



**Delhi Policy Group**

# DPG WEEKLY WORLD WATCH



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**Delhi Policy Group**

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## **DPG WEEKLY WORLD WATCH**

### **Volume 3, Issue 50**

#### **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

#### [India moves toward IEA membership with 'strategic partnership'](#)

December 10, 2019, Hellenicshippingnews.com

The members of the International Energy Agency have agreed to establish a "strategic partnership" with India that would serve as a pathway for the South Asian country's eventual membership, the IEA said in a statement at the weekend.

#### [Citizenship Amendment Bill continues long tradition of welcoming persecuted minorities](#)

December 11, 2019, The Indian Express

The Citizenship Amendment Bill (CAB) is not about excluding anybody; it is about including some. It is an effort to grant citizenship to those minorities from erstwhile Pakistan that now includes Pakistan and Bangladesh and Afghanistan, who have come to India seeking refuge from religious persecution or the fear of it. The first time such refugees were included was immediately after Partition in the first census, which was also regarded as the National Register of Citizens.

#### [US Commission has no locus standi: India on Citizenship Bill remarks](#)

December 10, 2019, The Indian Express

Hours after the US Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) suggested the Donald Trump-led government to consider imposing sanctions against Home Minister Amit Shah over the Citizenship Amendment Bill, India termed the reaction as "neither accurate nor warranted".

#### [China at sea: For Delhi, Shiyan incident is a reminder to invest more in maritime scientific research](#)

December 10, 2019, The Indian Express

Recent reports that the Indian Navy "chased out" a Chinese vessel — Shiyan 1— from the Andaman Sea should draw Delhi's attention to Beijing's growing maritime scientific capability and its ambitious research agenda for distant waters. Shiyan 1 is operated by the Chinese Academy of Sciences and is part of Beijing's growing marine research fleet that now stands at about 50 vessels.

#### [Defence & Foreign Secretaries of India & Australia hold third 2+2 Dialogue](#)

December 09, 2019, Indus Dictum

The Indian delegation was led by Defence Secretary Ajay Kumar and Foreign Secretary Vijay Gokhale, while the Australian side was led by Defence Secretary Greg Moriarty and Foreign Secretary Frances Adamson. During the dialogue, issues related to bilateral defence engagements, areas to enhance cooperation in

the field of defence industry and defence technology, as well as the prevailing regional security concerns, were discussed.

[Russian navy ships arrive in India for joint exercise INDRA 2019](#)

December 11, 2019, The Economic Times

Three Russian navy ships arrived in Goa to participate in the second edition of a tri-services exercise between the armed forces of India and Russia. The aim of exercise INDRA 2019 is to enhance interoperability and develop understanding in order to effectively tackle common security challenges.

[Indian Army gets new American assault rifles in Kashmir Valley against terrorists, Pakistan Army on LoC](#)

December 11, 2019, The Economic Times

In a major boost in fight against terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir and Pakistan Army on the Line of Control (LoC), the Indian Army has started inducting its newly acquired American SiG Sauer assault rifles in operations. In addition, the Indian Army has also started getting supplies of ammunition for its sniper rifles as more than 21 lakh rounds have been ordered from vendors. The first lot of 10,000 SiG 716 assault rifles has arrived in India and has been sent to the Northern Command.

[PSLV-C48/RISAT-2BR1: ISRO successfully launches Indian Defence Satellite RISAT-2BR1, 9 commercial payloads to orbit](#)

December 12, 2019, First Post

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) launched India's newest radar imaging earth observation satellite RISAT-2BR1 on board PSLV-C48 from its spaceport at Sriharikota. A total of ten satellites, one defence and nine commercial, were launched into space.

[Arms sales of top Indian defence firms drop by 6.9 per cent: SIPRI report](#)

December 10, 2019, The Economic Times

The combined sales of three public sector Indian defence companies that figure among the world's 100 top arms suppliers dropped by 6.9 per cent to stand at USD 5.9 billion in 2018, according to a new report published by a leading Swedish think tank.

[Two-plus-two Indo-US dialogue to be held on Dec 18 in Washington: MEA](#)

December 12, 2019, The Economic Times

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar and Defence Minister Rajnath Singh will arrive in Washington DC next week for the second round of the '2+2' dialogue with their US counterparts Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and Defence Secretary Mark Esper on December 18.

### [ADB scales down India's GDP growth forecast from 6.5% to 5.1% for FY20](#)

December 12, 2019, Business Standard

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has sharply scaled down its projection for India's economic growth to 5.1 per cent in 2019-20 from 6.5 per cent projected earlier because of the crisis in the non-banking finance companies and impact on consumption due to rural distress and a dismal job scenario.

### [India set to sign \\$2.6-bn chopper deal with US, push for waiver on Russian S-400 missiles](#)

December 10, 2019, The Print

India & US look to finalise the MH-60R Seahawk deal on the sidelines of 2+2 talks in Washington. The choppers will boost the Navy's anti-submarine warfare operations.

### [Japanese Trade Minister to discuss RCEP pact with Goyal](#)

December 09, 2019, The Hindu

Japanese Trade Minister Hiroshi Kajiyama will meet his Indian counterpart Piyush Goyal to discuss the conditions under which New Delhi could get back into the trade negotiations for the proposed Regional Cooperation for Economic Partnership (RCEP) pact between 16 countries.

## **Pakistan**

### [FATF wants conviction of banned outfits' members](#)

December 7, 2019, The News

Out of total 27 points in the action plan, Pakistan ~~has~~ submitted its progress report on 22 points before the joint group of Financial Action Task Force in fresh bid to avoid falling into the blacklist.

### [Russia to develop stakes in Pak economy in big way](#)

December 7, 2019, The News

Russia has decided to develop its stakes in Pakistan's economy in a big way and to this effect a 64-member delegation headed by Minister for Trade and Industries for the Russian Federation Denis V Manturov visited Pakistan from December 8 to 11 to attend an Inter-Governmental Commission.

### [ADB approves \\$1.3 bn loans for Pakistan](#)

December 7, 2019, The News

The Asian Development Bank approved two loans totalling \$1.3 billion to provide Pakistan's budgetary support and policy-based lending for the energy sector.

### [Inflation touches highest point in 15 years](#)

December 10, 2019, The News

Inflationary pressures for Pakistani consumers in the last five months have witnessed the highest ever hike in prices on monthly basis over the last 10 to 15 years. During July-November period of the current fiscal year 2019-20, the CPI based inflation peaked at 12.67 percent in November 2019, thus surpassing all regional countries on the rate of increasing prices.

