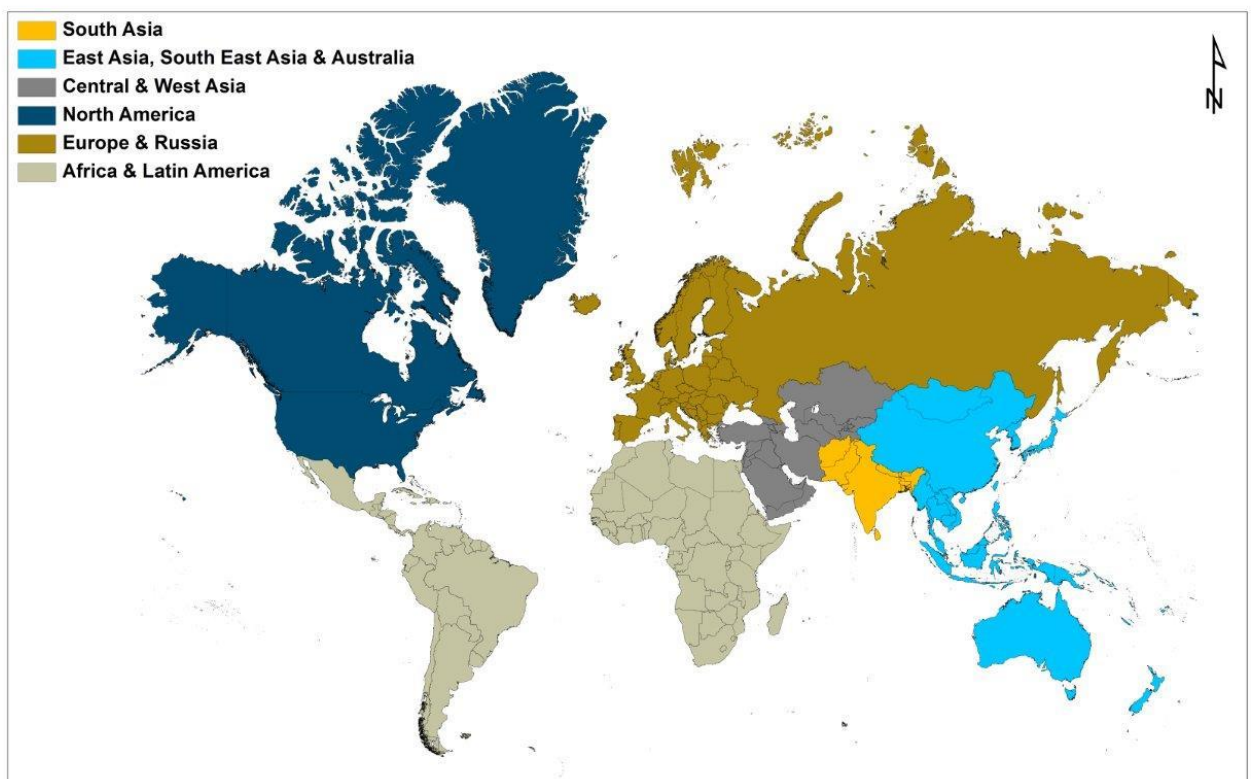




Delhi Policy Group

DPG WEEKLY WORLD WATCH



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DPG WEEKLY WORLD WATCH

Volume 4, Issue 17

ABOUT US

Founded in 1994, the Delhi Policy Group is among India's oldest independent think tanks with its primary focus on international and strategic issues of critical national interest. Over the past decades, the Delhi Policy Group has established itself in both domestic and international circles, particularly in the area of national security.

In keeping with India's increasing global profile as a leading power and the accompanying dynamism of India's foreign and security policy, the Delhi Policy Group has expanded its focus areas to include India's broader regional and global role; India's initiatives to strengthen its strategic periphery; India's political, security and connectivity challenges and policies across the Indo-Pacific; and the strategic partnerships that advance India's rise. To support these goals, the DPG undertakes research, publishes policy reports and organises conferences on strategic and geo-political, geo-economic, and defence and security issues.

DPG WEEKLY WORLD WATCH

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Contents

South Asia.....	1
East & South East Asia.....	8
Central & West Asia.....	18
United States.....	21
Europe & Russia.....	24
Africa & Latin America	27

South Asia

India

[Covid-19: Jaishankar speaks to counterparts from US, Russia and Brazil](#)

April 23, 2020, Live Mint

'Discussed our coronavirus responses and the importance of international cooperation,' Jaishankar tweeted about his conversations with US' Pompeo

[Explained: Why India tightened FDI rules, and why it's China that's upset](#)

April 23, 2020, The Indian Express

China's FDI has grown five-fold since 2014 and, as of December 2019, its cumulative investment in India exceeded \$8 billion.

[China's protest of India's revised FDI Policy: A process of de-globalisation begins opine experts](#)

April 22, 2020, Financial Express

The Embassy of China in New Delhi issued a statement asserting "The development of the Indian industries including mobile phones, household electrical appliances, auto and infra sector which have created jobs in India is due to the Chinese investments."

[Nepal, Bangladesh raise with India Bengal's decision to halt trade](#)

April 24, 2020, The Economic Times

Nepal and Bangladesh have raised with India the West Bengal government's decision to halt cross-border trade through its territory on the grounds that movement of trucks might spread Covid-19 infection in the state.

[Locked-down Indian economy in its worst quarter since mid-1990s](#)

April 23, 2020, The Economic Times

The Indian economy is likely to suffer its worst quarter since the mid-1990s, hit by the ongoing lockdown imposed to stem the spread of coronavirus, according to a Reuters poll, which predicted a mild and gradual recovery.

