



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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South Asia

India

[BHEL signs pact with Russian firm to undertake joint defence projects](#)

February 12, 2020, Business Standard

State-run engineering firm BHEL has signed a pact with Rosoboron export, Russia, for cooperation and undertaking projects for defence systems. The memorandum of understanding was signed during the 5th India Russia Military Industrial conference held in Lucknow.

[AK 203 and Kamov delayed, India and Russia aim for missile deal ahead of Modi visit](#)

February 10, 2020, The Print

With the much anticipated deals for AK 203 assault rifles and the Kamov helicopters getting delayed, India and Russia are aiming to seal a multi-billion-dollar missile deal before Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Moscow in May. Russia's IGLA-S system was chosen as the lowest bidder for India's short-range air defence missile system (VSHORADS) programme. The Army has an immediate requirement for 800 launchers and over 5,000 missiles.

[Iconic F-15EX enters the race for Indian fighter jets deal](#)

February 14, 2020, Economic Times

The multi-billion dollar Indian program to acquire new fighter jets could see a third American aircraft enter the fray, with permissions being sought to offer the iconic F 15 EX to the air force for its requirement of 114 fighters that are to be produced domestically. The US Air Force (USAF) placed an order for 8 F-15 EX, which could go up to 72 and will join the F/A 18 Super Hornet and the F 21 (a variant of the F 16) that are already on offer.

[Defence Ministry to have joint secretaries from Army, Navy, Air Force](#)

February 12, 2020, India Today

The Defence Ministry will have joint secretaries from the three services as the government is considering a proposal for appointment of three officers from the Army, Navy and Air Force in this regard. A proposal has been sent to the Cabinet committee on Appointments. The officers whose names have been sent for approval include Major General Narayanan, Rear Admiral RK Dhir and Air Vice Marshal SK Jha.

[Defence Expo 2020: Understanding Lucknow Declaration, India's agreement with 50 African countries](#)

February 08, 2020, India TV

India hosted the first India-Africa defence conclave in Lucknow on Friday during the 11th edition of Defence Expo 2020, in which Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh met his counterparts from 12 African countries, besides meeting heads of the delegations from 38 other African nations. Fifty African nations signed a declaration with India at the conclave, organised during the biennial defence exhibition.

[US approves sale of Integrated Air Defence Weapon System to India](#)

February 11, 2020, Live Mint

The US has approved the sale of an Integrated Air Defence Weapon System to India for an estimated cost of \$1.9 billion to modernise its armed forces and to expand its existing air defence architecture to counter threats posed by air attacks.

[India readying \\$2.6 billion U.S. naval helicopter deal ahead of Trump trip](#)

February 11, 2020, Economic Times

India is set to give final approval to a \$2.6 billion deal for military helicopters from U.S. defence firm Lockheed Martin ahead of a visit by U.S. President Donald Trump this month.

[India now exports defence products to 42 countries](#)

February 10, 2020, Live Mint

India may be a big importer of defence equipment but has been making steady progress in exports of such products to a number of countries including those who are big names in the export market like the US, Australia, Finland, France, Germany, Israel, South Africa and Sweden. These countries are in the list of 42 nations that also included Azerbaijan, Seychelles, Estonia, Indonesia, Guinea and the Philippines.

[Kazakh President to join India at Munich Security Conference to call for lasting peace in Afghanistan](#)

February 13, 2020, Economic Times

Kazakhstan, as the largest state in Central Asia, is interested in supporting regional security and stability and has found cause with India in safeguarding the peace process in Afghanistan. Kazakhstan will continue to support the Afghan people in restoring statehood. This will be key message from Kazakhstan at the Munich Security Conference between Feb 14-16.

[Portugal President, on his first visit to India, to meet PM Modi today](#)

February 14, 2020, DD News

Both sides will hold delegation level talks and are expected to ink several agreements at Hyderabad House on business and economic cooperation, focusing on common international interests. A significant area of overlap is defence production to cater to the international market. Indian ship-making firm GRSE signed an MoU with the Portuguese bridge specialist BERD to collaborate on building modular, portable steel bridges. These will be supplied to the Indian Army, state governments, and the neighbouring countries Bhutan, Myanmar and Nepal.

[S&P confident of India's economic recovery](#)

February 13, 2020, Live Mint

Global rating agency S&P today affirmed India's sovereign ratings at 'BBB-/A-3' with stable outlook, saying that it expects GDP growth to recover towards the longer term trend rates over two-three years. It also said that India is experiencing a cyclical, rather than a structural, economic slowdown.

Pakistan

[Jamaat-e-Islami rejects new curriculum for schools, colleges](#)

February 11, 2020, The News

Jamaat-e-Islami has rejected the new curriculum for schools and colleges that was prepared by National Curriculum Council to replace the existing syllabi, terming it against the teachings of Islam and Pakistan's Constitution.

[Hafiz Saeed, aide jailed for terror financing](#)

February 13, 2020, Dawn

An anti-terrorism court (ATC) handed down five-and-a-half-year rigorous imprisonment (RI) each to JamaatudDawa (JuD) chief Hafiz Mohammad Saeed and his aide Malik Zafar Iqbal in two of the cases relating to terror financing.

[Turkish president arrives on two-day visit today](#)

February 13, 2020, Dawn

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan reached Pakistan on January 13 on a two-day trip aimed at strengthening bilateral strategic partnership and economic ties.

