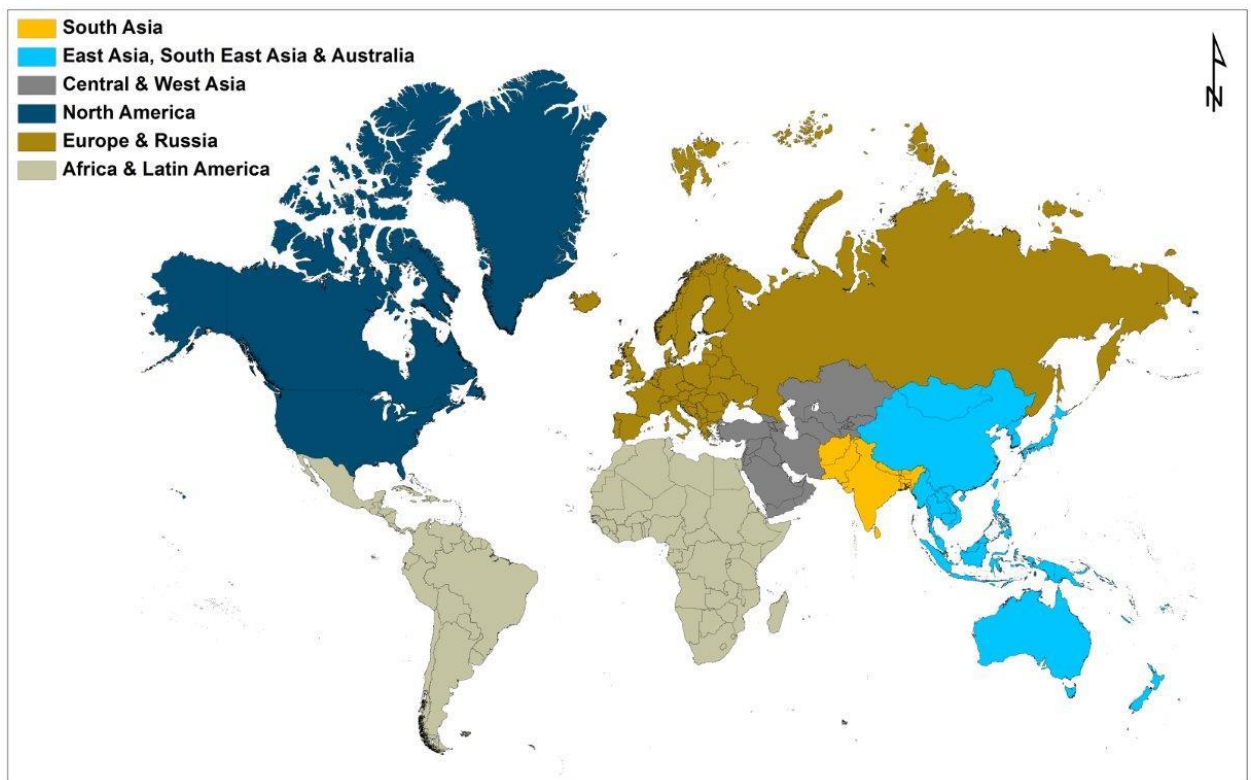




Delhi Policy Group

DPG WEEKLY WORLD WATCH



Volume IV, Issue 11 | March 13, 2020



DPG WEEKLY WORLD WATCH

Volume 4, Issue 11

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

[The defensive turn in India's foreign policy](#)

March 8, 2020, Hindustan Times

In these years, India's diplomatic machinery was busy giving concrete shape to Modi's vision and implementing the decisions that flowed from the decisions that emerged from his interaction with his international peers. The diplomatic focus was outward.

[Coronavirus: India temporarily bars entry of nationals from 3 countries](#)

March 10, 2020, India Today

Regular visas, including e visas, granted to all foreign nationals who have travel history to these countries on or after February 1 and who have not yet entered India also stands suspended.

[Covid-19: China's loss could be India's gain](#)

March 8, 2020, The Hindu Business Line

The recent outbreak of coronavirus (Covid-19) in China could present an opportunity for India as an alternative supply-chain market, particularly for electronics manufacturing and auto components sector.

[How India can beat China in global trade; domestic pharma, chemical-makers have an edge](#)

March 11, 2020, Financial express

India can beat China if the country adds efforts to increase production in the field of pharmaceuticals, textiles, engineering goods, and chemicals. The weak competition from the dragon can make India a potential trade beneficiary in the current situation.

[Geopolitics of Trump's Visit](#)

March 7, 2020, Mainstream Weekly

From a geopolitical perspective, India and the US essentially reaffirmed in the joint statement issued after the visit of President Trump—Vision and Principles for India-US Comprehensive Global Strategic Partnership—what they have been saying through the past decade or so. It is an open secret that shared concerns over China's rise is the leitmotif of the US-Indian strategic partnership.

[Fall in crude oil prices positive for India: Economic Affairs Secretary](#)

March 9, 2020, The Economics Times

The fall in crude oil price is positive for the country, says Atanu Chakraborty, Economic Affairs Secretary. His views came after oil prices tanked over 30 per cent after Saudi Arabia slashed prices and set plans for a dramatic increase in crude production in April.

