



Delhi Policy Group

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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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Contents

South Asia.....	1
East & South East Asia.....	10
Central & West Asia.....	16
United States.....	20
Europe & Russia.....	23
Africa & Latin America	26

South Asia

India

[Coronavirus outbreak: Exit from China – India plans two flights, 28-day isolation in Delhi](#)

January 30, 2020, The Indian Express

The government plans to operate two flights to evacuate Indian citizens from China's Hubei province, the epicenter of the coronavirus outbreak, and has decided to isolate them for 28 days instead of the customary 14-day incubation period.

[India and Brazil Ink 15 Pacts, Unveil Action Plan to Broaden Ties](#)

The India and Brazil on 25 January, inked 15 agreements to ramp up cooperation in a wide range of areas and unveiled an action plan to further broad base strategic ties after talks between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro. In the action plan, the two countries have set specific goals for deeper cooperation in areas of defence and security, trade and commerce, agriculture, civil aviation, energy, environment, health and innovation and vowed to work together to conclude an agreement to deal with international terrorism.

[India should realise that trade and opening borders can address Kashmir dispute](#)

January 25, 2020, The Indian Express

Pakistan was supposed to become like India if it wanted to survive. India's former foreign affairs minister, Yashwant Sinha, mentioned while India had fought a war with China in 1962 and continues to have territorial disputes with it, China was India's largest trading partner. Today, Sinha who is not a part of the BJP, mentioned that of Pakistan following India, India is becoming like Pakistan.

[Foreign secretary Harsh Vardhan Shringla has overcome challenges pragmatically](#)

January 29, 2020, The Indian Express

Harsh Vardhan Shringla's rise to the top of the Foreign Office brings closure to one of India's foreign policy challenges for three decades: The merger of Sikkim with the Indian Union in 1975.

[Taranjit Singh Sandhu is India's new envoy to the United States](#)

January 28, 2020, Hindustan Times

Among the key tasks he will have to take on after assuming his new position is coordinating US President Donald Trump's expected visit to India in February and guiding the talks for a new trade deal between the two countries.

[Donald Trump may visit India from Feb 21 to 24, trade in focus](#)

January 28, 2020, Hindustan Times

US President Donald Trump is set to visit India between February 21 and February 24, with a day devoted to a joint public function with Prime Minister Narendra Modi, possibly in Ahmedabad although the final programme is yet to be sealed, according to people familiar with the matter.

[India May Invite Australia For Crucial Multilateral Malabar Naval Exercise Despite Chinese Objection](#)

January 29, 2020, Swarajya

The Malabar naval exercise will be held in the Bay of Bengal after the monsoon ends in July-August. Sources told ToI that there is "a move by India to include Australia" in the 24th Malabar exercise, but "the final decision is yet to be taken."

[European Parliament postpones voting on joint motion against CAA](#)

January 30, 2020, The Indian Express

"Following a decision by MEPs at the opening of today's Plenary session in Brussels, the vote on the resolution on India's Citizenship (Amendment) Act 2019 has been postponed to the March session," the European Parliament said in a statement.

[Plan to cut Army from internal security duties in N-E, will be done in next 18-24 months: Chief](#)

January 29, 2020, The Indian Express

Army Chief General M M Naravane said that two battalions have already been taken off from such duties and the next drawdown will happen after the Bodoland elections in Assam are completed in June-July this year.

[Boeing says India is critical to its international growth plans](#)

January 28, 2020, Financial Express

The statement of Dennis Swanson, vice president, International Sales, Boeing Global Sales and Marketing came ahead of his visit to India's mega defence exhibition to be held in Lucknow from February 5-9.

[India-US trade deal final, Robert Lighthizer to seal it on February trip to Delhi](#)

January 27, 2020, The Print

According to the sources, New Delhi has agreed to remove price caps from US-imported medical devices, a matter of much concern in the US, while Washington is ready to partially restore concessions for Indian imports under the US' Generalised System of Preferences (GSP), a trade programme meant to boost the economies of developing nations.

[Indian Navy on humanitarian mission in Madagascar](#)

January 29, 2020, Mangalorean

The Indian Navy launched "Operation Vanilla", a humanitarian initiative after it came to know about a natural disaster in Madagascar. It has urgently diverted Indian Navy Ship Airavat to provide support in relief operations. Bad weather has displaced nearly 107,000 people there, with Prime Minister Christian Ntsay declaring the situation a "national disaster". Seeing the deteriorating situation, India's Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said, "In this time of national disaster, we stand in solidarity with Madagascar."

[Jindal Defence partners with Taurus Armas for small arms manufacturing](#)

January 27, 2020, Outlook India

Jindal Defence said it has partnered with Brazil-based Taurus Armas to foray into small arms manufacturing in India. Both the companies have signed an agreement to set up a joint venture firm in Haryana. While Jindal Defence will hold 51 per cent equity stake, Taurus Armas would have the rest 49 per cent, the company said in a statement.

[US looking forward to working with India on security](#)

January 28, 2020, The Hindustan Times

The United States has said that it is looking forward to working together with India on a wide range of issues including security. As India recently completed 70 years as a Republic, Washington wished New Delhi for a decade "full of achievements".

