



Picture: Max Kukarudzkiak/Unsplash

EDITORIAL LEADER

As events in Ukraine continue to unfold we are being bombarded with a steady stream of easy-to-digest news feeds and commentaries that give us our (sometimes quite superficial) angle on events there. But it is worth spending a little time, and exercising some 'professional curiosity', to get under the skin of events in a slightly better-informed way. In this *Digest* we have sought to provide some sources of deeper insight – be they on as accurate an overview of casualties (from both sides) as open sources can provide, to a range of issues that arise as the ripples spread well beyond the borders of Ukraine itself. – Maj Gen (Retd) Dr A R D Sharpe CBE, Director CHACR

The views expressed in this Digest are not those of the British Army or UK Government. This document cannot be reproduced or used in part or whole without the permission of the CHACR. www.chacr.org.uk

A WAY OUT OF TROUBLE?

In 2014 elder statesman and former Secretary of State Dr Henry Kissinger penned a [thoughtful piece](#) that sought a way out of the brewing conflict. Eight years later the insights are still highly relevant, and provide a framework for understanding that both the West and Putin could (but sadly did not) adopt, which recognises the strategic interests of both sides whilst ensuring that their respective security concerns are met. At the same time Kissinger warns about the inherent complexity of Ukraine itself and its fractured internal politics. Rather than forcing a divided country to be dominated by the politics of its Eastern Russian speakers, or its Western Ukrainian speakers leading to action, and reaction, interestingly the solution that he suggests is to respect the wishes of Ukraine's people to choose whatever government they wish, whilst ensuring the country does not join NATO.

HARDWARE AND MILITARY ASSESSMENT

Since the outbreak of the war, OSINT analysis has proven extremely useful in documenting the progress of military operations, the types and ranges of equipment used on the battlefield, and also the tactics employed by both sides to gain the upper hand. One such analyst is Oryx, who has provided regular updates on battlefield losses, which are crossed checked against the latest open source data. [This page](#) provides you with the most up to date numbers and tracking for both the Russian and Ukrainian armed forces.



Picture: President.gov.ua

THE IMPACT ON OTHER REGIONS

Three weeks into Russia's war in Ukraine it is already clear that the conflict represents a watershed moment for European security, as Ed Arnold writes [here](#). But it is also affecting other regions, and the strategic calculations around the world. RUSI's International Security Studies team has produced some useful initial analysis in this regard. In the latest [episode](#) of the Institute's Global Security Briefing podcast, Dr Neil Melvin, Ed Arnold, Veerle Nouwens and Dr Tobias Borck share their assessment of implications for Europe, China and the Indo-Pacific, and the Middle East, respectively. Borck has also written an [article](#), further outlining how the war is putting Middle Eastern countries under pressure to chose sides in an increasingly multi-polar world, how rising commodity prices can bring boom and bust to the region, and how Russia could seek to push back against Western pressure by fomenting further instability in Libya, Syria, Yemen and elsewhere.

ENERGY MARKETS CONTINUE TO FLUCTUATE

As the US and UK place sanctions on Russian oil exports, and Shell has rapidly changed its position on Russian energy being sold on the spot market, the implications for the energy markets of the future are profound. Sadly this will mean most of us paying a lot more to heat homes, and to drive our cars. In [this piece](#) the BBC assesses what the impact of removing Russian oil and gas from the global market, and asks whether it can be quickly replaced by other suppliers.



GERMANY AWAKENS

On 27 February, German Chancellor Olaf Scholz gave a speech in the Bundestag effectively resetting and reorientating German foreign, defence and security policy, particularly with regard to Russia. Among the most spectacular announcements was the creation of a €100 billion fund to immediately increase defence spending to meet the 2% of GDP NATO pledge. The [speech](#) itself is worth reading, and for more context and analysis it is well worth watching this [video](#) of a panel discussion hosted by the ECFR on 3 March, as well as looking at this [article](#) by Angela Mehrer and Rafael Loss.



STABILITY IN THE MIDDLE EAST



It can be easy to be distracted by events in Ukraine, while forgetting that there remain concerns about security and stability elsewhere. In this [thought provoking article](#) Professor Greg Gause III argues that the Middle East order remains fractured and divided, but that the root causes of division and strife are often misdiagnosed. Accordingly, he argues, the response of the US is incorrect and can often make the problem worse: the problem is fundamentally about the collapse of states and the disorder that that entails. Prof Gause posits that the US and the wider western world should, instead, focus on strengthening states (including those with unpalatable leaders such as Syria's Bashar al Assad), so that some semblance of order can be preserved across the region.

DAESH APPOINTS NEW LEADER

On 10 March, Daesh media released a [statement](#) naming Abu al-Hassan al-Hashimi al-Qurayshi as the group's new leader. The still little-known jihadist was chosen after his predecessor was targeted in a US military operation in north-western Syria on 3 February. The same Daesh statement was also the first official acknowledgement by the group that the previous leader had, indeed, been killed.



