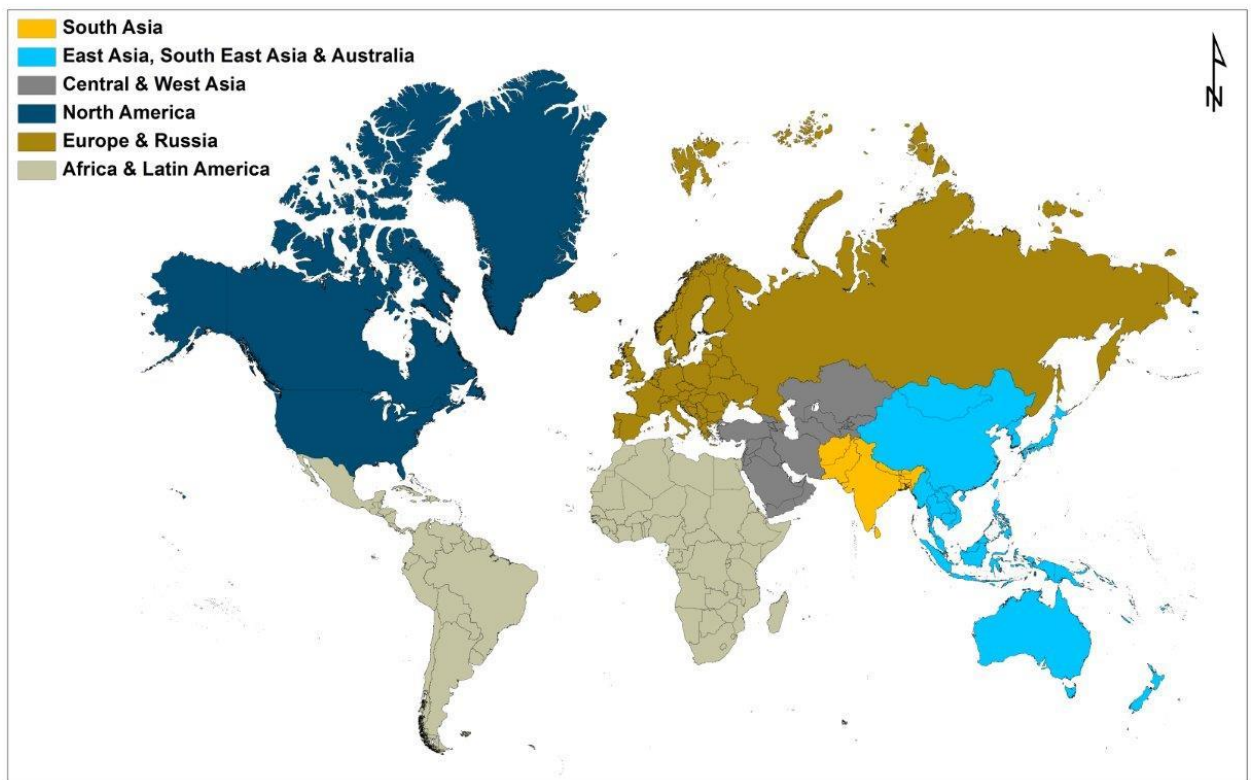




Delhi Policy Group

DPG WEEKLY WORLD WATCH



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DPG WEEKLY WORLD WATCH

Volume 3, Issue 6

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

[As US eyes Afghan exit, India talks to key players](#)

Feb 4, 2019, The Indian Express

From Pashtuns to Hazaras and Tajiks, New Delhi has quietly opened channels of communication with top Afghan leaders cutting across communities and factions as uncertainty looms over Afghanistan amid signs of the US withdrawing from the strife-torn country.

[The regional great game](#)

Feb 1, 2019, The Indian Express

Two neighbouring countries, Iran and Pakistan, which were trying to remain close, are today moving in opposite directions. This movement is partly pushed by circumstances, evident from the way India's presence in Chabahar has been recently upgraded and the way Saudi Arabia is increasing its presence in Pakistan.

[Israel PM Benjamin Netanyahu to visit India for talks with PM Narendra Modi](#)

Jan 31, 2019, India Today

Israel Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu will visit India in February for a second meeting with Prime Minister Narendra Modi. This is Netanyahu's second visit in a little over a year after his last visit to New Delhi.

[Over Rs 16000 crore allocated to MEA; hike in aid allocation for Maldives, African nations](#)

Feb 1, 2019, The Economic Times

Over Rs 16,000 crore has been earmarked for the Ministry of External Affairs in the 2019-20 budget, an increase of more than Rs 1,000 crore from the previous fiscal, with a massive jump in aid allocation for Maldives and African nations.

[Looking forward for early implementation of India-US secure lines: Pentagon](#)

Feb 2, 2019, DNA

Early implementation of a secure communication line between Defence and Foreign ministers of India and the US was the main focus of recent phone conversation between the Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman and Acting United States Secretary of Defense Patrick M Shanahan, a top Pentagon official said.