[India calls US move on duty relaxation unfair](#)

March 10, 2020, The Economic Times

India has termed as "unilateral action" a recent move by the United States to terminate an exemption given to developing countries from countervailing duty (CVD) investigations. It also criticised another US decision to unilaterally remove India and Turkey from a list of developing countries that are exempt from safeguard duty on crystalline silicon photovoltaic cells and large residential washers, last year.

[Economy's alright: PM Narendra Modi, Ministers' big message](#)

March 9, 2020, The Economic Times

The PM started the messaging on March 6 with his keynote address, saying "our policies are clear, our fundamentals are strong..." and that to minimise the impact of the global slowdown, his government has "taken whatever initiatives we could, whatever proactive action we could."

[HAL eyes bases in four nations to push 'made-in-India' defence products](#)

March 8, 2020, Live Mint

State-run aerospace behemoth Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd (HAL) is looking at setting up logistics bases in Malaysia, Vietnam, Indonesia and Sri Lanka as part of initiatives to woo the countries to buy India's light combat aircraft Tejas and military helicopters.

['US-India defence partnership is strong'](#)

March 11, 2020, The Hindu

US Ambassador Kenneth I. Juster visited the Tata-Lockheed Martin Aerostructures facility and participated in the topping out ceremony of the new US Consulate compound in Hyderabad. "Engaging meeting with the leadership team from Tata-Lockheed Martin. The US India Defense industry partnership is strong and this Hyderabad facility is a great example of accelerating US India cooperation in the advanced technology sector," Mr. Juster tweeted.

[In a first, India figures on arms exporters list](#)

March 10, 2020, The Economic Times

In a first, India has figured on a list of global arms exporters, making a modest entry at number 23 but the ranking is likely to rise sharply over the coming years with the government's focus on encouraging weapons sales abroad.

[Jaishankar hits back at UN rights panel, says it's blind to Pakistan terror](#)

March 8, 2020, The Times of India

Foreign minister S Jaishankar strongly rebutted UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Michelle Bachelet's criticism of Indian decisions on J&K and the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, saying the body has been wrong before and is surprisingly blind to the role of cross border terrorism.

[India quarantined: Govt suspends all tourist, medical visas till Apr 15](#)

March 12, 2020, Business Standard

In an effort to contain the continued spread of the novel coronavirus, the government suspended all tourist and medical visas till April 15. The government asked Indians to avoid foreign travel and said they could be quarantined for 14 days on their return. It also asked non-resident Indians (NRIs) to avoid travelling to India. Visa-free travel facility granted to non-OCI (Overseas Citizenship of India) card holders is also kept in abeyance till April 15.

Pakistan

['EU extends GSP Plus status to Pakistan till 2022'](#)

March 7, 2020, The News

European Commission has extended Generalised Scheme of Preferences -- (GSP+) status till 2022. This means Pakistan will continue to enjoy preferences under GSP Plus on its exports to EU countries.

[Pakistan ranks 11th in arms imports](#)

March 10, 2020, The News

Pakistan ranked at 11th position in arms imports in the world over, says the latest report by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (Sipri) that tracks arms deals around the world. Actual share of Pakistani imports in total global weapons imports had decreased. China accounted for 73% of the total arms

imports of Pakistan over 2015-2019, with Russia (6.6%) and Italy (6.1%) second and third on the list.

[Colonel martyred in Tank search operation](#)

March 10, 2020, Dawn

A senior military officer was martyred while two terrorists were killed during an exchange of fire in Tank district. The martyred officer was identified as Colonel Mujeebur Rehman who belonged to Astore district of Gilgit-Baltistan.

[Govt debt rises to Rs33tr](#)

March 11, 2020, Dawn

The central government debt during the first seven months of the current fiscal year increased by Rs1.210 trillion to Rs32.997tr mainly on account of a double-digit increase in the funds raised through the Pakistan Investment Bonds (PIBs) auctions.

[PAF F-16 crashes in Islamabad during March 23 parade rehearsal, pilot martyred](#)

March 11, 2020, Dawn

A Pakistan Air Force (PAF) F-16 aircraft crashed near Shakarparian in Islamabad during rehearsals for the March 23 parade. Wing Commander Nauman Akram was martyred in the crash.

[Sindh confirms 15th covid-19 case, Pakistan's tally rises to 21](#)

March 13, 2020, The Express Tribune

The Sindh Health Department confirmed a new case of the novel coronavirus on March 13, bringing the country's tally to 21.

[Pakistan hints at working with India on Covid-19](#)

March 13, 2020, The Express Tribune

Pakistan hinted at working with neighbouring countries including India to deal with coronavirus, which has now spread to over 100 countries and has been declared a pandemic by the World Health Organisation (WHO).

Afghanistan

[Trump Says Taliban Could 'Possibly' Seize Power after US Leaves](#)

March 7, 2020, Tolo News

US President Donald Trump said the Taliban could "possibly" overrun the Afghan government after foreign troops withdraw from the country as part of an agreement signed between the two sides last week.

[32 Killed, 81 Wounded in Kabul Attack: MoI](#)

March 6, 2020, Tolo News

At least 32 people were killed and 81 others were wounded in the attack on a ceremony marking the anniversary of the death of Abdul Ali Mazari, leader of the Hezb-e Wahdat party.

[Report: US Intelligence Says Taliban Plan to Break Peace Deal](#)

March 6, 2020, VOA

A U.S. media outlet reported that the U.S. government had intelligence that the Taliban did not plan to abide by promises they made in the recent peace agreement with the United States.