[Leveraging the COVID crisis: How India can displace China in global manufacturing and supply chains](#)

April 24, 2020, The Times of India

As India's attention cautiously shifts from bending the coronavirus curve downwards to rebuilding the economy, the Narendra Modi government's primary economic focus has, rightly, been on short-term, stop-gap stabilisation measures.

[Defence Minister Rajnath Singh inaugurates DRDO mobile testing lab](#)

April 23, 2020, The Economic Times

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Thursday inaugurated a mobile virology research and diagnostics laboratory, a testing facility developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation that can process over 1,000 samples in a day, speed up COVID-19 screening and carry out immune profiling of patients of the virus for vaccine development.

[India carrying out targeted strikes on terror launch pads along LoC: Defence Minister](#)

April 19, 2020, The Economic Times

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Sunday said the Indian Army is carrying out "targeted strikes" on terror launch pads along the Line of Control in Jammu and Kashmir and eliminating the Pakistani infiltrators before they cross over to the Indian side.

[26 Navy personnel in Western Naval Command test positive for coronavirus](#)

April 18, 2020, The Economic Times

At least 26 Indian Navy personnel have tested positive for coronavirus at the strategically-located Western Naval Command in Mumbai, in the first case of a major outbreak of the deadly infection in the armed forces.

Pakistan

[Bilateral debt: Islamabad does not require major rescheduling](#)

April 18, 2020, The News

All multilateral creditors such as the IMF, WB and ADB had come forward in any way to help Islamabad by providing loan packages through diverting the existing resource envelop or raising additional resources except the Islamic Development

Bank, which so far preferred to remain silent over issuing any additional loan or grants to Pakistan in the aftermath of this deadly virus.

[Soldier martyred, five militants killed in Waziristan clashes](#)

April 20, 2020, The News

Five militants were killed and a soldier was martyred in two separate clashes between the security forces and terrorists in North Waziristan district.

[Four 'AQIS terrorists' arrested in Jauhar raid](#)

April 20, 2020, The News

Personnel of the Special Investigation Unit (SIU) Karachi with the assistance of a federal intelligence agency have arrested four terrorists of the banned Al-Qaeda in the Indian Subcontinent (AQIS).

[PM Imran Khan's first official visit to Presidency](#)

April 21, 2020, The News

Prime Minister Imran Khan held a meeting with President Dr Arif Alvi in Islamabad on April 20. They discussed national and international affairs. The meeting also took into view the situation arising out of the pandemic of COVID-19.

[Mosques to be closed if corona spreads in Ramazan: PM Imran Khan](#)

April 22, 2020, The News

Prime Minister Imran Khan advised the nation to pray at home during the Ramazan and warned that if the coronavirus spread in a mosque, then it would be closed. He was expressing these views while chairing a high level meeting here which discussed the coronavirus situation and the related matters.

[US will provide ventilators to Pakistan: Trump](#)

April 24, 2020, Dawn

US President Donald Trump has said that Pakistan has asked him to send ventilators for the victims of the coronavirus and he has agreed to do so. At a White House briefing on US efforts to combat the disease, President Trump said that he spoke to a number of world leaders "who desperately need ventilators" and assured them that Washington would help them meet their needs.

[79pc infections in Pakistan caused by local transmission](#)

April 24, 2020, Dawn

While the number of Covid-19 cases has risen to almost 11,000 in the country with 742 new ones surfacing over the past 24 hours, the National Command and Operation Centre (NCOC) revealed on April 23 that 79 per cent of these cases had been caused by local transmission of novel coronavirus.

[Chinese businessman 'kidnapped' in DHA](#)

April 23, 2020, Dawn

A Chinese trader has gone missing from the Karachi Defence area and police suspect that he was abducted. The 39-year-old Chinese national had come to Pakistan on Feb 25 for "some business purpose". Chinese trader was not working on any project related to the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor.

[Sindh govt challenges high court verdict in Daniel Pearl case](#)

April 23, 2020, Dawn

The Sindh government challenged the Sindh High Court (SHC) verdict in the Daniel Pearl kidnapping and murder case before the Supreme Court. In its April 2 order, the SHC had overturned the conviction of Ahmed Omar Saeed Sheikh for killing the South Asia Bureau Chief of The Wall Street Journal. The SHC had also acquitted three other accused namely Fahad Naseem, Sheikh Adil and Salman Saqib, who had been earlier sentenced to life imprisonment by an Anti-Terrorism Court (ATC) of Karachi.

Afghanistan

[Taliban Seeks Release of Suspect in German Embassy Bombing](#)

April 21, 2020, Tolo News

One of the top 15 prisoners whose release was demanded by the Taliban, named Lailuddin, was part of a network responsible for major attacks in Kabul, including the German embassy bombing, the American University of Afghanistan (AUAF) attack, attack of former MP Mir Wali and the bombing of the funeral ceremony of Izadyar's son.

[Militant Group Jaish-e-Mohammad's Bases Destroyed: ANA](#)

April 22, 2020, Tolo News

Afghan Army troops in the eastern province of Nangarhar said that they destroyed bases of the Jaish-e-Mohammad insurgent group in the eastern part of the country. According to the army, Jaish-e-Mohammad militants have been active over the past fifteen years in the Ghoraki area of Momandara district in Nangarhar province along the Durand Line, and have been backed by Pakistan.

[U.S. President, Qatari Amir Agree On Taliban Reducing Violence](#)

April 23, 2020, RFERL

The U.S. President Donald Trump and Qatari leader Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani have agreed on the importance of the Taliban reducing violence in Afghanistan. An April 22 statement by the White House said that "the President and the Amir agreed on reducing violence and continuing discussions on prisoner releases."

[Afghan forces kill Mullah Khaliq, capture 4 Taliban compounds in Balkh province](#)

April 23, 2020 Khaama Press

The Afghan forces killed a key Taliban commander, Mullah Khaliq alias Saifullah, and captured four compounds of the group during the operations in northern Balkh province. The 209th Shaheen Corps in a statement said the Afghan forces conducted the operations in Qaland Kheli, Qarghanchi and Sayad Villages of Sholgara district of Balkh.