[Remittances rise to \\$13.3bn in 7 months](#)

February 13, 2020, Dawn

Pakistan foreign remittances grew to \$13.3 billion during the first seven months of this fiscal year, from \$12.774bn in the corresponding period of 2018-19. Inflows from workers abroad rose by just 4.13 per cent during July-January period of 2019-20 as compared to a healthy growth of 10.8pc in the same months of FY19.

[US seeks funds for resuming military training for Pakistan](#)

February 12, 2020, Dawn

The US State Department is seeking funds from Congress to resume its military education and training facilities for Pakistan. In its budget requests for the fiscal year 2021, the department sought a total of \$104.9 million for its International Military Education and Training (IMET) programme.

[Pakistan Senate passes two bills with amendments](#)

February 12, 2020, Dawn

Pakistan Senate passed with amendments anti-money laundering (AML) and foreign exchange regulations bills that have already been approved by the National Assembly. Both the bills, meant to comply with the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) conditions, will now be sent back to the National Assembly for reconsideration in the light of amendments suggested by the upper house of parliament.

[TTP confirms killing of top leader in Afghanistan](#)

February 13, 2020, The Express Tribune

Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) confirmed the killing of one of their top leaders in a remote-controlled blast in northeast Afghanistan. Shehryar Mehsud, leader of the Hakimullah Mehsud group of TTP, was killed by a roadside improvised explosive device (IED) in Kunar province.

Afghanistan

[US military budget request for Afghanistan lowest in a decade](#)

February 11, 2020, Military Times

With a \$14 billion dollar budget request for fiscal year 2021, the U.S. military is set to spend its lowest amount on the 18-year long war in Afghanistan in nearly a decade. The overseas contingency operations, or OCO, funding request for Operation Freedom Sentinel was detailed in the Defense Department's fiscal year 2021 request.

[Taliban weapons facilitator killed in Afghan army airstrike: Government](#)

February 10, 2020, Xinhuanet

The Afghan Air Force carried out a targeted airstrike, killing a Taliban local leader Mohammad Gul, known as Abubakr, who was in charge of militants' high-tech weapons in Delbar village, Chimtal district, Balkh province. The targeted Taliban leader provided laser weapons for the insurgents across the province, the statement said.

[US forces sustain casualties in Afghanistan](#)

February 8, 2020, Anadolu Agency

A combined U.S. and Afghan force conducting an operation in Nangarhar province was engaged by direct fire on February 8 and sustained casualties in an apparent so-called "green-on-blue attack". The so-called "green-on-blue-attack" means attacker/s, wearing Afghan forces' uniform, attack foreign/American troops.

[Kabul still in search of intra-Afghan talks team](#)

February 12, 2020, Tolo News

Amid reports that the United States and the Taliban are closer to a potential peace agreement, the Afghan government is still arguing about an inclusive peace negotiating team to talk to the Taliban. The office of Chief Executive Abdullah Abdullah confirmed that the Afghan government still had not formed a team.

[US announces week-long partial truce with Taliban](#)

February 13, 2020, The Express Tribune

The United States has secured a seven-day reduction in violence in talks to help seek a negotiated settlement in Afghanistan. The announcement came as Nato defence ministers met in Brussels and a day after Afghan President Ashraf Ghani reported "notable progress" in negotiations with the militant insurgents.

Bangladesh

[Bangladesh, Saudi Arabia sign multiple investment deals during JEC meeting](#)

February 13, 2020, Arab News

A 40-member Saudi delegation held several meetings with officials in Dhaka during the 13th session of Bangladesh–Saudi Arabia Joint Commission along with some of the biggest companies in the Kingdom, including Saudi Aramco and ACWA Power. Red Sea Gateway Terminal (RSGT), a leading port developer of the

Kingdom, is interested in developing Bangladesh's main Chottogram port which deals with more than 80% of the country's trade.

[India, Bangladesh, Nepal move to facilitate vehicle movement within three nations, leaving aside Bhutan](#)

February 10, 2020, Deccan Herald

The officials of India, Bangladesh, and Nepal met in New Delhi and agreed to ink a trilateral Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), which would be similar to the four-nation pact signed on June 15, 2015, but would be effective only for movement of vehicles within the three nations without any obligation for Bhutan. They also agreed to work fast on two separate protocols, which, once finalized, would govern the movement of passenger and cargo vehicles among the three nations.

[India-Bangladesh rail link to be ready by 2021](#)

February 10, 2020, The Hindu

Union Minister Jitendra Singh has said that the completion of the rail line between Agartala in Tripura and Akhaura in Bangladesh would pave the way for the first train to run from the north-eastern region to Bangladesh on the eve of the 75th anniversary of India's independence in 2022. The line between Agartala and Akhaura would be completed before the end of next year.

[Polish investors urged to explore opportunities in energy sector, 'blue economy'](#)

February 12, 2020, United News Bangladesh

Foreign Minister Dr AK Abdul Momen has urged the Polish government to encourage their investors and entrepreneurs to look to invest in Bangladesh, particularly drawing their attention to the shipbuilding, agricultural, food processing and energy sectors, as well as the blue economy. Momen discussed the bilateral issues including investment potential during a meeting with Deputy Foreign Minister of Poland Marcin Przydacz in Dhaka.

Sri Lanka

[India to enhance cooperation with Sri Lanka in business relations, connectivity, regional security](#)

February 08, 2020, Colombo Page

India, as a trusted partner in Sri Lanka's development efforts, will increase cooperation with Sri Lanka on enhancing economic, business, and investment relations, people-to-people connectivity and regional security, Indian Prime

Minister Narendra Modi said meeting with Sri Lankan counterpart Mahinda Rajapaksa.