### [Pak-China free trade pact Phase-II comes into force on Dec 1](#)

December 10, 2019, The News

Phase-II of the China-Pakistan Free Trade Agreement has come into force with effect from December 1, 2019, according to an announcement made by the Ministry of Commerce.

### [IHC grants bail to Zardari on health grounds](#)

December 12, 2019, Dawn

The Islamabad High Court granted post-arrest bail on medical grounds to former president Asif Ali Zardari in the Park Lane and fake accounts cases against surety bonds of Rs20 million. It adjourned proceedings on the bail petition of his sister and lawmaker Faryal Talpur till Dec 17.

### [Hafiz Saeed indicted for terror financing](#)

December 12, 2019, Dawn

An anti-terrorism court indicted Jamaatud Dawa chief Hafiz Mohammad Saeed and its leader Prof Zafar Iqbal in one of the cases registered by the Counter Terrorism Department on charges of terror financing.

### [Moscow promises talks on supply of aircraft to PIA](#)

December 12, 2019, Dawn

At the conclusion of the sixth session of the Pakistan-Russia Inter Governmental Commission on trade, economic and scientific and technical cooperation, the Russian side also promised to start negotiations on supply and after-sales service of 6-16 Sukhoi SuperJet-100 aircraft to Pakistan International Airlines in the first quarter of 2020.

### [ADB plans to pour \\$2b in Pakistan's energy sector](#)

December 12, 2019, The Express Tribune

The Asian Development Bank has planned to invest \$2 billion in the energy sector of Pakistan over a period of three years, said a delegation of the bank.

### [Kyrgyz envoy for tapping CPEC to boost trade with Pakistan](#)

December 12, 2019, The Express Tribune

Kyrgyzstan can act as a bridge for Pakistan to the Central Asian markets as Pakistani traders can easily export 6,000 goods with several concessions, said Kyrgyzstan Ambassador to Pakistan Erik Beishemhiev.

### [US reprimanded Pakistan for misusing F-16 Fighter Jet during aerial dogfight with India: Report](#)

December 12, 2019, News 18

According to the news report The US reprimanded the Pakistan Air Force chief in August for misusing F-16 fighter jets by undermining their shared security platforms and infrastructures. Andrea Thompson, the then-undersecretary of State for Arms Control and International Security Affairs, wrote a letter to Pakistani Air Force Chief Air Chief Marshal Mujahid Anwar Khan in August over the matter.

### [PM's visit to Saudi Arabia aims to assuage Riyadh's reservations](#)

December 13, 2019, Dawn

Prime Minister Imran Khan will visit Saudi Arabia on December 14 to reassure the kingdom's leadership that ties between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia remain firm despite Islamabad's engagement with other Muslim countries. The visit, an Arab source disclosed, has been recently planned after signals from Riyadh that it was not happy with Prime Minister Imran Khan's decision to attend Kuala Lumpur summit being held in Malaysia from Dec 18-20.

## **Afghanistan**

### [Deadly Clashes Erupt in Volatile Northern Afghan Province](#)

December 6, 2019, VOA

New clashes between government security forces and the Taliban in northern Afghanistan are said to have killed around 20 combatants on both sides.

### [US restarts peace talks with Afghan Taliban in Qatar](#)

December 7, 2019, Anadolu Agency

The Taliban resumed formal peace talks with the U.S. in the Qatari capital, Doha, the group confirmed in a statement. Suhail Shaheen, the insurgents' Qatar office spokesman, said on social media that Mualla Baradar Akhund, the group's deputy head, led the Taliban delegation. Shaheen added that a draft agreement was discussed, and talks would continue. Anas Haqqani, a recently freed Haqqani Network leader affiliate of the Taliban, also took part in the talks, he added.



### [US Aims to 'Reallocate' forces to Indo-Pacific: Esper](#)

December 8, 2019, Tolo News

Defense Secretary Mark Esper at the Reagan National Defense Forum said that he wants to prioritize the deployment of US forces to the Asia-Pacific region from other areas, including Afghanistan. He called the Indo-Pacific Command his "priority theater." Esper said: "I'm not just looking at Afghanistan" but "all these places where I can free up troops" to bring them home or "compete with the Chinese, to reassure our allies and to conduct exercises and training."

### [Everyone Knew We Were Losing in Afghanistan](#)

December 9, 2019, The Atlantic

Afghanistan has long been the overshadowed war, eclipsed in public attention by the invasion of Iraq and a dozen other stories. Even so, the American occupation of Afghanistan grinds on, with an end seeming remote and any kind of positive resolution even more so. Based on a tranche of thousands of documents obtained by the Post in litigation, as well as some previously released memos, the report shows that for nearly two decades, America's leaders—Democrat and Republican; civilian and military; elected, appointed, and career civil servant—have lied to us about how the war in Afghanistan is going.

### [Ghani calls for regional, int'l support for Afghan Peace](#)

December 9, 2019, Tolo News

President Ashraf Ghani while addressing the eighth ministerial conference of the "Heart of Asia-Istanbul Process" in Turkey emphasized the need for a political solution to the conflict in Afghanistan and stressed the need for an international and regional consensus for peace.

### [2 killed, 73 wounded in Taliban attack near Bagram Base](#)

December 11, 2019, Tolo News

At least two civilians have been killed and 73 people have been wounded, mostly civilians, in an explosion in the Bagram district of northern Parwan province close to Bagram airbase.

### [Pentagon leaders consider troop reduction in Afghanistan](#)

December 12, 2019, Tolo News

Gen. Mark Milley, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, told Congress that the Pentagon is considering several options to reduce the number of troops in Afghanistan, including one that would shift to a narrower counterterrorism mission.

### [Tensions rising over reduced Pakistani visas](#)

December 12, 2019, Tolo News

Pakistan is issuing fewer visas for Afghans since ~~many~~ Pakistani diplomats in Kabul accused Afghan intelligence troops of harassing them.

### [Herat province railway construction contract signed](#)

December 12, 2019, Railway Gazette

A contract for the design and construction of the first phase of the fourth section of the railway being built to link Khaf in Iran with Herat province has been signed by the Afghanistan Railway Authority and Kazak company Integra Construction.

### [U.S. envoy to Afghanistan announces 'pause' in Taliban peace talks after attack on air base](#)

December 13, 2019, CNBC

The U.S. special envoy to Afghanistan said he was outraged by a Taliban attack near Bagram airfield this week, and "we're taking a brief pause," apparently in reference to peace talks that had recently resumed with the militant group.