[Taliban Rejects Afghan Truce Calls During Ramadan](#)

April 23, 2020, VOA

The Taliban has turned down calls for a cease-fire in Afghanistan during the Muslim holy month of Ramadan. The Afghan government and others had hoped to enable health officials to better respond to the "common threat" of the coronavirus pandemic.

[55 More Prisoners Released by Afghan Govt: ONSC](#)

April 24, 2020, Tolo News

55 Taliban prisoners were released from nine provinces. Javid Faisal, the council spokesman, said that the Taliban were released as part of the Afghan government's efforts to "advance peace and fight COVID-19" in the country. The prisoners were released in Paktia, Logar, Badakhshan, Jawzjan, Ghazni, Baghlan, Khost, Paktika, and Maidan Wardak provinces, said Faisal.

Bangladesh

[High Commission of India in Bangladesh holds webinar on trade promotion](#)

April 23, 2020, DD News

Participating in a webinar organized on Thursday with India Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (IBCCI) the High Commissioner said that bilateral trade has been showing significant growth in the last few months and the truck exchanges at ICP Petrapole-Benapole showed positive trends in the month of March 2020.

[Bangladesh to turn back new Rohingya refugee boats: Minister](#)

April 23, 2020, CNA

Bangladesh will not accept two boats carrying hundreds of reportedly starving Rohingya refugees, the country's foreign minister said on Thursday (Apr 23) as calls grew to rescue the Muslim outcasts.

[Chinese weapons for Arakan Army through Bangladesh](#)

April 22, 2020, Northeast Now

The separatist Arakan Army (AA) fighting Myanmar troops in an intensified conflict in the coastal province of Rakhine and the neighbouring state of Chin has managed to land and bring in a huge consignment of weapons and ammunition through Bangladesh's Chittagong Hill Tracts.

[Neighbourhood first: India rushed help to Bangladesh to fight COVID-19](#)

April 23, 2020, Financial Express

The first batch of humanitarian aid was dispatched to the neighbouring countries including Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan, Afghanistan, Maldives, Seychelles & Mauritius. India has always been a first responder to any crisis in the region and has always extended a helping hand.

Nepal

[India hands over 23 tonnes of medicines to Nepal to fight COVID-19 pandemic](#)

April 22, 2020. All India Radio

As part of ongoing bilateral cooperation between India and Nepal to fight COVID-19 Pandemic, Ambassador of India to Nepal Vinay Mohan Kwatra, handed over 23 tonnes of medicines to Nepal's Minister for Health and Population, Bhanubhakta Dhakal in Kathmandu today.

[Nepal's exit strategy](#)

April 23, 2020, Nepali Times

Sooner or later, governments around the world have to decide between economic survival and public health. The choice for politicians is between saving lives and livelihoods. Here in Nepal, no matter what the government thinks, the people voted with their feet leaving Kathmandu by the thousands this week.

Sri Lanka

[Sri Lanka to seek \\$ 400 mn financial facility from India Reserve Bank to meet short term financial needs](#)

April 24, 2020, Colombo Page

Sri Lanka seeks to enter into an agreement with the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) for a Bilateral Currency Swap Arrangement worth US\$ 400 million, Co-Cabinet spokesman Information and Communication Minister Dr Bandula Gunawardena said.

[No need for military from other countries for Sri Lanka to fight coronavirus- Defense Secretary](#)

April 23, 2020, Colombo Page

Sri Lanka Defense Secretary Major General (Retd) Kamal Gunaratne said there was no necessity for Sri Lanka to seek assistance from the military of other countries to combat the spread of coronavirus in the island.

East & South East Asia

China

[China appreciates Russia's position on origin of COVID-19 virus](#)

April 24, 2020, Xinhua

China appreciates Russia's position on the origin of the COVID-19 virus, which is objective, fair, science-based and rational, according to a Foreign Ministry spokesperson Thursday. Spokesperson Geng Shuang made the remarks at a press conference when asked to comment on the remarks made by Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov that claims about the artificial origin of the virus are groundless and allegations against any country without sufficient scientific proof are unacceptable.

[There are no so-called "wildlife wet markets" in China: spokesperson](#)

April 23, 2020, Xinhua

A Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson on Thursday refuted U.S. official's accusations of China over COVID-19, saying China has legislated a comprehensive ban on the illegal activities of hunting, trading, transportation and consumption of wild animals. Spokesperson Geng Shuang made the remarks when responding to a question about U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo's comments calling for China and other countries to close all wildlife wet markets permanently, which "may have played a critical role in the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic," calling it "a move that would reduce risks to human health."

[China slams U.S. shifting blame amid COVID-19 pandemic](#)

April 22, 2020, Xinhua

China on Wednesday slammed the practice of the United States shifting blame amid the COVID-19 pandemic, and said the U.S. is trying to cover up its own problems by doing so. Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Geng Shuang made the remarks at a press conference after Robert O'Brien, U.S. President's national security adviser, reportedly said that the United States has many ways to exert pressure and shift the blame to China, including filing lawsuits.

[Allow no Cold War thinking in COVID-19 vaccine development](#)

April 21, 2020, Xinhua

The United States has some of the world's most innovative scientists. Yet their ability to imagine can be easily outshined when some Washington politicians

scramble to smear China during the coronavirus pandemic. Talking to Fox Business on Monday, White House trade advisor Peter Navarro alleged that China may have withheld data on the virus during its early stages to win a business race to find a vaccine ahead of others, adding "but we're going to beat them."

