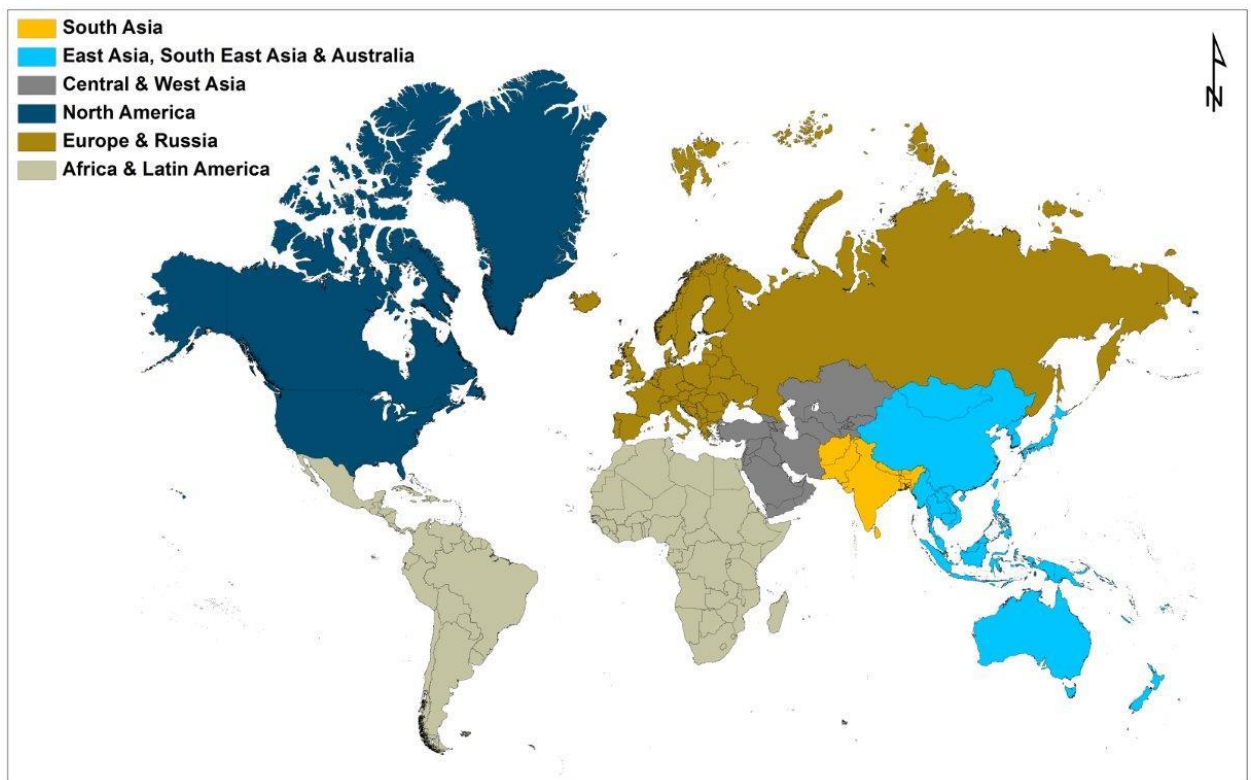




Delhi Policy Group

DPG WEEKLY WORLD WATCH



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DPG WEEKLY WORLD WATCH

Volume 3, Issue 35

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.

DPG WEEKLY WORLD WATCH

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South Asia

India

[If Pak Closes Airspace, Will Devise System To Deal With It, Says Minister](#)

August 29, 2019, NDTV

Pakistan Foreign Office's Spokesperson Mohammad Faisal said earlier in the day that they could order the closure of the country's airspace for India "at a time of its choosing".

[Amid tensions over Kashmir, India, Pakistan hold talks over Kartarpur corridor](#)

August 30, 2019, India Today

Amid rising tensions between the two countries after the abrogation of Article 370, technical teams of India and Pakistan met on Friday morning at zero point to discuss the construction of Kartarpur corridor.

[India, Pakistan in touch over consular access for Kulbhushan Jadhav](#)

August 30, 2019, India Today

Nearly a month and a half after the verdict at the International Court of Justice (ICJ) granting consular access to Kulbhushan Jadhav, the stalemate on conditions for access continues.

[India's diplomatic win at G7 Summit: PM Modi, Donald Trump agree Kashmir is a bilateral issue](#)

August 26, 2019, India Today

In a meeting between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and US President Donald Trump, Trump said that the Kashmir issue had been discussed between them. The two leaders are in France to attend the G7 Summit.

[Issues between India and Pakistan are truly bilateral in nature: Modi after meeting Trump at G-7 summit](#)

August 26, 2019, The Economic Times

Speaking on the sidelines of the G-7 summit in Biarritz, France, US President Donald Trump and Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed a host of issues and clearly laid down the way forward for Kashmir and the ongoing trade impasse between India and the United States.

[PM Modi meets Boris Johnson on G7 Summit sidelines, agree to further India-UK bilateral ties](#)

August 26, 2019, The Hindu Business Line

Prime Minister Narendra Modi had a “good” meeting with his British counterpart Boris Johnson here on Sunday and the two leaders discussed ways to further cement bilateral ties in trade, defence and innovation.

[Three days after Trump thumbs up on Kashmir, U.S. expresses concerns again](#)

August 30, 2019, The Hindu

Three days after U.S. President Donald Trump met Prime Minister Narendra Modi in France and discussed the situation in Kashmir, American officials said they were “concerned” about the continuing communication restrictions and detentions in the Valley.

[Months after Sri Lanka Easter Day blasts, NIA busts IS cell in Tamil Nadu](#)

August 29, 2019, Livemint

Just days after a terror alert was sounded across Tamil Nadu’s Coimbatore region, the National Investigation Agency (NIA) on Thursday cracked down on sleeper cells of the Islamic State (IS) in the city, which were in the process of radicalizing and recruiting youth, en-masse.

[India aims to capitalize on U.S.-China trade war](#)

August 30, 2019, Automotive News Europe

India is targeting automakers and companies including Apple, Foxconn and Wistron with a charm offensive aimed at encouraging them to shift business out of trade war-hit China.