[India & Russia could team up to build nuclear plants in Africa and Middle East, as New Delhi juggles rival partners](#)

January 31, 2020, Rt

The Indian ambassador to Russia, Ambassador Venkatesh Varma, recently announced that India could collaborate with Russia to launch new projects in Africa and the Middle East. He stated, "Russia already has agreements in this field with a number of African countries," adding, "Ethiopia is one of them, and there are some countries in the Middle East."

Pakistan

[Overseas investors pump record \\$2.58b in govt debt](#)

January 26, 2020, The News

Pakistan Government securities attracted a record \$2.58 billion in overseas cash during the current fiscal year of 2020 as a number of global investors re-allocate resources to Pakistan, which is amongst the top yielding debt market in the region.

[Pakistan Customs makes trackers mandatory for Afghan transit cargo](#)

January 25, 2020, The News

Pakistan tax authorities have made installation of tracking and monitoring devices mandatory on all vehicles carrying cargoes from Afghanistan for transit trade from February 1, 2020.

[Divestment procedures for six entities finalised](#)

January 30, 2020, Dawn

Pakistan government has finalised procedures for privatisation of six state-owned entities. The entities include Convention Centre, Services Hotel Lahore, SME Bank, First Women's Bank and two power plants.

[Navy offers Sri Lanka help in fighting drug trafficking, human smuggling](#)

January 30, 2020, Dawn

Pakistan Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Zafar Mahmood Abbasi on January 28 completed his five-day official visit to Sri Lanka which was aimed at strengthening naval ties between the two countries and offering help in combating organised transnational crime at sea.

[23 PTM activists sent to jail for 14 days](#)

January 30, 2020, Dawn

A judicial magistrate sent 23 activists of the Pa--shtun Tahaffuz Move-ment (PTM) to jail on 14-day judicial remand after police relea--sed seven other activists, including MNA Mohsin Dawar. The activists were arres-ted from outside the Natio-nal Press Club on Tuesday while protesting detention of PTM leader Manzoor Pashteen.

[Pakistan organising two-day trade conference in Kenya](#)

January 29, 2020, Dawn

The Pakistan government organised a two-day trade conference in Kenya in a major trade outreach to Africa. The first Pakistan-Africa Trade Development Conference hosted jointly by the ministries of commerce and foreign affairs in Nairobi on Jan 30-31.

[Power sector: Pakistan's average surplus capacity to cross 4,000MW](#)

January 31, 2020, The Express Tribune

The annual average capacity surplus of Pakistan's power sector is likely to increase 15% against projected demand because of over-commitment of power generation projects.

Afghanistan

[Taliban kill 29 Afghan security personnel in renewed clashes](#)

January 30, 2020, Dawn

At least 29 members of the Afghan security forces have been killed in Taliban attacks that followed air and ground assaults by government forces on the Islamist group. The surge in hostilities signals deadlock at stop-start peace talks involving US and Taliban negotiators in Doha.

[Afghan politicians prepare 'national reconciliation plan'](#)

January 27, 2020, The News

A group of prominent Afghan politicians has prepared a national reconciliation plan with the help of a research organization for moving forward the peace negotiations.

[2 US airmen killed in Afghanistan crash: Pentagon](#)

January 30, 2020, Anadolu Agency

The Department of Defense announced the deaths of two airmen who were supporting Operation Freedom's Sentinel," in Air Force plane crashed in Afghanistan. Lt. Col. Paul K. Voss, 46, and Capt. Ryan S. Phaneuf, 30, died on January 27 in the crash of a Bombardier E-11A aircraft in Ghazni, central Afghanistan. The cause of the crash remains under investigation.

[TAPI pipeline project faces more delays in Afghanistan](#)

January 27, 2020, Tolo News

Work on the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (TAPI) gas pipeline project – a major regional economic project - has faced another delay in its construction inside Afghanistan over a postponement in land acquisition, among other issues.

Bangladesh

[PM Modi set to visit Bangladesh on March 17 to bolster ties](#)

January 29, 2020, Hindustan Times

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will be the chief guest at an event to kick-start the year-long centenary celebrations for "Bangabandhu" Sheikh Mujibur Rehman in Dhaka on March 17 in a move that signals the robust bilateral relations between India and its eastern neighbour.

[India-Bangladesh joint exercise 'SAMPRITI-IX' to be conducted in Meghalaya from Feb 3](#)

January 30, 2020, ANI

The ninth edition of joint military training exercise between India-Bangladesh will be conducted at Umroi, Meghalaya from February 3 to February 16. The statement stressed that Exercise SAMPRITI is an important bilateral defence cooperation endeavour between India and Bangladesh.

Nepal

[Vinay Mohan Kwatra appointed as the next Ambassador of India to Nepal](#)

January 30, 2020, ANI

The Ministry of External Affairs appointed Vinay Mohan Kwatra as India's next ambassador to Nepal. The diplomat is presently serving as India's ambassador to France. He will be replacing Manjeev Singh Puri, the current Indian ambassador to Nepal.

[On Republic Day, India gifts 30 ambulances, six buses to Nepal](#)

January 26, 2020, ANI

New Delhi gifted 30 ambulances and six buses to various hospitals, non-profit charitable organisations and educational institutions of Nepal on the occasion of India's 71st Republic Day. The ambulance and buses were gifted to reaffirm India's commitment to partner with Nepal in its journey towards socio-economic development.