[US to sell two missile defence systems worth \\$190 million for Air India One](#)

Feb 7, 2019, Business Standard

The defence systems, which would bring security of Air India One at par with that of Air Force One, would be installed in two Boeing 777 Head-of- State aircraft, the Pentagon said.

[India Takes Possession Of The First Ch-47f Chinook Helicopter](#)

Feb 3, 2019, Indian Defence News

India has officially been handed over first of the Chinook helicopters at Boeing's facility in the presence of Indian ambassador to US Harsh Shringla. The 'India-Chinook Transfer Ceremony' took place at Boeing's facility in Philadelphia.

[Delhi Eases Norms For Foreign Investors in Lucrative Indian Defence Sector](#)

Feb 2, 2019, The Eurasian Times

The Indian government has relaxed the administrative requirements for foreign investors in the defence sector. The Foreign Investors will be exempted from Reserve Bank of India approval in certain cases.

Pakistan

[Pakistan, India agree on team visits to reach Kartarpur deal](#)

Feb 8, 2019, DAWN

After a bit of wrangling over the venue of talks on Kartarpur Corridor Accord, Pakistan and India on Thursday finally agreed in principle on reciprocal visits of officials for negotiating and finalising the agreement with Pakistani delegation set to travel to Delhi on March 13 for initiating the process.

['Gross interference': FM Qureshi rejects Afghan president's statement on protests in KP, Balochistan](#)

Feb 7, 2019, DAWN

Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi on Wednesday rejected a tweet shared by Afghan President Ashraf Ghani earlier in the day, regarding alleged violence against protesters in Pakistan's Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) and Balochistan provinces, and called the "irresponsible" statement a "gross interference".

[PTM leader thanks Afghan president for what Pakistan condemns as 'gross interference'](#)

Feb 7, 2019, The Express Tribune

An elected member of Pakistan's parliament, who belongs to the Pashtun Tahafuz Movement (PTM), has thanked Afghan President Ashraf Ghani for a statement which has been unanimously condemned by Pakistani politicians and media as "gross interference" in Pakistan's internal matters.

[Govt to pay Rs3.6 trillion on defence, debt servicing](#)

Feb 7, 2019, The Express Tribune

The federal government would pay a whopping Rs3.6 trillion on account of defence and debt servicing that is equal to 68.2% of the current fiscal year's revised budget, the centre on Wednesday sensitised the provinces about the grave fiscal situation that has thrown the country into a debt trap.

[CPEC China's vote of confidence in Pakistan, says Mushahid](#)

Feb 8, 2019, The International News

Chairman of Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs Mushahid Hussain Sayed has said China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is China's vote of confidence in Pakistan and its promising future.

[Pakistan signs \\$10 bn gas pipeline agreement with Russia](#)

Feb 7, 2019, The International News

As a major sign of increasing economic cooperation, Pakistan and Russia on Wednesday signed an inter corporate agreement for the laying of more than 1,500 km offshore gas pipeline costing \$10 billion that would be transporting natural gas from the Russian gas company Gazprom's sources in the Middle East to Pakistan with possibility of extending it further to South Asian countries.

['Saudi investment highlights trust in Pakistan's economy'](#)

Feb 8, 2019, The Express Tribune

Saudi investment in different sectors depicts the trust of Saudi Arabia's leadership and investors in Pakistan's economy, said Senate Chairman Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani.

Afghanistan

[Afghan Government Must be 'Decision-Maker' in Any Peace Deal](#)

Feb 7, 2019, Daily Outlook Afghanistan

Afghanistan President Ashraf Ghani said on Tuesday no peace deal between the Taliban and the United States could be finalised without involving his government as "the decision-maker".

[Kabul Ready to Enter HIA-Like Deal with Taliban: Ghani](#)

Feb 7, 2019, Daily Outlook Afghanistan

President Ashraf Ghani has insisted on leadership and ownership of the peace process by Afghans who he said wanted 'a dignified and stable peace' in their country.

[Kabul vows respect for UNSC sanctions regime](#)

Feb 7, 2019, Pajhwok Afghan News

The Afghan government has promised respect for the established procedures in the 1988 committee's guidelines concerning travel ban exemptions for individuals on the consolidated list.

[Moscow meet wants foreign troops out of Afghanistan](#)

Feb 7, 2019, Pajhwok Afghan News

The two-day Moscow meeting called for the complete withdrawal of US-led foreign forces to ensure lasting peace in Afghanistan.

[Clerics stress intra-Afghan dialogue](#)

Feb 6, 2019, Afghanistan Times

Religious scholars in the northern Baghlan province urge that only intra-Afghan dialogues could help Afghans end the war.

[FM Rabbani meets Chinese ambassador to Kabul](#)

Feb 6, 2019, The Kabul Times

Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan Salahuddin Rabbani met with Ambassador of the People's Republic of China in Afghanistan Mr. Liu Jinsong here the other day, a MoFA statement said.

