



**POTOMAC INSTITUTE FOR POLICY STUDIES**  
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### Daily Terrorism Weather Online

31 May 2018

#### **Middle East**

##### [Madagascar President Files Court Petition over Political Crisis](#)

*Author/Source: News24*

“Madagascar's president on Wednesday filed a petition to the country's paramount court over its bid to defuse a mounting political crisis...”

##### [UAE Sentences Prominent Activist to Decade in Jail: Media](#)

*Author/Source: Middle East Eye*

“An Emirati court has sentenced an award-winning human rights activist to 10 years in prison for insulting the "status and prestige of the UAE and its symbols", pro-government media reported on Thursday...”

##### [Bashar al-Assad Warns US Troops to Leave Syria as He Raises Prospect of Clash](#)

*Author/Source: Josie Ensor, The Telegraph*

“The US should learn the lesson of Iraq, President Bashar al-Assad said on Thursday, threatening to expel American troops from Syria and retake areas from its Kurdish allies...”

##### [Lebanon Working for Return of Thousands of Syrian Refugees: Security Official](#)

*Author/Source: Tom Perry, Laila Bassam and Angus McDowall, US News and World Report*

“Lebanon is working with Damascus for the return of thousands of refugees who want to go back to Syria, a Lebanese official said on Thursday...”

##### [EU Should Help Push Iran Out of Syria: Opposition Negotiator](#)

*Author/Source: Gabriela Baczyńska, Reuters*

“The U.S. withdrawal from the Iran nuclear deal opens the way to raising pressure on Tehran to stop its military support for Syrian President Bashar al-Assad and leave the country, a Syrian opposition leader said on Thursday...”

##### [Red Cross Sends War Surgeons to "Sinking Ship" Gaza](#)

*Author/Source: The Daily Star: Lebanon*

“The International Committee of the Red Cross is sending two teams of war surgeons to Gaza and setting up a surgical unit in the enclave's main hospital to treat heavy casualties from clashes between Israeli forces and Palestinians...”

##### [Israel Approves More Than 2,000 New West Bank Settlements](#)

*Author/Source: Sara Shayanian, United Press International*

“Israel has approved more than 2,000 new settlement units in the West Bank, a move Palestinian authorities say was encouraged by the United States...”

##### [Palestinians Say 500 Prisoners in Israeli Jails to Start Hunger Strike](#)



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*Author/Source: Yami Roth and Yasser Okbi, The Jerusalem Post*

“Approximately 500 Palestinians held in administrative detention in Israel are expected to go on hunger strike next week...”

### **Gaza Flare-Up Worsens Electricity Crisis for Palestinians**

*Author/Source: Arab News*

“An already severe electricity crisis in the Gaza Strip has worsened due to the recent military flare-up between Palestinian armed groups and Israel, officials in the enclave said Thursday...”

### **Turkey Says 3 Soldiers Killed in Iraq Clashes with Kurdish Rebels**

*Author/Source: Arab News*

“Three Turkish soldiers were killed Thursday in clashes with fighters from the outlawed Kurdistan Workers’ Party (PKK) in northern Iraq, the army said...”

### **King, Crown Prince Receive Yemeni President**

*Author/Source: Saudi Gazette*

“Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Salman and Crown Prince Muhammad Bin Salman, deputy premier and minister of defense, separately received Yemeni President Abedrabbu Mansour Hadi in Jeddah, late Wednesday...”

## **Central Asia**

### **Official: Armenia Has Human Rights, Reform Obligations to EU**

*Author/Source: News.am*

“The need to speed up the process of ratifying the agreement between Armenia and the EU is being discussed during the meetings with European partners, Armenian Deputy Foreign Minister Armen Papikyan told reporters on Thursday...”

### **Georgia Tries to Reduce Asylum Seekers from the Country to Europe**

*Author/Source: Agenda.ge*

“Georgian Interior Minister has discussed steps taken by Georgia towards reducing asylum seekers from the country with his German colleague Horst Seehofer pointing out that there is a positive dynamic in terms of a decrease in their number...”

## **South Asia**

### **Taliban, Afghan Officials ‘in Ceasefire Talks’**

*Author/Source: The Japan News*

“Senior Taliban officials have been secretly negotiating with Afghan officials on a possible ceasefire, the Pentagon said Wednesday, even as U.S. forces killed over 50 Taliban leaders in a series of strikes...”

### **U.S. Commander: More than 70 Taliban Leaders Killed this Month**

*Author/Source: Sommer Brokaw, United Press International*

“U.S. forces killed more than 50 Taliban leaders in southern Afghanistan last week, a top commander said...”