[Nepal can mediate between India and Pakistan: Kathmandu](#)

January 25, 2020, Defence Aviation Post

Nepal is a neutral country and can play a mediating role between India and Pakistan if necessary, a powerful government source said, delinking concerns about terrorism from the question of revival of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC). "Dialogue is a must in resolving differences and if necessary Nepal can mediate as we are independent, peace loving, friendly and neutral in the region. We love truth and facts and can be instrumental in finding a better solution," said the highly placed source who also urged India and Pakistan to invest in direct channels of communication.

Bhutan

[Delegation from Bhutan led by its EC to visit Delhi CEO Office, poll museum](#)

January 27, 2020, Outlook

A three-member Bhutanese delegation led by its election commissioner will visit the office of the Delhi poll body on Tuesday to learn about functioning of the electoral process in the country, officials said. Their visit comes at a time when the office of the Delhi Chief Electoral Officer is gearing up to hold the assembly polls on February 8. The delegates will meet Delhi CEO Ranbir Singh and also visit the poll museum.

[India Cherishes "Very Special Friendship" With Bhutan, Ties Will Continue To Deepen: PM Modi](#)

January 27, 2020, NDTV

"Extremely touched by the lovely Republic Day wishes @PMBhutan! You have wonderfully highlighted the unbreakable bond between our nations. India cherishes the very special friendship with Bhutan and I am sure our ties will continue to deepen in the times to come," PM Modi tweeted.

Sri Lanka

[Sri Lanka Defense Ministry to regularize private security agencies](#)

January 30, 2020, Colombo Page

The Defense Ministry will regularize private security services by introducing minimum wage for security guards, registration of new security firms and renewal of licenses, the Ministry said. Defense Secretary Major General (Retd) Kamal Gunaratne said plans were drawn to regularize private security services that operate island-wide to provide a quality security service.

[US, Sri Lanka share compelling interests: Alice Wells](#)

January 26, 2020, Colombo Page

Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asian Affairs Alice Wells on Friday said the United State and Sri Lanka have compelling shared interests that include countering violent extremism, strengthening maritime security, preventing narcotics smuggling, promoting investment and economic growth as part of a free and open Indo-Pacific. During a briefing at the US Department of State on her recent trip to Sri Lanka and other South Asian countries, Ambassador Wells said ultimately, the quality of the partnership between the two countries will reflect the success in strengthening shared values, including on the critical issue of healing the wounds of Sri Lanka's civil war.

[Pakistan Naval Chief pays official visit to Sri Lanka: spokesperson](#)

January 28, 2020, Ary News

Pakistani Chief of Naval Staff (CNS) Admiral Zafar Mahmood Abbasi paid an official visit to Sri Lanka where he met top civil and military leadership. He called on Sri Lankan Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa and also held a meeting with Defence Secretary Maj Gen (Retd) Kamal Gunaratne and top military hierarchy. During the meetings, Admiral Abbasi offered help in fighting drug trafficking and

human smuggling activities, increase in intelligence sharing, and greater cooperation between Pakistan Maritime Security Agency and Sri Lanka's coast guards.

[Sri Lanka- Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa to visit India from February 7-11](#)

January 30, 2020, Menafn

Sri Lankan Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa will visit India from February 7-11, during which he will hold extensive talks with his Indian counterpart Narendra Modi. "The visit is in continuation of the tradition of high-level exchanges between India and Sri Lanka," Indian External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Raveesh Kumar said during a media briefing today. Apart from his official engagement in Delhi, Mahinda Rajapaksa will also travel to Varanasi, Sarnath, Bodh Gaya and Tirupati, Kumar said.

Maldives

[India provides platform, Maldives inches closer to re-enter Commonwealth](#)

January 26, 2020, Economic Times

Maldives foreign minister Abdullah Shahid met Commonwealth secretary general Patricia Scotland here earlier this month on the sidelines of the Raisina Dialogue. India, as a key member of the grouping, has been nudging the re-entry of its neighbour, since a new government in Male was voted to power in 2018.

East & South East Asia

China

[Long-term tech rivalry expected despite phase one deal](#)

Global Times, January 22, 2020

Despite the signing of the phase one trade deal, US pressure on Chinese technology companies including Huawei has not lifted. The US Commerce Department sent regulations to the Office of Management and Budget that would restrict US companies' sales to Huawei from their overseas facilities, according to a Wall Street Journal report citing people familiar with the matter.

[China needs to prepare for consequences of virus](#)

Global Times, January 30, 2020

As China is concentrating all efforts in fighting against the outbreak of the novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV), the central government should also be alert to and make preparations for the inevitable economic decline.

[Dream-chasing China a global anchor of stability](#)

Global Times, January 21, 2020

China will embrace its Lunar New Year Saturday, a new start for the nation to race against time to reach the Chinese Dream of national rejuvenation.

[Policy support a must to weather virus](#)

China Daily, January 31, 2020

Since its outbreak and spread, the novel coronavirus has aroused concerns in society. It is important to note that the fight against the epidemic is not only a fight for the sake of public health, but also for maintaining economic vitality. So, the country should not only take effective measures to arrest the epidemic as soon as possible, but also allocate resources to minimize the adverse economic impact it is having.