## **Bangladesh**

### [Bangladesh Navy Chief receives guard of honour in Delhi](#)

December 09, 2019, Economic Times

Bangladesh Navy Chief Admiral Aurangzeb Chowdhury received guard of honour in Delhi on Dec 08. He met Indian Navy Chief Admiral Karambir Singh. He is on a five-day visit to India. He will also visit Naval institutions outside Delhi including the Southern Naval Command in Kochi where he will see the training methods of the Indian Navy. Admiral Chowdhury will also visit the Eastern Naval Command in Vishakhapatnam where he will visit warships.

### [Dhaka to receive \\$500m from New Delhi for defence procurement](#)

December 07, 2019, Prothom Alo

New Delhi has provided a \$500 million line of credit to Bangladesh to enable Dhaka to buy military equipment from India. Bangladesh is seeking to diversify its military arsenal given that more than 90 per cent of its equipment is of Chinese origin. The current strategy is based on fears of being trapped in a full-blown conflict with Myanmar, which enjoys China's backing over the Rohingya issue.

### [ADB maintains robust growth outlook for Bangladesh](#)

December 12, 2019, The Daily Star

Bangladesh is expected to grow robustly in 2019 and 2020 riding on domestic consumption and strong remittance earnings, said the Asian Development Bank as it kept the growth outlook for the country unchanged.

## **Nepal**

### [India-Nepal Joint Military Exercise 'Surya Kiran' Focusses On IED Detection & Destruction](#)

December 09, 2019, Republic World

The India-Nepal joint military exercise 'Surya Kiran' ~~which is~~ held in Nepal, focused on the detection of Improvised Explosive Devices (IED). The 14th edition of the bilateral annual military exercise at Nepal Army Battle School (NABS) in the Rupendehi district of Nepal began on December 3 and will go on till December 16.

### [Nepal to vie for UNSC non-permanent seat](#)

December 12, 2019, The Himalayan Times

The government will soon file its candidacy at the United Nations seeking non-permanent seat in the 15-member United Nations Security Council for 2037-38. Countries needed 10-15 years to run their campaign to win, said the spokesperson for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Nepal has been a non-permanent member of the UNSC in 1969-70 and 1988-89.

### [Nepal govt. ADB sign deal to execute four development projects in Nepal](#)

December 10, 2019, myRepublica

A loan agreement has been signed between Asian Development Bank and Nepal Government for executing four different projects. The government has signed the loan agreement with ADB for an amount of USD 358 million. This amount will be used in enhancing the condition of the Pokhara-Muglin highway, sanitation of the Bagmati river, increasing the income of farmers and food and agriculture security.

### [Super powers eyeing Nepal Army](#)

December 11, 2019, Khabarhub

Despite attempts to project the impression of political stability in Nepal, the international community still seems dealing with the Nepal Army (NA) rather than with the government.

## Sri Lanka

### [Sri Lanka PM dismisses 'debt trap', assures to promotion of major cooperation projects with China](#)

December 08, 2019, Colombo Page

Sri Lanka's new Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa has said that his government will vigorously promote major Sino-Sri Lanka cooperation projects such as Colombo Port City and Hambantota Port.

### [In a first, Sri Lanka appoints military officer as spy chief](#)

December 09, 2019, India Today

For the first time in Sri Lanka's history, a military officer has been appointed as the chief of the country's top intelligence agency. Brigadier Suresh Sallay, the former director of the Military Intelligence, has been appointed as the chief of the State Intelligence Service (SIS), the country's premier spy agency

### [Sri Lanka's foreign policy in a new Rajapaksa era](#)

December 10, 2019, East Asia Forum

The return of the Rajapaksa family to the leadership of Sri Lanka raises questions about how the country's foreign policy approaches to India, China and the United States may change. Now that the Rajapaksas have reclaimed both the presidency and prime ministership, what direction will Sri Lanka's foreign policy take?

### [China grips Sri Lanka with artificial island off Colombo](#)

December 12, 2019, Nikkei Asian Review

China, no stranger to building islands, has finished one off the coast of Colombo that gives Sri Lanka, a strategically located South Asian nation, the potential of erecting a futuristic business hub. Billed as Port City Colombo, the 269 hectares of land reclaimed off the coast of Sri Lanka's largest city was officially declared part of the country last weekend.

### [Sri Lanka Appoints New Minister for Foreign Relations](#)

December 10, 2019, Modern Diplomacy

The newly-elected Sri Lankan President, Gotabaya Rajapaksa appointed Dinesh Gunawardena as the Minister of Foreign Relations. The new Minister of Foreign Relations is supposed to implement a friendly and Non-aligned Foreign Policy. In a recent newspaper interview he stated "Sri Lanka will have a strict neutral foreign policy where it will strive to have only friends and not foes among the global community.

## East & South East Asia

### China

#### [Capitalism is losing appeal for Chinese](#)

December 12, 2019, Global Times

As China has stood on a higher level of development, it ~~is having~~ has a different way of dealing with and understanding Western countries. It is fair to say the Chinese people now have the most profound and objective understanding of capitalism.

#### [US efforts to block Huawei futile](#)

December 13, 2019, Global Times

Telefonica Germany, one of Germany's three major telecom carriers, decided to use Nokia and Huawei equipment to build its 5G network, putting the US warning aside. The company said its cooperation with Huawei was pending approval from the German government. The German government has said that it would not exclude any company from 5G network rollout, stressing that it will verify the security of all companies participating in Germany's 5G network construction.

#### [Positive signs from US welcome, but more needs to be done to end trade war](#)

December 13, 2019, Global Times

This is a rare first time for US President Donald Trump to publicly state that both China and the US want a trade agreement. Previously, he had always stressed that China really wanted to reach a deal, but the US was not in a hurry. He even suggested that it was a good alternative for the US to impose additional tariffs.

#### [Economic hardship 'not bad' for China](#)

December 12, 2019, Global Times

China is expected to maintain an economic growth rate of at least 6 percent in 2020. Still, the economy is preparing for the winter to last through next year. Economic hardship is anticipated, but the country's core concern is strategic policymaking: whether governments at both central and local levels, businesses and individuals opt for quality growth based on structural reforms or pursue fast, stimulus-driven growth.

#### [US could determine unlikely 'China-Russia alliance'](#)

December 12, 2019, Global Times

Earlier this month, US magazine The National Interest published an article entitled "Donald Trump's Greatest National Security Threat: A China-Russia Alliance."

### [Economic growth needs deep vitality](#)

December 11, 2019, Global Times

Can the Chinese economy maintain a growth rate of around 6 percent in 2020? There are many analyses and discussions as 2019 comes to an end, and there are more forecasts that China's GDP growth rate will fall below 6 percent next year.

