



AN ANALYTICAL INTELLIGENCE WIRE PREPARED BY THE STUDENTS
OF EMBRY-RIDDLE AERONAUTICAL UNIVERSITY IN PRESCOTT,
ARIZONA

Eagle Eye 343 | November 1, 2019

In This Issue

GREAT BRITAIN: Additional Brexit Delay Indicates Government Stalemate	2
CHINA: Beijing's Developing AI Program Will Likely Benefit Security	5
CHINA: Deal with Kathmandu Will Likely Improve Influence at Nepal's Expense	6
ISRAEL: Presence at Bahrain Conference Indicates Possible New Gulf State Ties	7
ISRAEL: Internal Government Division Will Likely Distract Israel from Foreign Threats	8
NORTH KOREA: Solar Deal Likely to Proceed Development Despite UN Sanctions	9
SAUDI ARABIA: Riyadh's Mediation in Yemen Indicates Saudi Focus on Tehran	10

GREAT BRITAIN: Additional Brexit Delay Indicates Government Stalemate

Summary: Great Britain will not exit the EU on 31 October and will instead work towards a 31 January 2020 Brexit date. The delay likely resulted primarily from a lack of strong central leadership, incentives for the EU to continue to delay Brexit, and an inability of minority parties to form a collective opposition.

Brexit Delayed until Early 2020: Already delayed twice under former Prime Minister Theresa May, the EU postponed the Brexit deadline to 31 October, following Members' of Parliament (MPs') rejection of May's Brexit deal. May's deal failed to gain traction due to border issues between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland, as the "backstop" between that nation's borders ensured no border posts or barriers would be set up along the Irish border post-Brexit. This opposition to May's Brexit deal eventually led to May's resignation as Prime Minister.

Boris Johnson took over as Prime Minister in June 2019 and advocated for leaving the EU by the 31 October deadline no matter the cost. On 17 October, Johnson and EU leaders agreed on a deal very similar to the one created by May. Johnson renegotiated parts of May's deal, replacing the backstop with a new customs plan between the Northern Island and the rest of Great Britain. Johnson attempted to push this deal through Parliament, although MPs decided to postpone holding a vote on the deal until completing the legislation to turn the EU withdrawal agreement. As the vote did not go through, Johnson requested another extension, and the EU granted an extension to 31 January. Britain could leave before then if Parliament approves a deal.

Lack of Strong Central Leadership and Plan: Johnson's inability to deliver on his major campaign promise of taking Britain out of the EU by 31 October highlights the infeasibility of Johnson's plan and a perceived ineffective leadership style. Johnson repeatedly promised to leave the EU with or without a deal and opposition parties strongly opposed these statements. Fears of no-deal Brexit threatened by Johnson led MPs to pass the Benn Law, which required Johnson by law to ask the EU for an extension if Parliament had not agreed on a deal by 19 September. The passage of this law clearly displays the lack of confidence in Johnson's ability to negotiate and pass a responsible deal and do what many MPs consider in the best interest of Britain.

With divisive statements and a lack of a strong unifying force, Johnson remains largely unable to deliver on his main campaign promise, to leave on 31 October with or without a deal, likely due to his commitment to a plan without a clear mandate. Even after the creation of an 11th-hour deal, the rushed timetable and Johnson's insistence on an exit caused lawmakers to call for more time to thoroughly examine the deal. This signals potential issues with the deal, as Parliament apparently did not feel compelled to push the deal through before the 31 October deadline. This lack of solidified Brexit results along with no strong central leadership shows clear flaws in Johnson's plan.

EU Incentivizing Extension: The EU's motivations to delay a deal and make negotiations difficult for the London probably also contributed to another Brexit stalemate. In the early phases of Brexit negotiations, many large EU powers sought to make the transition of the EU difficult for London, to discourage other anti-EU movements in Europe from attempting to push their respective nations out of the EU. This sentiment does likely exist in countries such as Germany, where Chancellor Angela Merkel supported another Brexit extension likely in part to deter anti-EU movements that wish to see Brexit completed before challenging the EU themselves. Some leaders, such as French President Emmanuel Macron, opposed a further extension likely because of the attention Brexit garners compared to other European issues. In general, however, most European politicians likely see the continued Brexit extension as a means to continue putting pressure on the London, deter other EU exit movements, and delay more difficult policy negotiations that must take place post-Brexit such as a UK-EU trade deal.

Minority Parties without Centralized Opposition: Smaller parties will likely find it difficult to reach a consensus, both within their own parties and when working with other parties. Smaller parties do not have a strong, unified opposition to current Brexit proceedings due to a variety of different approaches and possible solutions. A lack of a clear path on how to handle Brexit have resulted in the drawn-out proceedings that plague Britain. The solutions to Brexit vary from a hard exit to a second referendum to stopping Brexit entirely. Without a unified opposition, Parliament lacks a cohesive alternative course of action to Johnson's. This leads to MPs having to vote for solutions they likely do not fully agree with, adding to current tensions.