[US, Russia: 'Will Not Support' an 'Islamic Emirate in Afghanistan](#)

March 7, 2020, Tolo News

The United States and Russia, in a joint statement made "on the occasion of the February 29 US-Taliban Deal," welcomed the US-Taliban commitment to the peace process in Afghanistan but said the "international community will not accept or support the restoration of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan."

[Afghanistan: Rival 'presidents' hold two inaugurations](#)

March 9, 2020, BBC

Two Afghan politicians - who both claim they won the presidential election - have declared themselves president at rival inauguration ceremonies. The electoral commission says incumbent Ashraf Ghani narrowly won September's vote, but Abdullah Abdullah alleges the result is fraudulent.

[Afghanistan: Ghani signs decree to release 1,500 Taliban fighters](#)

March 11, 2020, Al Jazeera

Afghan President Ashraf Ghani has signed a decree to release 1,500 Taliban prisoners as a move to launch direct talks with the armed group to end the 18-year war in Afghanistan.

[U.S. general says Taliban fought IS with limited U.S. support](#)

March 11, 2020, Xinhua

Commander of U.S. Central Command Kenneth McKenzie said that Afghan Taliban had pushed back the Islamic State (IS) militants in eastern Afghanistan with "very limited" support from the U.S. military.

[US-Taliban deal puts the onus of ending the Afghanistan war on Asian forces](#)

March 13, 2020, The Indian Express

India may remain silent, fully confident that the US will not be able to leave Afghanistan. Indeed, the dialogue of the deaf between Kabul and the Taliban may not go anywhere. That's why President Trump warned: "If bad things happen", he said, "we'll go back with a force like no one's ever seen."

Bangladesh

[Indian PM cancels Dhaka trip after Bangladesh detects coronavirus](#)

March 9, 2020, BD News24.com

Prime Minister's Modi's visit to Bangladesh next week at the invitation of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is being deferred due to Coronavirus.

[Bangladesh approves mega seaport project](#)

March 11, 2020, China.org.cn

Bangladesh's highest economic policy-making body approved nine development projects worth 241.13 billion taka (2.83 billion U.S. dollars), including a 177.77-billion-taka (2.09-billion- U.S. dollar) program to build a deep-sea port.

[26th span of Bangladesh's largest Padma Bridge installed as construction continues despite COVID-19](#)

March 10, 2020, China.org.cn

Chinese engineers successfully installed the 26th span of Bangladesh's largest Padma Bridge as China Major Bridge Engineering Company continued relentless efforts to ensure timely completion of the project despite COVID-19 outbreak.

[48 Myanmar nationals arrested for intruding into Bangladesh](#)

March 10, 2020, Dhaka Tribune

Bangladesh Coast Guard arrested 48 Myanmar nationals for illegally intruding into Bangladesh through Saint Martin Island's Chera Dwip in Cox's Bazar.

[Dhaka, Paris to boost defence cooperation](#)

March 10, 2020, New Age

Bangladesh and France stressed the need for enhancing cooperation in the defence sector, prime minister's press secretary Ihsanul Karim said referring to a meeting of French defence minister Florence Parly with prime minister Sheikh Hasina in Dhaka.

[Modi's canceled Bangladesh visit is an opportunity](#)

March 10, 2020, Atlantic Council

Recent demonstrations in Bangladesh against Modi's visit speak volumes, literally and metaphorically. Instead of dismissing them as a conspiracy, both countries will be better served if their policymakers listen and take this opportunity.

Nepal

[Nepal's delicate balancing act between China and India](#)

March 9, 2020, Deutsche Welle

Ties between Nepal and China have been on the upswing, particularly when it comes to trade, investment and regional connectivity. But Beijing's growing clout in the Himalayan country has stoked concerns in India.

[Nepal not to issue on-arrival visas for citizens from France, Germany and Spain](#)

March 9, 2020, Khabarhub

The government has decided not to issue on-arrival visas for citizens of three more countries hit by COVID-19.

[Crossborder virus and Nepali migrant workers](#)

March 10, 2020, Nepali Times

The country with the second-largest burden of disease outside China is South Korea where there are about 40,000 Nepali workers. Of the 14 new cases of COVID-19 detected in the UAE this week, two were Nepalis. There are about 200,000 Nepali workers in the Emirates.

Sri Lanka

[Sri Lanka suspends Buddhist pilgrimage visits to India over COVID-19](#)

March 9, 2020, The Week

Sri Lanka suspended Buddhist pilgrimage tours to India in view of the coronavirus outbreak, saying these trips are mostly undertaken by elderly people who are most vulnerable to COVID-19.

[Royal Australian Navy Ship Parramatta arrives at Sri Lanka's Port of Colombo](#)

March 7, 2020, Colombo Page

Sri Lanka Navy, in accordance with naval traditions, welcomed the Royal Australian Navy's frigate HMAS Parramatta arrived at the Port of Colombo on March 7.

East & South East Asia

China

[Europe's virus battle concerns world](#)

March 3, 2020, Global Times

Few countries in the world can mobilize society and quickly contain the spread of the virus as China. From the outbreak in Italy to the virus' infiltration to other major European countries, all these happened as they had sufficient time to be alerted. This reflects the complexity and arduousness of the fight. We hope Europe can find a way that suits its own conditions to effectively contain the epidemic.

