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In This Issue

RUSSIA: Pillaging of Moscow Occupied Kherson Likely to Increase Casualties	1
CHINA: Military Buildup Likely to Threaten Allies and Expand Territory Claims	2
IRAN: Protesters Likely to Seize Infrastructure to Reduce Tehran’s Ability to	3
Rule	
UKRAINE: Attacks in Svatove Likely to Cripple Russian Manpower	4
RUSSIA: Ukraine Likely to Reclaim Kherson	5
RUSSIA: Suspension of Grain Initiative May Lead to Further Cooperation	6
CHINA: Hackers’ Attack on Japan May Increase Prior to Meeting	7
RUSSIA: Moving Hypersonic Missiles to Belarus Likely an Intimidation Attempt ...	8
LEBANON: Increase in Political Pressures Likely Amid Cholera Outbreaks	9
VENEZUELA: Meeting with Columbian President Will Likely Help Ease	10
Sanctions	
CHINA: Quantum Technology Will Almost Certainly Strengthen Military	11
Technology	
HAITI: Journalist’s Death Likely Decreases External Support	12
IRAQ: Kirkuk Region Bombing Likely Stems from Heightened Stance Against	13
ISIS	

RUSSIA: Pillaging of Moscow Occupied Kherson Likely to Increase Casualties

Summary: Russian looting and occupation of the Ukrainian town of Kherson will likely lead to more havoc on both sides due to an impending Ukrainian assault to recapture the city.

Development: On 8 November, Kyiv accused Moscow of looting empty homes in the Ukrainian town of Kherson. This accusation comes after Moscow ordered previous residents of the town to leave. Kherson remains the only regional capital in Ukraine that Moscow successfully captured since the beginning of the war. Moscow captured Kherson on 27 February and still maintains full control over the southern part. Kyiv officials called the town's mandate a war crime as civilians faced forced deportation. The treatment of Kherson residents sparked anger from many Kyiv officials that see the treatment of Kherson citizens as barbaric.

Analysis: This town will likely act as a substantial advantage or loss for Moscow depending on its reaction to Kyiv's offensive. Moscow may focus more efforts on Kherson as it remains one of Moscow's last controlled strongholds in Ukraine. Anger from Kyiv officials will almost certainly further fuel campaigning for the town and the land hold that will come with securing Kherson by either side. The likely fight for control of Kherson could potentially lead to more bloodshed in the war as both sides view the town of strategic importance.

[Raechel Ferguson]

CHINA: Military Buildup Likely to Threaten Allies and Expand Territory Claims

Summary: Beijing's military buildup in the South China Sea (SCS) likely indicates its willingness to increase military control in the area, defend territorial claims, and a desire to intimidate any Pacific actors in the area.

Development: On 3 November, photos surfaced showing the extent of Beijing's military buildup in the SCS. The images show multiple man-made islands that contain weapons such as anti-ship and anti-aircraft missiles. The images also show multiple airstrips and hangers capable of harboring large vehicles and aircraft, according to *Daily Mail*. On 21 March, Beijing reportedly equipped at least three islands with military equipment, according to the *New York Post*. Beijing has built outposts at multiple locations in the region at Caurteron Reef, Johnson Reef, Hughes Reef, Gaven Reef, the north and south regions of Mischief Reef, as well as Subi Reef, and Fiery Cross Reef. The outposts contain enough storage to escalate any conflict in the area, according to *Interesting Engineering*.

Analysis: Beijing's military buildup in the SCS directly threatens Western interests in the area and will likely act as a deterrent to any Pacific actors, while also suggesting that Beijing will probably not give up on territorial claims in the area as an attempt to increase its influence. The large capacity of the outposts built likely indicates a strong willingness to escalate a conflict in the area if Beijing deems it necessary.

[Bryan Dean]

IRAN: Protesters Likely to Seize Infrastructure to Reduce Tehran's Ability to Rule

Summary: Protests against Tehran continue to increase in violence as protestors begin to attack security forces in retaliation for their fatal tactics against civilians. Tehran's inability to stop the protests will likely embolden the protestors to reduce Tehran's control by seizing infrastructure.