[Xi voices full confidence in winning battle against novel coronavirus](#)

Xinhua, January 31, 2020

Chinese President Xi Jinping said Tuesday that China has full confidence and capability to win the battle against the outbreak of pneumonia caused by the novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV).

[China voices support for Russia's proposal on UNSC permanent members' summit](#)

Xinhua, January 24, 2020

A Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson on Friday voiced support for Russian President Vladimir Putin's proposal to hold a summit among the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), including Britain, China, France, Russia and the United States.

[Pakistan reiterates one-China principle, rejects CPEC rumours](#)

Xinhua, January 23, 2020

Pakistan Foreign Ministry spokesperson Aisha Farooqui reiterated on Thursday that Pakistan firmly supports the one-China principle, stressing that Taiwan-related affairs are China's internal affairs.

[Epidemic shows room to better China's mega-city governance](#)

Xinhua, January 30, 2020

Over the past week or so, the outbreak of the novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) has been affecting every level of China's governing system. In particular, it has posed a major test of the country's capability to govern large cities.

Japan

[Three Japanese returnees from Wuhan test positive for new coronavirus](#)

January 30, 2020, The Japan Times

Three Japanese who returned from Wuhan on a government-chartered flight have tested positive for the new coronavirus, the health ministry said Thursday as more Japanese evacuees from the Chinese city arrived in Tokyo.

[U.S. diplomat says Japan is 'not a dependent,' urges greater security contribution](#)

January 25, 2020, The Japan Times

A senior U.S. State Department official said Friday that Japan is among the countries that should contribute greater funding to its security alliance with Washington, saying Tokyo is "not a dependent" but an "ally."

[Japan PM Abe calls for Taiwan's participation in WHO as coronavirus spreads](#)

January 30, 2020, Kyodo News

Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe said Thursday that Taiwan's participation in the World Health Organization is necessary to effectively fight the spread of a new coronavirus.

[An opening for Japanese leadership in the Mideast](#)

January 30, 2020, The Japan Times

Amid heightened U.S.-Iran tensions sparked by the U.S. killing of Iranian Gen. Qassem Soleimani, Japan's relationships with key players as well as its soft power assets create an opening for much-needed diplomacy between the United States, Iran and Arab states.

[Report: Japan's Shinzo Abe under pressure for China summit](#)

January 28, 2020, UPI

Opposition is growing in Japan against Chinese President Xi Jinping, who is expected to hold a rare summit in Japan with Prime Minister Shinzo Abe in the spring, the first visit by a Chinese president in nine years.

[Japanese living in Beijing grapple with coronavirus outbreak](#)

January 30, 2020, The Japan Times

While some Japanese living in Beijing are optimistic that the new coronavirus can be quickly contained, many others fear that the deadly outbreak will continue to spread.

[Abe eyes Moscow visit in May for WWII anniversary](#)

January 31, 2020, Japan Today

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe said Thursday he is considering visiting Moscow in May to attend a ceremony marking the 75th anniversary of Russia's victory over Germany in World War II.

[Lebanon rejects Japanese request for Ghosn extradition](#)

January 29, 2020, Nikkei Asian Review

Lebanon's judicial authorities have rejected a request from Japan to extradite disgraced former Nissan Motor Co. chairman Carlos Ghosn, who jumped bail and fled to the Middle Eastern country at the end of last year.

Korea

[First group of Koreans arrives from Wuhan](#)

January 31, 2020, The Korea Herald

The first group of Koreans evacuated from Wuhan, China, arrived in Korea on Friday, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs said.

[Asan, Jincheon residents continue to protest accommodating evacuees from Wuhan](#)

January 30, 2020, The Korea Herald

Residents of Asan and Jincheon continued on Thursday to protest the government's plan to use facilities in their towns to quarantine some 700 Korean evacuees from the Chinese city of Wuhan, the epicenter of the deadly coronavirus outbreak.

[Samsung's earnings nosedive on weak chip, display markets in 2019](#)

January 30, 2020, The Korea Herald

Samsung Electronics posted a 52.84 percent on-year decline in operating profit in 2019 due to the sluggish memory and display panel markets, according to its earnings report released Thursday.

[Korea urged to join CPTPP to cut reliance on China](#)

January 30, 2020, The Korea Times

Korea should join a trade agreement among 11 countries in the trans-Pacific area to reduce its heavy reliance on China and foster the export of goods manufactured by small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), a state-run think tank report said.

[N.Korea 'Building Underground Missile Base'](#)

January 30, 2020, The Chosun Ilbo

North Korea is believed to have built a large tunnel in Ryanggang Province near the border with China that appears to be an underground missile base. The U.S. and South Korea are monitoring the facility, which experts believe could be part of a cluster of North Korean missile bases being built underground to avoid aerial attacks.

[N.Korea Halts Trade with China Amid Coronavirus Fears](#)

January 30, 2020, North Korea

North Korea has suspended trade with China and its consulates there stopped issuing visas Tuesday amid the rapid spread of coronavirus. Trade with China is

virtually the regime's sole economic lifeline, which suggests how desperate it is to prevent the outbreak from spreading through North Korea, which lacks medical facilities and supplies to deal with any epidemic.