[Societies must adapt well to virus uncertainty](#)

March 2, 2020, Global Times

The coronavirus epidemic is spreading rapidly in Europe. Italy reported 566 new infections, a sharp increase. And the numbers of confirmed cases in both France and Germany have surpassed 100.

[Blaming China for own virus control failure detestable](#)

February 25, 2020, Global Times

The novel coronavirus pneumonia is spreading across the world fast and triggering global panic. At this critical juncture, fighting the epidemic is the most important thing, but some people vent their sentiments and label the epidemic as a "Chinese" one to voice their anger toward the poor handling of their government of the epidemic.

[China's quarantine moves need understanding](#)

February 26, 2020, Global Times

The city of Weihai, East China's Shandong Province, has announced that foreigners and Chinese nationals who departed from Japan or South Korea would be sent to hotels for a 14-day mandatory quarantine. South Korean Foreign Minister Kang Kyung-wha described the move as "excessive." Her statement is understandable. China's Foreign Ministry expressed China's empathy.

[Epidemic won't drive China, S.Korea apart](#)

February 27, 2020, Global Times

The mandatory quarantine measures will not drive a wedge between China and South Korea. Some speculations about this are exaggerated. Some people may find

it hard to adapt to the situation in the beginning, but this move will only cause a limited negative impact. The coronavirus epidemic in South Korea is raging. South Korea reported 505 new confirmed cases, bringing its total infected cases to 1,766, far exceeding the total infections in any province of China outside Hubei Province.

[COVID-19 puts global health, trade to the test](#)

February 25, 2020, Global Times

WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said that "we are not witnessing the uncontained global spread of this virus" at the current stage, so "using the word 'pandemic' now does not fit the facts." He also stated that this is not the time for us to "focus on what word we use," but "a time for all countries, communities, families and individuals to focus on preparing."

[Opening floodgates does not solve China's economic problems](#)

March 3, 2020, Global Times

The spread of the novel coronavirus pneumonia (COVID-19) has created a chain of panic worldwide, and the global market has felt the shock. Last week, the US stock market experienced one of its darkest moments since 2008. The Chinese economy has also been damaged due to the COVID-19. The Chinese government has issued a series of measures to help small and medium-sized enterprises revive and develop. These moves focused on short-term economic relief, but nothing like China's large-scale stimulus package in 2008.

[Political virus puts US behind the curve of infection control](#)

March 12, 2020, Global Times

The COVID-19 is spreading worldwide. Some people in Western countries, especially some American politicians, had not paid much attention to China's experience. Instead, they regard it as an opportunity to attack China, which has led to the serious situation.

[President Xi's inspection instills more optimism in society](#)

March 10, 2020, Global Times

The inspection tour by Chinese President Xi Jinping to Wuhan, Central China's Hubei Province, has greatly inspired Chinese society. People interpret the visit in their own simple way, and optimism has blended with the atmosphere of spring.

[China must save globalization from epidemic](#)

March 9, 2020, Global Times

The novel coronavirus epidemic has had a global impact. If the epidemic causes more severe damage and harshly disturbs the global economic performance in the first half of 2020, its consequences will be extensive and profound.

[Xi says nation will overcome virus outbreak](#)

March 12, 2020, China Daily

China will definitely defeat the novel coronavirus outbreak and achieve its economic and social development goals, President Xi Jinping said.

[Neither 'Wuhan virus' nor 'Los Angeles virus'](#)

March 12, 2020, China Daily

Is China trying to deny its "disgraceful role" in a "global pandemic" by strongly opposing the use of "Wuhan virus" or "China virus" to describe the novel coronavirus? And has China put the whole world on edge because of its inability to contain the virus in Wuhan, Hubei province, in the initial stages?

[CPC shares China's anti-virus experience with foreign parties](#)

March 13, 2020, Xinhua

The Communist Party of China (CPC) has shared its experience from China's fight against COVID-19 with political parties around the world, bolstering its efforts to aid countries in stemming the virus' spread.

[Commentary: In war against COVID-19, vision of community with shared future shines](#)

March 11, 2020, Xinhua

After the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) epidemic emerged, it has drawn much of the world's attention and triggered global concerns with the numbers of confirmed infections around the world and affected countries climbing.

[Xi's Wuhan trip boosts confidence in fight against COVID-19, overseas experts say](#)

March 13, 2020, Xinhua

Chinese President Xi Jinping's inspection trip to Wuhan has demonstrated his care for people's health and safety and assured the world of China's confidence in the final victory over the novel coronavirus, international experts and scholars have said.

Japan

[Japan and South Korea agree to continue talks over export controls after marathon session](#)

March 11, 2020, The Japan Times

Japan and South Korea have agreed to continue discussions over export controls after trade officials wrapped up marathon discussions.

[Japan begins coronavirus travel curbs on China and South Korea](#)

March 9, 2020, The Japan Times

The government implemented tougher border control measures for travelers from China and South Korea, effectively banning tourists from the two countries through the end of this month, as it fights to prevent a surge in coronavirus infections.

[Japan's energy policy nine years after Fukushima](#)

March 11, 2020, East Asia Forum

On 11 March 2020, Japan marks the ninth anniversary of the Tohoku earthquake and tsunami, which caused a nuclear meltdown at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant. The meltdown of the plant owned by the Tokyo Electric Power Company forced Japanese authorities to introduce many changes to Japan's energy policy.