Development: On 3 November, Javaid Rehman of the Situation of Human Rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran reported Tehran imprisoned 14,000 people and killed at least 277, according to Cable News Network. In response to the brutality of the Basij Resistance Force and the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, protestors launched attacks that killed at least 20 members of the Basij and IRGC. Tehran authorized live-fire ammunition against the protestors and guided its forces to attack schools and hospitals. Protestors used Molotov cocktails against mosques, imams' offices, and Basij and IRGC facilities, according to the BBC. Several youths across Iran filmed themselves knocking the turbans off clerics in public places. Commander of the IRGC Hossein Salami warned protestors on 29 September to stop, but the protests did not cease and escalated protests. Previously, Tehran's violent attacks against protests caused them to lose momentum and fade. Current protests have continued throughout the many deaths and arrests ordered by Tehran. Tehran blames hostile nations for the creation and ferocity of the protests.

Analysis: Iranian protestors will likely continue to increase their pressure on Tehran by seizing control of state infrastructure to lessen Tehran's effective control over its citizens. The seizing of infrastructure changes the danger to Tehran from a nuisance to politically and economically impactful, as Tehran cannot rely on the funds and loyalty generated from seized infrastructure. The continuation of protests despite Tehran's brutal methods almost certainly shows Tehran's loss of control. Tehran fears the scale of the protests and will likely resort to massive acts of violence, on an unprecedented scale, to bend the populace to their will.

[Mason Meininger]

UKRAINE: Attacks in Svatove Likely to Cripple Russian Manpower

Summary: Ukrainian Armed Forces continue attacking the routes in and out of Svatove, likely causing heavy losses for the Russian Armed Forces. Russian forces recently conducted a counter-offense near Svatove, which could relieve troops in the city from getting cut off.

Development: On 3 November, the Russian Armed Forces advanced near Makiiivka, south of Svatove. Russian forces faced consistent Ukrainian artillery in the last week from the steady push by Kyiv in the region. The General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine reported 840 Russians and 28 armored vehicles lost in 24 hours. The constant push by the Ukrainian Armed Forces around Svatove looks to cut off the city and inflict many more casualties for Moscow.

Analysis: Ukrainian forces around Svatove likely caused most of the casualties of Russians within the area. The recent push from Moscow will likely relieve pressure along the line. Ukrainian forces may give up land in hopes of inflicting more casualties on Russian manpower. The Ukrainian force's constant pressure around Svatove could push the city back into Kyiv's hands. Russian forces will likely get cut off in the region if Svatove fell, and Moscow would see more casualties.

[Darren Gray]

RUSSIA: Ukraine Likely to Reclaim Kherson

Summary: Following signs of Russian de-occupation in Kherson, Ukrainian forces will likely reclaim the territory.

Development: On 2 November, Moscow governor Vladimir Salado announced the renewal of civilian evacuations in Kherson. The Russian Armed Forces plan to evacuate 5,000 citizens per day, according to *The Kyiv Post*. Moscow officials removed the Russian flag on top of the Kherson Administration building, according to *The Moscow Times*. Furthermore, Moscow appears to be preparing to withdraw its troops from Kherson. Russian Forces abandoned multiple military checkpoints within Kherson and moved units further down the Dnieper River, according to *Politico*.

Analysis: Following the evacuations of civilian and military forces from Kherson, Moscow will likely abandon its effort to defend the city. Ukrainian forces likely will reclaim the city of Kherson in the coming weeks following Russian evacuations. Losing Kherson may disrupt Moscow's advances in Ukraine, as the city provided Russian forces with a strategic access point to the Black Sea and Crimea along with easy access to Ukraine's southern coastline.

[Nathaniel Pliskaner]

RUSSIA: Suspension of Grain Initiative May Lead to Further Cooperation

Summary: Moscow will most likely continue its participation in the Black Sea Grain Initiative going forward due to the benefits of unsanctioned cereal and fertilizer exports.

Development: On 2 November, Moscow announced its re-entry into the Black Sea Grain Initiative, just one week after announcing the suspension of its participation. The United Nations, Moscow, Kyiv, and Ankara formed the Black Sea Grain Initiative and the Joint Coordination Centre (JCC) to protect shipping routes and continue food and fertilizer exports from Kyiv and Moscow without sanctions. Agriculture accounts for over seven percent of employment in the Russian job market, with Moscow as the second largest exporter of cereals and largest exporter of fertilizers. Despite the benefits Moscow receives through Black Sea Grain Initiative, Moscow continues to drop hints that it may not renew the agreement when it ends on 19 November, according to CSIS.

