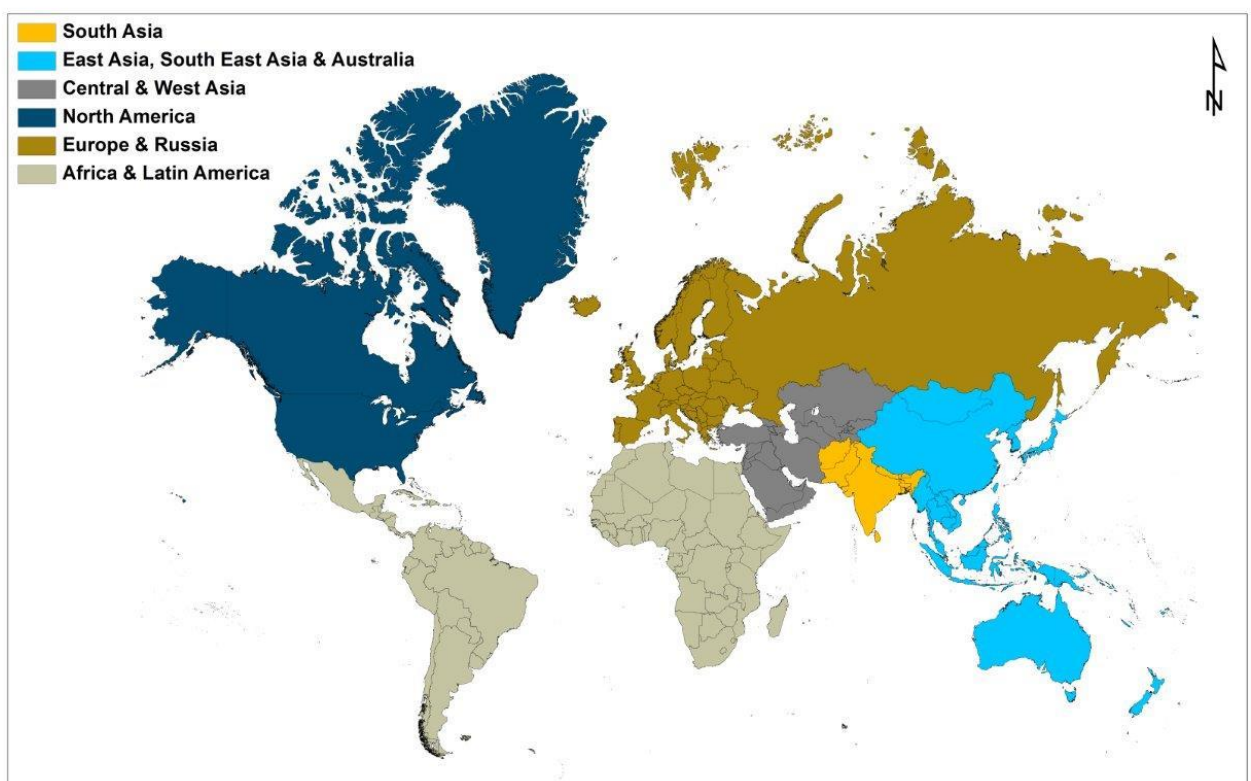




Delhi Policy Group

# DPG WEEKLY WORLD WATCH



Volume III, Issue 29 | July 19, 2019



## **DPG WEEKLY WORLD WATCH**

### **Volume 3, Issue 29**

#### **ABOUT US**

Founded in 1994, the Delhi Policy Group is among India's oldest independent think tanks with its primary focus on international and strategic issues of critical national interest. Over the past decades, the Delhi Policy Group has established itself in both domestic and international circles, particularly in the area of national security.

In keeping with India's increasing global profile as a leading power and the accompanying dynamism of India's foreign and security policy, the Delhi Policy Group has expanded its focus areas to include India's broader regional and global role; India's initiatives to strengthen its strategic periphery; India's political, security and connectivity challenges and policies across the Indo-Pacific; and the strategic partnerships that advance India's rise. To support these goals, the DPG undertakes research, publishes policy reports and organises conferences on strategic and geo-political, geo-economic, and defence and security issues.

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## South Asia

### India

#### [Kulbhushan Jadhav case: India to push for a civilian trial](#)

July 19, 2019, The Times of India

Armed with the ICJ verdict, Indian officials will push for consular access to Kulbhushan Jadhav, lodged in a Pakistani military jail for the past three years, and a nudge Islamabad to shift his trial to a civilian court.

#### [Leaders Across Political Divide Welcome ICJ Verdict on Kulbushan Jadhav](#)

July 17, 2019, News18

BJP leader and Defence Minister Rajnath Singh described the judgment as a big win for India while former external affairs minister Sushma Swaraj hoped that it will provide the much needed solace to the family members of Jadhav. The International Court of Justice has ruled that Pakistan must review the death sentence for Jadhav, who has been sentenced to death by a Pakistani military court on charges of "espionage and terrorism".

#### [India elbowed out of Afghanistan peace talks](#)

July 15, 2019, The Times of India

Pakistan joined the US, Russia and China over the weekend to craft a peace agreement with the Taliban, a development that shows how Islamabad has moved to the center stage of the Afghan peace process and how India has been dealt out of the future of Afghanistan.

#### [India Gives Pakistan Detailed Proof of Pro-Khalistani Leaders Radicalising Sikh Pilgrims, Seeks Action](#)

July 19, 2019, News 18

The dossier has listed date-wise incidents from 2016 to 2019 when Sikh pilgrims visiting Pakistan were exposed to Khalistani propaganda and anti-India activities.

#### [India-US trade talks end without major progress](#)

July 12, 2019, The Economic Times

Many of the toughest questions on agricultural commodities, e-commerce, and steel and aluminum, have been put off until Indian Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal goes to Washington for talks with United States Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer next month. The dates for that trip are yet to be settled.

### [Raja Mandala: Maritime challenges and opportunities](#)

July 16, 2019, The Indian Express

The churn in the Persian Gulf provides India an opening to step up its strategic engagements beyond investments in the Chabahar port.

### [India proposes consulate in Kartarpur, asks Pakistan for land](#)

July 16, 2019, The Economic Times

India has proposed to set up a special-purpose consulate with the presence of diplomats at Kartarpur in Pakistan to cater to pilgrims who visit the Gurudwara Darbar Sahib there.

### [India, China respecting bilateral pacts for peace at border](#)

July 17, 2019, The Economic Times

Making a statement on the prevailing situation along the Sino-Indian border, Rajnath Singh said there is complete restraint by armed forces of India and China at Doklam following months long stand-off between them in 2017.

### [Chandrayaan-2 mission called off due to technical snag in launch vehicle](#)

July 15, 2019, India Today

Chandrayaan-2 mission, India's second mission to the Moon, was scheduled to be launched at 2:51 am on Monday. However, the Isro has now postponed the launch of the Chandrayaan-2 due to a technical snag. The new dates will be announced later.