[Japan's GDP contraction revised to 7.1%, fueling recession fears amid coronavirus crisis](#)

March 9, 2020, The Japan Times

Japan's biggest contraction in more than five years adds to escalating concerns among policymakers about the length of a likely recession in the world's third-largest economy as the impact of the coronavirus and a plunge in oil prices causes markets to slide and the yen to gain.

[Olympics Postponement 'Inconceivable,' Says Japan Minister](#)

March 11, 2020, Bloomberg

A postponement or delay to the 2020 Olympics in Tokyo is "inconceivable," the Japanese minister responsible for the games said, responding to comments made by a member of the organizing committee which suggested a possible delay of up to two years as the coronavirus continues to spread.

[Mask diplomacy: How coronavirus upended generations of China-Japan antagonism](#)

March 9, 2020, Brookings

While the coronavirus crisis has led many states and non-state actors to behave in their own self-interest, viewing the distribution of masks and other medical supplies as a sort of zero-sum geopolitical game, others have selflessly endeavored to distribute supplies to those who need them most, engaging in “mask diplomacy” despite needs in their own countries.

[Japan and South Korea must beat coronavirus to normalize relations](#)

March 11, 2020, Nikkei Asian Review

Japan has begun restricting arrivals from South Korea to prevent the inflow of those infected with the new coronavirus, a move it has also taken with China. Though the curbs last only until the end of March, they are expected to damage economic and cultural exchanges. These countries should try to contain the outbreak quickly and minimize its economic impact.

[Japan plays COVID-19 catch-up with rushed state-of-emergency bill](#)

March 11, 2020, The Japan Times

Two months after Japan confirmed its first case of COVID-19, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe is finally setting up a legal framework that will let him declare a nationwide state of emergency if the outbreak worsens.

Korea

[North Korea launches unidentified projectiles for second time in two weeks](#)

March 9, 2020, CNN International

North Korea fired at least three unidentified projectiles, according to US and South Korean officials, the second such move by the Kim Jong Un regime in two weeks.

[Could North Korea's information blackout be masking a disastrous health crisis?](#)

March 10, 2020, Euro News

Unsurprisingly, the most secretive nation in the world has locked down all information except the regime's official version, and foreigners have been quarantined at home since early February.

[China to send first batch of coronavirus relief items to S. Korea this week: Seoul ministry](#)

March 10, 2020, Yonhap News

China will send the first batch of face masks and other coronavirus-related relief items to South Korea this week to help the neighboring country fight the viral disease, a foreign ministry official in Seoul said.

[S. Korea on edge over largest yet mass infections in Seoul](#)

March 10, 2020, The Korea Herald

Seoul's biggest-yet cluster of infections emerged, keeping South Korea's health authorities on their toes despite the number of newly discovered infections across the country slowing for the fourth consecutive day.

Southeast Asia

[ASEAN economic ministers agree to boost economic cooperation](#)

March 11, 2020, The Star

Economic ministers of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) approved 12 initiatives regarding boosting regional economic cooperation in 2020 at a meeting held in Vietnam's central city of Da Nang.

[India closes Myanmar border as coronavirus cases rise to 60 in the country](#)

March 11, 2020, Live Mint

India ramped up travel restrictions and closed a border with neighbouring Myanmar to counter the coronavirus outbreak, as countries across South Asia reported a rise in cases.

[China's Retention Walls in Wa Region Prompt Visit by Myanmar Border Officials](#)

March 6, 2020, The Irrawaddy

Myanmar officials visited the Chinese border in Hopang District of the Wa Self-Administered Zone in northern Shan State early this week to observe a boundary issue, as China is building retaining walls on two streams along the border near Namtit Town.

[China quietly filling US vacuum in the Philippines](#)

March 10, 2020, Asia Times

As President Rodrigo Duterte moves to boot US troops from Philippine soil through the cancellation of a key defense pact, China's People's Liberation Army (PLA) is quietly moving in to take their place.

[Forging closer China-Malaysia ties](#)

March 11, 2020, The Star

China is Malaysia's largest trading partner for 10 consecutive years and the largest source of foreign investments in the manufacturing industry for three consecutive years. According to Chinese Ambassador to Malaysia Bai Tian, Malaysia-China bilateral trade hit a record high last year with figures from the first 11 months already surpassing the previous year's total at US\$111bil (RM455bil).

[Malaysia wants to resolve palm oil spat with India within a month, minister says](#)

March 11, 2020, The Economic Times

India, the world's biggest consumer of edible oil, this year set curbs on palm oil purchases from Malaysia in retaliation for comments by then prime minister, Mahathir Mohamad, criticising New Delhi's policy on the Himalayan region of Kashmir.

[Thailand scraps visa on arrival for Indian tourists](#)

March 11, 2020, Business Today

Thailand cancelled the grant of visa on arrival for 18 countries and visa exemption for three others to contain the spread of the coronavirus, the country's interior minister said.

[Cambodia inaugurates China-funded road connecting Pursat province to Thai border](#)

March 10, 2020, IOL

Cambodia inaugurated a China-funded National Road 55 that links northwest Pursat province to the Thai border.