[India ready to partner with Sri Lanka on post millennium energy security](#)

February 13, 2020, Menafn

The Acting High Commissioner of India to Sri Lanka, Vinod K. Jacob noted that India is all set to cross the 100GW renewable energy capacity mark in 2020 and is on course to achieve the ambitious 175GW clean energy target by 2022. He noted that India has recently completed the commissioning of the largest solar park in the world in Karnataka. Underlining commitment to green energy sources, US\$3.1 billion has been allocated in the recent Budget by Government of India towards the power and renewable energy sector in 2020-21.

[Coronavirus stalls major projects in Sri Lanka](#)

February 10, 2020, Global Construction Review

Major construction projects have stalled in Sri Lanka as Chinese workers remain in their home country amid the coronavirus outbreak, or stay in accommodation in Sri Lanka for fear of discrimination.

[Sri Lanka and Turkey discuss intelligence sharing](#)

February 12, 2020, Colombo Gazette

The new Ambassador of Turkey to Sri Lanka Demet Sekercioglu called on Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa. Discussions focused on expanding bilateral relations beyond economic interests to a number of other sectors including culture and education.

[Israel keen to assist Sri Lanka in modernization of agriculture, education](#)

February 12, 2020, Colombo Page

Israel has expressed readiness to provide its advanced technical capabilities to enhance bilateral relations with Sri Lanka, particularly in the areas of the economy. Ron Malka, Israeli Ambassador to Sri Lanka Resident in New Delhi has pledged to support with modern technology for education, vocational training, transportation, and especially for modern agriculture considered vital for improving yield when he called on President Gotabaya Rajapaksa at the Presidential Secretariat.

[Air chief reiterates all-out coop to Sri Lanka in defence](#)

February 09, 2020, The Nation

Air Chief Marshal Mujahid Anwar Khan, Chief of the Air Staff Pakistan Air Force has reiterated all-out support and cooperation to Sri Lanka in defence-related

fields. The Air chief who is on visit to Sri Lanka , called on ChamalRajapaksa, State Minister of Defence of Sri Lanka . According to a press release issued by the PAF, the Air chief reiterated to offer all-out support and cooperation to Sri Lanka in defence related fields. It said both the dignitaries agreed to further enhance the existing bilateral cooperation between both the countries.

[Indian, Sri Lankan Navies to conduct joint hydrographic survey](#)

February 13, 2020, Indus Dictum

Indian Navy's Sandhayak class Hydrographic Survey Ship, INS Jamuna (J16), arrived in Colombo, Sri Lanka on February 06. The ship has been deployed to Sri Lanka based on a mutual agreement to carry out Joint Hydrographic Survey off the South West Coast of Sri Lanka. Over the two month deployment period, the ship will carry out detailed hydrographic surveys and several shore-based survey activities.

Nepal

[India makes exemption for Nepal, allows some refined palmolein imports: sources](#)

February 12, 2020, Reuters

India, which restricted imports of refined palm oil and palmolein in January, has exempted Nepal and has started issuing licenses to import some refined palmolein from the Himalayan nation. The move could put pressure on Indian refiners as imports from Nepal were allowed at zero duty under a regional treaty. It will also help Nepal, as refined palm oil and palmolein are its largest export earners.

[Amendment to Army Act proposes additional intelligence unit](#)

February 09, 2020, Online Khabar

The Nepal government registered a bill to amend the Army Act at the Federal Parliament Secretariat. If the legislative body endorses the bill as it is now, the Nepal Army can establish its own intelligence unit. Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Defence IshwarPokharel submitted the bill that also proposes establishing an army intelligence service; such a provision would strengthen the army's defence competence.

[Nepal, China likely to trade 2,000 MW of electricity by 2030](#)

February 09, My Republica

Nepal and China are likely to exchange 2,000-megawatt electricity within 2030. According to the Ratomate-Rauwagadhi-Kerung 400 KV Transmission Line

Project, in the upcoming 10 years, 2,000-megawatt electricity can be imported and exported as per the initial report of load flow.

Maldives

[Pres discusses tariffs placed on Maldives' fish exports to Europe](#)

February 10, 2020, AvasMv

President Ibrahim Mohamed Solih on Sunday discussed the current tariffs placed on Maldives' fish exports to European Union (EU). During a meeting held with Paola Pampaloni, the Deputy Managing Director for Asia and Pacific Department at the European External Action Service (EEAS) on Sunday, the president discussed ways in which the Maldives-EU relations can be further strengthened.

[Seychelles - Maldives launch marine research expedition](#)

February 09, 2020, Avas MV

The governments of the Maldives and Seychelles have announced the launch of a joint maritime research expedition, 'First Descent: Midnight Zone', a 35-day mission to support the sustainable governance of the Maldivian and Seychellois oceans.

[Maldives reserve exceeds US\\$ 685 mln](#)

February 09, 2020, Avas MV

Central bank's monthly economic review indicates Maldives state reserve reached a total of US\$ 685 million by the end of January, an increment of US\$ 8 million compared to the same period last year.

East & South East Asia

China

[China appreciates Pakistan's support to battle against coronavirus: FM](#)

February 11, 2020, Xinhua

The Chinese Foreign Ministry on Tuesday expressed appreciation for the Pakistani Senate's resolution that showed full solidarity and support to China's battle with the novel coronavirus outbreak.