[China to take all necessary measures to safeguard sovereignty, rights in South China Sea](#)

April 21, 2020, Xinhua

China will take all necessary measures to safeguard its sovereignty, rights and interests in the South China Sea, Foreign Ministry spokesperson Geng Shuang said. Geng made the remarks at a daily press briefing in response to a question concerning Vietnam's claim of sovereignty over the South China Sea islands.

[Chinese embassy spokesperson urges India to treat investments from all countries equally](#)

April 21, 2020, Xinhua

A spokesperson of the Chinese embassy in India on Monday urged India to treat investments from all countries equally and revise relevant discriminatory practices. "We hope India would revise relevant discriminatory practices, treat investments from different countries equally, and foster an open, fair and equitable business environment," Counselor Ji Rong said in a statement published on the website of the Chinese embassy in India.

[China strengthens border control to prevent imported COVID-19 risk](#)

April 20, 2020, Xinhua

China has strengthened border control measures for the containment of imported novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) risk, an official said Monday. Liu Haitao, with the National Immigration Administration (NIA), made the remarks at a press conference on China's response to the coronavirus outbreak.

[Hooliganism infects US judiciary: Global Times editorial](#)

April 23, 2020, Global Times

Republican-controlled Missouri has become the first US state to file a lawsuit against China for its handling of the COVID-19 outbreak, demanding that China compensate for the losses caused by the coronavirus. Mississippi, another state controlled by the Republicans, followed suit and similar propositions and actions are emerging from some Western lawyers and nongovernmental institutions such as Codacons, Italy's main consumer association. As attempting to hold China

accountable is absurd and the Chinese government is protected by sovereign immunity, such a lawsuit will never succeed. Even if some US or Western courts support the claim for compensation from China, they cannot force China to pay compensation as long as China refuses.

[Huge crude futures losses expose vulnerability of Chinese financial sector](#)

April 23, 2020, Global Times

Chinese investors taking long positions in a crude futures product sold by the Bank of China (BOC) have not only lost their principal investments but have now also found themselves owing millions to the bank.

[Why did China's lockdown work? The difference is state capacity](#)

April 23, 2020, Global Times

US political scientist Francis Fukuyama said in a recent interview with Le Point that some countries have great national strength and an effective health policy, while other countries have weak national strength and poor health policies, such as the Indian subcontinent and Africa, and they may be prone to disaster. The strength of a country can be measured by a government's executive powers, mobilization ability and people's willingness to cooperate. Thanks to the strong mobilization powers of the Chinese system, China has great advantages in dealing with the COVID-19 epidemic.

[Despite pandemic at home, US continues to make waves in S.China Sea](#)

April 22, 2020, Global Times

Over the last two weeks, the US government has repeatedly interfered in regional affairs in the South China Sea, disturbing the situation that is stabilizing. Two US warships - an amphibious assault ship and a guided missile cruiser - are operating in the South China Sea, the US Navy said on Tuesday after the US State Department on Saturday called on China to "refrain from engaging in proactive and destabilizing activity" in the region.

[Speak out against foreign attacks on China's COVID-19 record](#)

April 20, 2020, Global Times

As the COVID-19 pandemic is raging around the world, Western society is shirking from its responsibility in the COVID-19 fight by blaming China. The goal of the above actions is clear: They are trying to use the pandemic to launch a full-scale attack against China. First, they made huge economic claims. Some Western civil society groups have initiated suits against China, which could pose legal threats

to overseas Chinese assets in the future. Some Western countries will support these claims, using the excuse that legal actions cannot be interfered with. Second, they will try to make China bear the political responsibility for the pandemic. Third, they deliberately link China and Chinese people to the virus.

[Cooperate with US states on virus fight, not federal government](#)

April 20, 2020, Global Times

The US federal government is way too mean toward China. President Donald Trump and his cabinet members and high officials have intensified their efforts to slander China. China needs to take necessary actions and express its strong dissatisfaction. The advice is to focus China-US anti-epidemic cooperation with US states, while giving the federal government a cold shoulder. Specifically, China should fulfill US states' purchase orders for emergency medical materials before dealing with those from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) under the US Department of Homeland Security. This is a price that the Trump administration needs to pay.

[Every move to stigmatize China evokes our historical memory](#)

April 20, 2020, Global Times

What happened to China during the "Year of the Gengzi" in 1900? The Eight Nation Alliance - you can check which eight countries, if your history book is reliable - invaded China and they were caught burning and looting in Beijing. They used machine guns to slaughter ordinary people, ransacked the royal palace, and destroyed cultural relics. As if that was not enough, the very next year they had the temerity to demand huge compensation from China. Now, 120 years later, in this "Year of the Gengzi," when the descendants of some of the Eight Nation Alliance shamelessly demand compensation, they evoke our historical memory of humiliation. Many Chinese netizens have responded strongly: "They want compensation? If they want to get even with China, let us start from the damage China suffered since the first Opium War in 1840!"

[US failing in bid to strangle Huawei: China Daily editorial](#)

April 24, 2020, China Daily

That the United Kingdom is standing by its decision to allow Huawei's participation in the building of its 5G network shows the value it puts on its partnership with China, as it is remaining firm in doing business with the Chinese telecommunications company despite the United States ratcheting up the pressure in a bid to coerce it to do otherwise.

[Economy pickup can be consolidated: China Daily editorial](#)

April 20, 2020, China Daily

With its economy contracting 6.8 percent year-over-year in the first quarter due to the large-scale shutdowns and quarantines implemented to curb transmission of the novel coronavirus, China urgently needs to sustain its third month upturn in the second quarter. Although the pickup momentum in March was palpable – with the purchasing managers index rebounding sharply from 35.7 the previous month to 52 – it should be borne in mind that the uptrend was due to the easing of the domestic pandemic situation, and it was supported by the largely normal external demand from countries now waging their own battles with the virus, whose effects will be fully felt this month and beyond.