### [Why do Western media ignore China's documentary on Xinjiang?](#)

December 7, 2019, Global Times

An English language documentary, Fighting Terrorism in Xinjiang, ~~which~~ was aired on China's state broadcaster CGTN, exposed the trauma that violent terrorism and religious extremism have brought ~~about~~ to the region. It has garnered extensive attention on overseas social media platforms. Some netizens from abroad commented that it uncovers the fact that Western media outlets are telling lies about Xinjiang and that Western journalists who have hyped the Xinjiang issue by fabricating stories should carefully watch the documentary.

### [Stabilising course set to realize moderately prosperous society: China Daily editorial](#)

December 9, 2019, China Daily

The tone-setting Central Economic Work Conference has shed light on the direction of China's economic policymaking next year and mapped out policies to pursue high-quality development against domestic and external headwinds.

### [More tariffs not the way to a deal: China Daily editorial](#)

December 12, 2019, China Daily

In the long gaps between each round of trade talks between China and the United States, although both sides would occasionally signal that the negotiations were still alive, it has often been the case that no news is good news.

### [Joint defenders of multilateralism: China Daily editorial](#)

December 12, 2019, China Daily

In a fast-changing world and against the rising trend of protectionism and unilateralism, the commitment of China and the European Union to enhance cooperation and safeguard multilateralism not only serves the common interests of both sides but also ~~those~~ those that of the world.

### [US selfishly sabotages WTO appellate body: China Daily editorial](#)

December 12, 2019, China Daily

Were it not for Washington obstructing the appointment of new judges, the de facto supreme court for world trade would not have stopped functioning. Although the paralysis of the appellate body of the World Trade Organization is what the United States has sought, it will prove to be its undoing.

### [Iranian nuclear deal only viable solution: China Daily editorial](#)

December 8, 2019, China Daily

If you want to go fast, walk alone; if you want to go farther, walk together. This well-known piece of advice should be heeded by the United States and applied to the Iranian nuclear deal.

### [SCO anti-cyber-terrorism drill held in China](#)

December 12, 2019, Xinhua

Eight Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) countries and the SCO Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS) held a joint drill on countering cyber-terrorism in Xiamen, southeast China's Fujian Province.

### [Trade between China, Russia to top 110 bln U.S. dollars this year: MOC](#)

December 12, 2019, Xinhua

Trade between China and Russia is expected to hit a record high of 110 billion U.S. dollars this year, the Ministry of Commerce (MOC) forecast.

## **Japan**

### [Japan may pick new site for U.S.-developed missile defense system amid Akita outcry](#)

December 11, 2019, The Japan Times

Japan is leaning toward reviewing its current plan to deploy the U.S.-developed Aegis Ashore land-based missile defense system in the northeastern city of Akita, due to strong local opposition.

### [Countering Beijing's South China Sea strategy](#)

December 10, 2019, The Japan Times

The Chinese People's Liberation Army possesses overwhelming military capabilities in the South China Sea. And it is clear that no single nation in this region, Japan included, is able to match those capabilities.

### [Japan's Iran dilemma](#)

December 10, 2019, The Japan Times

The situation in the Middle East remains extremely unstable. Since May, when Iran declared that it was suspending some of its commitments under the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, Saudi Arabian and Norwegian-registered oil tankers have been attacked around the Straits of Hormuz, and a Japanese oil tanker was attacked while Prime Minister Shinzo Abe was actually visiting Iran.

### [Abe says visit by Iran's Rouhani being arranged](#)

December 10, 2019, Japan Today

Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe said his country is arranging a visit by Iranian President Hassan Rouhani because it wants to play a greater role in resolving a nuclear impasse between Tehran and Washington and in relieving tensions in the Middle East, the source of more than 80% of Japan's oil.

### [Abe determined to amend Constitution after debate in next Diet session](#)

December 10, 2019, Japan Today

Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe said he is determined to attain the goal of amending the Constitution at his own initiative.

### [Japan to keep pushing coal in developing world despite criticism](#)

December 10, 2019, Japan Today

Japan will continue providing backing to new coal-fired power projects in developing countries, a Japanese government source said, despite international efforts to move away from climate change-causing fossil fuels.

### [Japan-US trade deal set to take effect Jan. 1](#)

December 10, 2019, NHK

A new trade deal between Japan and the US is expected to take effect on January 1 after Japan's government announced it had completed all the necessary procedures.

### [Abe's visit to India to be postponed](#)

December 13, 2019, NHK

The Japanese government plans to reschedule Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's visit to India. The move comes amid intensifying violence in parts of the country he is due to visit. Abe was due to leave Japan for India on December 15 for the three-day trip.

## **Korea**

### [Moon to hold summits with Xi, Abe](#)

December 10, 2019, The Korea Times

President Moon Jae-in will attend the December 23 to 24 Korea-China-Japan Summit in Chengdu, China. Moon may meet bilaterally with Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe after meeting with Chinese President Xi Jinping in Beijing on December 23.



### [Trump urges Russia to help denuclearize North Korea](#)

December 11, 2019, The Korea Times

U.S. President Donald Trump met ~~with~~ Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov and urged Moscow to help ensure North Korea's denuclearization. Trump and Lavrov met a day before the U.N. Security Council is ~~set~~ to convene to discuss North Korea's recent missile launches and the possibility of a provocation by the regime.

### [N.Korea 'Conducted Long-Range Missile Engine Test'](#)

December 10, 2019, The Chosun Ilbo

South Korean military intelligence tentatively concluded that North Korea's "very important test" in Tongchang-ri near the Chinese border last week was of a new liquid-fuel engine for an intercontinental ballistic missile.

### [U.S. Calls UN Security Council Meet After N.Korean Provocation](#)

December 11, 2019, The Chosun Ilbo

The U.S. has requested a meeting of the UN Security Council after North Korea tested what appears to have been a liquid-fuel engine for an intercontinental ballistic missile.

### [South Korea to 'speak out' on NK test at UNSC](#)

December 10, 2019, The Korea Times

South Korea attended the United Nations Security Council meeting which at the request of the United States. South Korea is "discussing with the United States and other countries, regarding North Korea's recent tests very thoroughly.

### [Pompeo says US is hopeful N. Korea will refrain from nuclear, long-range missile tests](#)

December 11, 2019, The Korea Herald

The United States is hopeful North Korea will continue to refrain from nuclear tests and long-range missile tests, US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said, after Pyongyang had conducted a "very important" test over the weekend.