[Xi chairs leadership meeting on epidemic control, noting "positive changes"](#)

February 12, 2020, Xinhua

The Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee on Wednesday held a meeting on the prevention and control of the pneumonia epidemic caused by the novel coronavirus or COVID-19. Xi Jinping, general secretary of the CPC Central Committee, chaired the meeting and made an important speech.

[China pushes for differentiated measures to battle coronavirus](#)

February 14, 2020, Xinhua

Chinese authorities Thursday stressed differentiated measures for different regions to fight the novel coronavirus outbreak at a high-level meeting chaired by Premier Li Keqiang.

[China's coronavirus battle offers valuable experience for future fights against epidemics](#)

February 13, 2020, Xinhua

As the number of new confirmed cases of novel coronavirus pneumonia (NCP) in China outside the epicenter of Hubei Province has been dropping for nine consecutive days, China's tough measures to contain the virus outbreak, to some extent, have paid off.

[Strict ban on wild animal trade imperative: China Daily editorial](#)

February 13, 2020, China Daily

Despite the absence of a final, definitive scientific verdict regarding the source of the severe acute respiratory syndrome virus that claimed more than 700 lives worldwide in 2003, it was generally believed to have been first transmitted to humans from masked palm civets, which were identified as a host of the virus.

[Washington's divisive intents get cold shoulder: China Daily editorial](#)

February 13, 2020, China Daily

Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte's decision to end a decades-old military agreement with the United States might be unwelcome news to the Pentagon, but it will be conducive to peace and stability in the Asia-Pacific, as the region can take care of its own security and stability without frequent military maneuvers from outside forces.

[Institutional advantages instill confidence that fight against coronavirus will be won](#)

February 12, 2020, China Daily

Some Western epidemic experts' remarks in the wake of the outbreak of the novel coronavirus have provided some food for thought, as they said to some extent it is good that the virus has appeared in China, not in any other country, because China has a unique system that can help it effectively control the epidemic.

[Firing up the economy again will help Wuhan and the nation: China Daily editorial](#)

February 6, 2020, China Daily

That Hubei province accounts for 70 percent of the 28,130 novel coronavirus infections in the country, and 97 percent of the 564 deaths — as of Thursday afternoon — is heartrending. But the concentration of the cases in the province and the widening divergence with the national trend are also a source of optimism, as they instill confidence that the prompt and resolute measures taken by the central authorities to contain the outbreak have been effective.

[Tsai unscrupulously exploiting epidemic](#)

February 14, 2020, China Daily

While the Chinese mainland is making the utmost efforts to control the outbreak of the novel coronavirus, the Taiwan administration of Tsai Ing-wen is trying to manipulate the epidemic as a means to formally join the World Health Organization, to get the island recognized as a "sovereign nation".

[Dual tasks of virus fight, work resumption](#)

February 13, 2020, Global Times

The battle against the novel coronavirus pneumonia (COVID-19) has reached the most intense and complicated period. Central China's Hubei Province has demanded admission and treatment of all patients needing medical assistance. Hubei on Thursday announced 14,840 new cases, including 13,332 clinically diagnosed cases, as of midnight on Wednesday. The surge in the number is believed to be a release of the stock. Outside of Hubei, the newly confirmed cases announced on Thursday fell for the ninth consecutive day. The national control over the epidemic has produced results.

[Epidemic tests China's manufacturing sector](#)

February 13, 2020, Global Times

While the disruptive effect of the novel coronavirus pneumonia (COVID-19) outbreak on the global supply chain underscores the importance of China as the world's factory, the country's manufacturing advantage is now facing serious test and growing pressure.

[Senators exploit doctor's death to attack China's political system](#)

February 13, 2020 Global Times,

The world's most crucial ties, China-US relations are now coming to a crossroads. The novel coronavirus outbreak has given us a clearer understanding of US strategic direction toward China. Although China is working hard to promote the relationship between the two countries toward healthy and stable development, the recent strategic moves of the US showed that a strong force in the US is pushing the ties toward a hostile path, which is obviously making the future of Sino-US relations more unstable.

Japan

[Japan reports 1st death from coronavirus](#)

February 14, 2020, NHK

Japan's health ministry says a woman in her 80s living in Kanagawa Prefecture, near Tokyo, has died after contracting the new coronavirus. It is the first confirmed case of infection in Japan that resulted in death.

[U.S. working with Japan as questions grow over handling of virus-hit cruise ship](#)

February 13, 2020, The Japan Times

U. S. health authorities said that they are working with Japan to prevent the further spread of disease on the coronavirus-hit cruise ship quarantined off Yokohama, with Japan's handling of the situation being increasingly questioned.

[Japan and the U.S. should co-develop an anti-ship cruise missile system](#)

February 12, 2020, The Japan Times

The time has come for Japan and the United States to embark on an ambitious co-development project: a long-range ground-based anti-ship cruise missile system. Such a program is strategically necessary, technically feasible, cost effective and politically attractive — the allies should make it a top priority.

[On Trump's demand that Japan pay more for security](#)

February 11, 2020, Asia Times

In January, Japanese Defense Minister Taro Kono met with US Defense Secretary Mark Esper in Washington and Japanese Foreign Minister Toshimitsu Motegi met with US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo in Silicon Valley to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the signing of the Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security between Japan and the United States of America and reaffirm their commitment to the alliance.

[Japan takes second complaint to WTO over South Korean shipbuilding](#)

February 11, 2020, The Japan Times

Japan launched a second complaint at the World Trade Organization on Monday over support South Korea gives its shipbuilding industry, intensifying a wider dispute between the two Asian countries.