Southeast Asia

[Duterte Wary of US Role in South China Sea Dispute](#)

January 25, 2020, Inquirer.Net

President Duterte is not just afraid that a war in the South China Sea would crush the country—he's also wary that American troops would take advantage and the conflict would spiral out of control.

[USS Montgomery Conducts First 2020 FONOP in South China Sea](#)

January 28, 2020, USNI News

Littoral Combat Ship USS Montgomery (LCS-8) conducted the first freedom of navigation operation of the year through waters near the Spratly Islands, according to this report from the United States Naval Institute.

[Beijing Accuses US of 'Deliberate Provocations' in South China Sea as Warship Passes Spratly Islands](#)

January 28, 2020, SCMP

PLA Southern Theatre Command spokesman said USS Montgomery harboured 'evil intentions' on its Lunar New Year voyage into contested waters. The US 7th Fleet says warship challenged restrictions imposed by China, Vietnam and Taiwan.

[U.S. Navy Sails Warship Near Disputed Islands In South China Sea for First Time In 2020](#)

January 28, 2020, Japan Times

The U.S. Navy said Tuesday that it had sailed a warship near the contested Spratly Islands in the South China Sea – home to fortified islands built by China – on Saturday, in what was believed to be its first freedom of navigation operation (FONOP) of 2020.

[What's Next for Vietnam's Maritime Militia?](#)

January 28, 2020, The Diplomat

Vietnam's development of so-called maritime militias continues to surface in the headlines within its wider range of capabilities.

[Forging Consensus in the South China Sea](#)

January 28, 2020, The Interpreter

A less contested and somewhat united Southeast Asian front would be more diplomatically difficult for Beijing to divide and conquer.

[Vietnam, Under Increasing Pressure From China, Mulls a Shift Into America's Orbit](#)

January 30, 2020, WPR

In a major new defense white paper, its first in 10 years, Vietnam has begun signalling that it could abandon its long-standing foreign policy strategy of hedging between major powers like China and the United States and move more definitively into Washington's orbit.

Central & West Asia

Central Asia

[EU launches Green Central Asia environmental initiative at Berlin conference](#)

January 31, 2020, The Astana Times

The European Union (EU) launched the Green Central Asia regional integration project on climate protection as part of the new EU Strategy for Central Asia and Afghanistan at the Jan. 28 conference in Berlin. The German government initiated the project.

[China's virus storm over Central Asia](#)

January 28, 2020, Eurasia Net

A deadly Chinese virus is spreading panic through Central Asia's online space – and infecting the region's governments with a rare sense of urgency. So far, none of the five countries of Central Asia have had a confirmed case of the flu-like coronavirus that has caused over 100 deaths in China since the start of the year. Most of the fatalities have been in or close to the epidemic's locked-down epicenter in the Chinese city of Wuhan, but cases have already emerged in Europe and North America.

[Reforms in Uzbekistan: Key to India's neighbourhood policy in Central Asia](#)

January 28, 2020, The Economic Times

Uzbekistan, Central Asia's key power, has announced further reforms that will strengthen its position as a Eurasian player. A stronger Uzbekistan is imperative for India's plans to deepen strategic and economic bonds with the region that can aptly be called India's neighbourhood.

[Uzbekistan Will 'Cooperate' with Eurasian Economic Union](#)

January 27, 2020, The Diplomat

In a state of the union address, Uzbek President said the country would engage in "cooperation" with the EAEU.

[Kazakhstan Shutting Down Transport Links With China Over Coronavirus Fears](#)

January 29, 2020, Rferl.org

Kazakhstan says it is suspending all forms of passenger travel to and from neighboring China, as an outbreak of a new coronavirus continued to widen.

[Kazakhstan to return Kazakhs remaining in China](#)

January 30, 2020, Trendz

Kazakhstan will carry out additional flights to return remaining Kazakhs from Beijing and Urumqi, Trend reports with reference to Kazakhstan's Ministry of Industry and Infrastructural Development. Due to the coronavirus outbreak in China, Kazakhstan's government is taking measures to prevent the virus from spreading in Kazakhstan.

[Russia Willing To Assist Turkmenistan With Second Satellite, Turkmen Astronaut](#)

January 25, 2020, Space watch. global

Russia is willing to assist the Central Asian republic of Turkmenistan in developing its second satellite and in the selection, training, and launch of the first Turkmen astronaut, according to Yuri Baturin – vice president of the Tsiolkovsky Russian Academy of Cosmonauts, politician, and a former cosmonaut – during a visit to the Turkmen capital Ashgabat on 25 January 2020.

[Kyrgyzstan starts exporting oil products to Georgia by train through Uzbekistan](#)

January 30, 2020, Aki Press.com

Kyrgyzstan started a pilot project on export of fuel oil residue to Georgia by railroad, the Kyrgyz Temir Jolu JSC company said.

West Asia

[US wants to put Patriot missiles in Iraq to counter Iran as it announces humanitarian aid channel](#)

January 30, 2020, CNN Politics

The United States said that it is seeking to place Patriot missiles in Iraq to counter Tehran and will levy new sanctions against the regime on the same day that it announced the opening of a channel to deliver humanitarian aid to ordinary Iranians.

[Jordan agrees \\$1.3bn IMF programme - Petra](#)

January 31, 2020, Al Jazeera

Jordan has agreed a new \$1.3bn programme with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and will receive a first instalment of \$140m by the end of March, the state news agency Petra said .