[China to ship raw materials to help Cambodia's troubled garment industry](#)

March 10, 2020, The Star

Cambodian Prime Minister Samdech Techo Hun Sen said on March 10 that China has arranged vessels to freight raw materials for garment and footwear productions to Cambodia from now until May.

[Vietnam – India signed Memorandum of Understanding on IT cooperation](#)

March 10, 2020, The Policy Times

Vietnam has great demand in developing high quality IT human resource to approach the 4.0 revolution effectively. Moreover, Vietnam has been issuing incentives policies in investment environment, tax and creating the legal corridor.

Central & West Asia

Central Asia

[Kazakhstan To Cut State Budget Following Sharp Drop In Oil Prices](#)

March 09, 2020, RFE/RL

Kazakh President Qasym-Zhomart Toqaev has ordered the resource-rich Central Asian nation's government to cut spending following a sharp drop in the price of oil. The presidential press service said in a statement that during a government session on March 9, Toqaev stressed that Kazakhstan's government will fulfill all of its obligations, protect jobs, and preserve the stability of financial and currency markets.

[Kazakh FM Says Syria Talks In Nur-Sultan Likely Postponed](#)

March 10, 2020, RFE/RL

Kazakh Foreign Minister Mukhtar Tileuberdi says it's unlikely the so-called "Astana format" peace talks on Syria in the Kazakh capital will happen this month as planned. Tileuberdi told journalists on March 10 that it was not clear when exactly the next round of talks will be held.

[Uzbekistan, JICA review investment projects](#)

March 12, 2020, AKI Press

The Ministry of Investments and Foreign Trade of Uzbekistan and Japan International Cooperation Agency reviewed the current portfolio of investment projects and identified steps on future projects. Minister of Investments and Foreign Trade Sardor Umurzakov confirmed the intention of Uzbekistan to deepen and expand cooperation in energy sector, health care, human development, and infrastructure.

[Kazakhstan calls for consensus on OPEC+ deal](#)

March 13, 2020, New Europe

Kazakhstan's Energy Minister Nurlan Nogayev called for the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and its allies led by Russia, a group known as OPEC+, to reach a consensus that would stabilise oil prices.

West Asia

[Israeli-made Oral Vaccine For Coronavirus On Track, But Testing Will Take Months](#)

March 11, 2020, The Times of Israel

An effective Israeli-developed vaccine for coronavirus is on track to be ready for testing within "a few weeks," though it won't be available for months because of the lengthy and sometimes bureaucratic testing and approval process, a member of the development team said.

[Bahrain Accuses Iran Of 'Biological Aggression' Over Covid-2019](#)

March 13, 2020, Al Jazeera

Bahrain accused Iran of "biological aggression" by covering up the spread of the coronavirus and failing to stamp the passports of Bahraini travellers. Many of the recorded infections throughout the Gulf region are linked to travel to Iran, which hosts several important shrines and pilgrimage sites for Shia Muslims.

[British Soldier Killed in Missile Attack On Iraq's Camp Taji Was Female Lance Corporal Brodie Gillon, 26](#)

March 12, 2020, Daily Mail

The British servicewoman killed in a missile attack on Camp Taji in Iraq has named by the The Ministry of Defence Lance Corporal Brodie Gillon, 26, along with two American troops, was killed when 15 small rockets hit the military camp to the north of capital Baghdad.

[US Launches Airstrikes In Iraq After Female Reservist Named As First Briton Killed In Combat Fighting IS](#)

March 13, 2020, The Telegraph

The US has launched airstrikes in Iraq after a British army medic was killed in a missile attack on a military base.

[Coronavirus: 120 Indians From Iran To Reach Jaisalmer Today, To Be Quarantined At Army Facility](#)

March 13, 2020, India Today

Air India flight, with 150 Indians being evacuated from coronavirus-hit Iran, will reach Jaisalmer in Rajasthan. All the 120 Indians who are being evacuated from Iran will be quarantined at an Army facility created in Jaisalmer, a defence spokesperson said.

[Saudi Arabia Detains King's Brother, Nephew In Crackdown: Reports](#)

March 08, 2020, Al Jazeera

Saudi Arabia has detained two senior members of the royal family - Prince Ahmed bin Abdulaziz, the younger brother of King Salman, and Mohammed bin Nayef, the king's nephew - according to reports citing sources with knowledge of the matter.

[Oil Price Plunges Almost 30% As Saudis Vow To Step Up Production](#)

March 09, 2020, The Guardian

The price of crude oil has plunged by almost 27% after Saudi Arabia, the world's top oil exporter, said it would step up production from next month, flooding global markets and most likely depressing petrol and diesel prices.

[Turkey Says Idlib Ceasefire Details Largely Agreed On With Russia](#)

March 13, 2020, Al Jazeera

Turkish and Russian officials have largely agreed on details of a ceasefire deal in Syria's war-battered Idlib province, Turkish Defence Minister Hulusi Akar said, the third day of discussions between the two countries.

[Yemen's Houthis Advance In Marib, Saudi Border Areas](#)

March 12, 2020, Al-Monitor

Houthi rebels in Yemen this week secured crucial areas of oil-rich Marib province – the main stronghold of the internationally recognized government of exiled President Abed Rabbo Mansour Hadi.