[India delaying 5th generation fighter aircraft programme: Russian official](#)

August 29, 2019, India Today

A Russian official has said that the Indian Air Force has its own views and strategy of development and that the Indo-Russia fifth generation fighter aircraft (FGFA) programme has been delayed by the Indian side.

[Payment mechanism for India-Russia defence deal a non-issue, says top Russian defence body](#)

August 29, 2019, Zee News

India and Russia had last year announced the S400 deal and, given the American sanctions on the latter, payment was an issue. It may be noted that India will be getting Russian S400 by April 2023.

Pakistan

[Pak debt surges by Rs11tr in one year](#)

August 24, 2019, The News

Pakistan's total debt and liabilities have skyrocketed and witnessed surge of Rs11 trillion just in one year rule of the incumbent government and stood at Rs40 trillion.

[Pak-Oman talks on bilateral ASA held](#)

August 24, 2019, The News

With the view to further explore avenues of mutual cooperation in the aviation industry, the delegations representing the Aeronautical Authorities of Pakistan and Oman met in Islamabad on August 22, 2019 on the request of Pakistan in pursuance of the vision of the Government of Pakistan.

[Car sales drop by 50pc](#)

August 25, 2019, The News

Devaluation of rupee, hike in interest rate and Customs duty have badly affected Pakistan's auto industry, while the local businessmen is suffering because the auto investment has stopped and international brands have postponed to launch any new product in the current situation.

[Four hurt in IED blast near Pak Consulate in Jalalabad](#)

August 26, 2019, The News

The IED exploded outside the holding area of Pakistan Consulate General in Jalalabad. All Pakistani staff were safe. One policeman and two applicants were wounded.

[Airspace closure, trade route ban for India under study: Fawad](#)

August 28, 2019, Dawn

Pakistan Federal Minister for Science and Technology Fawad Chaudhry said that the government is considering imposition of a blanket ban on the use of Pakistani airspace by flights taking off from India.

[Tax exemption laws for Gwadar port, free zone approved](#)

August 29, 2019, Dawn

The Pakistan government approved a number of amendments to laws aimed to provide exemptions from income tax, sales tax and custom duties to the Gwadar port and free zone until 2039, but could not decide how to give legal cover to the decision.

[ADB to provide \\$1.3b worth of loans to Pakistan in Nov](#)

August 30, 2019, The Express Tribune

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) assured to give loans worth \$1 billion for budgetary support and \$300 million for energy sector reforms in November but complained about slow implementation on schemes, which delayed the release of billions of dollars approved under project loans.

[Pakistan successfully tests Ghaznavi missile](#)

August 29, 2019, The Express Tribune

Pakistan has successfully carried out night training launch of surface-to-surface ballistic missile Ghaznavi. The missile is capable of delivering multiple types of warheads at a distance of up to 290 kilometres.

Afghanistan

[Afghan Govt protests cross-Durand Lineshelling by Pakistan](#)

August 23, 2019, Tolo News

The Afghan government has slammed Pakistan for rocket attacks on the eastern parts of Afghanistan, calling it a violation of international principles. Pakistan has fired almost 200 rockets on eastern provinces of Afghanistan which are located along the Durand Line.

[Ghani to meet Saudi King and other top Saudi officials](#)

August 24, 2019, Khaama Press

President Mohammad Ashraf Ghani travelled to Saudi Arabia on a State visit accompanying a delegation of high-level government officials. During his visit he met Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, the King of Saudi Arabia and Secretary General of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Dr. Abdullatif bin Rashid Al-Zayani.

[Graham warns of 'another 9/11' if US leaves Afghanistan](#)

August 25, 2019, Tolo News

US Senator Lindsey Graham has once again warned that American pulling troops out of Afghanistan would lead to "another 9/11", saying that America cannot "outsource" its national security to the Taliban.

[Taliban: Attacks on Afghan forces won't stop with US deal](#)

August 26, 2019, The Hill

Two Taliban leaders told Reuters that a peace deal with the U.S. will not end the group's attacks on Afghan forces.

['No Timeline' for troop withdrawal in Afghanistan: Trump](#)

August 27, 2019, Tolo News

US President Donald Trump at a press conference on the last day of G7 Summit in Biarritz, France, said there is no timeline for US forces' withdrawal from Afghanistan. The negotiations between the US and the Taliban negotiators are underway in Doha, Qatar, with the hope to reach an agreement which will enable the withdrawal of part of US forces, almost 5,000 troops, from Afghanistan. President Trump, however, said "whatever it is", there is "no rush".

[Taliban says near agreement on U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan](#)

August 28, 2019, Reuters

The Taliban said it was close to an agreement with U.S. officials on a deal that would see U.S. forces withdraw from Afghanistan in exchange for a Taliban promise that the country would not become a haven for international militants.

[Too Early To Discuss Troop Withdrawal From Afghanistan: Dunford](#)

August 28, 2019, Reuters

The US Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. Joseph Dunford said it is too early to talk about a full American troop withdrawal from Afghanistan. Mr. Dunford said the Afghan forces are not yet able to secure the country without help from allied forces. "I'm not using the withdraw word right now," he said. "It's our judgment that the Afghans need support to deal with the level of violence" in the country today.

[NATO will support Afghan Forces after Peace Deal: Envoy](#)

August 28, 2019, Reuters

NATO Senior Civilian Representative for Afghanistan, Nicolas Kay, said that international forces will remain in Afghanistan even after a peace agreement in order to support the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces.

Bangladesh

[Bangladesh accuses Pakistan of interfering in its internal affairs](#)

August 29, 2018, The Economic Times

After India and Afghanistan, Bangladesh has accused Pakistan of interfering in its internal affairs and attempting to create unrest.

[Bangladesh, China to sign MoU for renewable energy power plant](#)

August 26, 2019, Dhaka Tribune

A memorandum of understanding (MoU) between North-West Power Generation Company Limited and China National Machinery Import and Export Corporation is set to be signed, with the aim of setting up a renewable energy power plant.

[Chinese companies keen to invest in Bangladesh](#)

August 28,, 2019, Dhaka Tribune

The country is expected to cater huge investment opportunities in power and energy sectors in future. A group of Chinese companies on Tuesday expressed their keenness in investing in different sectors in Bangladesh.

