

Weekly Newsletter

written by admin | December 6, 2020



The State Duma, lower house of Russian Parliament, on 22nd December, granted expanded immunity to the former Russian presidents. The bill signed by the Russian President, Vladimir Putin grants the former presidents of Russia immunity from prosecution. Once Presidents have left Kremlin, they and their families are immune from the prosecutions of crimes that they have committed in their life. The legislation exempts from police investigation, arrests or being searched. Before this legislation, Russian Presidents were immune to prosecutions for the crime that they committed, but only for the time they served as president. Even if the President now is accused of treason or grave crimes, and the Supreme Court has found him guilty, confirming the charges, the President will be immune from legal penalties and any kind of consequences. The bill that has now become a law, is a part of Russian constitutional amendments which were approved in summer and that allowed Putin to remain in power until 2036, when he will be 86 years old.



This law was followed by the Russian constitutional amendments, which allows Putin to run for elections for another two terms, and allows him to remain in Presidential seat until 2036. He has been ruling Russia as a president since 2000. After this legislation, Presidents after they have left the office are no more prohibited to become Senators for life in Federation Council, the upper house of Russian Parliament. A position of the former Russian President in the Senate also comes with the expanded immunity. Apart from this legislation, the Russian Parliament has also passed a law that has made information about employees of Russian Judicial System, officers working for law enforcement agencies or with regulatory authorities and military personnel classified as confidential. These legislations required a sign from the Russian President, Putin, which is merely a formality. However, to revoke the protections that new law has given the former presidents a supermajority of Russian lawmakers will be required. The immunity given to the presidents has played a significant role in Putin's rise to power. Putin previously granted immunity to a former president, Boris Yeltsin, from being interrogated, arrested or his house being searched by the police. The analysts in Russia have interpreted this decision of Putin as an incentive, to Yeltsin who stepped down from presidency and chose Putin as his successor. Although Yeltsin denies the rumors of having any deal with Putin in this regard. The previous law that grated presidential immunity was first time adopted by Russian Parliament in 2001. Other than Yeltsin, the only other former President who can enjoy the Presidential immunity is Dmitry Medvedev, who remained in office from 2008 till 2012, after which Putin was allowed to return back as President.

Kabul has been struck by another wave of violence after Kabul University attack in November 2020 despite the Taliban and government's engagement to end ferocity and maintain peace in Afghanistan via peace talks. As per Afghan interior minister, Masoud Andarabi, a car bomb exploded on Sunday morning, December 20th, 2020, leaving at least nine people killed and 20 wounded including a member of parliament, Khan Mohammad Wardak. The interior minister further mentioned that the toll of casualties may rise. The attack was carried out when the lawmaker's convoy was passing through intersection in

Kabul's Khoshal Khan's neighborhood. The intensity of blast was so great that it set other vehicles, buildings and shops around on fire as well. Other bombings were also reported on Sunday in the provinces of Logar, Nangarhar, Helmand and Badakhshan, it has been reported that these bombings have left security forces members and many civilians dead. The Sunday attack took place just two days after motorbike explosives attack near a remote part of Ghazni during a religious gathering which left 15 children dead and many wounded. No one has claimed a responsibility for carrying out this attack but ISIS has been actively involved in recent attacks in Afghanistan including educational institutions that left at least 50 people killed including students and rockets attack on US military base. NATO reported no casualties and that the airfield was not damaged either.

The Afghan interior ministry has reported that over the course of last three months Taliban have killed 487 civilians and wounded 1,049 by carrying out 507 blasts and 35 suicide attacks all across the country. According to UN mission in Afghanistan, between the month of January and September more than 2,100 civilians have been killed and 3,800 have been wounded. Many journalists, politicians and prominent figures have been attacked in past few month with the help of sticky bombs that can be attached to the vehicles with the help of magnets. The level of violence is constantly increasing despite the peace talks and negotiations between Afghan government and Taliban officials. The US agreed to extract its forces from Afghanistan by May 2021 in exchange for security guarantees but violence is continuously surging in Afghanistan. Peace talks that were opened in September in Doha are on break till January due to pandemic. Afghan President Ashraf Ghani has called out next round of negotiations and peace talks to be held in Afghanistan.