[Priority still pandemic control: China Daily editorial](#)

April 19, 2020, China Daily

As the push, and desire, for normalcy grows stronger, a chain of infections traced in Harbin serves as chilling proof of how things could take a turn for the worse if we do not keep our guard up and maintain the strictest vigilance. One person who returned to the northeastern city of Harbin, Heilongjiang province, from the United States on March 19, the same individual we mentioned last Friday, who at that time was thought to have infected five others, reportedly infected 50 people in a matter of 30 days.

[Economy will emerge stronger from first-quarter contraction: China Daily editorial](#)

April 17, 2020, China Daily

That the Chinese economy contracted by 6.8 percent year-on-year in the first quarter should not come as a surprise. Yet the job market and food supply chains remain largely stable despite the economy being battered, which is a potent sign that the economy can regain its normal growth momentum after production and retail operations resume now that China has largely contained the spread of the novel coronavirus. What is specially encouraging is that economic activities rebounded at a fast pace in March, with a series of indicators, including industrial output, retail and services, improving remarkably.

[Xi stresses reaching anti-poverty goals despite COVID-19 impact](#)

April 23, 2020, Xinhua

Chinese President Xi Jinping has urged efforts to overcome the negative impact of the COVID-19 epidemic to ensure the country reaches its goals in poverty alleviation and the building of a moderately prosperous society in all respects.

[China's resumption of production anchors global supply chain](#)

April 24, 2020, Xinhua

President Xi Jinping's inspection tour to Shaanxi Province underpins the fact that China is steadily pushing for a comprehensive resumption of production to ensure a smooth supply chain at home and abroad. The pandemic has disrupted the global supply chain. The reopening of production lines in China will not only help the Chinese economy, but also recover the global supply chain and lend a great support to the global fight against the pandemic.

[China to donate another 30 million USD supporting WHO's fight against COVID-19](#)

April 23, 2020, Xinhua

China decided to donate another 30 million U.S. dollars to the World Health Organization (WHO) in support of global efforts to fight COVID-19 and the construction of public health systems in developing countries, a Foreign Ministry spokesperson said here Thursday.

Japan

[China's coronavirus diplomacy has finally pushed Europe too far](#)

April 22, 2020, The Japan Times

With a series of high-level summits culminating in a visit to Germany in the fall by President Xi Jinping, this was supposed to be the year of Europe-China diplomacy. Instead, Europeans are warning of a damaging rift.

[Resetting the political calendar after COVID-19](#)

April 23, 2020, The Japan Times

2020 was set to be a highlight year for many Japanese politicians, but the disruptions from COVID-19 have affected the political calendar in important ways. From Diet session dates to state visits to a Cabinet reshuffle, the rearrangement of events will influence decision-making at various levels of government.

[It's time for arms talks with China](#)

April 22, 2020, The Japan Times

A new U.S. State Department report alleges that China may be cheating on its pledge to abstain from nuclear tests. The language of the report is nuanced, however, and the unclassified executive summary, all that mere mortals like you and I can read, points to Chinese activities that “raise concerns” about Beijing’s adherence to standards of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT).

[Kim Jong-un returns to spotlight as questions over North Korean leader's fate arise](#)

April 21, 2020, The Japan Times

Nuclear-armed North Korea returned to the spotlight Tuesday after contradictory media reports said leader Kim Jong Un was in critical condition while others denied he was gravely ill – news that would have serious implications for Tokyo as Japan and the world continue to grapple with the deadly COVID-19 pandemic.

[Japan seeks to develop F-2 jet's successor with U.S., sources say](#)

April 20, 2020, The Asahi Shimbun

The Japanese government is now in the final stages of coordination to develop the successor to the F-2 fighter jet with the United States, according to multiple government officials. The Japanese government is considering officially declaring the United States as its partner for joint development at the end of the year, after continuous talks that will last until this summer.

Korea

[NK media stay mum on leader's whereabouts amid rumors on his health](#)

April 24, 2020, The Korea Herald

North Korean media outlets have stayed mum on leader Kim Jong-un's whereabouts without putting out any reports on his public activity amid persisting speculation over his health.

[US Forces Korea extends health emergency amid virus spread](#)

April 24, 2020, The Korea Herald

Effective until May 23, the renewed declaration did not mean an increased risk level but was a reminder that the commander would exercise authority to enforce

the military staff's compliance with required precautions to combat the virus at US bases here, according to USFK.

[Trump says CNN report on Kim's health was 'incorrect'](#)

April 24, 2020, The Korea Herald

US President Donald Trump said Thursday the CNN report that North Korean leader Kim Jong-un was in grave danger after a surgery was "incorrect," but declined to say if he heard anything from Pyongyang.

[Election win sets Moon to push harder for NK policy](#)

April 27, 2020, The Korea Times

Following the sweeping victory by the ruling party in the general election, the Moon Jae-in administration's North Korea policy is expected to gain momentum.

[Defense chief says North Korean military plane activities on 'unusual' rise](#)

April 24, 2020, The Korea Times

North Korea has shown an "unusual increase" in inspecting its artillery's readiness and carrying out air force flight operations, heightening tensions in the region, Defense Minister Jeong Kyeong-doo said.

Southeast Asia

[Navy Slashes 33% Of Budget, Two Subs On Hold](#)

April 18, 2020, Bangkok Post

The Royal Thai Navy has cut its 2020 budget by 33%, or 4.1 billion baht, of its unspent total so the money can be used to fight the coronavirus outbreak and on rehabilitation.

[Coronavirus: Myanmar Ships 800 Freed Rohingya Prisoners Back To Rakhine](#)

April 20, 2020, The Straits Times

Myanmar shipped hundreds of recently released Rohingya inmates back to the country's restive western borderlands on Monday (April 20), after fears that its overcrowded prisons could become hotbeds for runaway coronavirus outbreaks.