[Bangladesh says Myanmar lacks 'will' to repatriate Rohingya](#)

August 30, 2019, Malay Mail

Bangladesh accused Myanmar of lacking the "will" to repatriate the Rohingya, as the spat between the countries grew over the recent failed attempt to return the stateless minority to their homes.

[Bangladesh suspends NGO projects for 'making' sharp weapons for Rohingya refugees](#)

August 29, 2019, BD News

The NGO Affairs Bureau move came on Thursday amid criticisms after some Rohingya Muslims were seen carrying sharp weapons during a recent rally in a refugee camp area.

Nepal

[Nepal-China Border Security Talks Inconclusive](#)

August 29, 2019, Nepal 24 Hours.com

The talks between the security officials of Nepal and China held with the aim of controlling crimes taking place on the Nepal-China border have ended inconclusively.

[Qatar- UN committee faults Nepal in child labour, abuse case](#)

August 27, 2019, Mena FN

A UN committee has ordered Nepal to compensate a man blocked from seeking justice after suffering years of forced labour, as well as alleged torture in custody as a child.

[‘Nepal-India relations have reached new heights’](#)

August 26, 2019, The Himalaya Times

The fifth meeting of Nepal-India Joint Commission concluded on August 21 expressing happiness with the overall aspects of Nepal-India relations.

[Nepal India introduce friendship bus service between Kathmandu and Siliguri](#)

August 29, 2019, ANI

The bus service was flagged off on August 26 by the Minister of Transport Management of Nepal and Indian Ambassador to Nepal Manjeev Singh Puri in the presence of the authorities of the private bus company.

[Nepal Supports Belt And Road Initiatives Forwarded By China: NCP Senior Leader Khanal](#)

August 30, 2019, Nepal 24 Hours.com

Nepal Communist Party (NCP) senior leader Jhalanath Khanal has said Nepal would support the Belt and Road Initiatives forwarded by China.

Bhutan

[India-Bhutan Ties Are Thriving](#)

August 23, 2019, The Diplomat

Continuing India’s attempt to foster a strong relationship with its neighbors under the “Neighborhood First Policy,” Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited Bhutan for the second time on August 17-18. During the visit, Modi held a comprehensive discussion with Bhutanese Prime Minister Lotay Tshering and reviewed the current status of the bilateral relationship. The two countries also signed 10 Memorandums of Undertaking (MoUs) to further boost the ties, with Modi having said that “Bhutan has a special place in the heart of 130 crores [1.3 billion] Indians.”

[Nepal, Bhutan finalise draft of trade agreement](#)

August 30, 2019, The Himalayan Times

The joint-secretary level meeting of the two nations settled the draft in Kathmandu today with due priority to enhancing bilateral trade and economic cooperation.

Sri Lanka

[Sri Lanka rejects Pakistan's claims of Sirisena calling J&K 'a disputed territory', says 'president did not make any such comments'](#)

August 23, 2019, Firstpost

According to Pakistan High Commission in Sri Lanka claimed that the island nation's President has acknowledged Jammu and Kashmir as a 'disputed territory' J&K 'a disputed territory', says 'president did not make any such comments'.

[Pakistan envoy apprises Sirisena on Kashmir; Sri Lanka desists from speaking](#)

August 23, 2019, India Today

A statement issued by the Pakistan High Commission here said Hashmat, during a meeting with the Sri Lankan President on Wednesday, briefed Sirisena about India's so-called "illegal and unilateral actions seeking to alter the disputed status" of Jammu and Kashmir by revoking Article 370 and Article 35 (A) that accorded special status to region.

[Sri Lanka commissions ex-Chinese navy frigate](#)

August 23, 2019, Jane's 360

The Sri Lanka Navy (SLN) has commissioned a frigate that was formerly in service with the People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN).

[A classic example of ' Chinese neo-colonialism' in Sri Lanka](#)

August 26, 2019, The Times of India

A year ago, Washington declared that it is ready to give \$39 million in aid to enhance the security in Sri Lanka as China developed its strategic hold on the Indian Ocean island. The US extended this offer in the backdrop of China's investment in ports and other investment activities on the island. These investments were a part of Beijing's ambitious "Belt and Road" infrastructure initiative.

Maldives

[After Sri Lanka Maldives also snubs Pakistan](#)

August 24, 2019, ANI

After being snubbed by Sri Lanka over the Indian government's move to revoke special status of Jammu and Kashmir, Pakistan received another blow when the Maldives made it clear that the decision was India's internal matter.

East & South East Asia

China

[Will Zarif's surprise G7 visit help resolve row?](#)

August 28, 2019, Global Times

Iran has been striving to overcome the crisis in its relations with the US. Although the Islamic Republic has taken some tough steps, such as shooting down a US military drone in June and seizing a British tanker in July, or ratcheting up the rhetoric against the US, Tehran doesn't want to break down its ties with Washington.

[Military parade to demonstrate China's rising capability](#)

August 28, 2019, Global Times

China officially announced on Thursday that it will hold a grand military parade on October 1 to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China. Some foreign media have highlighted the size of the parade and speculated on the advanced weapons that may be unveiled.

[London violates commitment of Sino-British Joint Declaration](#)

August 29, 2019, Global Times

For some time now, the British government has been making irresponsible remarks about Hong Kong, claiming that under the 1984 Sino-British Joint Declaration, Britain still holds responsibility for Hong Kong. London has repeatedly accused China of violating the Sino-British Joint Declaration and the promise of "one country, two systems." The US and other Western countries have also lent their support to London. The recent G7 summit also quoted the Sino-British Joint Declaration and made groundless statements.

[Can emergency be proclaimed in Hong Kong?](#)

August 29, 2019, Global Times

Asked by reporters on Tuesday whether the Emergency Regulations Ordinance could be invoked, Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (SAR) Chief Executive Carrie Lam Cheng Yuet-ngor did not dismiss the speculation, but said, "All laws in Hong Kong - if they can provide a legal means to stop violence and chaos - the SAR government is responsible for looking into them."

[Costco's opening in China defies US attempts at decoupling](#)

August 28, 2019, Global Times

Instead of leaving China, US mega-retailer Costco opened its first Chinese mainland flagship store in Shanghai Tuesday. As consumers waited in long queues to get inside, the new supermarket has become the latest sensation in the Chinese market. On a weekday, Chinese dashu and dama (elder men and women) in Shanghai added to the unbelievably spectacular opening of Costco that seems unlikely to be repeated in any other country.