USA blacklists Chinese and Russian companies for holding possible military ties:



Tensions between USA and China have only escalated over the past year or so. USA has explicitly accused China for spreading corona virus pandemic, imposing national security law in Hong Kong and expansionist

behavior over South China Sea. These accusations have further deepened that strains between USA and China. The USA has growing concern about China's "Civil-Military fusion." This category involves the idea of armed forces, national police and any person that ropes and supports the maintenance or production of military items, even if their businesses are non-military, work together. This is the reason that Trump administration has published a list of Chinese and Russian companies with military ties that "restrict them from buying a wide range of U.S. goods and technology" as per USA's senior Commerce Department officials. The list has named 103 entities including 58 companies with ties to China and 45 with ties to Russia.

Chinese Companies

Ø Academy of Aerospace Solid Propulsion Technology (AASPT);
Ø Anhui Yingliu Hangyuan Power;
Ø Baimtec Material Co., Ltd.;
Ø Beijing Aero Lever Precision Ltd.;
Ø Beijing Ander Tech. Co., Ltd.;
Ø Beijing Guang Ming Electronics Co., Ltd.;
Ø Beijing Siyuan Electronic Co., Ltd.;
Ø CAST Xi'an Spaceflight Engine Factory;
Ø Chengdu Holy Aviation Science & Tech;
Ø China Aviation Ind. Std. Parts;
Ø CSSC Xijiang Shipbuilding Co., Ltd.;
Ø Elink Electronic Technology Co., Ltd.;
Ø Fly Raise International Limited;
Ø Fuhua Precision Man. Co.;
Ø Government Flying Service;
Ø Guangzhou Hangxin Aviation Technology Co., Ltd.;
Ø Guizhou Aviation Tech. Dev. Nat.;
Ø Guizhou Liyang Intl Manufacturing Co., Ltd.;
Ø Hafei Aviation Industry Co., Ltd. (HAFEI);
Ø Hangzhou Bearing Test & Research Center Co., Ltd.;
Ø Harbin General Aircraft Industry Co., Ltd.;
Ø Henan Aerospace Precision Mach;
Ø Hunan South General Aviation Engine Co., Ltd.;
Ø Hutchison Optel Telecom Technology Co., Ltd.;
Ø Jiangsu Meilong Aviation Components Co.;
Ø Jiatai Aircraft Equipment Co., Ltd.;
Ø Jincheng Group Imp & Exp. Co., Ltd.;
Ø Laboratory of Toxicant Analysis, Institute of Pharmacology and Toxicology;
Ø Molecular Devices Shanghai Corporation;
Ø Nanjing Engineering Institute of Aircraft Systems (NEIAS);
Ø National Satellite Meteorological Bureau;
Ø Second Institute of Oceanography, Ministry of Natural Resources;
Ø Shaanxi Aero Electric Co., Ltd.;
Ø Shaanxi Aircraft Industry Co., Ltd.;
Ø Shanghai Aerospace Equip. Man.;
Ø Shanghai Aircraft Design and Research Institute;
Ø Shanghai Aircraft Manufacturing Co., Ltd. (SAMC);
Ø Shanghai Tianlang Electronic Science Co., Ltd.;
Ø Shenyang Academy of Instrumentation Science Co., Ltd.;
Ø Shenyang Aircraft Corporation;
Ø Shenyang Xizi Aviation Industry Co., Ltd.;
Ø Sichuan Hangte Aviation Tech. Co., Ltd.;
Ø Star Tech Aviation Co., Ltd.;
Ø Sumec Instruments Equipment Co., Ltd.;
Ø Suzhou Eric Mechanics and Electronics Co., Ltd.;
Ø Wuxi Hyatech Co., Ltd.;
Ø Wuxi Paikexin New Mat. Tech. Co., Ltd.;
Ø Wuxi Turbine Blade Co. Ltd.;
Ø Xac Group Aviation Electronics Import & Export Co. Ltd.;
Ø XAIC Tech (Xi'an) Industrial Co., Ltd.;
Ø Xian Aero-Engine Controls Co., Ltd.;
Ø Xian Aircraft Industrial Company Limited;
Ø Xi'an Xae Flying Aviation Manufacturing Technology Co., Ltd.;
Ø Xian Xr Aero- Components Co., Ltd.;
Ø Yibin Sanjiang Machine Co., Ltd.; and
Ø Zhejiang Perfect New Material Co., Ltd.