Outlook and Implications: Given the competing motivations of Johnson, the EU, and the rest of Parliament, the next Brexit deadline will likely only force another delay of Brexit and further stalemate domestically and in the EU at large. The upcoming general election on 12 December will likely not result in a decisive majority for the Conservative Party to pass meaningful agreements. Without a clear opposition policy and the multiple layered motivations among UK and EU leadership, Brexit negotiations will not likely end in the short-term future.

Brexit remains such a focal point in UK politics that MPs likely struggle to effectively deal with other domestic issues. Tensions have at points risen to high points and have more than likely not completely dissipated, probably finding their way into mostly unrelated issues. This impacts the ability of MPs to successfully focus on and pass other legislation without opinions from Brexit proceedings. As a result, domestic issues may be pushed to the side, which will likely create larger problems after the completion of Brexit, due to the unknown timeline.

As Brexit continues to go unresolved, the global image of Great Britain is likely deteriorating. The global community's view on its Parliament's ability to function effectively has also likely gone down internationally and domestically. The amount of turmoil, divisive statements and stances taken by MPs, and public dissatisfaction all contribute to also further damage the London's ability to create effective policy. This will likely impact how other countries work with Britain in the future, possibly creating a lack of willingness to partner on long-term projects.

[Zach Coffee, Gianna Geiger, Alli McIntyre]

CHINA: Beijing's Developing AI Program Will Likely Benefit Security

Summary: Beijing's use of artificial intelligence (AI) to prevent toilet paper theft likely demonstrates early signs of its intentions to establish widespread security surveillance technology, which it may also adapt for military application.

Development: On 21 October, The Star released an article discussing Beijing's steps towards developing AI, specifically in the use of AI to stop toilet paper theft. The AI uses facial recognition, similar to the facial recognition Beijing uses in its airport security, to stop theft through locking the machines if they screen the same face within 10 minutes. The first use of this AI occurred in public restrooms located in Temple of Heaven Park in Beijing in 2017. More than 700 cities have already proposed to install this AI. The toilet paper AI is the newest development and use of AI in China, another example being AI traffic lights.

Analysis: Beijing's use of AI to stop toilet paper theft represents the beginning of Beijing implementing AI for security measures, which could lead to more widespread use of AI within the next few years. Beijing has made AI development a goal, and it likely plans to use such a program in military applications. Beijing will likely use the toilet paper theft AI to refine use of AI to then later introduce the improved version to military practices. Beijing could eventually adapt the toilet paper theft AI in public security cameras to target suspicious individuals. Although it may take a few years to establish such a widespread application of AI, Beijing will most likely continue AI development to address public security and military concerns.

[Nikolaus Dunlap]

CHINA: Deal with Kathmandu Will Likely Improve Influence at Nepal's Expense

Summary: President Xi Jinping visited Nepal as he aims to build relations in South Asia. If Beijing's relations with Kathmandu continue to grow, China's influence in Southern Asia will likely increase and challenge New Delhi, but at the expense of Nepal.

Development: On 12 October, Xi visited Nepal to discuss trade agreements and foster ties, signing 17 total agreements, including a railway development plan through the Himalayas. In recent history, New Delhi has held major influence in Southern Asia, whereas Beijing's influence has stayed limited, which has led to a tenuous relationship between India and China. Nepal poses opportunities to Beijing, as it has ties to Tibet, lies close to India, and can help China's trade and investment growth. Past deals with China, however, have left Nepal economically weaker and have required Nepal to give up land ownership to China.

Analysis: Beijing's plans to increase relations with India's neighboring countries, such as Nepal, indicate an attempt to limit India's power in the region, and such agreements may disproportionately benefit Beijing. Other than protection from New Delhi, Kathmandu could lose more than it stands to gain by making deals with Beijing, which would gain more benefit from these agreements. China's trade deals with smaller, developing nations typically benefit China at the expense of the other nation, shown in trade deals with Sri Lanka and many African nations. This inequity would hold similarity with previous Nepal-China deals, which have left Nepal economically weaker and have required it to give up land ownership to China. Although Beijing approached Kathmandu first, it will probably approach other strategic South Asian countries such as Bangladesh, Myanmar, and Bhutan in the near future for its economic interests there and further limit Indian influence.

[Alexis Macias]

ISRAEL: Presence at Bahrain Conference Indicates Possible New Gulf State Ties

Summary: Jerusalem's attendance at the security conference in Manama likely indicates the beginning of new relations with Gulf Arab nations for Israel.

Development: On 21 October, senior Israeli official, Dana Benvenisti-Gabay, attended a maritime security conference in Bahrain. Sixty nations gathered to express their views following the Aramco attacks in Saudi Arabia. The conference agenda initially intended to address a global effort in countering Iran, but it redirected its focus to increasing the overall stability in the Middle East. Nations in attendance expressed their views of Iran as a menace and threat to the freedom of navigation. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu referred to the conference as a "historical turning point" in forming an alliance against Iran.

Analysis: Jerusalem attending the Bahrain conference indicates likely new ties between Gulf Arab nations and Israel. An expansion of ties may lead to new Israeli alliances against Tehran as nations establish it as a common enemy. Netanyahu's optimism for such alliances may provide for the openness necessary to form ties with nations on other common issues that may not be discussed otherwise. Increased relations with Arab nations outside of Egypt and Jordan provide the possibility for heightened stability within the Middle East, specifically for Israel.