[The truth about Hong Kong's autonomy](#)

August 27, 2019, Global Times

The riots in Hong Kong have lasted for over 10 weeks and most media from the city and the Chinese mainland have been covering specific incidents and related topics. Global Times believes it's time to bring Hong Kong's high degree of autonomy into focus. Such a review is necessary to calm the situation.

[PLA presence will only worry agitators: China Daily editorial](#)

August 29, 2019, China Daily

The Chinese People's Liberation Army completed the 22nd rotation of its garrison in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region on Thursday. The routine exercise took place in the small hours of the morning, the same way it has every summer for the past 22 years.

[Washington's gunship ploy won't work: China Daily editorial](#)

August 29, 2019, China Daily

People may have lost count of the number of times US warships have intruded into China's territorial waters over the years. So it was déjà vu on Wednesday when the US Navy destroyer Wayne E. Meyer triggered this cat-and-mouse game again by sailing within 12 nautical miles of China's Nansha Islands without the permission of the Chinese government.

[No unacceptable demands in HK dialogue: China Daily editorial](#)

August 27, 2019, China Daily

Responding to the violent incidents in Hong Kong over the weekend, Carrie Lam Cheng Yuet-ngor, chief executive of the special administrative region, promised on Tuesday that her government will do its utmost to build a dialogue platform with the public.

[Washington will never be allowed to control China's fate: China Daily editorial](#)

August 25, 2019, China Daily

How dare it? That was the message from the United States leader, who, announcing extra tariffs on \$550 billion worth of Chinese imports, declared that China "should not" have put tariffs on a further \$75 billion of US products.

[It's time for US to wake up and smell the coffee: China Daily editorial](#)

August 23, 2019, China Daily

With a week to go before the United States imposes 10 percent tariffs on another \$300 billion of Chinese goods, as threatened by the US leader on Aug 1, Washington must have been waiting for the other shoe to drop since on previous occasions China announced countermeasures soon after the US levied tariffs on Chinese imports.

[China to dispatch 1,600 troops for military drills in Russia](#)

August 30, 2019, Xinhua

The Chinese People's Liberation Army will send about 1,600 troops to participate in the Tsentr-2019 (Center-2019) drills in Russia, a Chinese military spokesperson said Thursday.

[China clarifies tariff hike rate, exemption issues for listed U.S. imports](#)

August 29, 2019, Xinhua

Imports from the United States that appear more than once on China's tariff hike lists will be subject to the combined tariff rates, the Customs Tariff Commission of the State Council said Thursday.

[China has sufficient countermeasures, opposes mounting trade war: MOC](#)

August 29, 2019, Xinhua

China has sufficient countermeasures but what should be discussed under current circumstances is the elimination of the further additional tariffs to be imposed by the United States on 550 billion U.S. dollars worth of Chinese imports and preventing further escalation of the trade war, a spokesperson for the Ministry of Commerce said Thursday.

[Chinese PLA to have largest delegation at Military World Games](#)

August 29, 2019, Xinhua

The Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) sports delegation to the 7th Military World Games was set up at a conference in Beijing on Thursday, said the Games' Executive Committee.

[China, Pakistan vow to enhance communication, maintain regional stability](#)

August 28, 2019, Xinhua

Pakistani President Arif Alvi and Prime Minister Imran Khan met with visiting Vice Chairman of China's Central Military Commission Xu Qiliang separately here on Tuesday.

[Senior Chinese official meets India's BJP delegation](#)

August 28, 2019, Xinhua

Huang Kunming, a member of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee and head of the Publicity Department of the CPC Central Committee, on Wednesday met with a delegation led by Arun Singh, national general secretary of India's Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).

Japan

[Japan seeks record ¥5.32 trillion defense budget with new focus on space and cyberspace](#)

August 30, 2019, The Japan Times

The Defense Ministry on Friday requested a record ¥5.32 trillion (\$50 billion) budget for fiscal 2020 as it stressed the need to beef up the nation's defense capabilities in domains such as outer space and cyberspace.

[China, Japan, S. Korea to step up cultural ties despite rows](#)

August 30, 2019, The Asahi Shimbun

The culture ministers of South Korea, Japan and China agreed on Friday to step up cultural exchanges and other areas of cooperation despite recent tensions over trade and their shared history.

[Japan eyes tighter ownership reporting to monitor China](#)

August 29, 2019, The Asahi Shimbun

Japan is considering lowering the 10-percent ownership threshold at which foreigners are required to report stakes in domestic companies, two officials said, as Tokyo looks to better monitor Chinese investment in areas related to security.

[Japan allows first exports of hydrogen fluoride to South Korea since curbs began](#)

August 30, 2019, The Japan Times

Japan has approved a shipment of hydrogen fluoride used in making computer chips to South Korea for the first time since imposing tighter export controls in July, a source familiar with the matter said.

[Trump's de facto blessing of North Korea's missile tests sends ominous message to Japan](#)

August 28, 2019, The Japan Times

U.S. President Donald Trump may not mind North Korea's repeated tests of short-range missiles, including some believed capable of striking Japan, but his not-so-begrudging acceptance of the North's actions is sending an unmistakable message to Washington's Asian allies: America really does come first.

[Japan's jobless rate hit 26-year low in July amid labor shortage](#)

August 30, 2019, The Japan Times

Japan's unemployment rate hit a 26-year low in July on the back of a serious labor shortage as the country's population rapidly grays, government data showed.

Korea

[Moon invites Kim Jong-un at summit in Busan](#)

August 30, 2019, The Korea Times

President Moon Jae-in is sticking to his engagement-driven North Korea policy, seeking to break the impasse in the denuclearization talks via another direct encounter with North Korean leader Kim Jong-un at the upcoming summit with leaders of Southeast Asian countries in Busan.

[North Korea changes constitution to solidify Kim's rule](#)

August 30, 2019, The Korea Times

North Korea's parliament has approved changes to the country's constitution to solidify leader Kim Jong-un's role as head of state, official state media said.

[Seoul urged to tighten vigilance against North Korean hackers](#)

August 27, 2019, The Korea Times

South Korea should raise its guard against cyberattacks from North Korea, as it has been increasingly vulnerable to Pyongyang's tech-driven cyberwarfare, experts said.