### [Israel inks USD 50 mn deal with India to supply complementary Naval MRSAM systems](#)

July 17, 2019, The Economic Times

"The deal involves follow up order for a range of maintenance and other services for various sub-systems of IAI's (State owned Israel Aerospace Industries) advanced MRSAM ADS," the company said in a statement.

### [India, Russia seek to skirt US sanctions threat to arms deals](#)

July 15, 2019, The Economic Times

India and Russia have agreed on a new payment method through their national currencies for multi-billion-dollar defense deals, in a bid to avoid risks created by the U.S. threat of sanctions and banking restrictions.

[Five nodal points identified for development of Defence Corridor in Tamil Nadu, Centre informs Rajya Sabha](#)

July 15, 2019, The Economic Times

The Finance Minister in his budget speech (2018-19) had announced setting up of two Defence Industrial Corridors in the country. In pursuance to the said announcement, it has been decided to develop one such corridor in Tamil Nadu and the other one in Uttar Pradesh.

**Pakistan**

[Pakistan will grant consular access to Jadhav: FO](#)

July 19, 2019, Dawn

The Foreign Office of Pakistan on July 18 announced that Pakistan will grant consular access to Kulbushan Jadhav. In its verdict, the ICJ had ruled that Jadhav be allowed consular access immediately and asked Pakistan to ensure "effective review and reconsideration of his conviction and sentences".

[India clean bowled in Afghan Peace Talks by Pakistan, claims Indian newspaper](#)

July 16, 2019, ARY News

According to The Times of India, Pakistan has now established a stronghold as a primary contender in the Afghan Peace Process, underway between Afghan Taliban and the United States.

[Ex-PM Abbasi arrested by NAB in LNG deal case](#)

July 19, 2019, Dawn

The National Accountability Bureau (NAB) on July 18 arrested former prime minister and Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz senior vice-president Shahid Khaqan Abbasi in the LNG (liquefied natural gas) import contract case.

[Pak-India standoff: Pakistan opens airspace after four months](#)

July 17, 2019, The News

Pakistan has opened its airspace for civil traffic after months of restrictions on July 16. The Pakistan government imposed restrictions on use of its airspace for air traffic in the wake of standoff with India since February 26.

[NAB orders freeze on Shehbaz Sharif family's assets](#)

July 17, 2019, The Express Tribune

The National Accountability Bureau (NAB) has ordered that all moveable and immovable assets belonging to Opposition Leader in the National Assembly

Shehbaz Sharif and his family members should be frozen with immediate effect on July 17.

#### [Kuwaiti business team explores investment avenues in Pakistan](#)

July 16, 2019, The News

A visiting Kuwaiti business delegation of Burgan Petroleum is in Pakistan to explore investment opportunities in Pakistan's petro-chemical sector.

#### [80pc work done on Kartarpur Corridor](#)

July 15, 2019, The News

Pakistan and India On July 14 held successful parleys at the Wagah border over finalising a draft agreement on the Kartarpur Corridor. Pakistan will allow 5,000 pilgrims to visit Kartarpur Sahib Gurdwara every day. Work is expected to be completed by October 31 this year.

#### [Pakistan among 37 states at UN defending China on HR cause](#)

July 14, 2019, The News

UN ambassadors from 37 countries, including Pakistan and Saudi Arabia, have released a letter defending China's "contribution to the international human rights cause" in the Xinjiang region, in direct response to Western criticism on July 10.

#### [Pakistan told to pay \\$5.9bn to mining firm in RekoDiq case](#)

July 14, 2019, Dawn

The Inter-national Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID), one of the five organisations of the World Bank Group, has announced award of \$5.976 billion against Pakistan in the RekoDiq case. The ICSID awarded a \$4.08bn penalty and \$1.87bn in interest. The full details of the case are yet to be released by the tribunal.

#### [Pakistan, India commence Track-II dialogue](#)

July 13, 2019, Dawn

The dialogue, titled 'Beyond Politics and Polemics New Beginning on a Difficult Trail', was hosted by the Regional Peace Institute. The discussions were the first round of the initiative and the second round would be held in New Delhi in September. Six delegates from India are participating in the dialogue.

## Afghanistan

### [India must back Taliban talks, says German special envoy on Afghanistan](#)

July 18, 2019, The Hindu

The envoy, Ambassador Markus Potzel, visited Delhi for talks with the government on the outcome of the intra-Afghan dialogue held in Doha on July 7-8, as well as the larger peace process between Taliban representatives and U.S. special envoy ZalmayKhalilzad who met at the same time.

### [Lapis Lazuli deposit in Badakhshan falls to militants](#)

July 17, 2019, Tolo News

A lapis lazuli deposit in KeranWaManjan district in the northeastern province of Badakhshan fell to the Taliban after a clash between the security forces and the militants. Taliban and local strongmen earn up to \$20 million per year from the lapis lazuli deposits.

### [Taliban Shuts 42 Swedish-Run Health Clinics in Afghanistan](#)

July 17, 2019, VOA

The Taliban forced Swedish Committee for Afghanistan to close 42 out of 77 health facilities in six out of nine districts of Wardak province so far, and due to this closure, an estimated number of over 5,700 patients are affected on daily basis.

### [Over 590 civilians killed in Afghanistan in three months](#)

July 16, 2019, Tolo News

New figures by Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHRC) indicate that 596 civilians were killed and 1,892 others were wounded in clashes between government forces and the Taliban and other attacks by militants in Afghanistan since the beginning of the current solar year which coincides with March 21, 2019.

### [\\$149 million approved as budget for the Afghan presidential elections: IEC](#)

July 15, 2019, Khaama Press

The Independent Election Commission of Afghanistan (IEC) has confirmed that a budget of \$149 million has been approved for the upcoming presidential elections which will be held in September 2019.

### [Major teams begin talks to facilitate elections transparency](#)

July 13, 2019, Tolo News

Three major election teams have started talks to provide the ground for transparency in the upcoming presidential polls scheduled for September 28. The



teams include Peace and Moderation led by former National Security Advisor Mohammad Haneef Atmar, the Stability and Partnership team led by Chief Executive Abdullah Abdullah, and Peace and Islamic Justice team led by Hizb-e-Islami leader Gulbuddin Hekmatyar.

#### [Taliban wants Japan to serve as a guarantor in US troop pullout](#)

July 13, 2019, Tolo News

Talking to Japan's Mainichi Shimbun newspaper, Sher Mohammad Abbas Stanekzai, deputy head of Taliban's political office in Qatar and the head of Taliban's negotiating team with the US, has said that the group wants Japan, among other European and Asians, to serve as a guarantor to make sure the US will withdraw its forces from Afghanistan after a deal is reached between the Taliban and the United States.

### **Bangladesh**

#### [India, Bangladesh coast guards meet to discuss maritime issues](#)

July 16, 2019, The Economic Times

The visiting delegation, led by Captain Shah Mohammed Moyeen Uddin, the Zonal Commander of South Zone met Inspector General Rajan Bargotra, Commander, ICG Region (NE) and his staff. Both sides discussed various common maritime issues like sensitization of fishermen on cross-border fishing, real-time information sharing, capacity building of Bangladesh Coast Guard through training and expertise sharing on maritime issues.