### [Korea, U.S. Step up Surveillance of N.Korea](#)

December 11, 2019, The Chosun Ilbo

South Korea and the U.S. have stepped up surveillance and reconnaissance activities to monitor North Korea's preparations for the possible launch of an intercontinental ballistic missile.

### [Japan's FM may meet S.Korean counterpart](#)

December 10, 2019, NHK

Japan's Foreign Minister Toshimitsu Motegi may meet with his South Korean counterpart Kang Kyung-wha in Spain. The Japanese minister wants to ask the South Korean side to take steps over the issue of wartime labor.

### **Southeast Asia**

### [India will review RCEP trade pact with ASEAN countries, Piyush Goyal tells Rajya Sabha](#)

December 10, 2019, The Print

Indian Commerce minister Piyush Goyal said the govt is going to review the free trade agreements between India and ASEAN countries signed by previous govts to address trade imbalances.

### [Aung San Suu Kyi tells ICJ: Myanmar genocide claims 'factually misleading'](#)

December 11, 2019, The Guardian

The Nobel peace prize laureate Aung San Suu Kyi has defended Myanmar's government against accusations of genocide at the international court of justice, calling the allegations an "incomplete and misleading factual picture of the situation in Rakhine state".

### [US slaps sanctions on Myanmar military chief over Rohingya abuses](#)

December 11, 2019, Al-jazeera

The United States imposed sanctions on four Myanmar military leaders, including the commander-in-chief, in the toughest action taken yet by Washington for alleged human rights abuses against the Rohingya and other minorities.

### [Duterte to lift martial law in southern Philippines](#)

December 10, 2019, The Jakarta Post

President Rodrigo Duterte will lift martial law in the southern Philippines by the year's end, more than two years after it was imposed, in an attempt to stop the Islamic State group from gaining a foothold there.

### [Malaysia's Mahathir pledges to step down for Anwar, but not before November 2020](#)

December 10, 2019, Reuters

Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir said in an interview that he would stand down from the post of PM and hand it over to Mr Anwar but not before a summit of Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) countries that Malaysia is to host in November.

### [Malaysia, Indonesia agree to use drones to patrol borders](#)

December 10, 2019, CNA

Malaysia and Indonesia have agreed in principle to use drones and other technologies to monitor their borders, said Malaysia's Home Affairs Minister Muhyiddin Yassin on December 10.

### [Malaysia seizes Vietnamese oil tanker that was tracked in North Korea](#)

December 12, 2019, Reuters

A Vietnamese oil tanker which visited North Korea in February has been seized by Malaysia after it was found adrift off the Malaysian coast.

### [ASEAN's quiet resilience in the face of rivalries](#)

December 11, 2019, Khmer Times

ASEAN should have begun to crack and fall apart from the strain of the rising geopolitical rivalries in Asia between the United States and China, if what critics say about its fragility were true. But ASEAN steadily marched through another difficult and challenging year and quietly delivered many positive results that will improve the wellbeing of its 650 million people.

### [Bangkok Bank Buys StanChart Indonesian Bank for \\$2.7 Billion](#)

December 12, 2019, Bloomberg

Bangkok Bank Pcl snapped up a controlling stake in Indonesia's PT Bank Permata for about \$2.7 billion in the first major purchase of an overseas lender by a Thai bank.

### [Mexican drug cartels targeting Thailand: US official](#)

December 12, 2019, Anadolu Agency

Mexican drug syndicates are trafficking meth into Thailand and other Asian countries, said a U.S. counter-drug official.

### [Cambodia dismayed over US sanctions for corruption, logging](#)

December 10, 2019, Associate Press

The Cambodian government expressed "strong dismay" over a U.S. Treasury decision to sanction two businessmen suspected of corruption and illegal logging. A Foreign Ministry statement said the sanctions were based on groundless accusations.

## Central & West Asia

### Central Asia

#### [Russia, Turkey, Iran hold 14th round of talks on Syria War in Kazakhstan](#)

December 10, 2019, Rferl.org

The delegations of Turkey, Iran, and Russia have arrived in Kazakhstan's capital, Nur-Sultan, for two days of trilateral talks over the Syrian conflict.

#### [Kazakhstan, Russia's Tatarstan seek to boost trade turnover to \\$1bn](#)

December 12, 2019, Menafn

Russia's Tatarstan Republic aims to bring mutual trade turnover with Kazakhstan to \$1 billion, Chairman of Tatarstan State Council Farid Mukhametshin has said.

#### [Iran, Tajikistan stress boosting economic ties](#)

December 11, 2019, Mehr News Agency

Minister of Finance of the Republic of Tajikistan Qahhorzoda Faiziddin Sattor stressed the expansion of economic cooperation with Iran. He met and held talks with Iranian ambassador to Dushanbe Mohammad Taqi Saberi on the development of cooperation between the two countries, especially in the economic field.

#### [Kazakhstan regains full control of power station from Russia](#)

December 12, 2019, New Europe

Samruk-Kazyna National Welfare Fund has acquired a 50% stake in Ekibastuz State District Power Station-2 JSC, the largest power plant in northern Kazakhstan. Samruk-Kazyna announced the completion of a deal to acquire a stake in Ekibastuz GRES-2 from the Russian company Inter RAO.

#### [Large Statue of Putin Unveiled in Kyrgyzstan](#)

December 10, 2019, The Moscow Times

A ski resort in Kyrgyzstan has unveiled a 2.5-meter statue of Russian President Vladimir Putin, after the resort's founder received a \$1.2 million loan from a Russian-sponsored development fund.

#### [China's investments the least popular of its diplomacy efforts in South and Central Asia, report suggests](#)

December 10, 2019, SCMP

China's attempts to woo South and Central Asian countries with a total of US\$126 billion of investment in 17 years have proved the most polarising of its efforts to gain regional influence, because of concerns over debt traps, transparency and Chinese labour, according to research in the United States.

## West Asia

### [Qatar not serious about ending Gulf crisis: Bahraini minister](#)

December 11, 2019, Gulf News

Bahraini Foreign Minister Khalid Bin Ahmad Al Khalifa has said that Qatar is not serious about ending a long-standing rift with a Saudi-led bloc, damping expectations for an imminent end to the crisis.

### [Iran-backed attacks in Iraq risks uncontrollable escalation - U.S. official](#)

December 11, 2019, Reuters

A senior U.S. military official said attacks by Iranian-backed groups on bases hosting U.S. forces in Iraq were gathering pace and becoming more sophisticated, pushing all sides closer to an uncontrollable escalation.