[Shinzo Abe is redefining Japan's China policy for a generation](#)

February 12, 2020, Nikkei Asian Review

Japan's position in Asia has changed significantly since the end of the Cold War. The most important logistics base for the U.S. then, Japan now finds itself at the forefront of the U.S.-China rivalry, with far less resources at its disposal than it used to have.

Korea

[Korea, U.S. Rename Joint Drills Again](#)

February 13, 2020, The Chosun Ilbo

The government here continues a baffling campaign to rename joint drills with the U.S. so as to avoid agitating North Korea. Early last year, the U.S. and South Korea staged substantial joint drills under the name "Alliance 19-2" that replaced the annual "Key Resolve" exercise.

[N.Korea Avoids 'Wuhan' Tag for Coronavirus](#)

February 11, 2020, The Chosun Ilbo

North Korea on Monday endorsed a WHO recommendation not to use the term "Wuhan" for the new coronavirus that first broke out in the Chinese city in a bid to avoid stigmatizing it. The official Rodong Sinmun reported that the WHO has urged countries "not to stigmatize the new coronavirus."

[N.Korea 'Exported \\$370 Million Worth of Illegal Coal Last Year'](#)

February 12, 2020, Chosun Ilbo

North Korea illegally exported about US\$370 million worth of coal through ship-to-ship transfers with Chinese vessels last year, the Panel of Experts to the UN Security Council North Korea Sanctions Committee reports

[US: S. Korea's possible funding for its THAAD base on Korean soil 'addressed'](#)

February 14, 2020, The Korea Herald

South Korea's possible funding for the construction of a US base on Korean soil for the THAAD missile defense system has been "addressed," a US budget proposal has shown, which could run counter to the allies' agreement on the issue.

[S. Korea, Japan to hold FM talks, trilateral meeting with US in Munich](#)

February 14, 2020, The Korea Herald

The top diplomats of South Korea and Japan will hold bilateral talks and a tripartite meeting with their US counterpart on the margins of a security conference in Munich, Germany, this week, Seoul's foreign ministry said.

[Seoul's export prices sink in Jan](#)

February 14, 2020, The Korea Herald

South Korea's export prices fell slightly in January from a month earlier, central bank data showed Friday, largely due to the strengthening of the local currency against the US dollar.

Southeast Asia

[Indonesia Won't Take Back Suspected Islamic State Militants](#)

February 14, 2020, The Diplomat

Indonesia's government has banned citizens who joined the Islamic State group in Syria from returning home citing national security concerns.

[Indonesia promotes ASEAN Outlook on Indo-Pacific at middle power meet](#)

February 14, 2020, The Jakarta Post

Indonesia has used a meeting of loosely associated and like-minded countries in Mexico City to promote the ASEAN vision of an inclusive Indo-Pacific region, underlining the importance of dialogue to foster cooperation instead of competition, the Foreign Ministry has said.

[Cambodia: EU Partially Suspends Trade Preferences](#)

February 13, 2020, HRW

The EU decision followed a formal year-long review of Cambodia's "Everything But Arms" (EBA) trade preferences. The EU's preliminary conclusion, sent to the Cambodian government on November 12, 2019, stated that Cambodia has seriously and systematically violated the right to freedom of expression, restricted other civil and political rights, and failed to ensure labor rights.

[Myanmar Navy Detains 50 Rohingya Who Were Trying to Leave Country](#)

February 13, 2020, RFA

The Myanmar Navy has detained roughly 50 Rohingya refugees at sea in southern Myanmar's Ayeyarwady region, while local authorities have apprehended five suspected human traffickers who allegedly helped them try to leave the country for an unknown destination, a local official said.

[India's curbs on Malaysian palm imports disrupts global edible oil trade](#)

February 14, 2020, Business Standard

Malaysia's latest palm export data revealed the impact of India's restrictions, with shipments to India in January falling 85% from a year earlier to 46,876 tonnes, the lowest since 2011.

Central & West Asia

Central Asia

[A New Era of Strategic Partnership: The US Engages to Find Opportunities in Central Asia](#)

February 13, 2020, The Diplomat

Central Asia will generally welcome – and want – U.S. attention, but will want a degree of circumspection.

[US Pledges \\$2 Million to Uzbekistan](#)

February 20, 2020, The Diplomat

The true nature of U.S. investment in Uzbekistan, and all of Central Asia, is broader than just direct financial assistance packages.

[Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan spurn US call to confront China](#)

February 13, 2020, Nikkei Asian Review

- U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo took advantage of his visit to Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan last week to lambast China over its treatment of its Muslim minorities and reliability as a business partner, but was met with a lukewarm response from the two Central Asian states.

[Uzbekistan Sending Medical Supplies To Virus-Hit China](#)

February 12, 2020, Rferl.org

Uzbekistan is sending protective cloths, disposable gloves, masks, and other supplies to China to support Beijing's efforts to control the spread of the new coronavirus.

[Ethnic violence blows hole in Kazakhstan's narrative of tolerance](#)

February 10, 2020, Al Jazeera

An outbreak of violence in southern Kazakhstan that saw members of a local Muslim ethnic minority of Chinese origin come under attack has raised concerns and prompted calls for changes in a country that prides itself on tolerance.

[Kazakhstan vows to strengthen information security](#)

February 13, 2020, New Europe

Kazakhstan's President Kassym-Jomart Tokaev has held a meeting on information security in connection with the interethnic

West Asia

[Turkey, Pakistan Relations Peak With Defense Industry Cooperation](#)

February 13, 2020, Daily Sabah

Turkey-Pakistan relations are expected to gain more momentum through a recently strengthened defense industry collaboration in which both countries pledge to contribute to regional safety.