#### [Bangladesh to host Commonwealth Business Connectivity conference](#)

July 12, 2019, Dhaka Tribune

State Minister for Foreign Affairs Md Shahriar Alam has proposed to host a "Commonwealth Business-to-Business Connectivity Conference" in Dhaka in the first quarter of 2020. The state minister, while addressing the Commonwealth Foreign Affairs Ministers meeting (CFAMM) held in London, put forward few proposals at Marlborough House in London recently, said the Bangladesh High Commission in London.

#### [Deepening Dhaka-Seoul ties](#)

July 15, 2019, The Daily Star

South Korean Prime Minister Lee Nak-yeon is visiting Bangladesh as part of a two-day official trip and it is expected that the outcome of the visit will be a milestone in deepening Bangladesh-South Korea relations.

## Nepal

### [Govt registers \\$500m pact signed with US in Parliament](#)

July 17, 2019, The Himalayan Times

The government today registered a \$500-million grant agreement signed between Nepal and the US in the Parliament Secretariat for ratification. The \$500-million grant is part of the \$630-million "compact programme" designed by the Millennium Challenge Corporation, an independent foreign aid agency of the US government, for Nepal.

### [Nepal-China railway plans hit a dead end](#)

July 18, 2019, Asia Times

The ambitious Nepal-China rail link, which is expected to break the tiny Himalayan nation's sole dependence on India for trade and transit, is looking financially unfeasible as disagreements crop up between principal stakeholders.

### [From the Kathmandu Press: Nepal starts exporting electricity to India](#)

July 17, 2019, Online Khabar

The Ministry of Energy, Water Resources and Irrigation has exported 150 megawatts of electricity to India in the last three days and 200 megawatts on Wednesday night.

### [Repeated diplomatic failures reveal shortcomings in the Oli administration's foreign affairs department](#)

July 14, 2019, Kathmandu Post

Foreign Ministry officials have not responded to at least three requests for clarifications from American and Indian embassies.

## Bhutan

### [Indian waterways to facilitate cheaper, efficient transport for Bhutan-Bangladesh trade](#)

July 13, 2019, Business Today

Bhutan is transporting 50 trucks worth of crushed stone aggregates to Bangladesh through India. The transportation that will save 30 per cent cost and eight-ten days of time is a first of many to come as Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI) will facilitate trade between Bhutan and Bangladesh via the country's waterways.

[Strength of Indian, Chinese armies reduced in Doklam since standoff but India keeping close watch: Defence ministry report](#)

July 18, 2019, The Times of India

The strength of both Chinese and Indian Troops have decreased at Dokhlam since Auguts 2017.

## Sri lanka

[China gifts warship to Sri Lanka](#)

July 17, 2019, The Economic Times

The Type 053 frigate was commissioned into China's People's Liberation Army Navy in 1994 as the Tongling. The 2,300-tonne warship was decommissioned by the PLA Navy in 2015. The warship has now been gifted to the Lankan Navy.

[Sri Lanka assures UN on freedom of association and peaceful assembly](#)

July 19, 2019, The Colombo Page

The assurance was given to the UN Special Rapporteur on the rights of freedom of association and peaceful assembly, Clément NyaletsossiVoule who commenced an official country visit to Sri Lanka.

[US govt. will not buy, sell, or own actual land in Sri Lanka – Teplitz](#)

July 18, 2019, Lanka Web

The United States Government will not buy, sell, or own any actual land under Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) Compact, says the US Ambassador to Sri Lanka, Alaina B. Teplitz. The Ambassador responded to public questions on the US-Sri Lanka partnership agreements, Visiting Forces Agreement (VFA), Acquisition and Cross Servicing Agreement (ACSA) and the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) Compact.

[EU offers Sri Lanka € 8.5 mn package to improve law enforcement and counterterrorism efforts](#)

July 15, 2019, ColomboPage

The European Union (EU) and Sri Lanka Monday (July 15) held an informal counterterrorism dialogue focused on preventing violent extremism and terrorism. The EU underlined the importance of efficient coordination of counterterrorism efforts, the essence of focusing on the prevention of violent extremism and the importance of counterterrorism responses to be fully in line with human rights obligations.

### [Turkey alerts Sri Lanka on FETO terrorist organization Turkish Ambassador](#)

July 18, 2019, Daily Mirror

Turkish Ambassador TuncaOzcuhadar, in an interview with Daily Mirror, shares his views on the Fethulla Terrorist Organization (FETO) that attempted to overthrow his country's government in 2016, bilateral engagements with Sri Lanka to curb alleged FETO activities.

### [India to fund upgrading railway track from Maho to Omanthai](#)

July 18, 2019, Colombo Gazette

India is funding a railway track from Maho to Omanthai under Indian concessional financing was signed between IRCON International Limited and Government of Sri Lanka in Colombo today. India has so far committed Lines of Credit worth around US\$ 1.3 billion for development of railway sector in Sri Lanka.

### [New map launched following construction of China-funded port city: Sri Lankan Official](#)

July 18, 2019, Xinhuanet

Sri Lanka's Survey Department has launched an updated map of the island country due to developments such as the China- invested Colombo Port City, Surveyor General P. Sangakkara said here Thursday.

## **Maldives**

### [Trade Bullying is Unpopular](#)

July 16, 2019, Avas.mv

Recently, many Maldivian friends expressed their concerns over the ongoing China-US trade frictions and worried about the ripple effects of the escalation of the frictions to Maldives. In fact, the US arbitrarily wields the tariff stick to its trading partners in addition to China, which results in damages to others and the US itself.

### [Maldives reaffirms solidarity with Palestine](#)

July 18, 2019, Maldives Independent

The Maldives reaffirmed support for an independent and sovereign Palestine on Wednesday at an extraordinary ministerial meeting of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation.

### [Maldivian Ambassador Presents US President With Credentials](#)

July 10, 2019, Maldives Times

Recently appointed ambassador to the United States (US), Ms. Thilmeeza Hussain has presented credentials to President of US, Mr. Donald Trump.

## East & South East Asia

### China

#### [India not excluded from peace process in Afghanistan: China](#)

July 15, 2019, The Economic Times

India has not been excluded from the efforts to bring peace in Afghanistan, China said Monday, days after it hosted a key meeting with the US, Russia and Pakistan on facilitating peace process in the war-torn country.

#### [China slams Trump's meeting with so-called Chinese religious figures](#)

July 18, 2019, Global Times

The US arrangement to have some so-called Chinese religious figures meet with President Donald Trump is an act of interference with China's internal affairs and China expresses strong dissatisfaction and resolute opposition to this, Chinese Foreign Ministry said

#### [China's debt at 303% of GDP, 15% of global total: Report](#)

July 19, 2019, The Times of India

China's economic growth slowed to 6.2% in the second quarter, its weakest place in at least 27 years.

