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Russia Sends Nuclear War Signals To Turkey

By Polina Tikhonova
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With reports that a nuclear war between NATO and Russia is “likely,” Russia and Turkey have intensified their war of words after Russia’s latest revenge measures for the downing of its fighter jet.



After striking Turkey and Egypt off the list of safe tourist destinations, Russia has decided to remove India as well, according to The Times of India. And while the reason for eliminating

Turkey and Egypt is crystal clear, removing India from the list is not fully comprehended in the current geopolitics.

Amid warming relations between New Delhi and Moscow and their joint naval exercises to be held from Dec. 7-12, many wonder why Russian President Vladimir Putin would weaken India's economy by removing it from Russia's list of safe destinations for tourists.

Putin cancelled all flights to Egypt after the Oct. 31 explosion of a Russian passenger plane, which killed 224 people on board. And after the Turkish military shot down a Russian fighter jet in its airspace last Tuesday, the Russian president wiped out Russia's tourist relations with Turkey, where 4.4 million Russians vacationed last year.

"This is extremely bad news for our tour operators. The flow of Russian tourists was expected to increase following the bombing a Russian plane (resulting in the suspension of Russian flights to Egypt) and the easing of visa restrictions," Subhash Goyal, president of the Indian Association of Tour Operators, told the Pakistan Observer.

Russia set to strengthen China's economy with tourists

India's Goa has always been a favorite place for Russian tourists, according to Rajji Rai, former president of the Travel Agents Association of India and chairman of Swift Travels.

"Such is the demand that last year, Air India resumed its Moscow flight after a gap of around 15 years. Around 50% of tourists visiting Goa in winters are Russians," he added.

Russians mean good business for India's travel industry, he said and added that "they stay here for an average 3-6 months and are an integral part of the travel industry here."

Moscow officials stated out that the removal of India from the safe travelling list was not connected to terror attacks. In what appears to be a move to strengthen China's economy, Russia is now going to focus on China, Cuba and Vietnam as new directions for tourist flow as they "have excellent infrastructure, friendly atmosphere and warm weather in winter," according to First Deputy Speaker of the Parliament of the Russian Federation Ivan Melnikov.

"Unfortunately, both India and Goa, were not discussed as a promising direction for Russian travelers," Melnikov said, as reported by The Times of India.

Russia imposes visa regime on Turkey

On Friday, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov announced that Russia is introducing a visa regime for Turkish citizens. The regime goes into effect Jan. 1, according to The Guardian.

Moscow has also warned all of its tour companies against selling vacation packages to Turkey and recommended that all Russian citizens leave the country that downed the Russian warplane last week. Additionally, it is expected that Putin is going to impose a number of economic sanctions and cancel joint projects in a bid to further cripple the Turkish economy.

The Turkish military said it had shot down the Russian fighter jet on Tuesday, triggering a furious response from the Kremlin and escalating the already-hot tensions in geopolitics. The Russian warplane was given ten warnings in five minutes as it approached the NATO member state's territory. After the Russian Su-24 attack aircraft ignored the warnings, the Turkish military sent two of its F-16s to bring down the Russian jet.

With Putin warning the West of “serious consequences” for bringing down the Russian warplane, analysts believe Moscow is willing to unleash a nuclear war over the incident. Although Turkey is backed by NATO's 5th Article, which states that an attack on one Ally shall be considered an attack on all NATO members, the chances that Russia is going start a nuclear war over the incident are very “likely,” according to Pavel Felgengauer, Russia's most respected military analyst, as reported by ValueWalk.

Russia can easily destroy Turkey with nuclear bomb: Russian MP

A Russian MP has recently outlined how easy it would be for Russia to destroy Turkey.

“You just chuck one nuclear bomb into the straits, and there'd be a huge flood. The water would rise by 10-15 meters and the whole city would disappear,” said Vladimir Zhirinovsky, leader of the misnamed Liberal Democratic party, according to the Daily Mail.

It was also reported by the British news source that Turkish president Recep Tayyip Erdogan has refused to apologize to Moscow for the downing of the Russian warplane. He said that his country's jets would act the exact same way if a similar situation ever occurred again. The words triggered furious rhetoric at the Kremlin.

The Turkish president also said on Friday that he had warned Putin about violations of Turkish airspace by Russian planes at the G20 summit in Antalya earlier this month. Erdogan said that Putin had told him to accept Russian warplanes “as guests,” to which the Turkish president responded that his country is not going to accept uninvited guests.

Erdogan added during a speech in Bayburt that Russia is “playing with fire to go as far as mistreating our citizens who have gone to Russia.”

“We really attach a lot of importance to our relations with Russia ... We don't want these relations to suffer harm in any way,” he said.

The Turkish president also accused Putin of backing Syrian President Bashar al-Assad's "terrorist state" in Syria. The comments come after Putin called the Turks, including Erdogan, "accomplices of terrorists" and claimed that Turkish officials were profiting from oil trade with ISIS, which claimed responsibility for the downing of a Russian passenger plane on Oct. 31.

Erdogan has previously said that the Turkish jets which were ordered to bring down the Russian Su-24 last Tuesday did not realize the jet was a Russian jet and would have acted differently had they known.