[Abigail Clark]

ISRAEL: Internal Government Division Will Likely Distract from Foreign Threats

Summary: Hezbollah and the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) will likely move to expand military influence under the Israeli radar while the Knesset struggles with internal division.

Development: On 23 October, Blue and White party leader Benny Gantz met with the leader of the Yisrael Beytenu Party to discuss strategies for forcing the Knesset to mutual ground on moving forward with the election. Also on 23 October, Iran began testing its long-range HoveyzeH cruise missile testing in southern Iran, advertising its capabilities through state-run media and sparking mild wariness among Israeli intelligence and military officials. Additionally, Hezbollah and the IRGC have continued operations challenging Israeli airpower in southern Lebanon and Syria, shooting down military and surveillance drones.

Analysis: If Israeli leadership continues to focus on internal relations with the upcoming elections, Iran and its allies will likely continue to push Israeli boundaries. Iran may continue penetration testing on Israeli military, intelligence, and political organizations to determine Israel's willingness to react publicly to the recent Iranian cruise missile tests and Israel's political and military limits. If Israel does not publicly respond, Iran may escalate provocative actions against Israel and its allies. With Israeli military leadership aware of Iranian actions in the region, however, Iran will likely not get far before Israeli military and intelligence efforts impede its advances. Despite Israeli military and intelligence interference on such Iranian advances, this scenario would still serve to necessitate more Israeli resources than it would if Israel had initially focused more attention on Iran. If Israel does resolve its internal political affairs quickly, then this would enable Israel with ample time to react appropriately to Iranian aggressive moves in the region to expand its geopolitical influence, thus helping it preserve time and resources.

[Melea Tucker]

NORTH KOREA: Solar Deal Likely to Proceed Development Despite UN Sanctions

Summary: Pyongyang likely seeks to defy UN-imposed sanctions by supplying China with access to rare earth minerals in exchange for a \$2.5 billion investment in solar technology.

Development: On 24 October, a report from the Association of China Rare Earth Industry indicated Beijing is considering investing \$2.5 billion in North Korea's solar industry, intending to construct a 2.5 million kilowatt-hour per day solar plant. In return for its investment, Pyongyang would grant Beijing mining rights to a rare earth mineral despot in North Pyongan province, which experts believe has significant untapped resources. A spokesman for China's rare earth industry commented that China is engaging in wishful thinking to invest in an unsafe deal. After Pyongyang's ballistic missile tests in 2016, the UN imposed sanctions on North Korea, barring Pyongyang from supplying any country with rare earth minerals.

Analysis: Despite UN sanctions, Pyongyang will likely do everything within its power to ensure that this deal goes through because of its need to establish reliable power infrastructure for both its citizens and government. In going through with this agreement, however, both North Korea and China will be directly violating UN sanctions. As evident in the breakdown in nuclear negotiations and its threat to continue both nuclear and long-range missile tests, Pyongyang will likely disregard existing sanctions. While some Chinese officials do not support this deal, Beijing's desire to stay as the world's dominant producer of rare-earth-based consumer electronics will likely act as the driving force in its decision to move forward on investing in North Korea.

[August Kather]

SAUDI ARABIA: Riyadh's Mediation in Yemen Indicates Saudi Focus on Tehran

Summary: Saudi Arabia's diplomatic mediation in the Yemen conflict likely indicates a desire to shift military priorities towards Iran and away from Yemen.

Development: On 25 October, the Saudi-backed Yemeni government reached a joint-control agreement with the UAE-backed Southern Transition Council (STC). The new agreement comes shortly after Riyadh's forces occupied several key points within Yemen, including the strategic city of Aden. The agreement is waiting on the final signatures, according to an STC official. The deal will give the STC several government ministries and will place Yemen's capital in Aden.

Analysis: Riyadh's mediation in the Yemeni Civil War likely indicates its desire to quickly end the conflict on Saudi Arabia's southern flank. The cessation of the conflict in Yemen will likely allow Riyadh to focus solely on the threat Tehran poses, as the September Aramco attacks have probably encouraged Riyadh to conclude its other military engagements. Riyadh likely seeks the UAE and even the STC as potential allies in a possible confrontation with Tehran. The compromises granted to the STC indicate Riyadh's desire to not aggravate the separatists or the UAE, possibly from apprehension that the two groups may gravitate towards Tehran. Saudi Arabia is probably working to resolve geo-political tensions in the region so that its defense and security forces can focus predominantly on Tehran.

[Max Olson]

This is a global intelligence briefing prepared by the students of the Global Security and Intelligence Studies program at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University in Prescott, Arizona. The views expressed in this briefing are those of the students, not the university.

Though we do not publish sources with the final publication, we log and cite every source we use for our research and are happy to share them on request.

For questions or comments, contact Editor in Chief Zach Coffee at editorsee@gmail.com or Eagle Eye Faculty Advisor Dale Avery at (928) 777-4708