

4 October 2024

An Analytic Intelligence
Wire Prepared by The
Students of Embry-Riddle
Aeronautical University

Issue 457

Of Eagle Eye Intelligence

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MEXICO: Internal Conflicts in Sinaloa Cartel Will Likely Escalate Violence

Summary: Authorities linked the 10 recent deaths to the Sinaloa cartel. These incidents involved a shootout with police and mutilated bodies left with messages from the Sinaloa cartel. Internal conflicts within the group may cause more violent events.

Development: On 21 September, authorities found seven bodies wearing sombreros with pizzas pinned to their heads by knives in Culiacan, Mexico. Following this, a shootout between police and alleged hitmen occurred, leaving three criminals dead. This event is presumed to be a message of intimidation between the warring factions, according to CBS News. In late July, authorities arrested Ismael “El Mayo” García, the Sinaloa cartel’s top leader, and observers view the violence as a power struggle among members loyal to Joaquín “El Chapo” Guzmán, according to CBS News. In 2019, authorities arrested El Chapo, the co-founder of the Sinaloa Cartel, for drug trafficking and money laundering. A cartel member in Sinaloa warned of the situation turning ‘ugly’ and added that El Mayo’s arrest will trigger ‘a lot of war between the narcos, according to Reuters. The new president of Mexico will face ongoing economic and migration challenges and must address rising drug cartel violence, according to *Border Report*.

Analysis: The violent incidents over the weekend raise the likelihood of further attacks in Culiacan. This rivalry not only reflects deeper fragmentation in the Sinaloa cartel but also signals that violence could become more unpredictable and widespread. The warring factions fueled by the arrests of their leaders and insiders predicting further violence will likely escalate further vicious events to the people of Mexico.

[Mya Thomas]

CHINA: Taiwanese Suspect's Trial May Raise Questions about Taiwan's Sovereignty

Summary: The extradition of a Taiwanese woman suspected of kidnapping and murder in the Philippines to China will likely raise questions about Taiwanese independence. Taipei will probably not upset the status quo.

Development: On 23 September, Chinese media reported the extradition of a Taiwanese woman arrested in Seoul for the kidnapping and murder of a Chinese national and Chinese-American in the Philippines. A joint team composed of Chinese, American, and Philippine workers investigated the case, which gained attention on Chinese social media, according to *South China Morning Post*. The Taiwan Criminal Investigation Bureau (CIB) stated that an extradition treaty between Beijing and South Korea allows extradition regardless of an individual's national origin. Taipei stated that "relevant agencies" are following the case "closely," according to Taiwan English news sources. In the past few years, foreign governments extraditing Taiwanese nationals to China have caught the attention of foreign news outlets, including BBC and CNN. Taiwanese President Lai Ching-te pledged to maintain the status quo with Beijing, despite the unpopularity of this policy with many Taiwanese citizens, according to the Council on Foreign Relations. Taiwanese people aged 18-34 tend to identify as solely Taiwanese and see China as a major threat, according to the Pew Research Center.

Analysis: Given Lai's previous attitude towards cross-strait relations, Taipei will probably not dispute the extradition to avoid the risk of upsetting the status quo. Because the extradition of Taiwanese nationals to China historically gained the spotlight internationally, the most recent occurrence will likely spark questions over Taiwan's sovereignty among the domestic public and those abroad. Considering younger Taiwanese generations' views of China, public pressure for a stronger stance on Taiwan's sovereignty will likely increase.

[Rachel Borden]

TUNISIA: New Judicial Oversight Bill Likely to Increase Political Unrest Near Election

Summary: Transferring oversight of the Independent High Authority for Elections (ISIE) to the Tunisian Appellate Court will likely result in protests as Tunisian President Kais Saied has complete control over the upcoming election.

Development: On 27 September, the Tunisian Parliament approved a bill that transferred the Tunisian Administrative Court's power to oversee the actions of the ISIE to the Tunisian Court of Appeals. In Tunis's courts, the ISIE arranges the elections while the Administrative Court ensures the ISIE does not overreach in power. This comes after 10 August, the ISIE removed 14 out of 17 presidential candidates for the upcoming 6 October election. On 29 August, the Administrative Courts ordered the ISIE to reinstate three candidates, a decision that the ISIE, which Saied seized control of on 22 April 2022, did not follow. Saied created Decree 34 on 1 June 2022, letting him dismiss judges; he immediately dismissed 57 judges, which caused the Judges Union to strike. The Administrative Court reinstated 49 of these judges, a decision Tunis ignored. This shows a clear pattern of the Administrative Court opposing decisions that favor Saied. On 22 September 2022, Saied released Decree 53, which declared spreading false news via technology illegal, forcing news outlets to censor information critical of Saied.

Analysis: Transferring oversight of the ISIE away from the Administrative Court will likely result in Saied obtaining dominance of the presidential elections. Considering Saied's ability to hire and dismiss judges at will, including those in the Court of Appeals, he could probably influence the upcoming elections considerably and pressure any judges who oppose his actions. As shown during recent disputes over election candidates and back during the introduction of Decree 34, the Administrative Court may be the only part of Tunis's judicial system willing to oppose Saied's decrees – opposition Tunis frequently ignores. Saied's opposition likely perceives this as Saied's attempt to solidify his power. The average Tunisian citizen likely believes that Saied stripped power from the Administrative Court to remove corruption because Decree 53 removes all news critical of Saied. This will probably cause political unrest like that seen after Saied gave himself the power to dismiss judges: significant protest.

[Nathan Popp]

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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Sebastien Bragg, a Senior 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 457, a publication created by students at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University in Prescott, Arizona.



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