[Afghanistan Makes Strides in Regional Connectivity](#)

Feb 7, 2019, Daily Outlook Afghanistan

Seeking to regain its historical position as the regional transit hub, Kabul government has put its weight behind regional connectivity and increased the

trade volume between Afghanistan and regional countries in recent years through launching air corridors with India, Turkey, Kazakhstan, Saudi Arabia, Indonesia, and China.

Bangladesh

[Modi vows to strengthen existing bilateral ties with Bangladesh](#)

Feb 7, 2019, The Daily Star

India's ruling BJP and main opposition Congress party have assured Bangladesh of India's cooperation for early repatriation of the Rohingya refugees who fled Myanmar's brutal military crackdown in August 2017 and are now living in Cox's Bazar refugee camps.

[Vietnam offers support to WFP for Rohingyas in Cox's Bazar](#)

Feb 7, 2019, Dhaka Tribune

The Socialist Republic of Vietnam has offered \$50,000 to the United Nations World Food Program (WFP), in Bangladesh, to support the Rohingya refugees in Cox's Bazar.

[PM to Armed Forces: Play your role in ensuring constitutional stability](#)

Feb 7, 2019, Dhaka Tribune

The Bangladesh Armed Forces is making significant contributions to peacekeeping in various countries as part of UN missions, says Hasina.

[Freedom House Report: Bangladesh saw decline in civil liberties](#)

Feb 8, 2019, The Daily Star

Bangladesh continues to suffer a decline in political rights and civil liberties, according to a report of Freedom House.

[Why are thousands of local govt employees without pay?](#)

Feb 8, 2019, The Daily Star

It is unthinkable that 35,000 employees of 260 municipalities nationwide have been working without pay for years! Of them, 6,000 staff members got no pay for last five years, 12,000 for two years and for a further 5,000, no salaries for one year.

[Op-ed: In our defense](#)

Feb 3, 2019, Dhaka Tribune

It was widely reported in the Bangladeshi media that the American ambassador discussed defense procurement with the foreign minister during a meeting on

January 31. The ambassador was quoted: "I discussed good governance, democracy, military sales, and Indo-Pacific Strategy."

Nepal

[Fault lines in ruling party exposed as Oli, Dahal spar over Venezuela](#)

Feb 8, 2019, The Kathmandu Post

Venezuela rarely figured in Nepal's foreign policy, let alone the domestic political discourse. But all of that changed last month after a co-chairman of the ruling party issued a strong statement on the country.

[Nepal wants zero-tariff facility on Indian agro goods dropped](#)

Feb 8, 2019, The Himalayan Times

Indian authorities have sought details from Nepal on their call to levy customs tariff on Indian agricultural products and some other primary products.

[Indian police rescue 180 Nepalis in major anti-trafficking operation](#)

Feb 8, 2019, The Himalayan Times

Indian police have recently rescued more than 180 Nepali men and women in a major operation near the border with Myanmar after activists raised suspicions they were being trafficked into forced labour.

[Government's last-ditch effort to bring back Italian contractor for Melamchi project fails](#)

Feb 8, 2019, The Kathmandu Post

After nearly two months of drama, a series of failed negotiations and the eleventh hour trip to Singapore aimed at bringing the Melamchi project back on track, the government has officially terminated the contract with its Italian builder.

[Nepal now has to balance not just India and China, but also the West](#)

Feb 1, 2019, Nepali Times

Article 5 of the 1950 Indo-Nepal Treaty implicitly forbids arms imports directly from third countries. Opposition to this provision has become the bedrock of Nepali nationalism over the years, and the demonstrated ability to flout it has catapulted some to become national heroes.

Bhutan

[Govt. did not breach the Constitution: PM](#)

Feb 2, 2019, Kuensel Online

Prime Minister Dr Lotay Tshering said that the government's decision to provide free education for all up to class XII did not breach the Constitution.

[Opposition questions govt over self-reliance and pledge funding](#)

Feb 2, 2019, The Bhutanese

In response to a question, the Opposition party questioned the government's push for self sufficiency on one hand and at the same time having many expensive pledges which have not yet been even budgeted in the 12th plan.

[The process and implications of opening more regional entry points](#)

Feb 2, 2019, The Bhutanese

Although National assembly during the first session of the third parliament endorsed entry and exit of regional tourists through the border towns of Samdrup Jongkhar, Gelephu, Samtse, Nanglam and Pangbang, the government and relevant stakeholders said it can be implemented only if it is feasible.

Sri Lanka

[UNF postpones moves to form National Government](#)

Feb 7, 2019, Colombo Gazette

The United National Front (UNF) has decided to postpone moves to form a National Government.

[Rupee ends firmer on exporter dollar sales](#)

Feb 7, 2019, Daily Mirror

Sri Lanka's rupee rose 0.3 percent yesterday due to exporter dollar sales, while a trade union action at customs dampened importer demand for the greenback.