Analysis: Moscow will likely renew its membership in the initiative on 19 November because it gains safe, unsanctioned exports through the Black Sea shipping routes. Continuing the partnership with the JCC and Kyiv would likely benefit Moscow as it would most certainly allow the agricultural sector of the economy to grow. The impact of a permanent suspension would likely damage the agricultural sector of the Russian economy. Russia produces enough grain for itself; however, unemployment would likely rise as the country would not be exporting as much grain under the sanctions. The past week could have been Moscow testing the response of the JCC and reactions of Western and Kyiv-supporting nations. Moscow most likely wants to maintain its ability to export food and fertilizer products without Western sanctions, and thus will preserve the relationship it has with Kyiv, Ankara, and the United Nations through the Black Sea Grain Initiative.

[Katie Larson]

CHINA: Hackers' Attack on Japan May Increase Tensions Prior to Meeting

Summary: The Chinese state-sponsored threat actor called StonePanda employed a malware called LODEINFO to steal sensitive information from Japanese entities, which may lead to an increase in tensions between the two countries before crucial meetings.

Development: On 1 November, global news sources reported on a group of Chinese hackers called StonePanda committing attacks on Japanese entities. Previously, StonePanda used various methods to attack entities deemed strategically significant to Beijing. StonePanda typically uses a backdoor or some other entrance point, but lately its malware of choice, LODEINFO, proved effective at gathering information and avoiding detection. StonePanda began using this malware in 2019 and continues to improve its ability to discretely gather information on specified targets, most recently coding in a way to halt execution when the machine suffering an attack has a location in the United States. The typical behavior includes working on behalf of Beijing to target entities deemed significant enough to spy on and steal information while evading detection. Recently, Tokyo and Beijing considered having their leaders meet for talks after past remarks from Chinese President Xi Jinping considering Japan as a rival nation. Despite former talks of rivalry, Xi shows interest in joining talks with Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida. Hacking attacks using LODEINFO, which makes discretely gathering information significantly easier and constantly updates while continuing to actively target Japanese organizations, sends the information back to StonePanda so it can pass it on to Beijing, come at a crucial time for Beijing-Tokyo relations.

Analysis: Cyber espionage on Japanese entities by the Chinese state-sponsored threat actor StonePanda will probably lead to an increase in tensions between the countries right before crucial talks between leaders Xi and Kishida. Although Xi expresses interest in talks with Kishida to better relations, the exposure of StonePanda's attacks on Japanese entities will almost certainly cause an increase in tensions between the countries. Beijing continuing to sponsor espionage on Japanese entities will likely cause problems for Xi's supposed attempts at peace. StonePanda will almost certainly continue its attacks on Japan using the LODEINFO malware and this will very likely cause a rise in tensions between Beijing and Tokyo.

[Brandon Hammer]

RUSSIA: Moving Hypersonic Missiles to Belarus Likely an Intimidation Attempt

Summary: Russian Kremlin Vladimir Putin likely deployed the Killjoy hypersonic missiles to Belarus to intimidate North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) countries involved in the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

Development: On 1 November, the United Kingdom's Defense Ministry spotted at least two MiG-31s carrying Killjoy missiles. The Killjoy missile can achieve speeds of Mach 12, or 9,207 mph, and has a range of approximately 1,200 miles, according to *Newsweek.com*. Killjoys can carry nuclear warheads if necessary. Moscow used the Killjoy missiles throughout the war on Ukraine with little success due to a limited supply. The deployment of the Killjoy missiles to Belarus also marks the first time the missiles have left Russia. The restationing to Belarus moves the Killjoys closer to both Kyiv and NATO countries, giving Putin more offensive opportunities against Kyiv.

Analysis: The deployment of the Killjoy missiles to Belarus most likely acts as an attempt to intimidate NATO countries rather than attack Kyiv. Moscow's likely unwillingness to escalate to nuclear warfare, and the limited amount of Killjoy missiles will almost certainly prove inadequate in causing substantial damage to Kyiv. The Killjoys likely carry more weight as a deterrent due to their nuclear capabilities and ability to attack a target without allowing time for a reaction. While unlikely, the movement of the Killjoys to Belarus allows Putin to initiate an attack against a NATO country's city or military base if he feels that country overstepped in lending support to Ukraine. Putin will probably not use the Killjoy missiles against NATO countries, even if support for Ukraine increases, due to the military response such actions could lead to.

