

Far and Wide

Every week we share selection of six news from six continents that we believe will impact our world in the near or distant future

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In the wake of East Africa's floods, Kenya reports 44 cases of cholera

Welcome to the latest edition of Far and Wide, where we embark on a journey to explore intriguing stories and global developments.

Widespread flooding in Kenya has triggered a **cholera outbreak, with 44 confirmed cases and over 270 deaths**. The Ministry of Health, Kenya and WHO attribute the outbreak to **damaged sanitation facilities and contaminated water sources**. As a response, health authorities issued advisories on **preventive measures, emphasizing proper handwashing and avoiding contaminated water and food**. The situation is compounded by **potential malaria outbreaks** and concerns **over limited clean water and sanitation facilities, particularly in overcrowded rescue camps**.

Children are particularly vulnerable, with school closures due to damaged infrastructure and risks of waterborne **diseases like cholera and typhoid**. **Save the Children International-Kenya** is providing support, including cash transfers and hygiene kits. The government has allocated funds for school repairs and reconstruction.

In response to the crisis, a **multi-sectoral emergency response is underway**, led by the Kenya Disaster Emergency Operations Centre and supported by WHO and other partners. The situation in Kenya highlights **broader concerns for East Africa**, with Tanzania also experiencing significant flooding and its associated impacts, including casualties, injuries, and damage to farmland.

The situation underscores the **urgent need for coordinated efforts to address health risks, rebuild infrastructure, and support affected communities in both Kenya and across the region**.

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EU countries approve law to slash CO2 emissions from trucks



European Union countries have approved a landmark law to drastically cut carbon dioxide emissions from trucks. The legislation mandates that the majority of new heavy-duty vehicles sold in the EU by 2040 must be emissions-free, aiming for a 90% reduction in CO2 emissions from these vehicles.

This move targets the significant contribution heavy-duty vehicles make to Europe's road transport emissions, currently comprising a quarter of the total.

The law also sets progressively stringent targets for reducing fleet CO2 emissions, requiring a 45% reduction by 2030 and 65% by 2035, surpassing the previous 30% target.

It further stipulates that from 2030 onwards, the vast majority of new urban buses sold in the EU must be emissions-free, reaching 100% by 2035.

Source: Reuters

<https://www.reuters.com/business/environment/eu-countries-approve-law-slash-trucks-co2-emissions-2024-05-13/>

Despite objections from some quarters, the law has garnered approval from both EU countries and the EU Parliament, paving the way for its enactment. However, certain countries opposed the policy, while a preamble was added to consider rules recognizing trucks running on CO2-neutral fuels in the future.



North America

Dozens of Chinese companies hit with US trade restrictions over 2023 spy balloon incident

The **Biden administration** escalated tensions with Beijing by **adding 37 Chinese entities** to a trade restriction list on 9th May 2024, citing support for a suspected spy balloon and **attempts to acquire American technology** for military applications, **particularly in quantum technology**.

Among those targeted are units of **China Electronics Technology Group**, a major **military equipment supplier**.

The move follows heightened scrutiny since a spy balloon incident in February 2023, which led to canceled diplomatic trips and accusations from both sides.

The entity list, **a tool to curb technology flow to China**, now includes entities seeking drone components for the Chinese military and facilitating controlled item **shipments to Russia**. These actions underscore the ongoing US effort to constrain Chinese access to sensitive technologies.



Source: CNN Business

<https://edition.cnn.com/2024/05/10/business/china-spy-balloon-us-trade-restrictions-intl-hnk/index.html>



South America

China's Green Energy Investments Aim at Latin America Amid Competition With the US



China's expanding trade and investment presence in Latin America has become a focal point for **US policymakers and businesses**, challenging the traditional dominance of the US in the region. This trend, **evolving over two decades** since China's accession to the WTO and its **Going Global strategy in 2001**, has seen a remarkable surge in bilateral trade, **reaching over \$445 billion in 2021**.

Initially focusing on sectors **like agriculture and energy security**, Chinese investment in Latin America has shifted towards strategic areas like **renewable energy and electric vehicles**, reflecting changing priorities in China's domestic economy.

The recent wave of **Chinese investment, despite pandemic-induced** disruptions, is directed towards technologically intensive projects, including lithium mining and battery production. This shift signifies **China's pursuit of quality over quantity**, aligning with its emphasis on indigenous innovation and self-reliance.

Source: The Diplomat

<https://thediplomat.com/2024/05/chinas-green-energy-investments-aim-at-latin-america-amid-competition-with-the-us/>

The growing Chinese footprint in Latin America poses geopolitical challenges, prompting the region to devise strategies for harnessing Chinese capital **for its developmental goals**. This dynamic landscape **underscores the evolving nature of global economic influence**, with Latin America emerging as a new arena for competition between China and the US.