[BP Invested \\$35bn In Egypt, Despite Widespread Corruption](#)

February 13, 2020, Middle East Monitor

British Petroleum (BP) has invested \$35 billion in Egypt making it one of the largest foreign investors in the country. As analysts have pointed out, this means it more or less controls the energy supply in the country producing 50 per cent of Egypt's natural gas consumption.

[Rocket Attack Hits North Iraq Base Hosting U.S. Troops](#)

February 13, 2020, Gulf News

A rocket attack on Thursday night slammed into an Iraqi base in the remote province of Kirkuk where American troops are stationed, Iraqi and US security sources told AFP.

[US Senate Votes To Limit Trump's War Powers Against Iran](#)

February 14, 2020, Al Jazeera

The United States Senate backed legislation on Thursday to limit President Donald Trump's ability to wage war against Iran, rebuking the president after a strike against an Iranian military commander and Tehran's retaliation last month raised fears of broader regional conflict.

[Iran Starts Election Campaign With Thousands Barred From Standing](#)

February 13, 2020, Middle East Monitor

Iran's week-long parliamentary election campaign started on Thursday, state TV reported, a vote seen as a popularity test for the clerical establishment at a time when relations with Washington are at their worst since the 1979 Islamic revolution.

[U.S. Accuses China's Huawei Of Helping Iran Track Protesters](#)

February 14, 2020, Radio Free Europe

The U.S. Justice Department has accused Huawei Technologies of helping Iran track protesters in its latest indictment against the Chinese tech giant as Washington steps up the pressure on the world's largest telecommunications equipment maker.

[Netanyahu: Israel, US began drawing map for 'implementation of Israeli sovereignty' over parts of West Bank](#)

February 9, 2020, i24 News

Israel, together with officials from the administration of US President Donald Trump began drawing a map for the "implementation of Israeli sovereignty" over parts of the West Bank, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu told supporters on Saturday.

[Ex-IRGC chief: 'No doubt' we would have flattened Tel Aviv if US bombed Iran](#)

February 9, 2020, The Jerusalem Post

Iran would "no doubt" have flattened Tel Aviv after the assassination of former IRGC Quds Force commander Qasem Soleimani, if the US had attacked Iran, Mohsen Rezaei former chief of the Iranian Revolutionary Guards Corps who currently serves as Expediency Council Secretary said.

[Philippines lifts ban on sending labour to Kuwait](#)

February 14, 2020, Middle East Monitor

The Philippines announced a "total lift" to a ban on sending local household workers to Kuwait. Philippine labour minister, Silvestre Bello III, told Kuwait's Al-Qabas that the ban was "lifted permanently," adding that the decision was made in coordination with the country's "foreign ministry and the Department of Labour and Employment."

[Oman Stamp Declares Jerusalem The Capital Of Palestine](#)

February 10, 2020, Middle East Monitor

Oman is honouring Palestine and its capital Jerusalem by issuing commemorative stamps that read "Al Quds – the Capital of Palestine" as part of a collaboration with the Arab Permanent Postal Commission.

[Air India Express to fly new India services to Qatar](#)

February 11, 2020, The Peninsula Qatar

Indian budget airline Air India Express will add a new destination from India to Qatar in March 2020. The airline will start a direct flight from Tiruchirappalli airport in the southern Indian state of Tamil Nadu to Doha, effective from March 31, 2020.

[Saudi Arabia Accuses Turkey Of Supporting Extremist Militias In Three Arab Countries](#)

February 14, 2020, Middle East Monitor

Saudi Minister of Foreign Affairs, Adel Al-Jubeir, confirmed that the kingdom opposes what he described as "Turkey's incursion into Syria, and its support for extremist militias in Libya and Somalia."

[Syria war: Assad Government troops seize part of key Idlib town Saraqeb](#)

February 7, 2020, BBC News

Syrian government troops have retaken parts of the strategic town of Saraqeb in the last rebel-held province, Idlib. Syrian army units besieged the town for two days, exchanging artillery fire with Turkish forces who were supporting Syrian rebels.

[UAE Reportedly Held Talks With Iran Behind Washington's Back In September](#)

February 14, 2020, Times of Israel

Emirati and Iranian officials held secret talks in the UAE capital of Abu Dhabi in September in an effort to cool Middle East tensions amid escalating violence between Tehran and Washington.

conflict in the Kordai region in the south of the republic, Akorda said on 13 February.

United States

United States

[Trump will visit India on Feb. 24-25: White House](#)

February 11, 2020, Reuters

U.S. President Donald Trump and his wife Melania Trump will visit India on Feb. 24-25, the White House said in a statement on Monday.

[Ahead of Trump's visit, US defence major Boeing mulls offering F-15EX fighter jets to India](#)

February 13, 2020, Hindustan Times

Ahead of US President Donald Trump's maiden visit to India, the two countries are eyeing to finalise a raft of mega defence deals including procurement of a batch of military helicopters by Indian Navy from American defence major Lockheed Martin at a cost of USD 2.6 billion.

[Another Wall Goes Up for Trump, This Time in India](#)

February 13, 2020, The New York Times

U.S. President Donald Trump will be shielded from the sight of slums by a newly built wall when he visits the city of Ahmedabad during a visit to India this month.