CHINA-INDIA TENSIONS CONTINUE TO SIMMER

The world's two most populous nations continue to eye each other cautiously across a wide swathe of territory. China continues to strengthen its position along its disputed border with India. At several locations on or near the Line of Actual Control (LAC) the People's Liberation Army has amassed troops and fortified many of their installations. Beijing is also bringing much-needed infrastructure to the region. In [this article](#) CSIS analysts explain the impact of China's recent fortifications along the LAC, which will greatly speed up the resupply and movement of troops in one of the world's most inhospitable regions, an indication that China has no intention of backing down.



WIDER READING

Questions about energy – energy security, the political economy of global energy markets, and the global energy transition away from fossil fuels – are once again front and centre, as oil and gas prices are surging and Western countries seek to decouple themselves from Russian hydrocarbon supplies. Three book-length reads on the subject that are both informative and digestible include: Daniel Yergin's [The Prize: The Epic Quest for Oil, Money and Power](#), which traces the history of how oil has shaped and literally fuelled much of global development, politics and conflicts throughout the 20th century; David MacKay's [Sustainable Energy – Without Hot Air](#), which uses case studies to outline how the energy transition to renewable energy can be possible, without ignoring major challenges and problems; and David Wallace-Wells' [The Uninhabitable Earth: Life After Warming](#), a matter-of-fact expose of just how important rapid adaptation of the world's energy systems is to combat climate change.



NEWS STORIES TO WATCH OUT FOR

While the war in Ukraine is set to continue to dominate the headlines over the coming weeks, there are a number of other developments to look out for:

In South America, a new generation of left-wing leaders is [coming to power](#).

South Korea has a new controversial President [raising questions](#) over whether relations with North Korea are set to worsen further.

In a major boost to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's position, his [BJP has won](#) key state elections in Uttar Pradesh.

In France, the presidential election campaign is heating up; a renewed run-off between President Macron and Marine Le Pen seems the [most likely scenario](#).

On 11 March, India [said](#) it had accidentally fired a missile into Pakistan.

[Hong Kong](#) is struggling to contain a major Covid-19 outbreak, urging the population to get vaccinated.



Picture: Wolfgang Stemmle from Pixabay

RUSSIA IMPERILS IRAN NUCLEAR DEAL

Just as the remaining issues appeared to have been resolved, and Iran and the P5+1 (the five permanent members of the UN Security Council and Germany) appeared poised to conclude negotiations to revive the Iran nuclear deal (also known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action), new demands from Russia have halted proceedings and could well derail the deal entirely. In this [Politico article](#), Stephanie Liechtenstein and Nahal Toosi explain how Moscow's insistence on written guarantees that the Western sanctions imposed on Iran will not prevent it from trading freely with Iran, once a deal is concluded, has brought talks to a sudden halt. On 11 March, negotiations were officially paused, and analysts suggest that they might not resume in the foreseeable future.

OUT NOW & UP NEXT...

● As demonstrated by the unfolding events in Ukraine, warfare has a habit of finding its way into the urban environment. The British Army, however, did not need such a dramatic reminder and – as the latest *CHACR Commentary* details – is 'on the case'. If you have not done so already, read *No Longer an Urban Myth* – and other recent releases – online at chacr.org.uk or email info@chacr.org.uk to request a printable e-copy to be sent direct to your inbox.



● On 11 May, the CHACR and U.S. European Command's Russia Strategic Initiative is hosting an event at Royal Military Academy Sandhurst. Open to attendance for UK, US and Allied defence personnel, *Understanding Russia: Beginning of a new era?* will run from 0900-1300. Register your place by scanning the QR code on this page or clicking [here](#).



CHACR COMMENTARY // MARCH 10, 2022
BY COL JAMES J. MCCONOUGH, Colonel US Army, an exchange with British Army Headquarters

'WE'RE ON THE CASE'

FORWARD The British Army, Army Staffing Requirements (ASR) and the Urban Environment (UE) are the focus of this commentary. The UE is a complex and dynamic environment, and the Army is currently facing a number of challenges in this area. This commentary explores the challenges the Army faces in the UE and offers some suggestions for how to address them.

INTRODUCTION The Urban Environment (UE) is a complex and dynamic environment, and the Army is currently facing a number of challenges in this area. This commentary explores the challenges the Army faces in the UE and offers some suggestions for how to address them.



CHACR COMMENTARY // MARCH 11, 2022
BY IAN GIBSON, Director of Operations, CHACR

RISK IN UKRAINE

FORWARD The Russian invasion of Ukraine has brought the world's attention to the risks of a large-scale conventional war in Europe. This commentary explores the risks of such a war and offers some suggestions for how to address them.

INTRODUCTION The Russian invasion of Ukraine has brought the world's attention to the risks of a large-scale conventional war in Europe. This commentary explores the risks of such a war and offers some suggestions for how to address them.

IN-DEPTH BRIEFING // #24 // FEBRUARY 22

CAN TURKISH DRONES HELP UKRAINE? A MILITARY-STRATEGIC ASSESSMENT

CHACR

AUTHOR Dr. Colin Gray, Director of Operations, CHACR

FORWARD The use of Turkish Bayraktar TB2 drones by Ukraine has become a major topic of discussion. This briefing assesses the military and strategic implications of their use.

INTRODUCTION The use of Turkish Bayraktar TB2 drones by Ukraine has become a major topic of discussion. This briefing assesses the military and strategic implications of their use.