[China, Malaysia: Ships Engage in Standoff in the South China Sea](#)

April 20, 2020, Stratfor

A Chinese survey ship has been tagging an exploration vessel operated by Malaysia's state-owned energy firm Petronas in the disputed portion of the South China Sea.

[Maritime Flashpoints and the COVID-19 Pandemic](#)

April 20, 2020, The Diplomat

Southeast Asian states like Malaysia are having to both deal with a global health crisis and step up defense of their South China Sea claims.

[Vietnam Accuses Beijing Of 'Seriously Violating' Sovereignty In South China Sea](#)

April 20, 2020, SCMP,

China's latest activities in the South China Sea have triggered a strong protest from rival claimant Vietnam, which said the move "seriously violated" its sovereignty.

[China Steps up Patrols in Disputed Sea: Here's What Malaysia and Vietnam Will do](#)

April 20, 2020, VOA,

The vessel was sailing near China's mainland east of Hong Kong as of late Sunday, according to ship-tracking website Marine Traffic.

[China Lays Ever Larger Claim to South China Sea](#)

April 21, 2020, Asia Times,

China announces new administrative districts with US in retreat in contested waterway but signs of overreach are apparent.

[Malaysia Arrests Rohingya In Trafficking Crackdown](#)

April 21, 2020, France 24

Malaysia has arrested two Rohingya for alleged human-trafficking, authorities said Tuesday, as they ramp up efforts to stop members of the Muslim minority coming to the country amid coronavirus fears.

[South China Sea: China Establishes Administrative Units In Disputed Area](#)

April 21, 2020, The Times of India

Chinese efforts to strengthen its claims in the South China Sea (SCS) have been intensified as the International Community is busy in fighting a war against the coronavirus that originated from China. The recent Chinese announcement to establish two districts in Paracels and Spratly Islands in the South China Sea is yet

another evidence of its expansionist plan. This has been approved by State Council of China recently.

[Indonesia Discovers New Oil Reserves](#)

April 21, 2020, China.org.cn

Indonesia's state-owned oil company Pertamina Hulu Energi (PHE) through its subsidiary Pertamina Hulu Energi Offshore Northwest Java (PHE ONWJ) has discovered oil reserves from drilling activities at its FK-1 well.

[Making Sense of China's Latest Bid to Administer Sovereignty in the South China Sea](#)

By April 21, 2020, The Diplomat

New additions to 'Sansha' City and a naming exercise for submerged features are the latest in Beijing's sovereignty-seeking toolkit.

Central & West Asia

Central Asia

[Labor migrants from Central Asia: no earnings, no social support](#)

April 23, 2020, The Times of Central Asia

The current economic crisis in Central Asia due to the COVID-19 pandemic is complicated by the return to homelands of millions of labor migrants who can no longer support their families with remittances.

[Economic Impact of COVID-19 on Central Asia](#)

April 23, 2020, Daily Times

Coronavirus catastrophe has posed a global fatal challenge. National and international governance is subject to acid test. Besides direct impact on health, the fallout has social, economic and political consequences. Central Asian Republics comprising Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, Kirghizstan and Uzbekistan are also confronting COVID-19 menace with the available state capacity. Let us have a country-wise insight on how these states are handling the pandemic along with its economic impact.

[India inspires Uzbekistan to initiate government support for vulnerable population](#)

April 23, 2020, The Economic Times

Uzbekistan, along with several other countries in the world, is facing consequences of COVID-19 pandemic on the economy and social area, including on the lives of people in cities and regions. Uzbekistan like India has decided on government support to vulnerable population and business sector impacted by Covid-19.

[Plunge In Oil Prices Deals Another Blow To Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan](#)

April 23, 2020, Rferl.org

When the crucial OPEC+ meeting broke up on March 8 after major disagreement between Saudi Arabia and Russia, it sent the price of oil plunging.

[Turkmenistan supporting UN call for global truce amid coronavirus pandemic](#)

April 23, 2020, Trend Agency

Turkmenistan is supporting the UN call for a global truce in response to the coronavirus pandemic. The issue was discussed between President of Turkmenistan Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov and UN General Secretary Antonio Guterres over the phone. The sides discussed pressing issues, in particular the situation in the world due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

West Asia

[Pak Account Poses as 'Omani Princess' Tweets Anti-India Material; Princess Clarifies](#)

April 22, 2020, WION

An increase in the number of Pakistani accounts changing the name to Arabic names or after names of Arabic royalty has been seen. A Pakistani ID @pak_fauj changed its name to Omani Royalty Mona bint Fahd al Said @SayyidaMona to spread propaganda and tweeted anti-India rant.

[Iran Reportedly Launches First Military Satellite](#)

April 22, 2020, The Guardian

Iran has claimed it has put its first military satellite into orbit, further raising tensions with the US at a time the two countries are already facing off in the Persian Gulf.

[Trump Says US Will 'Destroy' Iranian Gunboats that Harass American Ships](#)

April 22, 2020, CNBC

President Donald Trump warned on Wednesday (April 22) that the United States would destroy Iranian gunboats that harass American ships at sea.

[Netanyahu, Gantz Ink Coalition Pact](#)

April 21, 2020, The Jerusalem Post

Israel will soon have a new coalition government after an agreement was signed on Monday evening between Likud (Netanyahu) and Blue and White (Gantz), putting an end to a 17-month political stalemate that resulted in three elections.

[Saudi Arabia Wants to Raise 220 Billion Riyals \(\\$58 billion\) Through Debt Issues](#)

April 23, 2020, Gulf News

Saudi Arabia will rely on the biggest debt programme since its debut in international bond markets in 2016 to absorb the shock to the budget from collapsing energy prices and cuts in oil output. The kingdom could borrow 220 billion riyals (\$58 billion) this year.