#### [2nd import expo to have 5G network coverage](#)

July 12, 2019, Xinhua

The National Exhibition and Convention Centre in Shanghai, the venue for the annual China International Import Expo (CIIE), is under construction to increase 5G coverage and expand its exhibition area. The exhibition is slated to take place in November, 2019.

#### [China to impose sanctions on U.S. companies involved in arms sales to Taiwan](#)

July 12, 2019, Xinhua

China will impose sanctions on U.S. companies involved in arms sales to Taiwan, foreign ministry spokesperson Geng Shuang said. Geng's comments came after the United States earlier announced a plan of selling weapons worth 2.22 billion U.S. dollars to Taiwan.

#### [Chinese FM urges U.S. not to "play with fire" on Taiwan-related issues](#)

July 12, 2019, Xinhua

Chinese State Councillor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi on Friday urged the United States to correctly handle Taiwan-related issues, and not "play with fire."

### [China can effectively sanction US companies who sell weapons to Taiwan: experts](#)

July 14, 2019, Global Times

The US is deploying a double standard by calling China's proposed sanctions on US companies for arms sales to Taiwan a "foolish action," Chinese mainland analysts said on Sunday, pointing out that the sanctions could not only cut base material supply to these companies including rare earths but also block their non-military products from entering Chinese markets.

### [Five-nation delegation tours Wuhan for Military World Games](#)

July 12, 2011, Xinhua

A five-nation delegation concluded its two-day visit to the host city of the 7th Military World Games, the Executive Committee of the Games told Xinhua Thursday evening.

### [China to host 2020 AIIB annual meeting](#)

July 15, 2019, Xinhua

The Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) has announced that its fifth annual meeting will be held in Beijing in July 2020.

### [China's Uighur policy is human rights 'stain of the century' – Pompeo](#)

July 19, 2019, The Guardian

The US secretary of state, Mike Pompeo, has accused China of being responsible for the human rights "stain of the century" with mass detentions of Muslims and other minorities.

### [Taiwan's president is planning another stopover in the US. China will be infuriated](#)

July 19, 2019, CNBC

Taiwan's president is expected to transit in the U.S. on Friday — for the second time in as many weeks — as she returns from visiting diplomatic allies in the Caribbean. The move is sure to make China angry.

## **Japan**

### [Japan summons S Korean envoy; man sets himself on fire in front of Japanese Embassy in Seoul](#)

July 19, 2019, Japan Today

Japanese Foreign Minister Taro Kono summoned South Korea's ambassador on Friday in a deepening diplomatic row over compensation for Korean wartime forced labour that threatens global supply of memory chips and display screens.

[Japan may take South Korea wartime labor dispute to International Court of Justice: NHK](#)

July 18, 2019, The Japan Times

Japan is considering taking a dispute with South Korea over its compensation for wartime forced laborers to the International Court of Justice as the deadline for seeking third-country arbitration is set to pass on Thursday, public broadcaster NHK reported.

[U.S. vows to help S. Korea, Japan resolve dispute](#)

July 17, 2019, The Japan News

The United States will “do what it can do” to help defuse a worsening political and economic dispute between South Korea and Japan, a senior U.S. diplomat said on Wednesday, as South Korea warned that the row would have global repercussions.

[Japanese official says negotiators working hard on U.S.-Japan trade deal](#)

July 18, 2019, The Asahi Shimbun

U.S. and Japanese officials are working hard to reach agreement on a bilateral trade agreement, a senior Japanese official told Reuters on Wednesday, adding he was looking forward to news on the deal in the near future.

[Japanese Maritime Self-Defense Force launches new Aegis destroyer in Yokohama](#)

July 18, 2019, The Japan Times

The newest Aegis-equipped destroyer of the Maritime Self-Defense Force was launched Wednesday at a shipyard in Yokohama.

[Abe avoids Iran, N. territories issues in campaign speeches](#)

July 13, 2019, The Japan News

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe appears to be avoiding discussing tensions over Iran and a territorial issue with Russia in his campaign speeches for the July 21 House of Councillors election, after he failed to achieve tangible progress on the issues in recent opportunities.

[With pacifist Constitution at stake, apathy reigns in Japan ahead of Upper House election](#)

July 18, 2019, The Japan Times

Politically speaking, the upcoming Upper House election is a huge deal for Prime Minister Shinzo Abe. After all, it’s a vote that could determine the fate of his long-held ambition to amend the postwar pacifist Constitution.



## Korea

### [N.Korean Economy 'Worst Since Famine'](#)

July 19, 2019, The Chosun Ilbo

Researchers at the Institute for National Security Strategy told reporters Thursday that the North Korean economy is shrinking and the effects could hit hard in the second half of the year. They said factories could stop operating if they cannot import machinery, electronics and metal components for maintenance due to international sanctions.

### [Sanctions Regime Against N.Korea Full of Holes](#)

July 19, 2019, The Chosun Ilbo

A veritable fleet of ships are suspected of violating international sanctions against North Korea by transporting North Korean coal or carrying out ship-to-ship transfers of crude oil to the North while exploiting tracking flaws.

### [US-North Korea working-level talks likely to be delayed](#)

July 17, 2019, The Korea Times

Working-level denuclearization talks between the United States and North Korea are likely to be delayed.

### [Seoul, Washington preparing joint exercise despite Pyongyang's warning](#)

July 17, 2019, The Korea Times

South Korea and the United States are preparing to stage a joint military exercise this fall, the Pentagon said Tuesday, after North Korea warned the drill will affect the prospects of working-level nuclear talks between the two countries.

### [Korea refuses Japan's call to form arbitration panel](#)

July 18, 2019, The Korea Times

Japan is likely to continue to pressure Seoul over a dispute on wartime forced labor, and is considering bringing it to the International Court of Justice (ICJ) after Seoul's apparent rejection of Tokyo's Thursday deadline to respond to its call for the formation of an arbitration panel including a third country.

### [Japan calls South Korea's rejection of arbitration offer 'very regrettable'](#)

July 19, 2019, The Korea Herald

Japan called in South Korea's ambassador to the country and filed a protest on Friday after Seoul rejected its call for an arbitration panel on wartime forced labor, with the escalating row showing signs of spreading to the security realm.

### [Moon, party leaders vow to work together to deal with Japan's economic reprisal](#)

July 18, 2019, The Korea Herald

The government and political parties are to establish an emergency cooperation body to respond to Japan's trade restrictions against South Korea, the parties and the presidential office said.

### [Korea-Japan trade friction to hurt global value chain'](#)

July 17, 2019, The Korea Times

Japan's escalating moves to place restrictions on trade with Korea will end up dealing a heavy blow to the global value chain, which refers to different stages of the production process being distributed across different countries, the head of Korea's largest trade association said.

## **Southeast Asia**

### [U.S. sanctions on Myanmar military leaders inadequate - U.N. investigator](#)

July 18, 2019, Reuters

Sanctions imposed this week by the United States on Myanmar's military leaders over human rights abuses against Rohingya Muslims do not go far enough, U.N. special rapporteur Yanghee Lee said.