[Moon hopes for North Korean leader's participation in ASEAN summit](#)

August 30, 2019, The Korea Times

South Korean President Moon Jae-in said Friday he would "embrace" Japan if it shifts to dialogue to end diplomatic and trade rifts between the two sides, again extending an olive branch to Tokyo.

[North Korea's propaganda outlet mentions Seoul's GSOMIA termination for first time](#)

August 27, 2019, The Korea Times

A North Korean propaganda outlet mentioned South Korea's recent decision to end a military information-sharing deal with Japan for the first time Tuesday, citing a South Korean media report that strongly supports the move.

[Moon resumes overtures to Japan, hopes for NK leader's participation in ASEAN summit](#)

August 30, 2019, The Korea Herald

President Moon Jae-in said Friday he would "embrace" Japan if it shifts to dialogue to end diplomatic and trade rifts between the two sides, again extending an olive branch to Tokyo.

[S. Korean PM to meet ex-Japanese minister to discuss diplomatic tensions](#)

August 30, 2019, The Korea Herald

South Korean Prime Minister Lee Nak-yeon plans to meet with a former Japanese chief Cabinet secretary to discuss bilateral tensions sparked by Tokyo's export curbs against Seoul, officials said.

[Korea, Japan, China vow cultural cooperation despite diplomatic spat](#)

August 30, 2019, The Korea Herald

Despite diplomatic and trade tension between Korea and Japan, the two countries, along with China, laid the groundwork Friday for cultural cooperation over the next 10 years.

[U.S.-Korea Rift Deepens](#)

August 30, 2019, The Chosun Ilbo

U.S. security officials are skipping the annual Seoul Defense Dialogue on Sept. 4-6 amid growing conflict between the two allies after Seoul's decision to scrap a military intelligence-sharing pact with Japan.

Southeast Asia

[India can do a lot more to deepen ties with ASEAN: Singapore Minister](#)

August 29, 2019, Financial Express

The Indian-origin Shanmugam said Asean consumers are highly price-conscious and one of the things that India does well is it produces products for this price conscious market.

[Indonesia, ASEAN and Indo-Pacific \(Part 1\)](#)

August 29, 2019, The Jakarta Post

During the 34th ASEAN Summit in Bangkok in June, the regional group's leaders officially endorsed and adopted the "ASEAN Outlook on Indo-Pacific".

[Indonesia, ASEAN and the Indo-Pacific \(Part 2\)](#)

August 30, 2019, The Jakarta Post

Five years ago, on Oct. 20, 2014, in his inaugural speech, President Joko "Jokowi" Widodo declared, "We have to work hard to rebuild Indonesia as a maritime nation. We have far too long turned our back on the seas, the oceans, the straits, and the bays.

[Moon urges ASEAN to help break impasse with Japan](#)

August 30, 2019, NHK World

South Korean President Moon Jae-in is calling on the Association of Southeast Asian Nations to help steer Japan toward dialogue with his country.

[Southeast Asian Nations to Hold Naval Exercises with US](#)

August 27, 2019, VOA

The United States and a group of 10 Southeast Asian nations are preparing for their first military exercises.

[New US-ASEAN Naval Drills a 'Balancing Act' with Beijing](#)

August 28, 2019, VOA

The United States and all 10 member states of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) will for the first time conduct joint maritime drills near the disputed South China Sea.

[What's Behind the Rising US-Southeast Asia Coast Guard Cooperation?](#)

August 27, 2019, The Diplomat

A closer look at a significant trend and its potential implications for Indo-Pacific security.

[Thailand Aims to Be Southeast Asia's Power-Trading Middleman](#)

August 26, 2019, Bloomberg

Thailand is jump starting a decades-old plan to create a Southeast Asia electricity super-grid, and wants to be the power-trading hub at the center of it.

Central & West Asia

Central Asia

[India-Kazakhstan joint military exercise from August 31](#)

August 28, 2019, Times Now

A 14-day joint military exercise between India and Kazakhstan with emphasis on counter-terrorism operations in the mountainous terrain will begin on August 31. The exercise, named KAZIND 2019, will be held in Pithoragarh in Uttarakhand. Nearly 100 soldiers each from India and Kazakhstan will participate in the event.

[OSCE strengthens Kyrgyzstan's capacities to prevent, counter use of Internet for terrorist purposes](#)

August 26, 2019, The Times of Central Asia

A three-day national table-top exercise (TTX) on preventing and countering the use of the Internet for terrorist purposes, for 30 Kyrgyz representatives from diverse backgrounds, including representatives of government, law enforcement, civil society, media, and the private sector, began on 26 August in Issyk Kul.

[Cash-Flow Problem: People In Turkmenistan Detained Just For Standing At ATMs](#)

August 27, 2019, RFE/RL

Police in Turkmenistan's eastern region of Lebap are detaining people who are standing in long lines at ATMs, desperately to try to get money amid cash shortages. The police actions were reported after President Gurbanguly Berdymukhammedov publicly criticized people standing in lines at ATMs and reprimanded the Central Bank chief for what he called "weak control over ATM operations."

[Uzbekistan making progress in economy, World Bank report praises](#)

August 26, 2019, AKI Press

The summer 2019 edition of the Uzbekistan Economic Update of the World Bank (2018–first quarter of 2019) says the country is moving toward a new, more open economy. The country has eliminated the need for entry visas to promote tourism and business, and renewed its commitment to join the World Trade Organization (WTO).

[Can Uzbekistan's new leader reform the country?](#)

August 26, 2019, TRT World

Uzbek President Shevkat Mirziyoyev has made headlines for shifting the country's foreign policy and introducing several social and economic reforms, ending 27 years of closed rule by Islam Karimov. However, it remains to be seen whether Uzbekistan is heading towards genuine reform or the reforms are just an illusion.

[Tajikistan: Ceremony marks start of rehabilitation at Qairokkum hydropower plant](#)

August 24, 2019, The Times of Central Asia

A ceremony to mark the start of work was held on August 23 at Tajikistan's Qairokkum hydropower plant (QHPP). The US\$ 196 million financing package organized by the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) is helping to complete the climate-resilient rehabilitation of QHPP to help Tajikistan improve its electricity supply.