Russian Companies

Ø Admiralty Shipyard JSC;
Ø Aleksandrov Scientific Research Technological Institute NITI;
Ø Argut OOO;
Ø Communication center of the Ministry of Defense;
Ø Federal Research Center Boreskov Institute of Catalysis;
Ø Federal State Budgetary Enterprise of the Administration of the President of Russia;
Ø Federal State Budgetary Enterprise Special Flight Unit Rossiya of the Administration of the President of Russia;
Ø Federal State Unitary Enterprise Dukhov Automatics Research Institute (VNIIA);
Ø Foreign Intelligence Service (SVR);
Ø Forensic Center of Nizhniy Novgorod Region Main Directorate of the Ministry of Interior Affairs;
Ø Irkut Co.;
Ø Irkut Research and Production Corporation Public Joint Stock Company;
Ø Joint Stock Company Scientific Research Institute of Computing Machinery;
Ø JSC Central Research Institute of Machine Building (JSC TsNIIMash);
Ø JSC Rocket and Space Centre - Progress;
Ø Kamensk-Uralsky Metallurgical Works J.S. Co.;
Ø Kazan Helicopter Plant PJSC;
Ø Komsomolsk-na-Amur Aviation Production Organization (KNAAPO);
Ø Korporatsiya Vsmo Avisma OAO;
Ø Ministry of Defence RF;
Ø Molot Oruzhie;
Ø NPO High Precision Systems JSC;
Ø NPO Splav JSC;
Ø Oboronprom OJSC;
Ø PJSC Beriev Aircraft Company;
Ø PJSC Irkut Corporation;
Ø PJSC Kazan Helicopters;
Ø POLYUS Research Institute of M.F. Stelmakh Joint Stock Company;
Ø Promtech-Dubna, JSC;
Ø Public Joint Stock Company United Aircraft Corporation;
Ø Radiotechnical and Information Systems (RTI) Concern;
Ø Rapart Services LLC;
Ø Rosoboronexport OJSC (ROE);
Ø Rostec (Russian Technologies State Corporation);
Ø Rostekh - Azimuth;
Ø Russian Aircraft Corporation MiG;
Ø Russian Helicopters JSC;
Ø Sukhoi Aviation JSC;
Ø Sukhoi Civil Aircraft;
Ø Tactical Missiles Corporation JSC;
Ø Tupolev JSC;
Ø UEC-Saturn;
Ø United Aircraft Corporation;
Ø United Engine Corporation; and
Ø United Instrument Manufacturing Corporation.

Israel Government falling down, focusing on 4th election in 2 years:



Jerusalem is planning for the 4th election and pushing the country towards another early election, if this happened this will be the 4th time in last two years. Israeli parliament on 22nd December 2020 dissolved itself. This move forced a new election after weeks of infighting ups and downs in the so called Israeli government. We have seen uneasy coalition in past seven months that paired Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's conservative Likud party with his main rival turned partner, Benny Gantz of the centrist Blue and White party.

Mr. Netanyahu and Mr. Gantz blamed each other for the crisis. Mr. Netanyahu said "I think at the current time, we should have united forces to find a way to avert these needless elections," A new election must take place in three months and is scheduled for 23rd March 2021. But an election date in the late spring or summer, once the coronavirus vaccination campaign is well underway, might have been more advantageous for both of us.

Mr. Netanyahu, whose party holds the finance range, had refused to present a budget, in violation of his coalition agreement with Mr. Gantz the ostensible reason for the government breakdown. But at the heart of the crisis lies a deep, mutual distrust between Mr. Netanyahu & Mr. Gantz and a country basically split over the fate of Mr. Netanyahu, whose corruption trial is scheduled to move into a serious stage in early 2021, requiring his presence in court on regular basis. He has been charged with bribery, fraud and breaking of trust. He denies any wrongdoing and adding himself in good books. Analysts said that Mr. Netanyahu was gambling on another election in the hope of forming a right-wing.