[Saudi Arabia May Re-route Tankers if U.S. Imposes Crude Import Ban](#)

April 22, 2020, Reuters

Saudi Arabia is exploring re-routing millions of barrels of oil onboard tankers sailing to the United States if President Donald Trump decides to block imports of crude from the kingdom, shipping and trade sources say.

[Bahrain Latest Gulf Country to Announce Drastic Spending Cuts](#)

April 20, 2020, Al Jazeera

Bahrain will slash state spending by nearly a third to help it weather the economic effects of the coronavirus pandemic.

[Egypt to Cut Fuel Subsidies, Increase Net Debt Issuance in 2020/21 Budget](#)

April 22, 2020, Nasdaq

Egypt plans to cut spending on fuel subsidies by 47% in its 2020/21 budget to 28.193 billion Egyptian pounds (\$1.8 billion), an explanatory note for its draft budget published on Tuesday (April 21) showed.

United States

United States

[House Approves \\$484 Billion Bill to Aid Small Businesses, Hospitals](#)

April 23, 2020, Wall Street Journal

House lawmakers, returning to the Capitol in the midst of the coronavirus pandemic voted to approve the next infusion of aid for small businesses and hospitals grappling with the outbreak's toll.

[Coronavirus: Outcry after Trump suggests injecting disinfectant as treatment](#)

April 24, 2020, BBCUS President Donald Trump has been lambasted by the medical community after suggesting research into whether coronavirus might be treated by injecting disinfectant into the body.

[Coronavirus: Trump signs order on immigration green card suspension](#)

April 23, 2020, BBC

US President Donald Trump has signed an executive order to temporarily suspend the approval of some green cards. The measure, which contains a number of exemptions, is to last for 60 days and then could be extended, he said.

[Trump disagrees with Fauci on US testing capacity](#)

April 23, 2020, CNN

President Donald Trump said Thursday he disagrees with Dr. Anthony Fauci after the nation's top infectious disease expert said the US needs to "significantly ramp up" testing.

[Biden says he thinks Trump will try to delay the November election](#)

April 24, 2020, NBC News

"I think he is going to try to kick back the election somehow, come up with some rationale why it can't be held," the former vice president and apparent Democratic presidential nominee said during an online fundraiser.

[Trump Is Harsh on Immigration. That Doesn't Mean Biden Has the Latino Vote.](#)

April 24, 2020, The New York Times

Some Democrats worry that their party is taking a crucial bloc for granted in 2020.

[With lobbying push, gyms get on Phase One of Trump's reopening plan](#)

April 24, 2020, CNN

When President Donald Trump revealed his guidelines for "opening up America again" last week, among the bolded names of businesses and institutions that could reopen were restaurants, movie theatres and places of worship -- so long as they adhered to strict social distancing protocols. Tucked near the bottom of the list, right above a warning that bars should stay closed, was a curious inclusion: gyms.

[Trump suggests reports on Kim Jong Un falling ill are 'incorrect'](#)

April 23, 2020, CNBC

President Donald Trump said Thursday that reports suggesting North Korea's leader was incapacitated following a cardiovascular surgery were incorrect.

[Pentagon Waters Down Trump's Iran Threat](#)

April 23, 2020, Foreign Policy

On Wednesday, U.S. President Donald Trump wrote on Twitter, "I have instructed the United States Navy to shoot down and destroy any and all Iranian gunboats if they harass our ships at sea." In response, the Pentagon sought to manage up, downgrading Trump's announcement to a warning. "What he was emphasizing is all of our ships retain the right of self-defense, and people need to be very careful in their interactions" David Norquist, U.S. Deputy Secretary of Defense, [said](#) at a Pentagon press briefing.

[Trump says he 'totally disagrees' with Georgia Gov. Kemp's decision to reopen businesses in the middle of coronavirus pandemic](#)

April 22, 2020, CNBC

U.S. President Donald Trump said Wednesday he "totally disagrees" with Georgia Gov. Brian Kemp's phase 1 plans to reopen tattoo parlors, bars, hair salons and other nonessential businesses this week.

[Financial Aid to Struggling States Is Next Big Congressional Battle](#)

April 23, 2020, The New York Times

With congressional approval of the latest emergency pandemic measure sealed on Thursday, the focus is quickly shifting to an escalating battle over whether Congress will provide hundreds of billions of dollars to states staggering under the costs of the coronavirus outbreak.

[U.S. warship sails through Taiwan Strait, second time in a month](#)

April 24, 2020, Reuters

A U.S. warship has sailed through the sensitive Taiwan Strait for the second time in a month, Taiwanese and U.S. militaries said on Friday, amid heightened tensions between Taiwan and China and as a Chinese aircraft carrier passes near the island.

Europe & Russia

Europe

[EU leaders clash over trillion-euro Covid-19 aid in online meeting](#)

April 23, 2020, The Guardian

European Union leaders have clashed over how to rescue their economies from an economic slump caused by the coronavirus pandemic and forecast to be unparalleled since the 1930s Great Depression.

[EU Leaders Fail To Agree On Coronavirus Economic Recovery Program](#)

April 23, 2020, National Public Radio

Divisions among European nations over the structure of an economic recovery program continue after European Union leaders again failed to reach an agreement. But the group endorsed the recent recommendation of EU finance ministers for a short-term rescue package worth more than a half-trillion dollars.

[Merkel warns Germany is on the 'thinnest ice' as Europe realizes social distancing is here to stay](#)

April 23, 2020, CNN

Germany risks squandering the gains it has made in slowing down the spread of the novel coronavirus if the country opens up too quickly, Chancellor Angela Merkel warned, joining leaders across Europe who have cautioned that any easing of lockdown restrictions would likely be gradual.

[World's first Syria torture trial opens in Germany](#)

April 23, 2020, Al Jazeera

The world's first trial of a senior member of the Syrian military for war crimes got under way in Germany on Thursday, despite ongoing restrictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

[Italian COVID-19 cases fall as Rome grapples with easing lockdown](#)

April 23, 2020, Al Jazeera

Italy is trying to work out how to get people back to work when it begins lifting restrictions next month.