West Asia

[Saudi Arabia's Khalid bin Salman meets US Secretary of Defense in Washington](#)

August 29, 2019, Arab News

Saudi Arabia's Deputy Defense Minister Prince Khalid bin Salman met with US Secretary of Defense Mark Esper in Washington. The meeting follows discussions between Prince Khalid and US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo on Wednesday that included the situation in Yemen.

[Qatar's reserve grew 18.8% in July](#)

August 29, 2019, Middle East Monitor

Qatar's reserves grew 18.82 per cent year-on-year in July, setting a new record. According to data released by the Central Bank of Qatar, the value of reserve assets amounted to 196.169 billion riyals (\$53.92 billion) as of July. Reserve assets rose from 165.091 billion riyals (\$45.38 billion) in July 2018.

[Turkey's Erdogan eyes Russian fighter jets amid US standoff](#)

August 29, 2019, Al Jazeera

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan suggested his country may buy Russian Su-35 and Su-57 fighter jets instead of US-made F-35 fighters as the dispute

between the NATO allies shows no sign of abating. The US began removing Turkey from its F-35 programme after Ankara started receiving the S-400.

[Hunt for Iraqi IS leaders continues amid heightened secrecy](#)

August 27, 2019, Al Monitor

As the fourth phase of Operation Will of Victory gets underway in Iraq to hunt down Islamic State (IS) remnants, attempts to understand who the current top IS military leaders are is proving frustrating. Several Iraqi security analysts and Deir ez-Zor sources have said that Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi and other key Iraqi leaders are believed to be in Syria, but beyond that, scant information is available.

[Tehran reactivates oil pipeline project reaching Syria](#)

August 28, 2019, Middle East Monitor

Tehran revived a project aiming to export oil from Iran through a pipeline running through Iraqi territory to the Syrian port of Baniyas on the Mediterranean. Through this move, Iran is seeking to circumvent the US sanctions and avoid the Strait of Hormuz, fearing its closure in case of a military confrontation.

[Iran sells oil from tanker released by Gibraltar](#)

August 26, 2019, Al Jazeera

Iran has sold 2.1 million barrels of crude oil on board an Iranian tanker that was detained by British Royal Marines in Gibraltar last month, and the vessel's new owner will decide on its next destination. Government representatives declined to name the oil's buyer or terms for the sale.

[Syrian rebels push back against army advances in Idlib](#)

August 27, 2019, Reuters

Syrian rebels launched a wide-scale attack against a five-month Russia-backed Syrian army campaign aiming to take back the opposition's last major bastion. The push-back comes as the Turkish and Russian Presidents are to meet in Moscow, where Turkey is expected to ask Russia to rein in Syrian army advances in the northwest.

[Israel Strikes Palestinian Base on Lebanon-Syria Border, State News Claims](#)

August 27, 2019, Haaretz

Lebanon's state-run National News Agency says Israeli warplanes have attacked a Palestinian base in the country's east, near the border with Syria. Three strikes took

place minutes apart, and struck a base for a Syrian-backed group known as the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine – General Command.

[Bahrain confers The King Hamad Order of the Renaissance to PM Narendra Modi](#)

August 25, 2019, India Today

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has been conferred the King Hamad Order of the Renaissance by Bahrain's King Hamad bin Isa bin Salman Al Khalifa in recognition of his efforts to strengthen bilateral relations with the key Gulf nation. The first Indian prime minister to visit Bahrain, Modi received the honour on Saturday night when he called on the King of Bahrain.

[UAE carries out air strikes against Yemen government forces to support separatists](#)

August 29, 2019, Reuters

The United Arab Emirates carried out air strikes against government forces in South Yemen in support of southern separatists who have deployed reinforcements to take back control of the port of Aden from their supposed allies in the Saudi-led coalition.

[8,000 Soldiers From 29 COUNTRIES in Jordan for 'Eager Lion' Exercise](#)

August 27, 2019, The Jerusalem Post

The Kingdom of Jordan's armed forces is hosting "Eager Lion" training drills, in which 8,000 personnel from 29 countries are participating. Jordanian Brig.-Gen. Mohammad Thalji addressed a press conference to discuss the importance of improving interoperability among partner nations. The drill will continue until September 5.

[Iran jails two, including UK dual national, for spying for Israel](#)

August 27, 2019, Al Jazeera

Iran has jailed two people, including a British dual national, for more than a decade for spying for Israel and receiving illegal payments. The developments came amid heightened tensions between Iran and the UK, a major ally of the United States, with the pair recently embroiled in a bitter spat over the seizure of two oil tankers.

United States

[Trump launches Space Command](#)

August 29, 2019, CNN

President Donald Trump announced Thursday the official establishment of the US military's Space Command. Space Command will become the 11th combatant command, joining the ranks of US Central Command, which oversees operations in the Middle East, and US Special Operations Command, which oversees Special Operations Forces.

[Trump defends trade war with China amid GOP fears of economic impact](#)

August 29, 2019, CNN

President Donald Trump defended his trade strategy on Thursday morning, pushing back on Republican senators who have raised fears about the economic effects of the administration's escalating trade war with China.

[President Trump demands media outlets 'all apologise' as G7 fallout prompts Congress to step up impeachment inquiry](#)

August 29, 2019, Independent

Donald Trump has lashed out at the press after MSNBC host Lawrence O'Donnell was forced to apologise for claiming Deutsche Bank's financial records on the Trump family included loan documents co-signed by Russian billionaires close to Vladimir Putin.

[Trump seriously considering blocking \\$250M in military aid to Ukraine](#)

August 29, 2019, CNN

President Donald Trump is seriously considering a plan to block \$250 million in military assistance to Ukraine, a move that would further ingratiate him with Russian President Vladimir Putin and has directed senior officials to review the aid package.

[China Rejects U.S. Warship's Visit Amid Trade War Tensions](#)

August 28, 2019, The New York Times

China has denied an American warship permission to visit a Chinese port, the United States Navy said on Wednesday, an apparent reflection of flaring trade and military tensions between the two countries.

[Scrapped intelligence pact draws United States into deepening South Korea-Japan dispute](#)

August 29, 2019, Reuters

South Korea's decision to scrap a military intelligence-sharing pact with Japan has led to an increasingly public split with the United States, just when the allies face rising tensions with North Korea and new competition from China and Russia.