[5 Takeaways From the New Hampshire Primary](#)

February 11, 2020, The New York Times

Senator Bernie Sanders of Vermont won New Hampshire's Democratic presidential primary Tuesday night, consolidating support on the left in his second strong showing in as many weeks.

[The real winner in New Hampshire: Donald Trump](#)

February 13, 2020, Washington Post

Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.) narrowly edged out former South Bend, Ind., mayor Pete Buttigieg in Tuesday's New Hampshire primary. The real winner, however, was President Trump.

[Democrats turn focus to Nevada and South Carolina after Sanders' narrow win in New Hampshire](#)

February 12, 2020, Reuters

Democrats vying for the right to challenge U.S. President Donald Trump turned their focus on Wednesday to Nevada and South Carolina after Bernie Sanders solidified his front-runner status by narrowly beating Pete Buttigieg in New Hampshire.

[Pompeo 'outraged' by UN list of firms with settlement ties](#)

February 14, 2020, Associated Press

U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo on Thursday said he is "outraged" by the U.N.'s publication of a list of companies accused of violating Palestinian human rights by operating in Israel's West Bank settlements.

[U.S. files superseding indictment against Huawei Technologies, CFO Meng](#)

February 13, 2020, Reuters

The U.S. government on Thursday filed a superseding indictment against the Chinese smartphone maker Huawei Technologies Co and its Chief Financial Officer Wanzhou Meng.

[Trump accuses John Kelly of 'missing the action' after scathing criticism](#)

February 13, 2020, Politico

President Donald Trump on Thursday lashed out at his former chief of staff, branding Kelly an attention seeker after Kelly publicly repudiated the president on a vast range of subjects.

[The President's decision to expand his power post-trial has stunned Washington](#)

February 13, 2020, CNN

On Wednesday, Trump publicly praised the Justice Department for reversing its call for a stiff jail term for Stone after his own critical late-night tweet that laid bare fears of blatant interference in bedrock US justice.

[U.S. Faces Tough 'Great Game' Against China in Central Asia and Beyond](#)

February 13, 2020, The New York Times

The Trump administration sees former Soviet republics in the heart of Asia as critical battlegrounds in the struggle with China over global influence. But American policies could fall short.

[Iran says it will strike U.S. and Israel if they make the 'slightest error'](#)

February 13, 2020, Reuters

Iran is ready to strike the United States and Israel if they give it any reason to do so, the head of the elite Revolutionary Guards said in a live broadcast on state television on Thursday.

[Pompeo sees breakthrough in Taliban talks, wants 'significant' reduction in violence](#)

February 13, 2020, Reuters

The United States has had “a pretty important breakthrough” in peace talks with the Taliban over the past couple of days, U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said on Thursday, but he cautioned that Washington wants to see a significant fall in violence in Afghanistan before starting wider discussions.

Europe & Russia

Europe

[Sajid Javid, U.K. Finance Chief, Quits as Boris Johnson Shuffles Team](#)

February 13, 2020, The New York Times

Cabinet changes on Thursday aimed to put a new stamp on the government. They have proved more dramatic than the prime minister perhaps intended.

[Narayana Murthy's son-in-law Rishi Sunak appointed as UK's new finance minister](#)

February 13, 2020, LiveMint

British Prime Minister Boris Johnson on Thursday named Indian-origin politician Rishi Sunak to be his new finance minister, after Sajid Javid sensationally resigned.

[What to expect from the Munich Security Conference?](#)

February 14, 2020, Al Jazeera English

The wars in Libya and Yemen, brewing tensions elsewhere in the Middle East and India's lockdown of Kashmir are among the most pressing geopolitical concerns as world leaders and diplomats prepare to rub shoulders at the Munich Security Conference.

[Sinn Fein path to power blocked as Fianna Fail rules out deal](#)

February 13, 2020, Reuters

Ireland's largest party Fianna Fail will not consider going into government with Sinn Fein, it said on Thursday, in a decision that is likely to prevent the left-wing nationalists from entering power for the first time.

[Germany's CDU wrestles with move towards far right or the left](#)

February 12, 2020, The Guardian

Germany's embattled Christian Democratic Union party is coming under increasing pressure to signal its future direction, with leading members caught in a row over whether they should show more tolerance towards the far left or the hard right.

[Coronavirus containment in Europe working 'so far,' says Germany's Spahn](#)

February 13, 2020, Deutsche Welle

Germany's Health Minister Jens Spahn tells DW that efforts to contain the coronavirus in Europe are working, but he cautioned that "things could get worse before they get better."

[Bundestag approves funds for German-French fighter jet](#)

February 12, 2020, Deutsche Welle

Germany has voted to pay €77 million for the first prototypes of a "new generation fighter" for European armed forces. The country's defense minister has called it a concrete step towards European security.

[Brazil's military elite sees France as country's biggest threat, leaked report reveals](#)

February 9, 2020, France24

France is expected to be Brazil's biggest military threat over the next 20 years and could invade the Amazon in 2035, according to a secret report published by Brazilian media on Friday.

[Let's stick together on security, Germany's Kramp-Karrenbauer tells UK](#)

February 13, 2020, Reuters

The EU and Britain have a shared interest in retaining close security ties after Brexit, Germany's defence minister told Reuters in an interview.

[Netherlands: Explosions in Amsterdam and Kerkrade](#)

Feb 12, 2020, Deutsche Welle

The first incident occurred at an ABN Amro mail-sorting office in the Dutch capital and police presumed it was a letter bomb. A second explosion occurred in Kerkrade, which lies on the German border with the Netherlands.

