol. Prime Minister Modi congratulated PM Sunak and both leaders agreed to work together to conclude a comprehensive and balanced Free Trade Agreement (FTA).

Secret Chinese Police Stations Found in Netherlands

Dutch reports claimed that two [Chinese "posts"](#) were found operational in Amsterdam and Rotterdam. These "police stations", allegedly, claim to offer diplomatic assistance to Chinese nationals but have not been registered with the Dutch government. NGOs have also claimed that the facilities were being used by Beijing to monitor and silence political opponents and dissidents abroad, using former military and intelligence officers as employees. Spanish human rights organisation Safeguard Defenders had earlier reported about the presence of 36 Chinese "police stations" in Europe.

NATO Launched the European Sky Shield Initiative (ESSI)

A [letter of intent](#) was signed on 13 October between 14 NATO Defence Ministers and Finland. These countries will engage in joint purchase of advanced air defence systems with interoperability being the focal point. The key objective of this initiative, spearheaded by [Germany](#), is to develop a common air and missile defense system to defend the European airspace.