[Donald Trump cancels Poland trip as Hurricane Dorian barrels toward Florida](#)

August 29, 2019, USA Today

President Donald Trump said Thursday he is cancelling his planned trip to Poland this weekend to "ensure that all resources of the federal government are focused on" confronting Hurricane Dorian as it heads toward the East Coast.

[Signs of new U.S.-China trade discussions emerge as increased tariffs loom](#)

August 29, 2019, Reuters

The United States and China gave signs on Thursday that they will resume trade talks as the two economic superpowers discussed the next round of in-person negotiations in September ahead of a looming deadline for additional U.S. tariffs.

[US peace pact with Taliban may not solve Afghan issue](#)

August 29, 2019, The Straits Times

America's longest war may officially end soon, or will it? An imminent peace deal between the United States and the Taliban may turn out to be the easy part but leave Afghanistan with an uncertain and highly volatile future. More complicated will be intra-Afghanistan negotiations between the Taleban and the Afghan government on power sharing, which are likely to take place in Oslo within weeks of a deal with the Taliban.

[Iran's Zarif to Trump: Drop 'economic terrorism' before talks](#)

August 29, 2019, Al Jazeera

Iran will not be meeting with the administration of US President Donald Trump unless Washington stops its "economic terrorism" against the Iranian people, Iran's foreign minister says referring to the US leader as the "mentality that wants to buy Greenland".

[Destroyer USS Wayne E. Meyer Sails Past Fiery Cross, Mischief Reefs in Latest FONOPS](#)

August 28, 2019, USNI News

Arleigh Burke-class destroyer USS Wayne E. Meyer (DDG-108) sailed within 12 nautical miles of both Fiery Cross Reef and Mischief Reef today to challenge excessive maritime claims in the South China Sea, U.S. 7th Fleet spokeswoman Cmdr. Reann Mommsen told USNI News.

Europe & Russia

Europe

[Boris Johnson asks Queen to suspend UK Parliament ahead of Brexit](#)

August 29, 2019, CNN

The Queen has approved Prime Minister Boris Johnson's request to suspend Parliament just days after it returns from summer recess next week, and only weeks before the Brexit deadline.

[Brexit: UK negotiators 'to step up tempo' on new deal talks](#)

August 30, 2019, BBC

The UK's Brexit negotiators will now meet their EU counterparts twice a week next month, in the run up to a crucial summit on October 17-18. It follows a backlash from MPs and opponents of a no-deal Brexit against the prime minister's decision to suspend Parliament next month.

['Very difficult' for UK and US to strike post-Brexit deal, says ex-UK trade minister](#)

August 29, 2019, Politico

Francis Maude, who served as both a Cabinet Office minister and then trade minister under David Cameron, said the U.S. has "tended to be a difficult counterpart" in trade negotiations and said Prime Minister Boris Johnson should not expect a "massive dividend" from the controversial president.

[UK shares drop as PM moves to suspend Parliament](#)

August 28, 2019, BBC

Sterling gyrates against the dollar and euro after a move that may lead to a no-deal Brexit.

[UK economy weakest since 2012 as Brexit fears mount: survey](#)

August 29, 2019, Reuters

A gauge of Britain's economic health slumped to an almost seven-year low in August, dragged down by deepening pessimism among services companies, retailers and consumers who expect inflation to rise sharply as the Brexit crisis escalates.

[EU defense chiefs eye ad-hoc, naval security forces – but not for the Hormuz Strait](#)

August 29, 2019, Defense News

European defense ministers have thrown their support behind a concept for deploying European Union member nations' naval forces to protect key shipping lanes, though the idea is not meant to secure traffic in the Strait of Hormuz.

[Ursula von der Leyen to demolish Juncker and Selmyar's poorly 'thought out' system](#)

August 29, 2019, Express

URSULA VON DER LEYEN is preparing to dismantle Jean-Claude Juncker's all-powerful European Commission leadership within days of taking over Brussels' top job, according to reports.

[EU backs US-Iran talks but says nuclear deal must stay](#)

August 29, 2019, AFP News

The EU would support talks between the United States and Iran, the bloc's diplomatic chief said Thursday, but only if the current nuclear deal with Tehran is preserved.

[India has an ally in France](#)

August 27, 2019, India Today

PM Narendra Modi's visit to France for a bilateral summit and French President Macron's invitation to him to participate in the G7 summit at Biarritz marks a further consolidation of the strong Indo-French strategic ties.

[Germany on brink of recession as business confidence nosedives](#)

August 26, 2019, The Guardian

Germany's economy is on the brink of recession after business confidence plunged to its lowest level in seven years.

[India explores partnership with Visegrad Group in Central Europe with Jaishankar visit](#)

August 27, 2019, The Economic Times

India may open a new chapter in its partnership with Central Europe with Foreign Minister S Jaishankar focussing on Visegrad group during his three day (Aug 25-27) visit to Hungary.

Russia

[Ukrainian national convicted of espionage in Russia moved to Moscow's Lefortovo prison](#)

August 29, 2019, Tass

Ukrainian journalist Roman Sushchenko, who has been sentenced to a prison term in Russia on espionage charges, is currently kept at Moscow's Lefortovo detention center.

[Russian missile cruiser wraps up call at Algerian port in long-distance deployment](#)

August 29, 2019, Tass

The Russian Northern Fleet's missile cruiser Marshal Ustinov continued its deployment in the Mediterranean Sea after completing its visit to Algeria, the Fleet's press office reported.

[Russian security chief discusses cooperation within Interpol, cybersecurity in Singapore](#)

August 29, 2019, Tass

Russian Security Council's secretary said that the exchange of information through Interpol's channels "will enhance the effectiveness of international cooperation".

[Russia Stages Large-Scale Military Exercises With Mongolia](#)

August 29, 2019, The Moscow Times

The Russian military has unveiled footage of large-scale exercises in Mongolia with a slick production value of shooting helicopters and firing rocket launchers.

[Russia Rebuffs International Concern Over Environment on Northern Sea Route](#)

August 30, 2019, The Moscow Times

The development of the Northern Sea Route appeared on the agenda in the Foreign Ministry's latest weekly press conference after several foreign leaders reportedly commented on the environment in the region.