[Italy and France See Slower Virus Spread With Reopening in View](#)

April 24, 2020, Bloomberg

Italy and France reported progress in slowing the spread of the coronavirus, offering encouragement to leaders who plan to start easing nationwide lockdowns next month.

[France rules out coronavirus aid for tax-haven businesses](#)

April 23, 2020, Financial Times

French finance minister Bruno Le Maire has said companies registered in tax havens, or with subsidiaries in such places, cannot benefit from the billions of euros of support being provided by the government to limit the economic damage of the coronavirus pandemic.

[Spain Extends Lockdown as Virus Cases Rise Again in Europe](#)

April 23, 2020, Bloomberg

In Spain, where the daily case count has been mostly steady, lawmakers have extended a state of emergency to May 9.

[Johnson, on the mend after COVID-19, faces lockdown conundrum](#)

April 24, 2020, Reuters

Prime Minister Boris Johnson faces the biggest conundrum of his premiership as he recuperates from COVID-19: how to lift a lockdown that is destroying swathes of the British economy without triggering a deadly second wave of the outbreak.

[FTSE 100 tracks global mood lower as retail sales sink](#)

April 24, 2020, Reuters

London's FTSE 100 dived along with European and Asian stock markets on Friday as data laid bare the scale of the collapse in UK retail sales in March and initial test results dealt a blow to hopes for one possible coronavirus treatment.

[EU heading for 5-10% economic contraction in 2020-Breton](#)

April 24, 2020, Reuters

The European Union is heading this year towards a 5-10% economic contraction due to the new coronavirus outbreak, EU Industry Commissioner Thierry Breton said on Friday, adding that figure could get worse if "things don't get better".

Russia

[Russia Suspends Deportations During Coronavirus Pandemic](#)

April 23, 2020, The Moscow Times

Russia will temporarily suspend deportations of foreigners over the next two months due to the coronavirus outbreak, the Interior Ministry said Thursday.

[Repair, abandon, burn: Russia explores options for historic oil cut](#)

April 23, 2020, Yahoo Finance

In just a week, Russia has to find ways to cut a fifth of its oil output under a deal to tackle the market glut and is looking at all options, including putting wells on repair and maintenance to abandoning them entirely and even burning oil, four oil industry sources said.

[Russia tries to stay neutral as US-China tensions rise over coronavirus' origin](#)

April 24, 2020, CNBC

Putin's spokesman told CNBC that Russia can't support a U.S. investigation into the source of the virus.

[Central Asian Rail Deal Allowing China to Bypass Russia, Expand Trade with Europe](#)

April 23, 2020, The Jamestown Foundation

For the last two decades, Moscow has counted on Beijing's regular use of Russian railways to export Chinese goods to Europe. In turn, China's reliance on Russian rail was based on the presumption that any substitute overland route via Central Asia would be hampered by the need for goods to be offloaded onto ships to cross the Caspian Sea and then reloaded on the other side.

Africa & Latin America

Latin America

[Brazil and Ecuador emerge as Latin America's coronavirus epicenters](#)

April 24, 2020, Axios

Brazil and Ecuador have become coronavirus epicentres in Latin America, as prolonged lapses in tracking and testing have led to severely undercounted death tolls.

[Trump administration adds military cameras at U.S.-Mexico border](#)

April 23, 2020, Axios

The Trump administration has been installing surveillance cameras on the U.S.-Mexico border because of the coronavirus pandemic. It is adding the cameras, which are manned by the military, even though fewer people appear to be crossing illegally.

[Argentina plans to fix local oil prices higher: report](#)

April 24, 2020, Al Jazeera

Argentina plans to issue a decree setting a higher local oil barrel price to protect the domestic industry from being further decimated by a collapse in global prices and slumping fuel demand due to the coronavirus pandemic.

[Manufacturers call on Mexico to reopen factories to maintain supply chain](#)

April 23, 2020, Mexico News Daily

Manufacturers in the United States and Mexico are calling on the federal government to allow the reopening of certain Mexican factories that were closed due to the coronavirus pandemic in order to maintain supply chains in the North American market.

Africa

[Africa's food security under fire](#)

April 24, 2020, Fin 24

Agriculture is a dominant economic activity across Sub-Saharan Africa, except for a few resource-rich economies, such as South Africa, Botswana and Angola. Yet Sub-Saharan Africa is the region with high levels of food insecurity and the most acute levels of malnutrition compared to other regions in the world.

[Warnings of worsening hunger, malaria emerge as coronavirus cases spike 40% in Africa](#)

April 24, 2020, Washington Post

Africa's reported number of coronavirus cases soared by more than 40 percent in the last week, stoking concerns that the continent could become the epicenter of the pandemic at a time when hunger is rising and doctors fear a resurgence of malaria deaths.

[WHO urges Africa to maintain guard against malaria](#)

April 24, 2020, Andolou Agency

At a time, when the entire world is focused to stem the spread of coronavirus or COVID-19, the World Health Organization (WHO) has asked African countries not to let their guard down while combating another killer disease malaria.

[How discrimination towards Africans and China's surveillance state will reset a migration trend](#)

April 24, 2020, Quartz Africa

Over the last fortnight, an ongoing number of incidents have emerged through social media where black people have been mistreated, persecuted and evicted from their houses and hotel rooms (without prior notice which has effectively left many of them homeless).

[China's African headache](#)

April 22, 2020, Mail & Guardian

Amid China's increased focus on a second wave of coronavirus cases being potentially imported from abroad, many African citizens in the southern city said they were racially profiled by security agents. There were reports of forced evictions, repeated testing without evidence of a travel history and being refused services in hotels and other establishments.



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