### [Iraq summons ambassadors of 4 countries over "interference in internal affairs"](#)

December 10, 2019, Xinhua Net

Iraqi Foreign Ministry said it has summoned the ambassadors of four countries to Iraq over a statement considered by the ministry as "interference in Iraq's internal affairs." A statement by the ministry said that it has summoned the ambassadors of France, Britain and Germany together, and the Canadian ambassador alone to meet with the Senior Foreign Ministry Undersecretary Abdul Karim Hashim.

### [GCC 40th summit: Saudi king calls for Gulf Arab unity to confront Iran](#)

December 10, 2019, Gulf News

Saudi Arabia's King Salman opened a Gulf Arab summit by calling for regional unity to confront Iran and secure energy supplies and maritime channels. "Our region today is passing through circumstances and challenges that require concerted efforts to confront them as the Iranian regime continues its aggressive actions that threaten security and stability ...," he said.

### [US unveils new sanctions on Iran](#)

December 11, 2019, CNN International

The US announced a fresh round of sanctions against Iran, targeting an Iranian shipping network they say is smuggling "lethal aid" to Yemen, and three agents of an Iranian airline company.

### [Israel Heads to Record Third Election, Extending Deadlock](#)

December 11, 2019, The New York Times

Having failed to form a government after two elections, Israel barreled toward a record third, extending the political deadlock that has paralysed the country for

nearly an year and assuring at least three more months of bitter, divisive campaigning and government dysfunction.

#### [US replaces Kuwait as India's 6th biggest oil supplier; Iraq remains on top](#)

December 11, 2019, Business Standard

The United States has surpassed Kuwait to become India's sixth largest oil supplier as it supplied 70 per cent more crude to the world's third largest energy consumer during April-September.

#### [Qatar's Emir Sheikh Tamim skips Gulf summit in Saudi Arabia](#)

December 10, 2019, Al Jazeera

Qatar's Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani will not attend the Gulf summit in Riyadh, dampening hopes of reconciliation between Doha and a Saudi-led bloc that imposed a punishing blockade 30 months ago.

#### [Saudi Aramco hits Crown Prince's \\$2 trillion goal despite valuation doubts](#)

December 12, 2019, Reuters

Saudi Aramco (2222.SE) hit the \$2 trillion target sought by de-facto Saudi leader Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman as its shares racked up a second day of gains, despite some scepticism about the state-owned oil firm's value.

#### [Syria's president: OPCW 'faked' report on chlorine gas attack](#)

December 10, 2019, Al Jazeera

Syrian President Bashar al-Assad has accused the global chemical weapons watchdog of faking and falsifying a report over an attack near the capital Damascus last year "just because the Americans wanted them to do so".

#### [U.S. Senate passes resolution recognizing Armenian genocide, angering Turkey](#)

December 13, 2019, Reuters

The U.S. Senate unanimously passed a resolution that recognizes as a genocide the mass killings of Armenians a century ago, infuriating Turkey and dealing a blow to the already problematic ties between Ankara and Washington.

#### [Reliance Industries plans to develop chemical facility in Ruwais with Adnoc](#)

December 10, 2019, Livemint

In what may further bolster India's robust ties with West Asian energy producers, Mukesh Ambani-promoted Reliance Industries Ltd (RIL), plans to develop an Ethylene Dichloride facility in Ruwais with Abu Dhabi National Oil Co (Adnoc), the state-run oil company of the United Arab Emirates (UAE), the companies said in a joint statement.

## United States

### United States

#### [India, US to sign key defence pact at 2+2 next week; Kashmir could figure](#)

December 12, 2019, Hindustan Times

India and the United States are likely to sign a key defence agreement at the second edition of the upcoming 2+2 ministerial, which has become a “principal mechanism”, for advancing growing strategic convergence between the two countries.

#### [Pelosi says U.S. House to consider impeachment next week](#)

December 12, 2019, Reuters

U.S. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi said the House would act next week to wrap up its impeachment inquiry, following up on whatever decision is taken on articles of impeachment by the House Judiciary Committee this week.

#### [Trump publicly minimizes impeachment while he stewes privately](#)

December 11, 2019, CNN

The imminent prospect of impeachment is still weighing heavily on Donald Trump, who is likely to join the small club of presidents to face a formal impeachment vote as early as next week.

#### [Trump again mocks teen climate activist Greta Thunberg](#)

December 12, 2019, CNN

President Donald Trump again publicly mocked teen climate crisis activist Greta Thunberg, tweeting that the 16-year-old Swede who has inspired protesters worldwide has “anger management” issues.

#### [Trump claims US is ‘getting very close’ to a China trade deal](#)

December 12, 2019, CNBC

President Donald Trump said the U.S. has moved close to a trade agreement with China after several false starts and near misses.

#### [Beyond the Trade War](#)

December 12, 2019, Foreign Affairs

Deal or no deal in the coming days, it is clear that the United States needs a fundamentally different approach to economic competition with China—one that bolsters U.S. technological and financial power while countering Beijing’s malign activities directly.

### [Stocks jump to a new record on Trump tweet saying US is 'very close' to China trade deal](#)

December 12, 2019, CNBC

Stocks jumped to all-time highs after President Donald Trump said China and the U.S. were zeroing in on a trade deal, lifting hope that an agreement will be reached before a key deadline.

### [Senate committee passes bipartisan bill to stop Trump withdrawing from NATO](#)

December 11, 2019, The Guardian

Legislation to stop Donald Trump from withdrawing the US from NATO has been approved for a Senate vote, amid uncertainty over the president's intentions towards the alliance.

### [Trump aims to crack down on anti-Semitism on college campuses using civil rights protections](#)

December 12, 2019, CNN

President Donald Trump signed an executive order to include discrimination against Jews as a violation of law in certain cases, with an eye toward fighting anti-Semitism on college campuses.

### [Trump poised for Supreme Court battle over financial records](#)

December 12, 2019, Reuters

The U.S. Supreme Court may have a conservative majority that includes two justices appointed by President Donald Trump, but his efforts to shield his tax returns and other financial records from scrutiny still face an uncertain future.

### [Trump Aides and Democrats Agree on Trade Pact With Mexico and Canada](#)

December 10, 2019, The New York Times

The White House and House Democrats reached an agreement to strengthen labor, environmental, pharmaceutical and enforcement provisions in President Trump's North American trade pact, a significant development that made it all but certain that the signature trade deal would become law.