[Iraq officials meet NATO brass, discuss future of foreign troops](#)

January 31, Rudaw

Iraq aims to restrict the activities of foreign forces on its soil, telling NATO officials on Wednesday that any future military operations must have Baghdad's prior knowledge and approval before implementation on the ground.

[Iraq and Lebanon Are in the same Boat](#)

January 30, 3030, Asharq Al- Awsat

As for similarities, they are especially important because they provide the basis for Iran's unified approach to the two countries, which its Revolutionary Guards (IRGC) boasts about occupying and controlling.

[Putin meets Netanyahu, reserves judgement on Middle East plan](#)

January 30, 2020, Al Jazeera

The Israeli prime minister visited Moscow to discuss United States President Donald Trump's Middle East plan and take an Israeli woman, who had been jailed in Russia, back home.

[World leaders react to Trump's Middle East plan](#)

January 29, 2020, Al Jazeera

Leaders from around the world are reacting to US President Donald Trump's long-awaited Middle East plan, with some denouncing it as "aggressive" and "one-sided" and others saying the proposal initiative "could prove a positive step forward".

[Palestinians push for UN action over Trump Middle East plan](#)

January 30, 2020, Al Jazeera

Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas will visit the United Nations within two weeks to address the Security Council on his rejection of the new US Middle East plan, his ambassador to the body has said.

[Jordanians voice concerns over imports of Israeli gas](#)

January 30, 2020, Al Jazeera

With her fist raised high, Ibtisam stands at the vanguard of hundreds of protesters who have gathered in Amman to rail against a natural gas deal they believe jeopardises Jordan's values, its energy sovereignty and the environment.

[Syrian army takes Maaret al-Numan after heavy bombardment](#)

January 29, 2020, Al Jazeera

Syrian government forces have captured a strategic rebel-held town in the country's northwest amid a Russia-backed military offensive that has displaced hundreds of thousands of people fleeing to safer areas.

[Netanyahu tells Putin that Trump peace deal is a 'new opportunity'](#)

January 30, 2020, The Times of Israel

Kremlin spokeswoman says Russians have only begun to study the 181-page US plan, reiterates stance that any decisions ultimately up to the 'Palestinians and Israelis themselves'.

[Turkey-Russia: Is the marriage of convenience in Idlib over?](#)

January 31, 2020, Arab News

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's sharp criticism of Russia over its handling of the Syria crisis has sparked debate about whether their alliance of convenience is over. On his way back from his African diplomatic tour, Erdogan told reporters: "As of now, Russia is loyal to neither the Astana nor the Sochi accords," adding that his "patience is running out" over the bombardment of rebels in Idlib province.

United States

United States

[Trump impeachment: Major blow for Democrats in witnesses battle](#)

January 31, 2020, BBC

Democrats have been dealt a major blow in their efforts to call witnesses at President Trump's impeachment trial. They needed four Republicans to vote with them to allow witness testimony but one of the few wavering senators said he would not support the measure.

[Trump trial could end soon; Alexander says no to witnesses](#)

January 31, 2020, Associated Press

Republican Sen. Lamar Alexander of Tennessee declared late Thursday night he will oppose calling more witnesses in President Donald Trump's impeachment trial, all but dashing Democratic efforts for more testimony and pushing the Senate toward an imminent vote to acquit the president.

[Trump defense: Ukraine 'quid pro quo' not impeachable](#)

January 29, 2020, Associated Press

In a striking shift from President Donald Trump's claim of "perfect" dealings with Ukraine, his defense asserted Wednesday at his Senate trial that a trade of U.S. military aid for political favours — even if proven — could not be grounds for his impeachment.

[Bolton is the latest in a long line of people Trump has accused of begging him for something](#)

January 30, 2020, CNN

After the New York Times reported that former national security adviser John Bolton's unpublished book alleges Trump said he wanted to withhold aid to Ukraine until Ukraine helped with investigations into Democrats, Trump tweeted -- among other jabs -- that Bolton had "'begged' me for a non-Senate approved job, which I gave him despite many saying 'Don't do it, sir.'"

[Nadler says House could subpoena Bolton if Senate doesn't: CNN](#)

January 30, 2020, Reuters

The head of the U.S. House Judiciary panel said it might be a good idea for the House of Representatives to subpoena President Donald Trump's former national security adviser John Bolton if the Senate does not call him as an impeachment trial witness, CNN reported.

[Trump Releases Mideast Peace Plan That Strongly Favors Israel](#)

January 28, 2020, The New York Times

President Trump on Tuesday unveiled his long-awaited Middle East peace plan with a flourish, releasing a proposal that would give Israel most of what it has sought over decades of conflict while offering the Palestinians the possibility of a state with limited sovereignty.

[House Votes 'No War Against Iran,' In Rebuke To Trump](#)

January 30, 2020, NPR

The House has approved two measures seeking to limit the president's ability to take military action without congressional approval.

[The US economy grew at the weakest pace of Trump's presidency in 2019](#)

January 30, 2020, Business Insider

The Commerce Department estimated Thursday that gross domestic product rose by 2.1% between October and December. In the previous three months, GDP rose by the same percentage. Economists had expected 2% growth in the fourth quarter.

