MIRANDA INTELLIGENCE

Mexico Foreign Press Chatter

December 12, 2025

Things were looking up a week ago during the World Cup draw, with a chummy mood among the three North American leaders (plus a fairly manageable group for the Mexican national team, per the AP). Alas, the good vibes didn't last long. After Trump publicly praised the relationship, he proceeded to threaten with tariffs yet again, per the NYT, this time tying them to the violation of a 1944 water treaty and demanding 200,000 gallons by year-end or a (by Trump standards, modest) 5% tariff hike. Sheinbaum acknowledged the delay, promising deliveries soon, but emphasized that her priority is a solution that does not harm agriculture, citing years of significant droughts, per the AP and the NYT. Adding to the tension, the AP reported that Trump further militarized the border, deploying over 7,000 troops in Southern California.

Delving into bilateral issues, Ioan Grillo argued in an NYT op-ed that while migration and drug-trafficking dominate cartel coverage, domestic extortion has become an urgent and tangible crisis with cross-border ramifications. Extortion penetrates daily economic life, particularly in agriculture, contributing to elevated avocado prices, domestically and in the U.S. In other cartel headlines, the NYT followed earlier coverage by the WSJ, reporting on the resurgence of cocaine trafficking as cartels respond to the fentanyl crackdown by collaborating with Colombian groups through Ecuador, now transformed into a "cocaine superhighway." The Times also followed the case of a retired DEA agent, charged with laundering money for the Cartel Jalisco Nueva Generacion.

The NYT also published a detailed investigation into Russian spies operating in Mexico, whose conditions make it an ideal hideout; the Mexican government's apparent reluctance to expel them is providing yet another source of friction. And to contextualize current tensions, the NYT revisited past U.S. military excursions in Latin America, including a 1914 naval blockade in Veracruz, which was sparked by a revolution-era dispute.

Domestic news turned to Michoacan once again, where the AP reported that an explosion outside a police station that killed five was followed by a National guardsman killing three fellow service members. Despite the surge of troops deployed last month and the promising yet problematic national homicide reduction numbers, highlighted this week by The Guardian, violence continued to impact the state. The AP also covered two high-profile money laundering cases: former Chihuahua governor César Duarte and Miss Universe co-owner Raúl Rocha. Detention for the former and frozen bank accounts for the latter show Sheinbaum's increased willingness to pursue corruption. Meanwhile, Reuters reported that the crackdown on vape sales is escalating, with approved legal reforms now imposing up to 8 years in jail for sellers. If you have one, keep it on the down low.

On business and the economy, both Reuters and Bloomberg reported on the higher-than-expected inflation figures for November, which are unlikely to stop the projected rate cut on December 18th, but may lead to a pause next quarter. Adding to inflation doubts, tariff hikes of up to 50% on Chinese and other Asian imports were approved on Wednesday amid U.S. pressure,

though Sheinbaum stresses they are imposed to generate revenue and boost domestic production, per the NYT. Meanwhile, Bloomberg reported on blockades by truck drivers and farmers that have halted U.S. trade, and rumors of a potential acquisition of AT&T Mexico boosting Televisa's share price.

Shifting gears, songwriter Natalia Lafourcade followed Diego Luna in the NYT's *Turning Points* series. She reflects on her recent album "Cancionera", which seeks authentically inspired music, allowing her to be honest with herself, and ignore the superficial pressures of the digital world. Ya ya ya… Meanwhile, the LA Times reported on the enthusiasm around the World Cup, as organizers hope the tournament will showcase Mexico City's cultural richness and Guadalajara's "traditional" feel. For its part, The Athletic reported a huge spike in Mexico City hotel prices: at Le Méridien Mexico City Reforma, close to the Azteca Stadium, the per-night rate for a two-night stay surged by 2,373%, rising from $157 in the third week of May to $3,882 per night for June 10–12. Across six Mexico City hotels, average nightly rates jumped from $172 three weeks earlier to $1,572 around the opening game, an average increase of 961%. Lastly, good news for baseball fans: the MLB announced a two-game series between the Arizona Diamondbacks and San Diego Padres in Mexico City next April.

Notable podcasts and blogs in English on Mexico

On this week's MexMoves, Damian and Eduardo are joined by Jaime Guillen, co-founder and partner at Mexico Infrastructure Partners, who explains how the firm became the country's largest infrastructure fund, the strategy behind its landmark Iberdrola acquisition, and where MIP is heading next. They also interview Bruce Boren, Partner at THR3 Media who produced HBO's hit Chespirito biopic. Bruce breaks down how the project came together, why it struck such a nerve, and what the looming Netflix and Paramount battle for Warner Bros. Discovery could mean for content creators in Mexico. They also discuss the impact of the hike on tariffs on imports from non-FTA countries like China; the latest inflation data; Alsea's plans to bring Raising Cane's to Mexico; and the rising speculation around a potential AT&T México, Televisa and Izzi deal.