### [The United States is about to sanction Assad, Russia and Iran for Syrian war crimes](#)

December 12, 2019, The Washington Post

More than three years after it was first introduced, landmark legislation that would provide for U.S. sanctions against the Assad regime, Russia and Iran for past and ongoing war crimes in Syria is on the verge of finally passing in Congress.



[In new legal memo, White House budget office defends withholding aid to Ukraine](#)

December 12, 2019, The Washington Post

The White House budget office asserts in a new legal memo that it withheld military aid to Ukraine as a temporary move to study whether the spending complied with U.S. policy – and not as a political effort to block Congress's spending decisions.

[U.S. threatens visa restrictions over South Sudan peace process](#)

December 12, 2019, Reuters

The United States threatened visa restrictions on anyone who attempts to damage the peace process in South Sudan as Washington upped its pressure on the war-torn country to form a unity government and re-evaluates its relationship with the African nation.

[Latvian government seizes control of main ports after U.S. sanctions](#)

December 12, 2019, Reuters

Latvia's parliament passed legislation to take control over the Baltic country's two biggest ports in an effort to keep them open after U.S. sanctions against a Latvian oligarch threatened operations.

[US lawmakers reach deal on massive defense bill, eye Russia, Turkey, China](#)

December 10, 2019, The Economic Times

U.S. lawmakers announced an agreement on a \$738-billion bill setting policy for the Department of Defense, including new measures for competing with Russia and China, family leave for federal workers and the creation of President Donald Trump's long-desired Space Force.

## Europe & Russia

### Europe

#### [France will act in concert with India to ensure a free, open and secure Indo-Pacific region](#)

December 9, 2019, Times of India

For France, as for India, the Indo-Pacific is a threefold reality. First, a geographical reality, as civilizational and commercial ties have linked Africa and Asia through the Indian Ocean for centuries. Second, a national reality, as France, like India, is an Indo-Pacific rim nation and an actor in the region. Third, the Indo-Pacific is above all a strategic reality, with security, economic and environmental dimensions.

#### [France's Indo-Pacific strategy: inclusive and principled](#)

December 12, 2019, East Asia Forum

France's recently launched Indo-Pacific strategy has attracted many critical and sarcastic comments. Some Western analysts picture France's move as a desperate (and vain) attempt to regain its past grandeur and most of them consider the strategy doomed to fail, while Chinese commentators criticise France for following in US footsteps to contain China's rise.

#### [Election results 2019: Boris Johnson hails 'new dawn' after historic victory](#)

December 13, 2019, BBC

Boris Johnson has said he will work "night and day" to repay the trust of voters after he led the Conservatives to an "historic" election victory. Speaking in London, the PM said it was a mandate to take the UK out of the EU next month "no ifs, no buts".

#### [Europe now has its own Green Deal](#)

December 11, 2019, Vox

The European Union plans to eliminate its contributions to climate change by 2050. But its plan is light on how to do so.

#### [European shares advance as Britons head to polls](#)

December 12, 2019, Reuters

European shares advanced as investors awaited the outcome of a general election in Britain that may decide the future of Brexit as well as comments from new European Central Bank (ECB) chief Christine Lagarde.

### [Germany Tells Trump Not to Meddle in Europe's Energy Issues](#)

December 12, 2019, Bloomberg

Germany is pushing back on President Donald Trump's moves to impose sanctions on the controversial Nord Stream 2 natural gas pipeline, with Angela Merkel's top diplomat rejecting outside meddling.

### [Germany: Indian couple convicted of spying for Delhi](#)

December 12, 2019, Deutsche Welle

Two Indian citizens living in Germany have been found guilty of spying on Kashmiris and Sikhs for India's intelligence agency. The couple have been sentenced to suspended jail terms and large fines.

### [Germany says Russia's expulsion of its diplomats is unjustified](#)

December 12, 2019, Reuters

Germany described as "unjustified" Russia's decision to expel two German diplomats from Moscow in a tit-for-tat response to Berlin's decision last week to order the expulsion of two Russian diplomats.

### [Huawei Strikes German 5G Deal Despite Political Pushback](#)

December 11, 2019, Wall Street Journal

Huawei Technologies Inc. secured a commitment to build part of Germany's 5G infrastructure, strengthening its position in Europe's largest economy despite calls from lawmakers to bar the Chinese company.

### [France shuts down as Macron touches the third rail of French politics](#)

December 7, 2019, CNN

The one-day general strike that was supposed to shut down France is now stretching at least into next week as President Emmanuel Macron perseveres in his efforts to drag his nation into the 21st century.

### [France Postpones Summit on Military Involvement in Africa](#)

December 12, 2019, The New York Times

French President Emmanuel Macron has agreed with Niger to postpone a key summit focusing on France's military operation in Africa's Sahel region until the beginning of next year.

### [European Union to Set Up Sanctions Regime Against Human Rights Offenders](#)

December 11, 2019, UNPO

The European Union (EU) has agreed to start working on legislation that will allow the EU to sanction individuals accused of human rights abuses worldwide, mirroring the Magnitsky Act in the United States, which has already been in place

since 2012. With such a sanctions regime, the EU is able to hold individuals accountable over human rights abuses without having to target a specific country.

### [EU's new chief diplomat urged to consider Palestine statehood](#)

December 10, 2019, Al Jazeera

Josep Borrell should restart the debate over recognising Palestine's statehood, said Luxembourg's foreign minister.

## **Russia**

### [Turkey may get Russia's alternative to F-35 if US fails to supply jets](#)

December 11, 2019, Tass

Ankara and Moscow are close to striking a deal on the delivery of 36 Sukhoi Su-35 fighters. The parties could also agree that Turkey would start manufacturing some components for Russian jets. Head of Russia's Federal Service for Military and Technical Cooperation Dmitry Shugayev said that consultations on the possible delivery of the Su-35 and the Su-57 aircraft were underway but the parties were not discussing a contract.

### [Vladimir Putin signals Russia will appeal against four-year Wada ban](#)

December 10, 2019, The Guardian

Russian president Vladimir Putin has said his country has 'reason to appeal' against the four-year ban imposed by the World Anti-Doping Agency. Wada's executive committee unanimously accepted a recommendation from its independent compliance review committee to impose sanctions on Russia.

### [UN resolution condemns Russia's occupation of Crimea](#)

December 10, 2019, Al Jazeera

The UN General Assembly (UNGA) has approved a resolution condemning Russia's occupation of Crimea and the city of Sevastapol and urged the withdrawal of its military forces "without delay".

### [Trump meets with Russian foreign minister amid impeachment chaos](#)

December 11, 2019, The Guardian

Donald Trump held a closed-door meeting with the Russian foreign minister, Sergei Lavrov, at the White House, but the two men gave diverging accounts of what was discussed, on a day articles of impeachment were announced against the US president.