### [India-Myanmar: Partners in Progress](#)

July 18, 2019, The Economic Times

After decades of isolation, India's eastern neighbour – Myanmar is now perceived as a link to new markets. The transformation of 'Look East Policy' into the much coveted 'Act East Policy' has also added to the significance of Myanmar in India's foreign policy considerations.

### [Indonesia to send waste back to Australia](#)

July 18, 2019, Al Jazeera

Environmentalists are concerned about the high level of plastic and household waste in wastepaper imports.

### [Singapore to return US\\$40m linked to 1MDB scandal](#)

July 19, 2019, Malay Mail

Singapore is returning almost US\$40 million (RM164.4 million) to Malaysia seized in connection with a massive financial scandal that played a major role in the toppling of the corruption-plagued government of Datuk Seri Najib Razak, the police said.

### [Malaysia seized \\$240m from Chinese company over pipeline project: Mahathir](#)

July 16, 2019, The Jakarta Post

Malaysia seized more than 1 billion ringgit (\$243.5 million) from a bank account of state-owned China Petroleum Pipeline Engineering (CPP) over incomplete pipeline projects, Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad said

### [Timor Leste 'wants to contribute', not be burden to ASEAN](#)

July 15, 2019, The Jakarta post

Timor Leste wants to contribute to ASEAN and not be a burden to it, one of the country's high-ranking officials said recently, as Southeast Asia's smallest economy waits for the regional grouping to determine next year whether to offer the country full-fledged membership.

### [Transnational crime boom a destabilising influence in SE Asia: UN](#)

July 18, 2019, Al Jazeera

New report on how criminal groups rake in billions of dollars via drug trade, human trafficking and other activities

### [ASEAN's Indo-Pacific Concept and the Great Power Challenge](#)

July 17, 2019, The Diplomat

Rising tensions between the U.S. and China complicate ASEAN's vision for the region.

### [The changing seas: antecedents of the Indo-Pacific](#)

July 17, 2019, The Telegraph

With the publication of the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific last month the elucidations of the concept have expanded. The Association of Southeast Asian Nations statement follows that of Australia, the United States of America, Japan, France and Indonesia. For each, the conceptual rebalancing the term implies is directly related to the new factor in this region — Chinese maritime assertion. India's position, too, on the Indo-Pacific is related to this new factor in its geopolitical environment but it has also older antecedents that are equally significant.

### [Germany In Indo-Pacific: New Security Actor? – Analysis](#)

July 19, 2019, Eurasia Review

Berlin is considering some limited military presence in the Taiwan Strait. This would be a radical shift in Germany's military doctrine and self-perception. For the time being, however, the domestic environment is unlikely to allow for more military deployment.

### [The Idea Of Indo-Pacific: ASEAN Steps In – Analysis](#)

July 18, 2019, Eurasia Review

The ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP) is an initial step towards formally incorporating ASEAN Centrality in the evolving Indo-Pacific concept. The AOIP has been much anticipated as different powers assert their conceptions of the Indo-Pacific region in which ASEAN claims a key role. What does this mean for sub-regional cooperation?

### [Energy key to luring India into US Indo-Pacific strategy](#)

July 18, 2019, Asia Times

When Narendra Modi was sworn in for a second term as prime minister of India, it became time for the Indian government to address issues that had been postponed until after the general election. America's cancellation of sanctions waivers on India's import of Iranian oil was one such issue.

## Central & West Asia

### Central Asia

#### [Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan agree to bring trade turnover by \\$1 billion in 2020](#)

July 19, 2019, The Astana Times

Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan agreed to bring their trade to \$1 billion in 2020 during the recent visit of Kazakh Prime Minister Askar Mamin to Bishkek and his meeting with Kyrgyz President Sooronbay Jeenbekov.

#### [Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan open transit highway](#)

July 18, 2019, The Times of Central Asia

Prime Minister of Kazakhstan Askar Mamin and Prime Minister of Uzbekistan Abdulla Aripov, on July 17 in Kazakhstan's Mangystau region, attended the opening ceremony of the international highway Beineu–Akzhigit–the border of Uzbekistan.

#### [Kyrgyzstan expanding trade, investment ties with South Korea](#)

July 18, 2019, The Times of Central Asia

The Republic of Korea is among Kyrgyzstan's closest partners in the Asian region, Kyrgyz Prime Minister Mukhammedkaly Abylgaziev said at the Kyrgyz-Korean business forum on July 17 in Bishkek.

#### [Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan Continue Border Talks](#)

July 17, 2019, Asia Plus

A regular meeting of the Tajik-Kyrgyz working group on delimitation and demarcation of the mutual border has been held in the Tajik northern city of Isfara. The officials discussed proposals on drawing the disputable stretches of the border and reached an agreement on conducting a joint field examination of the border in Kyrgyzstan's Batken district.

#### [Hyperinflation and hunger: Turkmenistan on 'edge of catastrophe'](#)

July 16, 2019, Al Jazeera

Turkmenistan is facing its worst economic crisis in three decades, which has led to hyperinflation and widespread food shortages, despite the country possessing an estimated 10 percent of all proven natural gas reserves. The economic woes have seen the personality cult of its leadership and the intrusion into the lives of its citizens intensify as the regime seeks to maintain its grip on society.

### [India, Uzbekistan hold meeting on counter-terrorism](#)

July 17, 2019, Xinhua

India and Uzbekistan held their eighth meeting of "Joint Working Group on Counter Terrorism" in New Delhi, where both sides deliberated upon measures to strengthen bilateral cooperation in counter terrorism. The Joint Working Group reviewed threats posed by terrorist groups worldwide and in their respective regions, including cross border terrorism.

### [New right-wing groups confront Armenia's revolutionary government](#)

July 12, 2019, Eurasianet

A group has recently emerged in Armenia, which stands against LGBT advocates, the European Union and liberal thought on the whole. Its members hold aggressive, conservative views. It appears that the group, Adekvad, stands squarely with the European far-right movement, which has also risen in Georgia, taking advantage of the same conditions now present in Armenia: a liberalising government and a socially conservative population.

### [US supports Afghanistan-Uzbekistan cross-border trade](#)

July 19, 2019, The Times of Central Asia

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) is supporting private-sector led economic growth in Afghanistan by hosting a week-long workshop "Facilitating Trade, Promoting Economic Growth," to promote trade between Afghanistan and Uzbekistan, the US Embassy in Tashkent said on July 18.

### [Azerbaijan-Georgia relations newly strained by monastery tensions](#)

July 17, 2019, Eurasianet

Tensions have again flared up between Georgia and Azerbaijan over Davit Gareji, a sprawling monastic complex that straddles the two countries' border. After hearing that Azerbaijani border guards removed icons from shrines situated on Azerbaijani-controlled territory, Georgian monks and activists physically confronted Azerbaijani border guards.