[62nd anniversary of China-Sri Lanka diplomatic relations](#)

Feb 6, 2019, News First.lk

At this important historical juncture, China and Sri Lanka, the good neighbors, good partners and good friends featuring sincere mutual assistance and everlasting friendship, are going to celebrate the 62nd anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic ties between China and Sri Lanka.

[China-Sri Lanka cooperation under Belt and Road brings new opportunities for regional development: Chinese envoy](#)

Feb 6, 2019, Xinhua

The cooperation between China and Sri Lanka under the framework of the Belt and Road Initiative has not only brought tangible benefits to the two countries and two peoples, but also generated new opportunities for regional development, China's Ambassador to Sri Lanka Cheng Xueyuan said.

[Sri Lanka's quest for a rules-based Indian Ocean](#)

Feb 7, 2019, Daily FT

The evolution of Sri Lanka's foreign policy since the election of a unity government on 8 January 2015 merits interest. Changes include the country's engagement with a wider range of international partners, as well as a commitment to address the country's post-conflict concerns.

[Demise of Sri Lanka's Independence](#)

Feb 8, 2019, Lankaweb

The 71st anniversary of Sri Lanka's independence from British rule was celebrated on February 4 in a gallant ceremony" at the Galle Face Green in Colombo. Geopolitical rivalry, foreign intervention and constitutional reform for political devolution, however, are posing serious threats to the island's sovereignty and environmental and human well-being. Even the country's nominal flag independence" is severely threatened.

Maldives

[India quadruples contribution to Maldives](#)

Feb 3, 2019, Avas.mv

Neighboring India has increased its contribution to Maldives by four times in the interim budget submitted for the period 2019-2020. During the last president, Yameen Abdul Gayyoom's tenure, the free aid received from India had significantly dwindled.

[Maldives arrests 80 Bangladeshis in crackdown on undocumented migrant workers](#)

Feb 8, 2019, bdnews24.com

In a Twitter post, Maldives Immigration said the operation to detect the undocumented expatriates in Male on Tuesday was the first one of the year. The

immigration status of the expatriates was checked on site, and 80 were brought for "further screening", it added.

[Revitalising the Maldives-Sri Lanka relationship](#)

Feb 5, 2019, Daily FT

Early this year, the newly-elected President of the Maldives, during an unofficial visit to Sri Lanka, reaffirmed the value of the Maldives-Sri Lanka relationship based on the number of Maldivians living in Sri Lanka, the long diplomatic history and the economic contribution of Sri Lankan businesses in the Maldives.

[Maldivians being trained to pilot military helicopters](#)

Feb 6, 2019, Rajje.mv

Maldives National Defence Force (MNDF) stated that Maldivians are being trained to pilot the two military helicopters.

[Maldives ex-president to be charged with money laundering](#)

Feb 8, 2019, Borneo Bulletin

Police in the Maldives have asked the country's prosecutor general to charge a former president with money laundering and his former Cabinet minister with aiding him.

East & South East Asia

China

[Chinese ambassador calls for cooperation as China-US diplomatic ties hit 40-year mark](#)

Feb 2, 2019, Global Times

Chinese Ambassador to the United States Cui Tiankai on Wednesday called for more cooperation between China and the United States as their diplomatic ties reached its 40th anniversary.

["Decoupling" of China, US disastrous for world economy: Chinese ambassador](#)

Feb 7, 2019, Global Times

Chinese Ambassador to the United States Cui Tiankai warned Wednesday that the so-called "decoupling" of China and the United States would be disastrous for both economies and the world economy at large.

[China-Sri Lanka cooperation under Belt and Road brings new opportunities for regional development: Chinese envoy](#)

Feb 6, 2019, Global Times

The cooperation between China and Sri Lanka under the framework of the Belt and Road Initiative has not only brought tangible benefits to the two countries and two peoples, but also generated new opportunities for regional development, China's Ambassador to Sri Lanka Cheng Xueyuan said here Wednesday.

[China-Pakistan relations thrive on cultural frontiers with rising trend of mutual acceptability](#)

Feb 5, 2019, Xinhua

With the colorful advertisement of "Happy Chinese New Year" hanging and waving along the Jinnah Avenue, the main street in Pakistan's capital city Islamabad, Pakistanis are well aware that the traditional Chinese Spring Festival is approaching.

[Chinese state councilor meets senior Japanese diplomat](#)

Feb 5, 2019, Xinhua

Chinese State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi met with Japanese Senior Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs Takeo Mori Saturday in Beijing.

[China, Japan hold diplomatic consultation, security dialogue](#)

Feb 3, 2019, Xinhua

China and Japan held a regular diplomatic consultation and a security dialogue Friday in Beijing. During the activities attended by Chinese Vice Foreign Minister Kong Xuanyou and visiting Japanese Senior Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs Takeo Mori, the two sides agreed that 2019 is a vital year for China-Japan relations to move toward a higher level.