[Travis Feimer]

LEBANON: Increase in Political Pressure Likely Amid Cholera Outbreaks

Summary: The vacancy of the Lebanese Presidential seat and the new country-wide cholera outbreak will likely worsen Lebanon's outlook. The people of Lebanon will likely increase pressure on parliament for a presidential candidate, possibly allowing Hezbollah to seize power.

Development: On 1 November, the World Health Organization (WHO) announced Lebanon currently has 1,400 confirmed cholera cases. Cholera is reemerging in the Middle East, while Lebanon experiences the first cases since 1993. Former President of Lebanon Michel Aoun left office on 30 October, leaving the presidential and ministry seats vacant. Medical care in Lebanon sits at an all-time low due to personnel leaving the country and medicine being unaffordable from the recent financial crash. With the failure to approve and form a government from the interim Prime Minister of Lebanon, vacancies continue to plague many key government positions.

Analysis: The current cholera outbreak in combination with the vacant presidency seat will likely create a vacuum for someone to fill the position quickly. Hezbollah will likely fill the void for government action as it has in the past to gain public support. If Hezbollah fills the power vacuum and gains positive sentiment, this will likely influence the parliamentary elections for the new Lebanese president. Hezbollah is likely looking for as much public support as possible to influence parliamentary decision-makers and further their agenda.

[Tucker Jones]

[VENEZUELA: Meeting with Colombian President Will Likely Help Ease Sanctions](#)

Summary: International sanctions on Caracas will likely ease as Bogotá leads the way in re-establishing relations. The international community will likely view Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro as more open and willing to negotiate as he works with Bogotá.

Development: On 1 November, Colombian President Gustavo Petro met with Maduro at the Miraflores presidential palace in Caracas, according to international media reports. Petro asked Maduro for support in peace talks with the National Liberation Army (ELN), a Colombian rebel group located on both sides of the border, according to *Al Jazeera*. Both countries will look for ways in sharing intelligence on drug trafficking groups, according to The Associated Press. Petro stated that he would ask for the return of Caracas in the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR), which would allow recourse in an international court for victims who have not received justice in Venezuelan courts, according to *The New York Times*. The international community already considered lifting oil sanctions imposed from Maduro's questionable election, according to *The Washington Post*.

Analysis: With Petro's bold willingness in working with Maduro, international sanctions against Caracas will likely ease as other governments attempt to work with Maduro. Relations with the ELN will likely improve as Caracas and Bogotá work together in peace talks. The sharing of intelligence between governments will likely not affect drug trafficking groups. Caracas will likely join the IACHR due to pressure from existing sanctions and increasingly healthy relations with Bogotá.

[Julian Romano]

CHINA: Quantum Technology Will Almost Certainly Strengthen Military Technology

Summary: Beijing's quantum technology (QT) will probably innovate military applications that other countries have yet surmounted, likely expanding military capabilities.

Development: On 31 October, reports indicated Beijing's efforts to expand its QT. QT remains classified as technology that uses the principles of sub-atomic particles. Quantum computers utilize the technology to process data with bits in multiple states simultaneously. QT can increase efficiency and power within military applications but cannot create new weapons. QT grants motion sensors and other programs on the atomic level higher efficiency. Beijing's developments in quantum computers support counter-stealth, counter-submarine programs, decrypt encryption, and generate impenetrable encryption, according to *Asia Times*. Previously built quantum computers in China have performance speeds that surpass the West's innovations, according to the *South China Morning Post*.

Analysis: QT's ability to increase the power of military applications will probably increase the likelihood of Beijing enabling unmatched capabilities. Beijing could use QT advancements to enact data breaches towards countries that lack stronger defense technology. QT's ability to create technology at the atomic level will most likely encourage Beijing to expand device capabilities that measure distance and collect data. If Beijing induces cyberattacks with quantum computers, Beijing may remain impenetrable from defensive attacks other countries might impose.

[Lauren Estrada]

HAITI: Journalist's Death Likely Decreases External Supports

Summary: Port-au-Prince's response to recent protests will likely display its vulnerabilities and highlight the inability to quell civil unrest which may exacerbate tensions.

