

# EURASIA DIGEST

*Monthly Compilation of News from Russia, Central Asia & Europe*

Vol 2 | Issue 10 | October 2022



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## **Russia and China Held Naval Drills in the Pacific**

Russia and China held [joint naval drills](#) in the Sea of Okhotsk and the Pacific Ocean on 15 September. Meanwhile, the Russian and Chinese Presidents met on 16 September on the [side-lines of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization \(SCO\) summit](#) in Samarkand. President Xi said that China was willing to work with Russia to support "each other's core interests" with President Putin stating that he understood that China had questions and concerns about the situation in Ukraine but praised China's "balanced" position on the conflict. In other developments, Russia's Energy Minister Alexander Novak said that a [new Russian pipeline](#) to China (Asian Force Siberia 2) would replace the Nord Stream 2 gas link to Europe

## **Prime Minister Modi Met with President Putin**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi [met](#) with Russian President Vladimir Putin in Samarkand on 16 September on the side-lines of the SCO summit. Key issues of discussion revolved around bilateral, global and regional developments. These included the crisis in Ukraine, global food and energy security, and availability of fertilizers. President Putin expressed appreciation for Prime Minister Modi's video-message at the Eastern Economic Forum in Vladivostok held earlier in September.

## **Russia Declared 'Partial' Mobilization**

President [Putin declared](#) a "partial" military mobilization in Russia on 21 September, the country's first since the Second World War, vowing to use "all means necessary"

to achieve Russia's aims against Ukraine and the West. Russian Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu said that 300,000 Russian reservists would be called up for service. In the first official estimate of Russia's battlefield losses since late March, Shoigu announced that 5,937 Russian soldiers had been killed in Ukraine. Meanwhile, there have been reports of [large exodus](#) from Russia as well as [protests](#) against the "partial" mobilization.

## **Pro-Russian Officials in Ukraine Claimed Victory in Annexation Votes**

On 28 September 2022, officials in the Ukrainian regions of Luhansk, Donetsk, Kherson and Zaporizhzhia claimed victory in [referendums](#) for a merger with Russia. The "yes votes" in the region amounted to 99.23 per cent, 98.42 per cent, 87.05 per cent and 93.11 per cent respectively.

## **Armenia and Azerbaijan Military Confrontation**

On 13 September 2022, the Armenian Defence Ministry [reported](#) large scale attacks from Azerbaijan, along the Armenian southern border. According to the ministry, the cities targeted included Vardenis, Sotk, Artanish, Ishkhanasar, Goris and Kapan. The Azeri Defence Ministry retaliated by carrying out "local countermeasures". Reportedly, more than 180 people have lost their lives in the clashes.

## **Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan Border Clashes**

On 14 September 2022, [clashes](#) were reported along several points on the un-demarcated borders of Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, post which, a peace deal was signed between the two nations on 20

September. The most affected provinces were Batken on the Kyrgyz side and Soghd in Tajikistan.

### **Chinese President Xi Jinping Visited Kazakhstan**

Prior to his trip to Samarkand to [attend](#) the SCO Summit, Chinese President Xi Jinping visited Kazakhstan on 14 September 2022. This was President Xi's first trip outside China since the onset of the pandemic (January 2020). During his visit, he met with Kazakh President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev and assured China's support towards Kazakhstan's 'independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity'. He also highlighted Kazakhstan as an important regional partner of Beijing.

### **Prime Minister Narendra Modi Attended SCO Meeting**

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi [visited](#) Samarkand to attend the 22<sup>nd</sup> SCO Summit on 15 September 2022. This was the first physical summit of SCO since the pandemic, with the last two summits being in the virtual mode. The Prime Minister, in his speech, focused on the importance of transit rights for improving connectivity, food security, and India's potential as a 'manufacturing hub' in the region. In the same Summit, India took up the presidency of SCO and Varanasi was selected as the first ever SCO Tourism and Cultural Capital for 2022-2023.

### **EU-India Energy Initiatives Inaugurated**

European Commissioner for Energy, Kadri Simson visited India during 7-8 September for an event on EU-India [Solar Energy](#) Cooperation and inaugurated the first edition of the EU-India [Green Hydrogen](#) Forum. She mentioned that the ongoing

energy crisis has made the implementation of the European Green Deal even more urgent and the need for EU to increase its outreach for energy beyond Russia.

### **French Foreign Affairs Minister Visited India**

Ms. Catherine Colonna, French Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs, [paid](#) an official visit to India from 13-15 September 2022 and met with the Indian Prime Minister and External Affairs Minister. The two sides made a commitment to deepen the India-France Strategic Partnership in view of the evolving geopolitics, particularly in the Indo-Pacific, where both countries are resident powers. The ministers welcomed the expansion of bilateral relations to new areas like the Blue Economy and Ocean Governance.

### **Germany Nationalised Energy Giant Uniper**

On 21 September, the German government announced a deal to nationalise the country's biggest gas importing company, [Uniper](#). Uniper was the largest importer of Russian gas in Germany and supplied almost 40 per cent of gas, until the crisis in Ukraine. The firm has been on the brink of collapse since it was forced to buy more expensive gas from alternate suppliers.

### **Far Right Claimed Victory in Italian Elections**

Leader of Brothers of Italy, [Giorgia Meloni](#) has claimed victory in the general elections, which would install her as Italy's first female prime minister. These elections have provided Italy with the most far-right government since the fascist era of Benito Mussolini.