Asia

China overtakes US as India's top trading partner in FY24, data shows

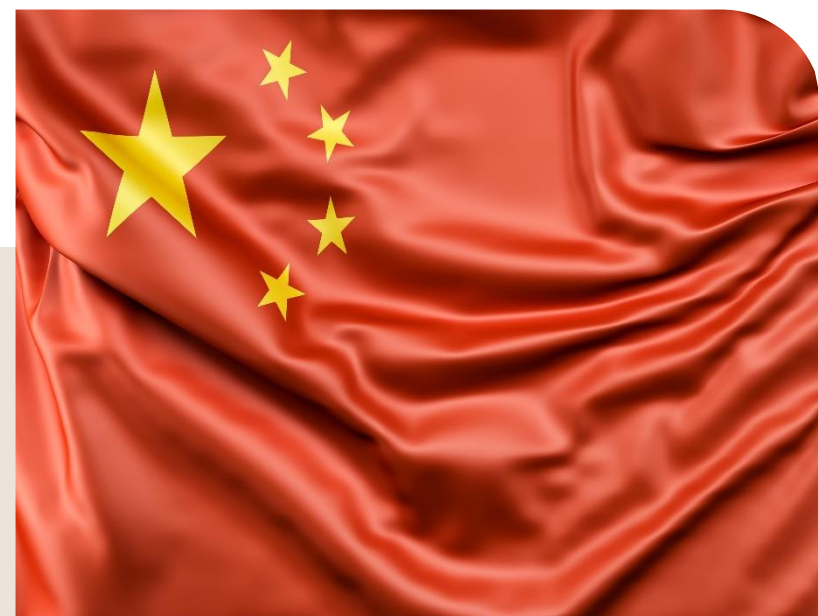
In **the fiscal year 2023-24**, China surpassed the United States as **India's largest trading partner**, with bilateral trade **reaching \$118.4 billion**, according to data from the **Global Trade Research Initiative (GTRI)**.

India's exports to **China increased by 8.7%**, totaling **\$16.67 billion**, driven by sectors like iron ore, cotton, textiles, spices, and agricultural products.

Conversely, India experienced a **slight decline in exports to the US**, while imports from the US increased by 14.7%, resulting in a **widened trade surplus of \$36.74 billion**.

Ajay Srivastava, GTRI's Founder, highlighted the shifting trade dynamics, noting a surge in India's imports from China by 44.7%, leading to a widening trade deficit.

However, trade with the US saw significant growth, with **exports increasing by 47.9% and imports by 14.7%**. GTRI's data also illustrated **major transformations in India's trade relationships** with its **top 15 trading partners** from **fiscal year 2019 to FY24**, impacting exports and imports across various sectors.



Source:WION

<https://www.wionews.com/business-economy/china-overtakes-us-as-indias-top-trading-partner-in-fy24-data-shows-720883>



Australia

Australia tightens student visa rules, savings threshold raised: Here is how it will affect Indian applicants

Australia has tightened its student visa rules, effective from May 10, affecting Indian applicants. The minimum savings required for entry on a student visa have substantially increased, now aligning with **75% of the national minimum wage, amounting to at least A\$29,710 (₹16,29,964)**.

This adjustment aims to ensure a **minimum standard of living for foreign students** in Australia. Applications lodged before May 10, 2024, will be assessed under previous **financial capacity requirements**.

This move follows recent efforts to reduce migrant inflows, with the last adjustment made seven months ago. Australia's Home Affairs Minister, Clare O'Neil, highlighted the nation's significant **reduction in migration levels**, attributing the changes to factors beyond war or pandemic.

Source: Mint

<https://www.livemint.com/news/australia-tightens-student-visa-rules-savings-threshold-raised-here-is-how-it-will-affect-indian-applicants-11715327681268.html>

The tightened visa policies also address **rental housing shortages post the 2022 removal of COVID-19 restrictions**. These modifications underscore Australia's commitment to managing migration and ensuring the welfare of international students amidst evolving economic and social landscapes.



Africa

East Africa floods: Kenya confirms 44 cases of cholera as WHO warns of waterborne diseases

Kenya is grappling with a **cholera outbreak amidst widespread flooding**, with **44 confirmed cases and over 270 deaths**. The floods have contaminated water sources and destroyed sanitation facilities, raising concerns about waterborne diseases.

The Ministry of Health and WHO are advising **preventive measures like handwashing and safe water consumption**. Children's education is disrupted, **with many schools damaged or submerged**, posing risks of **waterborne diseases and psychosocial issues**.

Save the Children and the government are providing support, **including cash transfers and hygiene kits**.

A **multi-sectoral emergency response is underway**, led by the Kenya Disaster Emergency Operations Centre. The situation in Kenya **highlights broader concerns for East Africa, with Tanzania** also facing significant flood-related challenges.



Source: Down To Earth

<https://www.downtoearth.org.in/news/world/east-africa-floods-kenya-confirms-44-cases-of-cholera-as-who-warns-of-waterborne-diseases-96118>