Russia

[Russia's balancing act: Why Putin will always support Assad over Erdogan](#)

February 13, 2020, Middle East Eye

Turkey has now lost around a dozen soldiers in multiple incidents over the past week, in direct hits by the Syrian military. Meanwhile, pro-Turkish forces shot down a Syrian army helicopter in Idlib, a sign that Turkey is prepared to escalate its support for rebel groups in its confrontation with Damascus.

[Germany urges Russia to stop attacks in Idlib, Syria](#)

February 13, 2020, Andolou Agency

Germany has called on Russia on Thursday to use its influence on the Syrian regime to stop its offensive in northwestern Syria. "These attacks must be stopped," German Foreign Minister Heiko Maas said in an exclusive interview with the German daily *Suddeutsche Zeitung*.

[Russia Says It Prevented 'Escalation' of U.S.-Syria Clash](#)

February 13, 2020, The Moscow Times

Russian forces have mediated an armed conflict between pro-regime and U.S. troops in northeastern Syria, the Russian military said Wednesday following a deadly incident. U.S. soldiers killed one person in Syria's Hasakah region after their vehicles were stopped at a checkpoint, according to Syrian and Turkish media. The shooting was reportedly followed by U.S. airstrikes on a village in rural Qamishli near the Turkish border.

[Russia alarmed by U.S. Air Force visit to Norwegian island](#)

February 13, 2020, Reuters

Russia said it was alarmed by a trip to a Norwegian outpost in the Arctic by a U.S. Air Force unit and urged Oslo to refrain from what it said were de-stabilizing moves in the strategic region.

[Russia is 'fearful' of US competition in the European gas market, official says](#)

February 12, 2020, CNBC

Europe can buy its natural gas wherever it wants, including Russia, but there should be more competition among suppliers, a top U.S. energy official told CNBC, adding that Russia was "fearful" of a rise in energy exports from America.

[Space Force says Russian satellites are following American satellite](#)

February 11, 2020, CNN

Russian satellites have been exhibiting the "unusual and disturbing behavior" of following a US satellite in orbit, according to the commander of the Space Force, the newest military service.

[Russia's trust in Putin falls to six-year low despite high approval rating: pollster](#)

February 12, 2020, Reuters

The Russian public's trust in President Vladimir Putin fell to its lowest in six years last month, the Levada opinion pollster said on Wednesday, despite the Russian leader's approval rating remaining high.

Africa & Latin America

Africa

[With Plenty Of Trade With China, African Countries Fear Coronavirus Spreading](#)

February 10, 2020, NPR

The extensive trade links between China and Africa have raised worries about the spread of coronavirus to the continent. African officials admit they're ill-prepared to deal with a major outbreak.

[In Africa, the US plays catch-up with China](#)

February 12, 2020, The Interpreter

US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo has announced his first trip to Africa, 15–19 February, with stops in Senegal, Ethiopia, and Angola.

[40 Ugandan rebels arrested in DR Congo](#)

February 13, 2020, Andolou Agency

Security forces of Democratic Republic of Congo arrested 40 Ugandan rebels in the northeastern Ituri province, the UN peacekeeping mission in the country said.

[WHO to decide on emergency status of Ebola in DR Congo](#)

February 12, 2020, The Hindu

UN health agency experts meet on Wednesday to decide whether the Ebola outbreak in the Democratic Republic of Congo should still be considered a global health emergency, following a sharp decline in reported cases.

[Uganda: Chinese firm wants to build dam on Nile River](#)

February 12, 2020, Al Jazeera

Uganda has received an application for a licence to build a hydroelectric power plant on the Nile River from a Chinese firm, documents seen by Reuters News Agency show.

[Sudan's former dictator may finally face justice for the Darfur genocide](#)

February 11, 2020, Vox

Sudan appears to have agreed in principle to Omar al-Bashir facing charges before the International Criminal Court. But nothing is guaranteed yet.

[Sudan Says It Is Settling Lawsuit From Families And Victims Of USS Cole Attack](#)

February 13, 2020, NPR

Sudan says it has signed a deal to settle claims related to the bombing of the USS Cole 20 years ago – a move that could end lawsuits filed by victims and their families and also improve Sudan's chances of getting off the U.S. list of state sponsors of terrorism.

Latin America

[EU to donate millions to help refugees in Latin America](#)

February 14, 2020, The National

The EU is donating €4 million (Dh15.9m) to help refugees in Mexico, Costa Rica and Honduras find jobs and better integrate into society. The announcement in Mexico City on Thursday came as the number of asylum seekers in the country has soared, with more than 70,300 people last year.

[Latin America's militaries are back](#)

February 13, 2020, FIU News

What does the resurgence of the armed forces in the political arena mean for democracy in the region?

[Guaido Defends Sanctions Against Venezuela](#)

February 13, 2020, The Globe Post

Venezuela's opposition leader Juan Guaido on Wednesday defended foreign sanctions against his country 24 hours after he was attacked at Caracas international airport by protesters shouting "fascist" and "murderer."

[IMF lands in Argentina amid debt crisis](#)

February 13, 2020, Al Jazeera

Argentina's high-wire tightrope walk over its debt took centre stage on Wednesday as representatives from the International Monetary Fund (IMF), its biggest creditor, landed in Buenos Aires.

[Pentagon shifts US\\$3.8b towards Mexico border wall construction](#)

February 14, 2020, CNA

The US Defence Department is shifting another US\$3.8 billion from procurement and other operations towards paying for a wall on the US-Mexican border, official documents sent to the US Congress showed.



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