Japan

[Japan protests Chinese development work in East China Sea gas field](#)

Feb 7, 2019, The Japan Times

Japan said Thursday it has lodged a fresh protest with China over its continued deployment of a drilling ship at a gas field in a contested area of the East China Sea.

[Japanese government-backed rally over islands held by Russia adopts muted tone amid talks](#)

Feb 7, 2019, The Japan Times

A government-backed rally held in support of efforts to win back Russian-held islands off Hokkaido issued a restrained statement on Thursday, with organizers cognizant of the possible negative impact it may have on ongoing talks with Moscow.

[Abe seeking to work with Trump ahead of second U.S.-North Korea summit](#)

Feb 6, 2019, The Japan Times

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe said Wednesday that Tokyo will work closely with Washington to tackle challenges related to North Korea in the run-up to the second summit between U.S. President Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un later this month.

[PM Abe vows to resolve territorial dispute with Russia](#)

Feb 6, 2019, The Asahi Shimbun

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe vowed Thursday to take a "step-by-step" approach in resolving a territorial dispute with Russia left over from World War II.

[Japan cancels port call by Izumo in South Korea amid row](#)

Feb 6, 2019, The Asahi Shimbun

Japan announced Tuesday it has canceled a port call in South Korea by its main destroyer during a multilateral naval exercise as relations between the two Asian neighbors fall to their lowest level in recent years.

[Japan, Germany share responsibility to work towards global peace--PM Abe](#)

Feb 5, 2019, The Asahi Shimbun

Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe said on Monday that he and German Chancellor Angela Merkel share a responsibility to work towards global peace and prosperity, with both hoping for a prompt, democratic solution to Venezuela's leadership crisis.

[Tokyo to hold informal talks with Seoul over Sea of Japan name](#)

Feb 6, 2019, The Yomiuri Shimbun

The government will hold informal talks with South Korea over the name of the Sea of Japan as early as this spring, it has been learned.

[Sharing a mutual wariness of China, Abe and Merkel pledge to cooperate on security and economy](#)

Feb 5, 2019, The Yomiuri Shimbun

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and German Chancellor Angela Merkel agreed Monday that both countries would promote bilateral cooperation on both the security and economic fronts.

[Japan 'understands' U.S. pullout from INF treaty](#)

Feb 5, 2019, The Yomiuri Shimbun

The Japanese government on Monday expressed its understanding of the United States' decision to withdraw from the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty with Russia.

[Japan, China make efforts to build trust](#)

Feb 9, 2019, The Yomiuri Shimbun

Senior foreign affairs and defense officials from Japan and China agreed on Friday to promote confidence-building efforts between the two countries in the security field.

Korea

[US looks forward to 'very good' summit with N. Korea](#)

Feb 8, 2019, The Korea Herald

The United States looks forward to having a "very good" second summit with North Korea at the end of this month, the State Department said while sparing details.

[Pompeo sees 'every opportunity' for North Korea denuclearization](#)

Feb 7, 2019, The Korea Times

U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said Wednesday that there is "every opportunity" that North Korea will dismantle its nuclear weapons program as promised.

[South Korea, US to sign provisional defense cost-sharing pact](#)

Feb 8, 2019, The Korea Herald

South Korea will ink a provisional agreement with the US for the cost of maintaining US troops here Sunday, wrapping up nearly yearlong negotiations, according to a source.

[S. Korea, US to announce military exercise plan after Trump-Kim summit](#)

Feb 8, 2019, The Korea Herald

South Korea and the United States have postponed the announcement of plans for their combined springtime military exercises until after the second summit between Washington and Pyongyang slated for late this month, a government source said.

[Seoul seeks big, sustainable projects with North Korea](#)

Feb 7, 2019, The Korea Times

Amid the unprecedented reconciliatory cross-border atmosphere, the Seoul Metropolitan Government is trying to take advantage of the rare opportunity to pursue sustainable projects with North Korea that would encourage more active cooperation and exchanges.

[UN Report Lays Bare N.Korea's Illegal Activities](#)

Feb 8, 2019, Chosun Ilbo

The Panel of Experts of the UN Security Council Sanctions Committee on North Korea has concluded that Pyongyang is still earning hard currency by various illegal means and sanctions are often ineffective.

[UN grants sanctions exemptions for humanitarian aid to North Korea](#)

Feb 7, 2019, The Korea Times

The United Nations Security Council has granted sanctions exemptions allowing the Swiss government and a global relief organization to provide North Korea with goods related to drinking water supplies and flood prevention.

[Korea calls for auto tariff exclusion from US](#)

Feb 6, 2019, The Korea Times

South Korea has asked the United States not to impose a 25 percent tariff on cars that are imported from Korea, the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Energy said.

[1,200 tons of Korean garbage back from Philippines](#)

Feb 7, 2019, The Korea Times

More than 1,000 tons of garbage shipped to the Philippines falsely as "recyclable materials" last year have been returned to Korea.