### [Azerbaijan's Military cooperation with Iran developing successfully](#)

July 18, 2019, Azer News

Azerbaijan and Iran are two neighboring countries that have had long-standing relations, and today they continue to improve mutual ties. In this context, the two states have established the Joint Working Group on Military Cooperation between

the Defense Ministries of the two countries and Armed Forces Logistics, and its first meeting was held in Baku on October 24.

## West Asia

### [Gulf tensions rise as US shoots down Iranian drone](#)

July 19, 2019, The Times of India

Tensions in the Gulf region mounted Thursday as US President Donald Trump said an American naval vessel shot down an Iranian drone that threatened the ship as it was entering the Strait of Hormuz.

### [Saudi Arabia detains 1028 foreign prisoners on terrorism charges](#)

July 18, 2019, Middle East Monitor

As many as 1028 foreigners are held by the Saudi authorities on terrorism and harming state security charges, comprising 19.7% of the kingdom's detainees. Yemeni prisoners top the list of foreign detainees with 358 prisoners, followed by Syrians with 259 prisoners, Egyptians with 75 prisoners and Pakistanis with 73 prisoners.

### [Iran hits back at US demand on ballistic missiles](#)

July 17, 2019, Al Jazeera

Iran hit back at US President Donald Trump's call for new nuclear negotiations that encompass its ballistic missiles programme, accusing Washington of bringing the Middle East to the brink of "explosion" by selling arms to allies in the Gulf. Iran's Foreign Minister Javad Zarif says US must stop selling arms to Gulf allies if it wants to discuss Tehran's ballistic missiles programme.

### [Jordan appoints new Qatar envoy, two years after downgrading ties](#)

July 17, 2019, Al Jazeera

Jordan has appointed a new ambassador to Qatar, a step towards restoring normal relations two years after Amman withdrew its ambassador in solidarity with Gulf Arab allies who severed ties with Doha. Zaid Al Louzi, a senior Jordanian career diplomat and secretary general of Jordan's foreign ministry, was appointed as the new ambassador to Qatar.

### [Palestinians seek to disengage economically from Israel](#)

July 18, 2019, The Jerusalem Post

Palestinian leaders are spearheading a new effort to reduce their economic dependence on Israel by approaching Arab states for economic cooperation and agreements in a move meant to help counter the Trump Administration's so-called deal of the century peace project. Palestinian delegations have visited Iraq and Jordan regarding the same.

### [Jordan government rocked by legal challenges over secret gas deal with Israel](#)

July 17, 2019, Middle East Eye

Legal challenges filed across Jordan have placed the kingdom's latest controversial gas deal with Israel in jeopardy, strained the government of Prime Minister Omar al-Razzaz. After an earlier deal sparked protests, Jordan secretly signed another agreement in 2016 to purchase even more of its neighbour's natural gas, however this latter deal is now causing uproar after details of it emerged.

### [Turkey's restructuring stalls as banks, government wrestle with bad debt](#)

July 17, 2019, Reuters

Efforts to clean up Turkey's bad debt have stalled after bankers rejected or put on hold initial plans, frustrating the country's attempts to leave behind the worst of last year's currency crisis. There has been little progress with plans to help lenders to Turkey's construction, real-estate and energy companies that can no longer afford roughly \$20 billion of debt.

### [Bahrain to host global maritime security conference addressing Iran threat](#)

July 17, 2019, The National

Bahrain will host a global maritime security conference to address the Iranian threat to navigation security in the Arabian Gulf. Minister for Foreign Affairs, Sheikh Khalid bin Ahmed Al Khalifa, announced the summit alongside the US special representative for Iran, Brian Hook. He said the conference would probably take place this autumn, and will aim to reach a common understanding on addressing the challenge posed by Iran.

### [Oman closer to self-sufficiency as imports down by 9.1 per cent](#)

July 15, 2019, Times of Oman

Oman's imports have decreased by 9.1 per cent over the last year, as the country moves towards self-sufficiency and becomes less reliant on goods brought in



from overseas. As the country sets up industries that manufacture goods and help harvest raw materials that were previously imported, Oman's dependence on imported goods has decreased.

#### [Turkey blocked from US F-35 program after Russian missile purchase](#)

July 18, 2019, Arab News

The United States said that it was removing Turkey from the F-35 fighter jet program, a move that had been long threatened and expected after Ankara began accepting delivery of an advanced Russian missile defence system. The first parts of the S-400 air defence system were flown to the Murted military air base northwest of Ankara on July 12, sealing Turkey's deal with Russia.

#### [Arab coalition intercepts Houthi drones targeting Saudi Arabia](#)

July 18, 2019, Arab News

Saudi air defence forces intercepted a weaponised drone launched by Houthi terrorists toward Jazan, the coalition supporting Yemen's legitimate government said. The coalition forces shot down three drones that were heading for southern Saudi Arabia and the cities of Jazan and Abha. The drones were intercepted in Yemeni airspace.

#### [Syria's Assad says talks on post-war constitution to 'continue'](#)

July 13, 2019, Al Jazeera

Syria's President Bashar al-Assad has said discussions would "continue" over the composition of a body to draw up a post-war constitution for the country. Assad met with Russian envoy Alexander Lavrentiev, and discussed ongoing efforts towards creating a committee to discuss the constitution. Both sides agreed to continue working and coordinating on the next steps regarding the same.

#### [Lebanon's Palestinian Refugees Protest Against Labour Crackdown](#)

July 18, 2019, Al Jazeera

Lebanon's crackdown on unlicensed labour is part of a campaign directed at Syrian refugees, to force them to return home. Palestinian refugees, however, have not been excluded from the Ministry of Labor's efforts and Palestinians are protesting what they call "discriminatory" laws against them. They claim the laws are intended to discourage them from staying, and are part of a crackdown forcing them to suffer.

## United States

### [Trump Says U.S. Downes Iranian Drone, Refueling Tensions as Both Nations Dig In](#)

July 18, 2019, New York Times

The American military downed an Iranian drone in the Strait of Hormuz on Thursday in what President Trump called an act of self-defense, just hours after Iran's chief diplomat offered a modest road map for easing tensions with the United States.

### [Zarif: Iran offers United States enhanced inspections for lifting of sanctions](#)

July 18, 2019, UPI News

Iran will accept enhanced inspections of its nuclear program in return for the lifting of U.S. sanctions, Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif said.

### [American to Lead NATO Intelligence as Iraq-War-Era Concerns About U.S. Linger](#)

July 18, 2019, New York Times

The United States will take over the top NATO intelligence post at the end of the year, alliance officials said, a move that some American officials hope could bolster a critical alliance capacity that President Trump has praised.

### [US expels Turkey from F-35 fighter jet programme](#)

July 18, 2019, Al Jazeera English

The United States said on Wednesday that it was removing Turkey from the F-35 fighter jet programme, a move that had been long threatened and expected after Ankara began accepting delivery of an advanced Russian missile defence system last week.