[U.S. warns citizens against travel to China as virus toll tops 200](#)

January 31, 2020, Reuters

The United States warned Americans not to travel to China as the death toll from a new virus reached 213 on Friday and the World Health Organization (WHO) declared a global health emergency.

[Trump: Coronavirus will have 'a very good ending for us'](#)

January 30, 2020, Politico

President Donald Trump on Thursday sought to assure Americans about the spread of a new coronavirus, saying it would have "a very good ending for us ... that I can assure you," hours after the World Health Organization declared the outbreak a global emergency.

[Trump's Secretary of State Mike Pompeo says Brexit will be 'fantastic' for the United States](#)

January 30, 2020, Business Insider

Brexit will be "fantastic" for the United States because it will allow the United Kingdom to abandon European trade regulations and standards, the US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo suggested on Thursday.

[Trump border wall between US and Mexico blows over in high winds](#)

January 30, 2020, The Guardian

A section of Donald Trump's much-vaunted border wall between the United States and Mexico has blown over onto the Mexican side in high winds, US border patrol officers have been reported as saying.

Europe & Russia

Europe

['Dawn of a new era': UK's Johnson 'respectfully' marks Brexit day](#)

January 31, 2020, Reuters

Prime Minister Boris Johnson will hail Brexit day on Friday as “the dawn of a new era” and pledge to unite Britain in an address to the nation which he hopes will draw a line under years of angry debate over the European Union.

[12 big moments in the UK-EU relationship](#)

January 30, 2020, BBC

The United Kingdom was always one step removed from the vision of a united Europe.

[A sad farewell after 47 years of EU membership](#)

January 30, 2020, The Guardian

On the eve of Brexit, readers reflect on the UK’s departure from the European Union.

[Ireland wary of UK’s optimism for EU trade deal this year](#)

January 30, 2020, Associated Press

Getting a new trade deal between the U.K. and the European Union by the end of the year — as the British government claims will happen — would be a feat “nearly without precedent,” the Irish finance minister said Thursday.

[French PM Philippe to stand in local Le Havre elections](#)

January 31, 2020, Reuters

French Prime Minister Edouard Philippe said on Friday that he would stand in local elections in the northern port city of Le Havre, while adding he would still seek to remain as PM if President Emmanuel Macron continued to back him.

[Germany reports fifth coronavirus case](#)

January 30, 2020, Deutsche Welle

A fifth coronavirus case has been confirmed in the southern German state of Bavaria. The patient worked at the same company as the other four people thought to have caught the virus from a co-worker visiting from China.

[France confirms sixth case of infection with coronavirus](#)

January 31, 2020, Reuters

France has confirmed a sixth case of infection by the new coronavirus from China, a French health official said on Thursday.

[In Poland, France's Macron hopes to reset ties and build up business](#)

January 30, 2020, Reuters

When French President Emmanuel Macron toured eastern Europe just weeks after being elected in 2017, he shunned Poland and delivered a stinging attack on its leaders.

[Germany's Schäuble calls for expansion of military operations](#)

January 31, 2020, Deutsche Welle

The Bundestag president has called for Germany to take a more proactive role in international defense. He said "the lessons of Auschwitz" should not deter the country from upholding military commitment to its allies.

[Spain to Proceed With Catalan Talks Under Separatist Pressure](#)

January 30, 2020, Bloomberg

Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez committed to go ahead with a negotiation process in Catalonia as planned after coming under pressure from the separatist party that helped smooth his path to form a government.

Russia

[Russia Closes Border With China to People, Not Goods](#)

January 31, 2020, Bloomberg

Russia shut its 4,209-kilometer (2,615 mile) land border with China to most passenger travel as the Kremlin seeks to prevent the spread of the deadly coronavirus from its biggest trading partner.

[New U.S. envoy tells Russia to 'end nightmare' for jailed ex-Marine](#)

January 30, 2020, Reuters

The United States' new ambassador to Russia urged Moscow to release a former U.S. Marine accused of spying, and said Russian investigators had failed to present credible evidence to back up their case.

[Netanyahu set to fly home from Russia with freed Israeli-American woman](#)

January 30, 2020, CNN

An American-Israeli woman jailed in Moscow on drug charges is expected to fly home with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu after she was granted a presidential pardon and released from prison.

[Russia's Plan to Move on the Arctic](#)

January 28, 2020, The Daily Signal

Aggression by Iran and trade with China may dominate U.S. foreign policy headlines, but a plan recently announced by Russia to increase its presence in the Arctic should command our attention.

[Russia's Advanced Su-35S Fighter Flight](#)

January 29, 2020, The Moscow Times

The Russian Defense Ministry's news channel has shown video of its Sukhoi Su-35S fighter jet in flight. The Zvezda news channel said it was the western military district's first batch of Su-35S jets, which it received in the fall of 2019. Russia's Aerospace Forces field more than 60 Su-35S multipurpose fighters.

[Russia Exerts Growing Influence in Africa, Worrying Many in the West](#)

January 28, 2020, The New York Times

The Kremlin is increasing arms sales, security pacts and training programs as the American defense secretary weighs withdrawing troops from the continent.