Southeast Asia

[Choice of Vietnam as Trump-Kim summit venue shows possibility of moving beyond conflict: US State Department](#)

Feb 8, 2019, The Straits Times

The choice of Vietnam as the venue for a second United States-North Korea summit this month shows the possibility of moving beyond conflict and division towards a thriving partnership, the US State Department said .

[Entry of princess into political fray takes Thai politics into uncharted territory](#)

Feb 8, 2019, The Straits Times

Until recently, Thailand's upcoming election had been shaping up to be a showdown between parties aligned with the current military government and parties aligned with the faction linked to fugitive former prime minister Thaksin Shinawatra.

[Indonesia seizes two Malaysian-flagged fishing vessels in Strait of Malacca](#)

Feb 6, 2019, The Jakarta Post

The Maritime Affairs and Fisheries Ministry has seized two Malaysian-flagged fishing vessels in Indonesian territory in the Strait of Malacca on suspicions of illegal fishing.

[Human rights an issue in new US funding support to the Philippines](#)

Feb 8, 2019, Phillipine Star

The Philippines will receive US funding assistance under the newly-signed Asia Reassurance Initiative Act that aims to promote Washington's security and other interests in the Indo-Pacific region, but no funds will be given in support of the government's anti-narcotics campaign unless certain human rights standards are satisfied.

[Australian parliament hacked, leaving authorities scrambling to discover who did it](#)

Feb 8, 2019, South China Morning Post

Local media reported that Australian security agencies were investigating whether China carried out the attack.

Central & West Asia

[Cement Plants Bloom in Central Asia Along China's New Silk Road, Prompting Worries](#)

Feb 7, 2019, Haaretz

On a windswept steppe in southwestern Kazakhstan, the new Chinese-backed cement plant on the outskirts of the village of Shieli stands as a gleaming symbol to some of the Central Asian country's industrialization.

[Rising Anti-Chinese Sentiment In Central Asia](#)

Jan 20, 2019, Rferl.org

There have now been two anti-Chinese protests in Kyrgyzstan in January. Compare that to April and May of 2016, when Kazakhstan's biggest protests in some 20 years started after rumors spread that proposed land-privatization laws would allow Chinese citizens an opportunity to purchase land in Kazakhstan.

[Uzbekistan gives visa-free entry to visitors from 45 countries](#)

Feb 3, 2019, The Jakarta Post

Uzbekistan on Friday granted visa-free entry to citizens of 45 countries to boost tourism, which the government views as vital for economic growth.

[Kazakhstan's Oil Dilemma](#)

Feb 5, 2019, Oil Price.com

What is pumped from Kashagan, from depths of around 4,500 meters, is just one component of a Kazakhstan-specific product known as CPC Blend. The name derives from the pipeline built in 2001 by a multinational consortium called the Caspian Pipeline Consortium.

[Kazakhstan Looks to Russian Rivers as Outlets to Global Markets](#)

Feb 7, 2019, The Jamestown Foundation

The Siberian scholar traces the use of the Ob-Irtysh river system as a means of delivering bulk or ultra-heavy cargo back to 1984, when the Soviets dispatched oil refinery equipment from Volgograd to Pavlodar.

[Kyrgyzstan: Corruption hinders mining development, investment attraction](#)

Feb 3, 2019, The Times of Central Asia

Protection of natural resources and using them wisely is among the priorities in ensuring the national security of Kyrgyzstan. However, corruption in issuing licenses hampers the mining industry development and the attraction of investments in this sector, Kyrgyz President Sooronbai Jeenbekov said on

January 30 at a meeting of the Security Council to address problems in the subsoil use.

[Iran Dismisses EU Criticism of Its Missile Tests, Says 'Threats' Won't Stop Them](#)

Feb 5, 2019, Haaretz

Tehran calls EU overture to launch system facilitating non-dollar trade 'late and inadequate,' vows to continue tests despite European pleas.

[Turkey expects 'more cooperation' from Greece on extradition of 8 coupist soldiers, Erdoğan tells Tsipras](#)

Feb 5, 2019, Daily Sabah

President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan said on Tuesday he expected more cooperation from its neighbor Greece in the repatriation of eight soldiers who fled to Greece following a 2016 coup attempt.

[How the Adana pact could reshape Syrian conflict](#)

Feb 7, 2019, Arab News

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan went to Moscow late last month with high hopes. He sought President Vladimir Putin's backing for a Turkish assault on the Kurds east of the Euphrates, the setting up of a "safe zone" stretching 32 kilometers into northern Syria, and the takeover of the Kurdish town of Manbij after the US soldiers leave.

[Qatar Asian Cup soccer victory may deepen Gulf tensions, experts warn](#)

Feb 7, 2019, The Times of Israel

United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia, both beaten by Qataris during championship run, likely to step up opposition to 2022 World Cup in response

[Qatar says committed to labour reform after Amnesty criticism](#)

Feb 6, 2019, Channel News Asia

Qatar said it is committed to labour reform following an Amnesty International report that the 2022 World Cup host is failing to stop widespread labour abuse.