Confidently Wrong (Mexico News Daily) delves into the water issues in Mexico beyond tourist perceptions of poor drinking water, as geography limits supply and makes it one of Mexico's most important infrastructure issues. Meanwhile, on Mexico: The Podcast hosts Alex and Tavo explore the famous Guadalupe-Reyes "marathon" in Mexico.

In substacks on Mexico, The Mexico Political Economist covered Mexico's sprawling ecosystem of chambers and advisory groups following the launch of a new business council under Sheinbaum's plan Mexico. In Mexico Decoded, Viri Ríos explored how the social media "tradwife" phenomenon is (somewhat) different in Mexico to the U.S. and Europe, through her predictable ideological lens.

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Photo of the Week



President Donald Trump dances to The Village People as Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney, Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum and First Lady Melania smile during the draw for the 2026 soccer World Cup. Photo by Jacquelyn Martin for The AP.

FOREIGN PRESS COVERAGE

Trump meets Mexican President Sheinbaum in person for the first time at World Cup draw
12/05/25, AP, Will Weissert

Sheinbaum Touts 'Good Relationship' With US in Party Anniversary
12/06/25, Bloomberg, Jose Orozco

Trump administration adds militarized zone in California along southern US border
12/10/25, AP, Staff

Trump Again Threatens Tariffs on Mexico Over Long-Running Water Dispute
12/08/25, New York Times, Chris Cameron

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Mexico will send more water to US but not immediately, President Sheinbaum says
12/09/25, AP, Staff

After Trump Threatens Tariffs, Mexico Seeks a Deal on Water
12/09/25, New York Times, Emiliano Rodríguez Mega and Jack Nicas

The Hidden Cost of Your Avocado
12/05/25, New York Times, Ioan Grillo

The U.S. Gave Mexico a List of Russian Spies. Mexico Let Them Stay.
12/08/25, New York Times, Maria Abi-Habib

Why Russian Spies Are Using Mexico to Target the U.S.
12/08/25, New York Times, Maria Abi-Habib

How the U.S. Focus on Fentanyl Helped Fuel the Cocaine Trade's Resurgence
12/05/25, New York Times, Maria Abi-Habib

Ex-D.E.A. Agent Charged With Agreeing to Launder Millions for Cartel
12/05/25, New York Times, Benjamin Weiser

'Voodoo Rituals' and Banana Wars: U.S. Military Action in Latin America
12/09/25, New York Times, Helene Cooper

Mexican National Guardsman kills 3 fellow service members in Michoacan state
12/08/25, AP, Faviola Sánchez

Death toll rises to 5 after explosion outside a police station in Mexico's Michoacán state
12/06/25, AP, María Verza

Daily killings in Mexico drop 37% under Claudia Sheinbaum, but experts say data is problematic
12/09/25, Guardian, Oscar Lopez

Mexican ex-governor expected to face charges for money laundering
12/08/25, AP, Fabiola Sánchez

Mexico freezes Miss Universe co-owner's bank accounts during organized crime investigation
12/05/25, AP, Fabiola Sánchez

Mexico threatens eight years of jail in crackdown on vape sales
12/11/25, Reuters, Staff

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Mexico's inflation accelerates more than expected, central bank notes further risks
12/09/25, Reuters, Aida Pelaez-fernandez

Mexico Inflation Accelerated Ahead of Banxico Rate Meeting
12/09/25, Bloomberg, Gonzalo Soto

Mexico Approves 50% Tariffs on Many Chinese Imports
12/11/25, New York Times, Jack Nicas and James Wagner

Mexico's lower house approves tariff hikes on Chinese, other Asian imports
12/10/25, Reuters, Diego Oré

Shares of Mexico's Televisa Rise Amid Report of Interest in AT&T
12/09/25, Bloomberg, Carolina Millan

Mexico's Truck Drivers Stage Blockades, Disrupting Trade With US
12/10/25, Bloomberg, Gonzalo Soto

Looking to the Past to Find My Future
12/05/25, New York Times, Natalia Lafourcade

Mexico City declares itself the 'soul of the World Cup' as its preps to host 2026 matches
12/07/25, LA Times, Eduard Caich

Mexico optimistic about World Cup chances after group-stage draw
12/05/25, AP, Carlos Rodriguez

Hotel prices in World Cup host cities surge by more than 300% after schedule confirmed
12/09/25, The Athletic, Adam Crafton and Henry Bushnell

MLB finalizes 2-game series in Mexico City between Diamondbacks and Padres in April
12/10/25, AP, Staff