[UN Blasts 'new And Irresponsible' Offensive In Northern Yemen](#)

March 12, 2020, The National

The United Nations peace envoy to Yemen Martin Griffiths criticised a rebel offensive in Al Jawf province as the "most alarming military escalation" currently occurring in the country's grueling civil war.

United States

United States

[Joe Biden Wins String of Key Primaries in Major Blow to Bernie Sanders](#)

March 10, 2020, The Guardian

Joe Biden secured a key victory in the Democratic presidential nomination race by winning the vital state of Michigan and delivering a major blow to his rival, the Vermont senator Bernie Sanders.

[US Calls for a UN vote on Taliban deal: Diplomats](#)

March 10, 2020 Al Jazeera

Trump administration seeks Security Council endorsement on deal as rival Afghan leaders claim presidency in Kabul.

[US Commander Says Taliban are Not Keeping 'Their Part of the Bargain'](#)

March 10, 2020, The Guardian

The US commander for the Middle East and Afghanistan has said the Taliban are not keeping "their part of the bargain" from the deal signed with the US earlier this month, saying the insurgents were continuing to launch attacks.

[The Oil Price War is a Nightmare for US Shale Producers](#)

March 10, 2020 Al Jazeera

US shale oil firms have far higher production costs than Saudi Arabia, which unleashed a price war over the weekend.

[U.S. House Leaders Unveil Coronavirus Bill; Capitol Tours Suspended](#)

March 12, 2020, Reuters

Democrats in the U.S. House of Representatives unveiled a broad package of proposals to help Americans affected by the coronavirus outbreak, while officials suspended public tours through the Capitol building.

[What You Need to Know About Trump's European Travel Ban](#)

March 12, 2020, The New York Times

President Donald Trump imposed sweeping restrictions to prevent people from 26 European countries from traveling to the United States for a month.

[Brazilian Who Met Trump has Virus; No Plans to test Trump](#)

March 12, 2020, Associated Press

A senior Brazilian official who attended weekend events with President Donald Trump in Florida has tested positive for the coronavirus, marking the first time that someone known to have the virus was in close proximity to the president. Trump does not plan to be tested or go into self-quarantine, the White House said.

[Iran Accuses US of 'Economic Terrorism,' Urges Sanctions End](#)

March 12, 2020, Associated Press

Iran's foreign minister demanded that the United States immediately halt what he called a "campaign of economic terrorism" and lift sanctions, saying they have made it increasingly difficult for the country to export oil and virtually impossible to import medicine and medical equipment, including to identify and treat coronavirus patients.

[Retaliatory Air Raids hit Iraqi Targets After Attack on US Troops](#)

March 13, 2020, Al Jazeera

The United States launched air raids in Iraq late, US officials said, directing them at four locations of the Iranian-backed Shia militia members believed to be responsible for an earlier rocket attack that killed and wounded American and British troops at a base north of Baghdad.

[Facebook Takedowns Reveal Sophistication of Russian Trolls](#)

March 13, 2020, Associated Press

Facebook and Twitter revealed evidence suggesting that Russian efforts to interfere in the U.S. presidential election are getting more sophisticated and harder to detect.

Europe & Russia

Europe

[European Union Leaders Denounce Trump's Coronavirus Travel Restrictions](#)

March 12, 2020, CNN

European Union leaders issued a withering denunciation of President Donald Trump's decision to bar some Europeans from traveling to the US amid the coronavirus pandemic, as Trump admitted he hadn't told the Europeans what was coming.

[PM Johnson Warns Britons: More Loved Ones are Going to Die from Coronavirus](#)

March 12, 2020, Reuters

Prime Minister Boris Johnson warned that many more families would see their loved ones die from coronavirus, as the government's chief scientific adviser said Britain likely has as many as 10,000 people infected.

[Merkel's Party Postpones Congress to Choose New Leader Due to Coronavirus](#)

March 12, 2020, Reuters

German Chancellor Angela Merkel's Christian Democrats (CDU) have postponed a conference scheduled for April 25 in Berlin to choose a new party leader due to the coronavirus and said it would reschedule as soon as the epidemic allowed.

[Turkey's Erdogan Accuses Greece of 'Nazi tortures' on Refugees](#)

March 12, 2020, Al Jazeera

Greece responded to the Turkish president's Nazi comments by denouncing Holocaust comparisons.

[Germany Places Part of Far-Right Party Under Surveillance](#)

March 12, 2020, The New York Times

The intelligence agency labelled a wing of the Alternative for Germany extremist, warning of a "danger for democracy."

[Europe Wants a 'Right to Repair' Smartphones and Gadgets](#)

March 12, 2020, The New York Times

The European Union is seeking to help consumers fix or upgrade devices, rather than replace them, as part of a 30-year push to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

[EU to Give Migrants in Greece €2,000 to go Home](#)

March 12, 2020, BBC News

The EU says it will pay €2,000 (£1,770; \$2,225) each to migrants in overcrowded camps on the Greek islands willing to go back to their home countries.

[UK and EU Agree to 'Dial Down Rhetoric' in Brexit Talks](#)

March 13, 2020, The Guardian

The UK and the EU have agreed to “dial down the rhetoric” over Brexit in an effort to open up space for a deal, it has emerged.