[Israel's PM Netanyahu 'to meet Putin' in Moscow this month](#)

Feb 6, 2019, RT

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has said he will meet with Russian President Vladimir Putin in Moscow this month.

[Netanyahu Takes Aim at Rival Gantz, Says He'd Pull Israel Out of West Bank](#)

Feb 6, 2019, Haaretz

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his biggest rival in the upcoming election, Benny Gantz, traded barbs on Wednesday after the latter defended the 2005 disengagement from Gaza in an interview with Yedioth Ahronoth published that morning.

[Did Trump Interfere In Israel's Election By Sharing Netanyahu Instagram Post?](#)

Feb 9, 2019, The Jerusalem Post

The image depicts the two leaders smiling at one another as they shake hands. The slogan reads, "Netanyahu: In a different league."

United States

[President Trump's State of the Union transcript, annotated](#)

Feb 5, 2019, The Washington Post

President Trump delivered his second State of the Union address— an address that had to wait a week because of the government shutdown. And he delivered it at a time when the underlying issues in that shutdown, such as a border wall, remain completely unresolved.

[State of the Union address 2019: Donald Trump calls for unity and announces second summit with Kim Jong-un](#)

Feb 6, 2019, The Telegraph

Donald Trump issued a call for unity as he warned that the "politics of revenge" and "ridiculous partisan investigations" threatened to derail the "economic miracle" taking place in the United States.

[US Senate approves anti-BDS bill, slowdown of Syria withdrawal](#)

Feb 6, 2019, Al Jazeera

Senate vote sends the legislation to the House of Representatives where it will likely face renewed debate.

[Senators Seek to Punish Saudis Over Khashoggi Murder, Yemen War](#)

Feb 8, 2019, Bloomberg

Legislation to punish Saudi Arabia for the killing of Washington Post columnist Jamal Khashoggi and for its role in the conflict in Yemen was introduced Thursday by a bipartisan group of senators who said the Trump administration failed to hold a key ally to account.

[Trump Says All Islamic State Land to Be Won Back by Next Week](#)

Feb 6, 2019, Bloomberg Quint

President Donald Trump said the U.S. military and its allies will probably control all territory once held by Islamic State by next week.

[Taliban Peace Talks in Moscow End With Hope the U.S. Exits, if Not Too Quickly](#)

Feb 6, 2019, The New York Times

After two days of talks in Moscow, the Taliban and prominent Afghan politicians, many of them former enemies, said on Wednesday that they had charted a broad road map for ending the war in Afghanistan, which is in its 18th year. It is structured around the withdrawal of American forces from the country and the Taliban's commitment to citizens' fundamental rights.

[Trump: Meeting with China's Xi Jinping Before Trade Deal Deadline Unlikely](#)

Feb 7, 2019, U.S. News and World Report

PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP says he will not meet Chinese President Xi Jinping before a temporary truce in the countries' trade war expires March 1, stoking fears that a deal will not be reached before the 90-day freeze ends.

[US to scrap INF treaty: How nuclear pact with Russia made world safer - and why an arms race looms](#)

Feb 2, 2019, Telegraph

The US will withdraw from a landmark nuclear missile pact with Russia, Donald Trump announced on Friday - ending an agreement that has been a cornerstone of superpower arms control since the Cold War.

[Democrats Seek Green New Deal to Address Climate Change](#)

Feb 7, 2019, VOA

Democrats including Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez of New York are calling for a Green New Deal intended to transform the U.S. economy to combat climate change and create thousands of jobs in renewable energy.

Europe & Russia

[UK seeks to reassure foreign investors over Brexit](#)

Feb 4, 2019, Citizen

Britain will seek to reassure foreign investors worried about Britain leaving the EU after Japanese automaker Nissan said it was scrapping a major planned investment less than two months before Brexit.

[Brexit: Theresa May says she wants to change backstop, not remove it](#)

Feb 5, 2019, Euro News

UK Prime Minister Theresa May is in Northern Ireland where she is trying to reassure people that she can secure a Brexit deal that will avoid a hard border on the island of Ireland.

[May Heads to Brussels Seeking Escape From Brexit Backstop 'Trap'](#)

Feb 7, 2019, Bloomberg

Theresa May heads to Brussels seeking legally-binding changes to the Brexit deal she reached last year with her European Union counterparts, with little sign the two sides are close to a compromise.

[Polish prime minister would wish for UK to stay in EU](#)

Feb 7, 2019, The first News

Poland's head of government announced that concerning the Brexit, the Visegrad Group of countries (Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary) as well as Germany have expressed their position that it is "a very bad event for the whole EU."