[Russia's Mystery Nuclear Explosion Occurred During Missile Recovery at Sea – Reports](#)

August 29, 2019, The Moscow Times

The mysterious explosion in northern Russia that caused a spike in radiation levels happened during a mission to salvage a nuclear-powered cruise missile from the bottom of the sea, media have cited a U.S. intelligence assessment as saying.

[Russia-Turkey Relations Face Pressure Over Syria, but Pattern Is Unlikely to Change](#)\August 28, 2019, The Moscow Times

Advancements of the Syrian army in Idlib approximate the end of the civil war, but threaten to sow discord between Moscow and Ankara.

[20 Years of Vladimir Putin: How Russian Foreign Policy Has Changed](#)

August 27, 2019, The Moscow Times

Dmitry Trenin on Russia's successes abroad and why resisting NATO expansion to the east was a fundamental mistake.

Africa & Latin America

Latin America

[Argentina wants more time to pay its debts, worrying investors](#)

August 29, 2019, Al Jazeera

Argentine asset prices tumbled Thursday as investors scrambled to assess the kind of hit they could take after the government of President Mauricio Macri said it will ask creditors for more time to pay off the country's roughly \$100bn in debts.

[Argentina restructures foreign, IMF debt as peso tanks](#)

August 29, 2019, Financial Review

Argentina will negotiate with holders of its sovereign bonds and the International Monetary Fund to extend the maturities of its debt obligations as a way of ensuring the country's ability to pay, Treasury Minister Hernan Lacunza said on Thursday (AEST).

[Amazon fires: Jair Bolsonaro issues burning ban in Brazil](#)

August 28, 2019, Deutsche Welle

Brazil's president signed the decree amidst escalating global pressure to address raging fires in the Amazon. The ban comes during the country's peak burning season, leaving critics skeptical of its efficacy.

[Brazil Bans Burning for 60 Days as Catastrophic Amazon Fires Continue to Rage](#)

August 29, 2019, News 18

The decree issued by President Jair Bolsonaro comes after escalating international pressure over the worst fires in the Amazon in years that have ignited a diplomatic spat between Brazil and Europe.

[Brazil dodges recession](#)

August 30, 2019, Al Jazeera

Brazil's economy rebounded strongly in the second quarter after having shrunk in the first, official figures showed on Thursday, indicating that Latin America's largest economy comfortably avoided falling back into recession.

[No Refuge for the Amazon in Evo Morales' Bolivia](#)

August 29, 2019, Common Dreams

Evo Morales has carefully cultivated his image on the world stage as an indigenous defender of the "Pachamama (Mother Earth)," but his domestic policies belie another reality.

[How the fires in Bolivia became political](#)

August 29, 2019, Latin America Reports

Bolivia's presidential candidates declared a pause on presidential campaigning due to the crisis, but the events are becoming increasingly politicized.

[Mexico's new drug war may be worse than old one](#)

August 30, 2019, AP News

Mexico's drug war appears to be back — and it may be worse this time around than in the bloody years of the government's 2006-2012 offensive against drug cartels.

[US, Mexico widen asylum crackdown to push back all migrants](#)

August 29, 2019, AP News

A Trump administration program forcing asylum seekers to wait in Mexico has evolved into a sweeping rejection of all forms of migrants, with both countries quietly working to keep people out of the U.S. despite threats to the migrants' safety.

[Mexico Reaches Deal With Pipeline Operators on Gas Delivery Contracts](#)

August 27, 2019, The Wall Street Journal

Mexico's president announced a deal to end a standoff with several natural-gas pipeline operators over contract prices, allowing them to avoid international arbitration and begin increasing gas deliveries across the country.

Africa

[World's 2nd-largest Ebola outbreak surpasses 3,000 cases](#)

August 30, 2019, ABC News

The second-largest, second-deadliest Ebola outbreak in history has exceeded 3,000 cases and 2,000 deaths as the yearlong epidemic continues despite access to an experimental vaccine and developmental treatments.

[DR Congo names new government after 7-month delay](#)

August 26, 2019, Deutsche Welle

Most members of the new executive have been drawn from former president Joseph Kabila's Common Front for Congo. DRC will now have a female vice prime minister, minister for foreign affairs and minister for planning.

[Months after pledge to open internet, Ethiopia disrupts connectivity amidst communal violence, tension](#)

August 29, 2019, Global Voices

On June 18 of last year, in his second parliamentary address, Ethiopia's reformist Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed announced his government would no longer block online publications.

[Ethiopia's election board disclosed a date for Sidama referendum](#)

August 29, 2019, Borkena.com

In a statement shared on social media, National Election Board of Ethiopia disclosed on Thursday that voting day for Sidama zone referendum is on November 19, 2019.

[Barbados-Kenya sign new agreement](#)

August 29, 2019, The Pie News

The governments of Kenya and Barbados have signed a South-South cooperation agreement that will see the countries establish higher education ties among other benefits.

[China Invests \\$16 Billion in Nigeria's Oil Sector](#)

August 28, 2019, VOA

Chinese investment in Nigeria's oil and gas industry has reached \$16 billion, according to Nigeria's state-run oil company. While Nigeria's oil industry welcomes China's interest, analysts worry about a lack of transparency in the sector and slow development of the country's renewable energy market.

[Impounded aircraft: Tanzania says it's been betrayed by SA government](#)

August 29, 2019, The South African

Tanzanian government officials are working through diplomatic channels to resolve a standoff with South African authorities over an Air Tanzania aircraft impounded at OR International Airport in Johannesburg.

[Liberia, Japan Commit to Strengthening Cooperation, International Relations](#)

August 30, 2019, Africa Online

The governments of Liberia and Japan have agreed to strengthen cooperation and international relations as well as committing to infrastructural developments.

[SA key to peace in South Sudan](#)

August 30, 2019, Mail and Guardian

South Africa's ascendance to the United Nations Security Council this year offers an unprecedented opportunity to reshape peace efforts in some of Africa's deadliest conflicts.

[Sudan urges UN to withdraw all peacekeepers by June 2020](#)

August 27, 2019, Al Jazeera

Sudan has called on the United Nations Security Council to lift its suspension of troop withdrawals and ensure all peacekeepers leave Darfur by June 2020, but the African Union said overall security in the vast western region "remains volatile."



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