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### **Nipah Virus Death Toll Rises to 17 in India**

*Author/Source: The Daily Star*

“The two new Nipah cases in Kerala take the total number of confirmed cases to 17, Kozhikode district medical officer V Jayashree told Reuters...”

### **Bangladesh PM Vows to Continue Anti-Drug Operations**

*Author/Source: Shehab Sumon, Arab News*

“Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has said no one involved with drug dealing in the country will be spared in the country’s ‘war on drugs’...”

### **Attacker Killed, 3 Afghan Police Injured in Suicide Car Bombing**

*Author/Source: Xinhua New*

“An assailant was killed and three Afghan police personnel wounded in a suicide car bomb attack in southern Helmand province on Thursday, a local official said...”

## **Southeast Asia**

### **Myanmar to Form Independent Enquiry Commission in Rakhine**

*Author/Source: The Daily Star*

“The independent commission will investigate the violation of human rights and related issues following the terrorist attacks by ARSA, said a press release of the Myanmar presidential office...”

### **Malaysia Deflects Blame Away from Russia for MH17 Disaster**

*Author/Source: Pravda Report*

““There is no convincing evidence to blame Russia on the basis of the data provided by the Joint Investigative Group (JIT)’...”

### **Japan, Vietnam Agree on Maritime Safety Cooperation**

*Author/Source: Tampa Bay Times*

“The leaders of Japan and Vietnam agreed Thursday to bolster cooperation in maritime safety and defense, and expressed shared concerns over China's growing activity in the South China...”

## **East Asia**

### **South Korea May Try for a Three-Way Summit in Singapore with U.S. and North Korea**

*Author/Source: Michelle Ye Hee Lee and John Hudson, The Washington Post*

“As senior U.S. and North Korean officials worked toward reviving an aborted meeting between Kim Jong Un and President Trump, South Korea on Thursday expressed interest in a three-way summit in Singapore that would add South Korean President Moon Jae-in to the mix...”

### **China Urges U.S. to Stop Hying Up South China Sea Issue**

*Author/Source: Xinhua Net*

“China on Thursday urged the United States to stop hyping up the South China Sea issue, after U.S. Defense Secretary James Mattis said the United States would continue to confront China



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on militarization of islands in the South China Sea...”

### **Korean Air Raided by Prosecutors Over Suspected Embezzlement by Founding Family**

*Author/Source: The Straits Times*

“South Korean prosecutors raided the headquarters of Korean Air Lines on Thursday (May 31) over suspected tax evasion, embezzlement and breach of trust by members of its founding family, in what has become the broadest-ever chaebol probe...”

## **Africa**

### **Hundreds of Kenyans in the Capital March Against Corruption**

*Author/Source: AP News*

“Carrying signs saying “Kenya is bleeding” and “Stop These Thieves,” hundreds of people marched Thursday in Nairobi to protest against widespread corruption and deliver a petition to the office of President Uhuru Kenyatta...”

### **Uganda Has Imposed a Controversial Social Media Tax 'To Stop Gossip'**

*Author/Source: Damola Durosomo, Okay Africa*

“In April, it was announced that the Ugandan government planned to impose a controversial social media tax on users who use sites to ‘gossip’...”

### **U.N. Fires Central Africa Legal Adviser Who Accused Peacekeepers of Massacre**

*Author/Source: Aaron Ross, Reuters*

“The U.N. mission in Central African Republic has fired one of its lawyers after he accused Rwandan peacekeepers of massacring 30 civilians in the capital last month and said they could be investigated...”

### **Neighborhoods Hit and Supplies Cut in Libya's Derna, U.N. Says 31 May 2018**

*Author/Source: Tom Miles and Ayman al-Warfalli, Reuters*

“Fighting in the Libyan city of Derna has escalated to unprecedented levels, with air raids and shelling of residential areas as well as heavy ground clashes, the United Nations humanitarian office said on Thursday...”

## **Europe**

### **Rajoy Likely to be Forced Out as Spanish PM as Basque Party Turns Against Him**

*Author/Source: Sam Jones, The Guardian*

“Mariano Rajoy’s controversial and scandal-mired tenure as Spanish prime minister seemed all but certain to end on Friday after a small Basque party threw its weight behind a no-confidence motion tabled after Rajoy’s party was found to have profited from a huge corruption racket...”

### **Lithuania, Romania Aided CIA Torture by Hosting Secret Detention Sites, Court Rules**

*Author/Source: Ian P. Johnson, Deutsche Welle*

“The European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) in Strasbourg found Thursday that secret hosting of CIA detention sites by Lithuania and Romania in 2004 and 2005 breached basic tenets of the 1950 European Convention on Human Rights...”