[France conducts nuclear strike simulation, seen as message to Moscow amid tensions](#)

Feb 7, 2019, Fox News

The French Air Force said it conducted a rare simulation test launch of a nuclear cruise missile just days after the United States announced it will withdraw from a Cold War-era arms control treaty with Russia.

[France recalls Italian ambassador as relations cool](#)

Feb 7, 2019, RTE

France has taken the exceptional step of recalling its ambassador to Rome in protest against a "provocation" from the Italian government, laying bare the tension between the two historic allies.

[Russia Bolsters Central Asia Buffer as U.S. Afghan Exit Looms](#)

Feb 3, 2019, Bloomberg

Russia is stepping up efforts to reinforce security in vulnerable former Soviet Central Asian states as the U.S. prepares for a possible troop exit from nearby Afghanistan, risking greater instability in the conflict-torn country.

[Russia doesn't view China as rival in Central Asia, says Lavrov](#)

Feb 5, 2019, Tass

The plans of Russia and China in Central Asia do not contradict each other, Russia's top diplomat Sergey Lavrov said.

[US shuts down American citizenship office in Moscow](#)

Feb 6, 2019, RT

Residents of the former Soviet Union seeking US citizenship will have to do so in Greece, after the US announced it would shutter the Citizenship and Immigration Services office in Moscow due to lack of interest in its services.

[Putin signs a decree abolishing some special economic measures against Turkey](#)

Feb 6, 2019, Tass

Under the decree, a larger number of Turkish citizens are released from the restrictive measures imposed back in November 2015.

[Russia to do everything to prevent deployment of US missiles to Baltic States](#)

Feb 7, Tass

Russian diplomats and military will do everything possible to prevent the deployment of US missiles to the Baltic States, Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov said.

[Russia to develop nuclear missiles by 2021 following end of treaty with US](#)

Feb 5, 2019, The Telegraph

Russia has said it will develop a new hypersonic missile and a land-based version of an existing cruise missile by 2021 following the demise of a key nuclear arms control treaty with the US.

Africa & Latin America

[Venezuela crisis splits superpowers after US asks the world to pick a side](#)

Jan 29, 2019, News.com.au

Donald Trump has asked the world to pick a side in the disturbing crisis engulfing Venezuela – and the results reveal how divisive the catastrophe has become.

[EU countries recognize Guaidó as Venezuela's president](#)

Feb 4, 2019, Politico

France, Germany, Spain, the U.K. and other European countries have officially recognized Juan Guaidó as interim president of Venezuela.

[UN warns against politicising humanitarian aid in Venezuela](#)

Feb 7, 2019, New Sarawak Tribune

The United Nations warned on Wednesday against using aid as a pawn in the Venezuelan crisis after the United States sent food and medicine to the country's border, even though it was unclear how it will get past the objections of President Nicolas Maduro.

[Brazil Court Hands Lula a Second 12-year Sentence for Corruption](#)

Feb 6, 2019, Havana Times

The 73-year-old had already been handed a jail term of nearly the same length on similar charges. He was jailed in April for 12 years and one month, after being found guilty of corruption and money laundering in connection with the renovation of a beachside penthouse he was planning to buy.

[Candidate of Palestine origin wins Salvador presidency](#)

Feb 4, 2019, Andolou Agency

Candidate of Palestine origin wins Salvador. A candidate of Palestinian origin, Nayib Bukele, won Sunday's presidential election in El Salvador, clinching over 50 percent of the vote, according to the country's official electoral board. Presidency

[Kenya: Westerners targets of terrorists, US warns](#)

The Star, Feb 2, 2019

Europeans and Americans have been warned against travelling to some parts of Kenya for fear of terrorist attacks.

[African Union Summit Focuses On Refugees, Migration Crisis](#)

Feb 7, 2019, Nigerian Tribune

Security across the Ethiopian capital, Addis Ababa has been beefed up as dignitaries and heads of states from across the continent gather for the annual African Union (AU) summit which kicked off on Thursday.

[Central African Republic: UN chief hails signing of new peace agreement](#)

Feb 6, 2019, UN News

CAR has been grappling with conflict since 2012, as fighting between the mostly Christian anti-Balaka militia and the mainly Muslim Séléka rebel coalition killed thousands and left two out of three civilians dependent on humanitarian aid.

[Sudan's al-Bashir vows to release detained journalists](#)

Feb 2, 2019, Andolou Agency

President Omar al-Bashir has pledged to release all journalists detained by Sudanese security forces since protests erupted across the country in mid-December.

[DRC: Fayulu calls for 'peaceful resistance' after controversial election loss](#)

Feb 2, 2019, The East Africa Monitor

The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC's) top opposition leader Martin Fayulu has called upon supporters to engage in "peaceful resistance" following his controversial presidential election loss earlier this year.

[Nigeria election 2019: How 'godfathers' influence politics](#)

Feb 4, 2019, BBC News

"Godfathers" in Nigerian politics don't usually run for office themselves, but many believe they are the ones who decide the election winners and losers.



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