### [Pakistan arrests top militant figure ahead of prime minister's visit to U.S.](#)

July 17, 2019, The Washington Post

Pakistani authorities on Wednesday arrested Hafiz Saeed, the accused mastermind of devastating 2008 terrorist attacks in Mumbai, police said. In Washington, Trump welcomed the arrest. In one of several tweets on various topics Wednesday morning, Trump wrote: "After a ten-year search, the so-called 'mastermind' of the Mumbai Terror attacks has been arrested in Pakistan. Great pressure has been exerted over the last two years to find him!"

### [U.S. Military Returns to Saudi Arabia in Response to Iran](#)

July 18, 2019, The Wall Street Journal

Hundreds of American troops are being deployed to the kingdom after a 16-year absence to counter what U.S. officials say are threats from Tehran

### [U.S.-China Talks Stuck in Rut Over Huawei](#)

July 17, 2019, The Wall Street Journal

Progress toward a U.S.-China trade deal has stalled while the Trump administration determines how to address Beijing's demands that it ease restrictions on Huawei Technologies Co., people familiar with the talks said.

### [Pakistan-US Cooperation 'Has Rekindled Hope' for Afghan Peace](#)

July 16, 2019, VOA News

Pakistan said Tuesday its cooperation in facilitating ongoing peace talks between the United States and the Taliban to end the war in Afghanistan has led to a "gradual warming up" in Islamabad's turbulent relationship with Washington.

### [US Brings Back Suspected American IS Fighter From Syria to Face Charges](#)

July 18, 2019, VOA News

An American suspected of fighting with the Islamic State terror group in Syria is back in the United States, where he is expected to be charged with and tried for terrorism-related crimes.

### [U.S. Inaction in Cameroon Is No Longer an Option](#)

July 18, 2019, National Interest

The United States has particularly important stakes in Cameroon. With investment comes the responsibility and leverage to ease the extent of human suffering.

## Europe & Russia

### Europe

#### [Europe is sleepwalking its way to another lost decade](#)

July 18, 2019, CNN

Ten years after the global financial crisis, Europe's economy has achieved a recovery, but not a revival. Low inflation, low interest rates and low growth have become the new normal.

#### [Von der Leyen elected EU Commission head after MEPs vote](#)

July 16, 2019, BBC News

Germany's Ursula von der Leyen has been narrowly elected president of the EU Commission following a secret ballot among MEPs. The centre-right defence minister will replace Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker on 1 November.

#### [Secret locations of US nuclear weapons in Europe accidentally leaked](#)

July 17, 2019, The Independent

The secret locations of US nuclear weapons stored in Europe have been accidentally revealed in a report published by a NATO committee. The document referred to the sites of roughly 150 American nuclear weapons.

#### [EU interior ministers fail to find compromise on Mediterranean refugee rescue](#)

July 17, 2019, DW

EU interior ministers meeting in Finland on Thursday failed to strike a stopgap deal to address ongoing disagreements about the bloc's migration policies, particularly issues of who should take responsibility for new arrivals.

#### [Netanyahu: 'Europe might ignore Iran threat until nuclear missiles hit'](#)

July 16, 2019, BBC

Israel's prime minister has said the European Union might not wake up to the threat of Iran "until Iranian nuclear missiles fall on European soil".

#### [Opening Statement in the European Parliament Plenary Session by Ursula von der Leyen, Candidate for President of the European Commission](#)

July 16, 2019, Europa

Demographic change, globalisation of the world economy, rapid digitalisation of our working environment and, of course, climate change. None of these meta-developments is new: science predicted them a long way back. What is new is that

we, as citizens of Europe — irrespective of the country in which we live — are feeling and experiencing their effects first hand.

#### [British MPs back proposal to thwart a no-deal Brexit](#)

July 19, 2019, The Straits Times

British lawmakers on Thursday backed proposals to make it harder for the next prime minister to force through a no-deal Brexit by suspending Parliament, showing again their determination to stop a divorce from the European Union without agreement.

#### [Nato chief calls on Russia to save INF nuclear missile treaty](#)

July 18, 2019, BBC News

Time is running out to save a key nuclear missile treaty with Russia, Nato Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg has told the BBC. Mr Stoltenberg pledged a "measured, defensive" response if Russia did not come back into compliance with the deal by the 2 August deadline.

#### [Ankara faces new wave of biting sanctions, now from Europe](#)

July 18, 2019, Arab News

The European Council's decision to impose sanctions on Turkey over its drilling activities in disputed offshore territories in the eastern Mediterranean has caused a political earthquake in the country.

### **Russia**

#### [Attempts to hinder Russia's development entailed huge losses for EU — Lavrov](#)

July 19, 2019, Tass

The European Union's policy of sanctions geared to frustrate Russia's technological and economic development has bounced off in billiards-worth losses for European countries, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said.

#### [Russian embassy points at May's 'narrow definition' of liberalism](#)

July 18, 2019, Tass

UK Prime Minister Theresa May came up with a "narrow definition" of liberalism in her indirect debate about the future of the liberal idea with Russian President Vladimir Putin, the Russian embassy in London said.

### ['Without Further Delay': European Parliament Calls On Russia To Release Detained Ukrainians](#)

July 18, 2019, Rferl.org

The European Parliament has overwhelmingly passed a resolution calling on Russian authorities "to release without further delay and unconditionally all illegally and arbitrarily detained Ukrainian citizens both in Russia and in the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine."

### [Putin, Macron discuss situation around Iran nuclear deal after US' withdrawal – Kremlin](#)

July 18, 2019, Tass

The situation around the Iran nuclear deal after the United States' withdrawal from it was among the topics Russian and French Presidents, Vladimir Putin and Emmanuel Macron discussed in a telephone conversation, the Kremlin press service said.

### [Russia test-fires Mosquito anti-ship missiles in Sea of Japan](#)

July 15, 2019, RT

Two Mosquito anti-ship cruise missiles eliminated an above-water target during tactical drills of the Russian Pacific Fleet in the Sea of Japan, with the successful test.

### [Moldovan president hopes to secure Russian gas discount at meeting with Putin](#)

July 18, 2019, Tass

Moldovan President Igor Dodon expects to secure a discount on Russian gas at a meeting with his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin that may take place in the near future, the president stated upon his return from Moscow, where he had discussed the issue with the top management of Russia's Gazprom company and Russian Special Presidential Envoy for Trade and Economic Relations with Moldova Dmitry Kozak.

### [World's largest nuclear-powered sub takes part in Russia's Northern Fleet drills](#)

July 18, 2019, Tass

The world's largest nuclear-powered submarine Dmitry Donskoi took part in the Russian Northern Fleet's anti-submarine warfare drills, the Fleet's press office reported

### [Russia Is Loving the S-400 Missile Show](#)

July 17, 2019, The Moscow Times

The dramatic flair with which Russia recently delivered a full division of its S-400 air defense to Turkey provided a befitting conclusion to what had been a long intrigue.