### [\\$740 Bn U.S. Defense Bill Targets Russian Pipelines](#)

December 11, 2019, The Moscow Times

U.S. lawmakers have agreed on a \$740 billion annual defense policy bill that includes new measures against two of Russia's nearly finished energy pipelines to Europe and Turkey.

### [Russia Wins Oil Concessions at Key OPEC+ Meeting](#)

December 6, 2019, The Moscow Times

Russia will barely have to cut its oil production as part of a new deal to stabilise oil prices agreed with the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC).

### [Airing Fake MH17 Image Was a 'Mistake,' Russian State TV Chief Admits](#)

December 11, 2019, The Moscow Times

The head of Russia's largest television channel has admitted that airing footage it erroneously claimed to prove Ukraine's role in the downing of MH17 was a "mistake," according to a book excerpt published by The New Yorker.

### [Russia's only aircraft carrier catches fire; 1 dead and 2 missing](#)

December 13, 2019, CNN

At least one person was killed after Russia's only aircraft carrier, Admiral Kuznetsov, caught fire ~~on~~ during repair work in Russia's Arctic Sea port of Murmansk. A further 10 people were injured and two are missing.

### [EU extends sanctions on Russia over Ukraine conflict](#)

December 12, 2019, DW

EU sanctions targeting Moscow's finance, energy and defense industries will stay in place until mid-2020.

### [Russia Expels 2 German Diplomats In Deepening Quarrel Over Murder Probe](#)

December 12, 2019, NPR

More than a week after Germany announced the expulsion of two Russian diplomats, citing evidence of a state-sponsored contract killing in Berlin, the Russian government has retaliated in kind.

## Africa & Latin America

### Latin America

#### [Chilean air force says missing plane with 38 onboard has crashed](#)

Dec 10, 2019, The Guardian

The Chilean air force has said one of its cargo planes that went missing for more than 12 hours with 38 people onboard has crashed and a rescue team is searching for survivors.

#### [Next round of India-Chile PTA expansion talks seek wider trade basket](#)

December 11, 2019, Financial Express

India and South American nation Chile meet in New Delhi seeking further expansion of the existing Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA).

#### [What's behind Chile's protests](#)

December 9, 2019, Atlantic Council

What started as a student protest over a spike in subway fares on October 18 has turned into a popular riot in Chile. Despite the twenty-six dead and thirteen thousand injured, the protesters continue to march and clash with the police in Santiago in an uprising that has surprised domestic, regional, and international experts alike.

#### [US, Canada and Mexico sign agreement again to replace NAFTA](#)

December 11, 2019, The Economic Times

Top officials from Canada, Mexico and the United States signed a fresh overhaul of a quarter-century-old trade pact that aims to improve enforcement of worker rights and hold down prices for biologic drugs by eliminating a patent provision.

#### [Former Mexican security official arrested in U.S., accused of taking millions in bribes from 'El Chapo'](#)

December 10, 2019, Los Angeles Times

As Mexico's top cop who helped launch the country's war against drug cartels more than a decade ago, Genaro García Luna won the trust of U.S. counter-narcotics officials and was celebrated for rooting out graft among police ranks.

#### [Authorities Discover 2nd Tunnel Under Arizona-Mexico Border in a Week; 4 Migrants Arrested](#)

December 10, 2019, KTLA.com

Another border tunnel from Mexico to the United States has been discovered in Arizona after the U.S. Border Patrol arrested four migrants.

### [Argentina Steps into the Post-Macri Era](#)

December 12, 2019, Jacobin

Argentina's Mauricio Macri officially steps down as president, having overseen four years of neoliberal mismanagement, inflation, and a new IMF bailout program. The election of the Peronist Alberto Fernández is good news for the Left, but it faces an uphill battle in stabilizing a deeply indebted economy.

### [In Colombia, Indigenous Protesters Decry Drilling On Reservations](#)

December 10, 2019, Forbes

Indigenous people from the Colombian countryside converged on its capital city to declare their territories closed to business and decry what they describe as a systematic campaign of assassinations by shady economic interests to mine, drill, log or produce drugs on their land.

### [As Guaido disappoints Venezuela, it's time for Trump to step up](#)

December 10, 2019, Washington Examiner

President Trump is allegedly losing confidence that Juan Guaido, Venezuela's legitimate leader, can ever topple socialist dictator Nicolas Maduro, and is weighing stronger options to achieve this goal. It has been almost one year since Guaido took office as interim president of Venezuela and ~~since~~ America started one of its fastest and strongest sanction campaigns to topple a dictator.

### [In Ecuador, no one can act outside the law](#)

December 9, 2019, The Guardian

Ecuador is a sovereign and independent republic and not res nullius (nobody's land) where any national or foreign adventurer can act outside the law.

### [India and Ecuador celebrate 50 years of diplomatic relations](#)

December 10, 2019, Prensa Latina

Cooperation between India and Ecuador made progress in areas such as health, energy, education and commerce, said Ecuadorian Ambassador Hector Cueva, on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations.

## **Africa**

### [Somalia hotel attack: Security forces kill 5 al-Shabab fighters](#)

December 11, 2019, Al Jazeera

Somali security forces shot and killed five al-Shabab attackers after an attack that left at least three civilians and two soldiers dead in a hotel near the presidential palace in Mogadishu.

### [Algeria presses ahead with election amid protests](#)

December 11, 2019, Al Jazeera

Algeria is set to hold a contentious presidential election on December 12, despite demonstrations against the poll led by protesters who want wide-scale political reform before any vote.

### [Ethiopia: Beyond ethnic federalism](#)

December 9, 2019, African Arguments

When the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) ruling coalition established the system of ethnic federalism after coming to power in 1991, it served a clear purpose.

### [Qatar Airways to take 60% stake in Rwanda international airport](#)

December 10, 2019, Al Jazeera

Qatar Airways has agreed to take a 60 percent stake in a new \$1.3bn international airport in Rwanda, according to a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed.

### [Sudan's New Government Can't Succeed If It Remains on the U.S. Blacklist](#)

December 9, 2019, FP

Washington's refusal to remove Khartoum from the state sponsors of terrorism list will slow Sudan's transition to democracy and could undermine it.

### [African Union, Arab League vow to support Palestine](#)

December 12, 2019, Anadolu Agency

The African Union (AU), non-aligned Movement, and the Arab League pledged to continue their support for the realisation of Palestine's independence statehood.





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