[Kremlin ponders plan for Putin to be Supreme Leader](#)

January 31, 2020, The Times

President Putin could take on the title of "supreme leader of Russia" under plans being discussed by a government commission, the Kremlin has said. Mr Putin, 67, personally chose 75 people this month to put forward amendments to the country's constitution, which dates from 1993.

Africa & Latin America

Latin America

[Argentina welcomes US decision not to impose steel tariffs](#)

January 27, 2020, RFI

Argentina has welcomed the US decision not to impose tariffs on the South American country's steel and aluminum which President Donald Trump had threatened. "We have just been left out, in a good way, of an internal communication from the (US) presidency regarding this issue.

[IMF to send team to Argentina in February after 'positive' talks with Guzmán](#)

January 28, 2020, Buenos Aires Times

The International Monetary Fund will send a mission to Argentina next month to discuss the crisis-hit nation's economic prospects and debt, it was confirmed Tuesday.

[Heavy rains, flooding hit southeastern Brazil again](#)

January 30, 2020, AL Jazeera

Heavy rains since Tuesday have caused destruction in the southeast of Brazil, a region that was already suffering from flooding and landslides in the last week.

[El Salvador general admits army carried out El Mozote massacre](#)

January 25, 2020, AL Jazeera

A retired Salvadoran general has acknowledged for the first time that the armed forces were responsible for a notorious 1981 massacre of nearly 1,000 people during the country's civil war.

[Colombia rejects Venezuelan proposal to resume diplomatic relations](#)

January 31, 2020, Reuters

Colombia rejected Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro's proposal that the two countries resume diplomatic relations on Thursday, amid a dispute over a fugitive former Colombian congresswoman who was captured in Venezuela.

[Socialist Venezuela Proposes To Privatize Its Collapsing Oil Industry](#)

January 29, 2020, Reason

President Nicolas Maduro, is now reportedly proposing to sell a majority stake in, and give control of the country's state-owned oil company, Petroleos de Venezuela SA, to private international oil companies. This offer may be less than

tempting to Big Oil since the Bolivarian Republic still owes billions to the oil companies whose property it seized 10 years ago.

[Russia denounces US call on using force against Venezuela](#)

January 30, 2020, Presina Latina

Russia denounced on Thursday US call on maintaining the option of using force against Venezuela, and launching a campaign to accuse this country of promoting terrorism in the region.

[China Demand for Latin America Oil Grinds to Halt on Virus Fear](#)

January 31, 2020, Bloomberg

Sales of Latin American oil cargoes to China have ground to a halt this week as the deepening crisis around the coronavirus further stifles an already quiet holiday period.

Africa

[Russia's interest in South Sudan](#)

January 30, 2020, Modern Diplomacy

On January 27-29, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the Republic of South Sudan, Awut Deng Acuil, made an official working visit to Moscow where she held diplomatic talks focused on strengthening economic cooperation with Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov.

[Russia to build military base in Somalia – media](#)

January 30, 2020, UNIAN

Russian officials are eyeing a port of Berbera as a location for their base on the coast of Somaliland, a self-declared state within Somalia on the Gulf of Aden, according to U.S. Defense Department officials. Both China and the United States, with military bases in Djibouti, share the same coastline as the potential Russian port.

[International Community Boosts Burundi Energy](#)

January 30, 2020, Yahoo Finance

Work begins this week to develop a 7.5 MW solar field in Burundi by frontier renewable energy developer Gigawatt Global, a Dutch company with American investors and a founding partner of the U.S. Power Africa initiative.

[Tanzania Eyes More Trade Flow With DRC](#)

January 30, 2020, Hellinic Shipping News

Tanzania is planning to boost business flow to the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) through Lake Tanganyika by addressing non-tariff trade barriers. The non-tariff trade barriers are cited as major impediments to movement of goods and people between the two bordered countries.

[Tension between Uganda, Rwanda near breaking point](#)

January 30, 2020, Andolou Agency

Heightened anger from those who lost their loved ones and tension followed Rwandan officials handing over the body of another Ugandan national shot dead by Rwanda National Police officers. Two Rwandans were also reportedly shot with the Ugandan, with Kigali saying they were smugglers who clashed with police intercepting them.

[UAE accused of forcing Sudanese to fight in war](#)

January 29, 2020, AL Jazeera

A security company in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) is being accused of deception, after giving jobs to young Sudanese men who say they were then sent to fight in wars. Dozens have managed to return home, but many others are believed to still be in Yemen or Libya.

[Dozens killed by suspected rebels in eastern DRC's Beni region](#)

January 30, 2020, Al Jazeera

At least 36 people have been killed in a suspected rebel attack in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo's Beni region, where hundreds have died in violence since November, a local official has said.

[Somalia: Kenya's foreign policy failure](#)

January 29, 2020, Al Jazeera

After gaining independence in 1963 and throughout the Cold War, Kenya tried to stay away from the internal and external struggles of its neighbourhood. While Ethiopia allied itself with the erstwhile USSR and Cuba, Somalia aligned with the United States and Tanzania became the intellectual hotbed for the Third World left, Kenya maintained poised neutrality and a policy of non-intervention.

[Cold-shouldered by China and the West, Zimbabwe warms up to UAE](#)

January 27,2020, Al Jazeera

Sanctioned by the West and spurned by China, Zimbabwe has turned to the United Arab Emirates in its latest bid to find a savior that can arrest the collapse of its economy.



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