## Africa & Latin America

### Africa

#### [Civilians And Military Leaders Sign Power-Sharing Deal In Sudan](#)

July 17, 2019, NPR

The leaders of Sudan's pro-democracy movement and the country's ruling military council signed a power-sharing agreement. The two sides held a signing ceremony in the capital, Khartoum, marking the end of three months of protests and negotiations. The document is a step toward civilian rule, but details of the agreement, including how power would be divided, still need to be worked out.

#### [Sudan political turmoil drives fears of economic collapse](#)

July 18, 2019, Arab News

Sales have tumbled at Hashem Abul Fadel's shopping centers in Sudan, where he and fellow business owners fear that months of political turmoil could bring on a full-scale economic collapse.

#### [Islamic, European officials plan support for Sudan](#)

July 19, 2019, Arab News

Support for Sudan in the wake of a new deal on civilian rule was among items discussed during a meeting between leading Islamic and European officials in Saudi Arabia.

#### [Zimbabwe cricket suspended over 'political interference'](#)

July 19, 2019, Al Jazeera

ICC freezes funding and bans Zimbabwean teams from competing after government commission installs temporary leadership.

#### [10 Turkish sailors kidnapped in pirate attack off Nigeria](#)

July 16, 2019, Daily Sabah

According to a statement from the ship operator Kadioğlu Maritime, the ship named "Paksoy-1" was sailing without freight from Cameroon's port city of Douala to Abidjan in Ivory Coast when the pirates boarded the ship in the Gulf of Guinea in the Atlantic Ocean.



### [Nigeria: Islamic State fighters attack Jakana military base after deadly ambush](#)

July 18, 2019, The Defense Post

Heavily-armed Islamic State West Africa Province fighters opened fire on a patrol vehicle on Wednesday, July 17 near Jakana, which is around 40 km (25 miles) west of Borno state capital Maiduguri, killing all the soldiers on board.

### [Trump's clampdown on US visas for Nigerians is cultivating fear—and "fake news"](#)

July 18, 2019, Quartz Africa

Few things unite Nigeria's middle classes like anxiety over international visa application processes—and none more so than for the United States.

### [Libya Says Missile Find Shows France Is Backing Haftar Offensive](#)

July 15, 2019, Yahoo.com

France's admission that it owned U.S.-made missiles found at a Libyan base seized from strongman Khalifa Haftar's forces indicates it had operatives on the ground supporting his offensive on Tripoli, the interior minister of Libya's internationally-recognized government said.

### [World powers call for an end to deadly Libya fighting](#)

July 16, 2019, Deutsche Welle

Major global and regional powers have urged the warring groups in Libya to stop their bloody fighting, warning that the bloodshed is worsening what is already a catastrophic humanitarian situation.

### [Egyptian Army foils terrorist attack on Sinai security outpost](#)

July 18, 2019, Egypt Independent

The Egyptian Armed Forces foiled a terrorist attack on a security outpost in the North Sinai city of Sheikh Zuweid, spokesperson for the Armed Forces Colonel Tamer al-Refaei said in a Facebook post.

### [South Africa's army has run out of money – here's how bad things have got](#)

July 18, 2019, Business Tech

The Department of Defence and Military Veterans has warned that a severe lack of funding could impact its ability to protect South Africa.

### [South African corruption inquiry adjourns after Zuma's lawyers say questioning unfair](#)

July 19, 2019, Reuters

A South African judge adjourned until Friday morning a public inquiry into state corruption, after lawyers for former President Jacob Zuma said he was being questioned unfairly.

### **Latin America**

#### [Cuban parliament unanimously approves electoral law](#)

Al Jazeera, July 14, 2019

Cuba's parliament has approved a new electoral law which calls for both a President and a Prime Minister but has no provision for a multiparty system, maintaining the Communist Party as the only permitted political organisation in the country. The prime minister can be elected to a maximum of two five-year consecutive terms. The constitution also calls for a notable liberal shift in the country's economic direction to reinvigorate its troubled economy. It officially recognises private property, the right of the state to partner with multinational companies and promoting foreign investment.

#### [EU readies sanctions on Venezuelan security officials](#)

Reuters, July 16, 2019

The European Union is preparing new sanctions against Venezuelan security forces involved in human rights violations. The death of Navy Captain Rafael Acosta while in custody for alleged participation in a coup plot showcases the deteriorating situation in Venezuela. EU warned that if there was no progress in talks between the Venezuelan opposition and Maduro's government to resolve the South American nation's political crisis, it would increase sanctions.

#### [Protest begins against billion-dollar Southern Copper mining project in Peru](#)

Reuters, July 16, 2019

Protesters from the area bordering Southern Copper Corp's \$1.4 billion Tia Maria copper mine project in the south of Peru blocked a portion of Peru's main coastal highway snarling traffic for cargo vehicles and others. The project has long been lamented by residents in the southern region of Arequipa as the mine will pollute their fields and affect water supplies.

### [Former Peruvian president Alejandro Toledo arrested in US](#)

Al Jazeera, July 17, 2019

After extradition request, US authorities arrest Peru's former President Alejandro Toledo, who faces corruption charges in his home country. Toledo is wanted in on accusations of taking \$20m in bribes from Odebrecht, a Brazilian construction company at the centre of Latin America's biggest corruption scandal. Odebrecht has admitted to paying \$800m to officials throughout the region in exchange for lucrative public works contracts.

### [El Chapo trial: Mexican drug lord Joaquín Guzmán gets life in prison](#)

BBC, July 17, 2019

A US federal court has sentenced Mexican drug kingpin Joaquín "El Chapo" Guzmán to life in prison plus 30 years. Guzmán, 62, was found guilty of 10 charges, including drug trafficking and money laundering, in New York in February. He escaped maximum-security prisons twice in the US and will spend the rest of his life in a U.S. penitentiary.

### [Mercosur calls for new elections in Venezuela at summit](#)

Buenos Aires Times, July 17, 2019

South American trade bloc Mercosur called for "free, fair and transparent presidential elections, as soon as possible" in Venezuela, at its summit in Argentina. The presidents of the four member countries signed a statement expressing concern "for the grave humanitarian situation and human rights crisis in Venezuela. New presidential elections are a key demand of Venezuela's opposition led by National Assembly leader Juan Guaido.

### [Accelerating deforestation in Brazil endangers EU trade deal](#)

Al Jazeera, July 18, 2019

Threats to Amazon rainforest jeopardise European economic accord with Mercosur, which includes ecological commitments. Deforestation in the Amazon rainforest area of Brazil accelerated with Over 1,000 sq km of the jungle cleared in the first 15 days of July. The parliaments of Ireland and Italy already oppose the deal. Further, EU farmers fear competition from Brazil's powerhouse farm sector - which they argue is subject to less stringent environmental requirements compared to Europe.

### [Argentina designates Hezbollah as terrorist organisation](#)

BBC, July 18, 2019

Argentina has designated Lebanon's Hezbollah movement as a terrorist organisation and frozen its assets, emerging as the first latin American country to

do so. It accuses the Shia Islamist group of being behind two attacks on its soil. Hezbollah has been engaged in illegal activities between Argentina, Brazil and Paraguay to finance its operations elsewhere.



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