Development: On 30 October, a protest occurred in conjunction with the murder of journalist Romelo Vilsaint. Witnesses saw Vilsaint get hit by police open fire, according to *Associated Press*. Other news outlets report his death stemming from head trauma inflicted by a thrown tear gas canister. The cause of death remains unknown due to conflicting reports, but Haitian National Police announced an investigation surrounding the death. The protest that Vilsaint participated in stemmed from the detention of his colleague, who reported on gang violence and the political climate in Haiti. The Committee to Protect Journalists reported 17 journalists died during protests in Port-Au-Prince between 1992 and 2022. In the last few days three journalists experienced extreme aggression against them while reporting on the humanitarian crisis in Port-Au-Prince, according to *Miami Herald*. In the past few years, Port-Au-Prince officials have reached out to surrounding countries for help.

Analysis: Violence during the protests surrounding humanitarian crises and police violence towards journalists will likely play a role in surrounding countries' interactions with the country. This event will likely expose Port-Au-Prince's lack of influence and control on Haitian citizens. The evidence of increased poverty, deaths, and protests demonstrates almost certainly displays the inefficient use of external support by Port-au-Prince officials. This will almost certainly limit international support. The decrease of support and lack of Port-au-Prince interference may push the Haitian people into civil war and initiate an increase of migration out of Port-Au-Prince.

[Hannah Hoffman]

IRAQ: Kirkuk Region Bombing Likely Stems from Heightened Stance Against ISIS

Summary: Increased operations, made to halt further ISIS activities, likely led to a bombing in Baghdad. This bombing could possibly act as the first of many against Iraqi cities as tensions rise.

Development: On October 29, a gas tanker exploded near a soccer field in northeastern Baghdad, killing at least nine people and wounding 10 others, according to *ABC News*. Originally ruled an accident, officials now seem unsure. New Iraqi President Abdul Latif Rashid directed the Commander-in-Chief of the Iraqi Armed Forces to form a committee and launch an investigation into the deadly incident, according to *Iraqi News*. The United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq also called for a thorough investigation. Prior to the bombing, a meeting with the Prime Minister-designate Muhammad Shia Al-Sudani, the U.S. Ambassador to Iraq Alina Romanowski and commander of Combined Joint Task Force Matthew McFarlane, addressed the continuation of security cooperation and coordination between the two countries. Al-Sudani stated they hope to combat terrorism within the framework of advice and training, in a manner that preserves Iraq's sovereignty and helps develop the capabilities of the Iraqi security forces. Days after this meeting, the Popular Mobilization Forces in Iraq, announced the launch of a security operation in areas of Mosul. Security forces from the Iraqi army and Nineveh Operations Command began a large-scale search operation in areas of Mosul, aiming to pursue remnants of ISIS terrorist groups in these areas. This operation also aims to secure areas that terrorists may use to launch attacks against civilians or security forces. Within 24 hours of the bombing, authorities arrested numerous ISIS leaders in the Kirkuk region.

Analysis: The bombing near Baghdad remains under investigation but likely stems from the aggressive stance towards ISIS in Iraq. With a new military cooperation effort, as well as a new operation in Mosul, ISIS would probably want to strike back. In recent months, numerous Baghdad officials commented on the growing ISIS movement, which may eventually lead to further pressure and potentially more civilian attacks.

[Peter Lopez]

About GSIS

Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University's (ERAU) Bachelor of Science in Global Security & Intelligence Studies (GSIS) degree program at our Prescott Campus blends both academic and professional studies to equip students with the knowledge and skills necessary to become future leaders in intelligence, security, and law enforcement. The program provides students with a sound foundation in the liberal arts, including international relations, foreign languages and cultures, international law, foreign policy, political and military history, and other essential topics.

About EE

Eagle Eye Intelligence (EE) is an intelligence and research organization led by the students of the GSIS program at ERAU in Prescott, Arizona.

Dr. Philip E. Jones founded EE and Embry-Riddle's GSIS program in 2002, following a career with the Central Intelligence Agency and consulting work in international development and global security. Currently, Professor Dale R. Avery, a former career intelligence analyst, serves as EE's faculty advisor.

EE strives to provide actionable intelligence and analysis to its customers during the academic year. We are driven by a number of goals – continuous development, nonpartisanship, interdisciplinary studies, global awareness, and professionalism.

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Savannah Gallop, a junior in the GSIS program, currently serves as EE's Editor in Chief. For questions or comments, contact the team at editorsee@gmail.com or Professor Avery at 928.777.4708. If you use material from this publication, you should attribute: Eagle Eye Intelligence Edition 417, a publication created by students at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University in Prescott, Arizona.



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