Russia

[Delhi hosts mega India-Russia Friendship fest to mark 20 years of strategic partnership](#)

March 10, 2020, The Economic Times

The maiden Russia-India Friendship Celebration, which took place on March 7-8 in the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts in Delhi, became the city’s main cultural attraction over the last weekend signifying bonds between Delhi and Moscow.

[Saudi Arabia, Russia raise stakes in oil production standoff](#)

March 11, 2020, The Economic Times

Saudi Arabia said it would boost its oil supplies to a record high in April, raising the stakes in a standoff with Russia and effectively rebuffing Moscow's suggestion for new talks.

[Russia hints at further talks with Saudi Arabia after oil prices crash](#)

March 10, 2020, CNBC

Russia has refused to rule out talks with OPEC to stabilize energy markets, according to reports, after oil prices registered their worst declines in almost 30 years.

[Oil War: Who Will Blink First?](#)

March 10, 2020, The Moscow Times

When Russia refused to back Saudi Arabia’s proposal for a deeper oil production cut in Vienna on March 6, it effectively fired the first shot in what looks like being an expensive and prolonged oil price war.

[Putin Says Russian Economy Will Emerge 'Stronger' from Turbulence](#)

March 11, 2020, The Moscow Times

President Vladimir Putin insisted that Russia will weather the economic storm triggered by its oil standoff with Saudi Arabia and come out "stronger."

[Russian Parliament Allows Putin 2 More Terms As President](#)

March 10, 2020, NPR

Russia's lower house of parliament approved a constitutional amendment to allow President Vladimir Putin — already the country's longest-serving leader since Josef Stalin — to extend his rule until 2036.

[US, Russia on shaky ground in Syria as military convoys come head to head](#)

March 10, 2020, Daily Sabah

The latest encounter of the troops took place. Reports claimed that the U.S. patrol blocked a Russian military convoy in the countryside of al-Hasakah, preventing the Russians from accessing a roundabout in the region.

[Turkey: Talks with Russia on Idlib, Syria 'positive'](#)

March 11, 2020, Anadolu Agency

Talks between Turkish and Russian military officials on starting joint patrols in Idlib, northwestern Syria under the cease-fire deal reached last week are making progress, said Turkey's defense chief.

Africa & Latin America

Latin America

[Brazil's leader promises to restore 'north-south' alliance with U.S. in Miami speech](#)

March 9, 2020, Miami Herald

Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro promised in Miami to restore the "north-south" strategic alliance with the United States and slash regulations to promote investments.

[US, Brazil sign deal to strengthen military ties](#)

March 9, 2020, Yenisafak

The bilateral agreement "reduces bureaucratic processes" in the sale of military goods between the two countries, opens the U.S. market to military products from Brazil, and "could facilitate the entry of Brazilian products to NATO member countries."

[Brazil, U.S. sign agreement to develop defense technology](#)

March 8, 2020, Reuters

Brazilian and U.S. governments signed an agreement for development of defense projects that may give the South American country access to financing.

[U.S., Canada, European nations meet to discuss concern over Mexico energy policy](#)

March 9, 2020, Yahoo News

The United States, the European Union, Canada and six European nations have held joint talks on concerns over Mexico's energy policy, sources told Reuters, as President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador pushes for a bigger role for the state in the sector.

[Market turmoil complicates Argentina foreign debt restructuring](#)

March 9, 2020, Financial Times

Argentina's new Peronist government has been caught off guard by global financial market turmoil at a crucial point in its talks with creditors to restructure more than \$100bn of foreign debt, raising the risk that the negotiations could be delayed and result in a messy default.

[Nearly 5m have fled Venezuela: UN](#)

March 11, 2020, The News

Some 4.9 million people have left Venezuela, wracked by years of economic and political crisis, the UN rights chief said, decrying ongoing attacks on opposition politicians, protesters and journalists.

Africa

[EU unveils 'partnership plans' for new Africa strategy](#)

March 9, 2020, Euractive

Partnerships on ten policy areas are at the heart of the EU's plan "Towards a comprehensive strategy with Africa," launched on 9 March. The paper will start a seven-month negotiating process with EU and African leaders, with a view to agreeing a partnership agenda at an EU African Union summit in October.

[How oil price war will hurt African producers](#)

March 11, 2020, SCMP

Africa's second-largest oil exporter Angola faces taking a major economic hit from an oil price war fuelled by the coronavirus that has seen the largest drop in crude oil prices since the Gulf War in 1991.

[AFRICOM scales back major exercise in Morocco over coronavirus fears](#)

March 11, 2020, Stars and Stripes

One of the largest military exercises in Africa is being scaled back amid concerns about the coronavirus, U.S. Africa Command said.

[Sudan PM survives blast in apparent assassination attempt](#)

March 9, 2020, The Guardian

Sudan's prime minister has survived an apparent assassination attempt after an explosion near his convoy in the capital, Khartoum.

[Senior al-Shabaab Leader Killed by US Strike in Somalia, Pentagon Says](#)

March 9, 2020, Military.com

Bashir Mohamed Mahamoud, a senior leader of the al-Shabaab terrorist group, was killed in an airstrike conducted by U.S. Africa Command on February 22.

[Djibouti-Somalia-Kenya submarine cable ready](#)

March 10, 2020, The East African

Kenya and Djibouti are now connected through the submarine cable Djibouti Africa Regional Express 1 (Dare1). The cable landed in Mombasa this week and is expected to boost connectivity in the Horn of Africa.



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