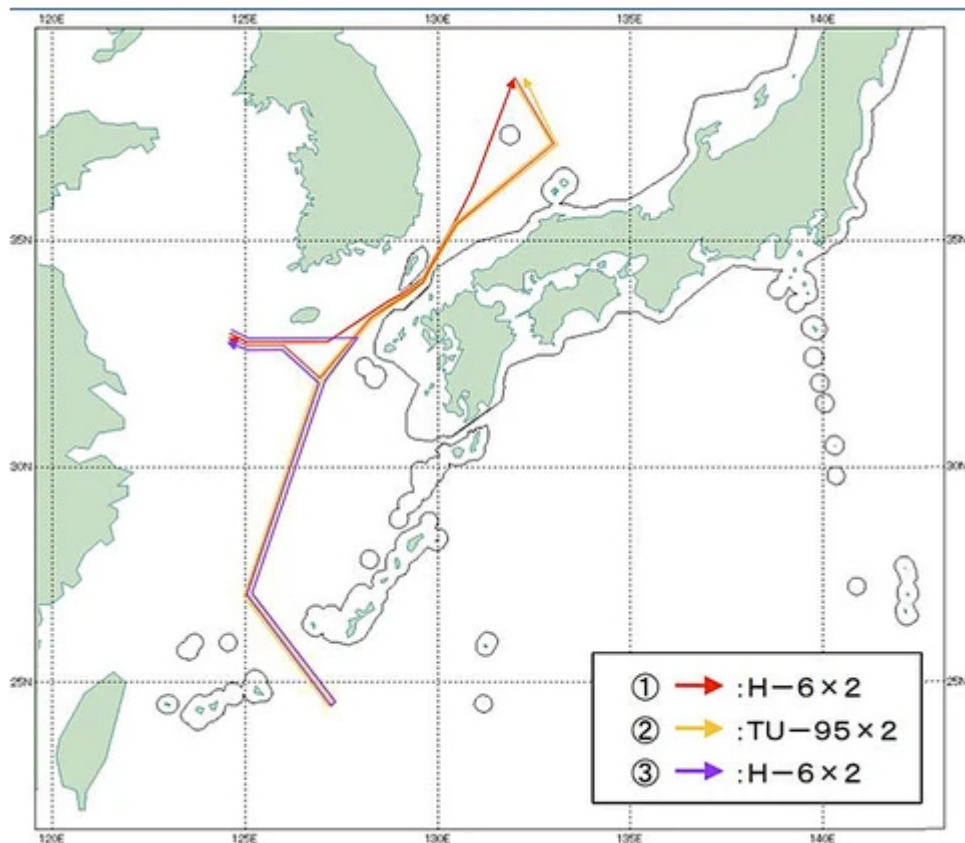
The two men have shared power since April in an uneasy coalition, agreeing to rotate as prime minister, with Mr Netanyahu holding office first before a scheduled handover to Mr Gantz in November 2021. Analysts say the dispute affords Mr Netanyahu a favourable way to end the coalition due to a loophole in the pact under which the office would pass to the other leader for an interim three months if either party

triggered elections, apart from in the case of failure to pass the budget. Mr Netanyahu is also facing a new political challenge from a former Likud MP, Gideon Saar, who has formed his own right-wing party which stands to peel votes away from Mr Netanyahu's political base.

South. Korea scrambles jets as Chinese, Russian aircraft enter air defence zone:



On 22nd December 2020 South Korea scrambled its jets after China and Russia violated South Korea air space. There are different reports from different sources according to Joint Chief Staff (JCS) South Korea 4 Chinese and 15 Russian aircrafts entered into South Korean air space without informing authorities. On the other hand the Chinese authorities claimed that they had followed the rules and regulations and informed South Korea before starting the routine training. This incident seems to be a joint military drill between China and Russia but it requires a further analysis," the JCS said.



A map shows the flight paths

of Russian and Chinese bombers over the East China Sea and Sea of Japan on Tuesday, December 22, 2020. PHOTO BY JAPANESE MINISTRY OF DEFENSE

This incident didn't happen for the first time; Chinese jets have repeatedly entered Taiwan's airspace amid tensions between the two countries. In September, Taiwan's Air Force scrambled fighters as Chinese jets entered its air defense identification zone (ADIZ) for four times in five days. Last week the Taiwan government had deployed its Navy and Air Force as a Chinese carrier group sailed through the Taiwan Channel. Tensions between Taiwan and China have been escalating for the past two months as reports said China had deployed its most advanced hypersonic missile DF-17 to the area this is the reason South Korea is worried about and & investigating on recent airspace violation. In July last year, South Korean warplanes fired hundreds of warning shots toward Russian military aircraft on a joint air patrol with China, when they entered South Korean airspace.