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### **'Dead' Russian Journalist Arkady Babchenko Alive After Ukraine Stages Death**

*Author/Source: Sanya Burgess, Sky News*

“Vasily Gritsak, head of the Ukrainian security service, told the media gathered in Kiev that the agency faked Mr Babchenko's death to stop a Russian plan to kill him...”

### **German Carmakers Hit by Report Trump Threatens to Drive Them off U.S. Streets**

*Author/Source: Madeline Chambers and Edward Taylor, US News & World Report*

“A report that U.S. President Donald Trump has threatened to pursue German carmakers until there are no Mercedes-Benz rolling down New York's Fifth Avenue dented shares in the luxury car manufacturers on Thursday...”

### **Denmark Forbids Burqa, Niqab; Rights Group Slam Ban as Unnecessary**

*Author/Source: Anna Pukas, Arab News*

“Danish parliamentarians voted 75 to 30 on Thursday to ban garments that cover the face, and although the government denied the law was aimed at any religion, it is perceived to be directed chiefly at Muslim women...”

### **Man Who Encouraged Attack on UK's Prince George Admits Terrorism Charges**

*Author/Source: Arab News*

“A British man, who suggested militants should target four-year-old Prince George — destined to be Britain's future king — pleaded guilty to terrorism offenses on Thursday...”

## **US & Canada**

### **Trump Hits Allies with Metal Tariffs; Mexico, EU and Canada Vow to Retaliate**

*Author/Source: Jeremy Diamond and Julia Horowitz, CNN*

“The trade penalties, 25% on imported steel and 10% on imported aluminum, take effect at midnight, Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross told reporters Thursday...”

### **Trump Pardons Dinesh D'Souza -- and Hints at More Celebrity Pardons**

*Author/Source: Kaitlan Collins, Maegan Vazquez and Laura Jarrett, CNN*

“President Donald Trump announced unexpectedly Thursday that he is granting a full pardon to Dinesh D'Souza, the conservative author and filmmaker who pleaded guilty to violating federal campaign finance laws in 2014 after he was indicted earlier that year on charges that he illegally used straw donors to contribute to Republican Senate candidate Wendy Long in New York in 2012...”

### **U.S. Calls on Sudan to Adopt New Approach to Achieve Peace in Darfur**

*Author/Source: Sudan Tribune*

“The United States Chargé d' Affaires in Khartoum, Steven Koutsis has called on the Sudanese government to adopt new mechanisms to achieve sustainable peace in Darfur...”

### **In Military Name Change, U.S. Pacific Command Becomes U.S. Indo-Pacific Command**

*Author/Source: Scott Neuman, NPR*

“In a largely symbolic move aimed at reflecting new national priorities, the Pentagon is changing the name of the Pacific Command to the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command...”



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### **Trump to Meet North Korean Envoys Amid Rising Summit Optimism**

*Author/Source: Gardiner Harris and Mark Landler, The New York Times*

“President Trump is expected to receive a letter from the North Korean leader, Kim Jong-un, hand-delivered by his envoy, on Friday afternoon, as the president and his secretary of state, Mike Pompeo, voice optimism about efforts to reinstate a canceled summit meeting with Mr. Kim...”

### **US-Led Coalition Acknowledges More Civilian Deaths in War Against ISIS**

*Author/Source: Rebecca Kheel, The Hill*

“The U.S.-led coalition fighting the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) acknowledged Thursday killing another nine civilians, bringing its total to 892 since the start of the war...”

### **Florida School Shooting Suspect Foretold Intention in Videos**

*Author/Source: The Los Angeles Times*

“In chilling cellphone videos released Wednesday, the suspect in a February massacre at a Florida high school announced his intention to become the next school shooter, aiming to kill at least 20 people and saying, ‘You’re all going to die’...”

## **South and Central America and the Caribbean**

### **Brazil Oil Workers Strike, Defying Court Order**

*Author/Source: The Latin American Herald Tribune*

“Brazilian oil workers defied a court order on Wednesday by launching a three-day strike affecting oil refineries...”

### **Bolivia Ex-Leader 'Not Responsible' for Protest Deaths**

*Author/Source: BBC*

“A US judge has overturned a ruling that held former Bolivian President Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada responsible for the deaths of dozens of protesters...”

### **Maduro's Reelection Victory for LatAm: Cuban President**

*Author/Source: Xinhua Net*

“Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro's reelection was a "strategic victory" for all Latin America, visiting Cuban President Miguel Diaz-Canel said on Wednesday...”