

## Mexico Foreign Press Chatter

December 19, 2025

As the year winds down, Mexico's security crisis stayed center stage with two long reads. First, the LA Times examined extortion, an underreported but deeply corrosive crime that disrupts daily life. Despite Sheinbaum's crackdown and plans to federalize extortion prosecution, distrust in authorities affects small businesses in particular, which feel powerless against organized crime's "protection" fees. Then, Bloomberg framed fuel-smuggling as a growing political test for Sheinbaum, arguing that her port crackdowns and push to increase tax revenue from fuel imports have exposed high-ranking Navy officials and led to the Attorney General's removal – a confrontational stance that breaks with the previous administration and threatens her popularity. Meanwhile, Omar García Harfuch was profiled once again, this time by The Economist, portraying a security chief with public poise, a technical approach, and a strong-man reputation that makes him a credible future presidential candidate. He also spoke to the NYT, which highlighted his "obsessive dedication to solving his country's most seemingly unsolvable problem".

Bilateral tensions also remained in focus. Bloomberg reported that the U.S. Treasury reinforced Washington's stance on energy security by adding Mexico's Santa Rosa de Lima Cartel to its sanctions list over fuel theft. Sheinbaum, meanwhile, attempted to ease growing tensions in the region, offering Mexico as a potential host for eventual U.S.-Venezuela talks, urging de-escalation and calling for the UN to intervene, reiterating her stance against foreign intervention, per Reuters and Bloomberg. At the border, Reuters reported that the U.S. and Mexico signed an agreement to increase monitoring of the Tijuana river that empties near San Diego, while Bloomberg followed up on last week's water-linked tariff threat as Mexico agreed to deliver 202,000-acre feet of water to ease tensions. Meanwhile, concerns over alleged dumping and subsidies in the American pork sector prompted the Mexican economic ministry to open an investigation into U.S.-origin pork, per Reuters.

Trade coverage also focused on last week's Asian tariffs, which the government estimates will raise inflation by just 0.2%, while protecting around 350,000 jobs in the automotive, textile, and metals sectors, per Bloomberg. In an op-ed, The Financial Times's Peter Navarro explained how these tariffs represent a global shift towards a stronger tariff wall and a "fairer" international trade order that challenges China's predatory tactics. Reuters reported that India will seek a deal with Mexico to curb these tariffs, which could hit as much as \$2 billion of its exports to Mexico. Meanwhile, as expected, Banxico cut interest rates by 25 basis points to 7.00%, while raising inflation concerns for the next quarter.

Business news skewed towards energy. Reuters revealed that Pemex's joint venture contracts are yet to attract investors' attention, with only five of 11 contracts awarded, and large players staying on the sidelines, a symptom of Pemex's high debt load and restrictive terms. On a brighter note, the Dos Bocas refinery, Mexico's new oil refinery, is now close to full capacity and helped reach a national 11-year high, per Bloomberg. In electricity, Bloomberg flagged rising concerns

over the government proposal to centralize electricity through enforcing private companies into contracts with state-run CFE, even as it detailed plans to add 6 GW of new capacity through a mix of solar, wind, and gas projects led by CFE and private partners. And on M&A developments, Bloomberg reported that Citigroup completed the sale of a 25% stake in Banamex to Fernando Chico Pardo, while Reuters covered the surprise announcement of a merger agreement between low-cost airlines Volaris and Viva, which would create Mexico's largest airline; the deal is subject to shareholders' approvals and anti-trust authorization.

Shifting gears, The Guardian covered the social media uproar caused by British baker Richard Hart, after he claimed Mexico "does not have a bread culture," a comment that struck a nerve in a country extremely proud of its cuisine, including its *pan de muerto*, and even the humble, but homely, *bolillo*. Previewing the holidays, the NYT highlighted the well-known and sunny Puerto Escondido, while Bloomberg visited Michoacán's Mazahua community, which attempts to bring more butterfly-inspired tourism; a project called Casa de la Cultura Mazahua combines visits to the monarch butterflies with traditional workshops and a community space. In sports, Reuters reported FIFA's limited release of \$60 World Cup tickets, though just 1.6% of capacity and restricted to fans of qualified teams, aiming to appease angered fans; still, tickets going into the thousands of dollars will in all likelihood make the tournament largely inaccessible.

### **Notable podcasts and blogs in English on Mexico**

We are now releasing every Wednesday, via Miranda Intelligence's Substack, a [Mexico Podcast Chatter](#), where we cover relevant weekly podcasts in English and Spanish on Mexican business, economics, politics, and culture. Let us know if we are missing any of your favorite Mexico podcasts as it is a work in progress.

Mexico-related substacks also centered on crime and trade. [The Mexican Political Economist](#) stressed that foreign coverage of Mexico's Asia tariffs has only focused on foreign perspectives, without reporting on the domestic reasons for the measures. In [Mexico Decoded](#), Viri Ríos framed Mexico's diverse and failed security strategies as a process of "state learning." In [Crashout](#), Ioan Grillo covered the accusation against DEA agent Paul Campo of laundering money for the Cartel Jalisco Nueva Generación. Meanwhile, on [Materia Gris](#), José Antonio Aguilar commented on Sheinbaum's Zócalo celebration on December 6, describing it as a populist tool that has been used by corporatist governments of the past and means little regarding incumbents' popularity.

### Photo of the Week



*Security Secretary Omar García Harfuch speaks on the famous “red phone”, a direct line to the President. Photo by Luis Antonio Rojas for The New York Times.*

### FOREIGN PRESS COVERAGE

[The crime that haunts Mexico, sowing fear, disrupting life: extortion](#)

12/16/25, LA Times, Patrick J. McDonnell and Cecilia Sánchez Vidal

[Omar García Harfuch, Mexico’s “Batman” with big political ambitions](#)

12/12/25, The Economist, staff

[Mexico’s Security Chief on His Fight Against the Cartels](#)

12/19/25, The New York Times, Jack Nicas

[Can This Man Finally Defeat Mexico’s Cartels?](#)

12/19/25, The New York Times, Jack Nicas

[Fuel-Smuggling Crackdown Threatens to Backfire on Mexico's Sheinbaum](#)

12/18/25, Bloomberg, Scott Squires and Alex Vasquez

[US Treasury Imposes Sanctions on Mexican Cartel Accused of Fuel Theft](#)

12/17/25, Bloomberg, Maya Averbuch

[Mexico and Brazil Offer to Mediate Trump-Maduro Dispute](#)

12/17/25, Bloomberg, Alex Vasquez and Gonzalo Soto

[Mexican president calls on UN to avoid bloodshed in Venezuela](#)

12/17/25, Reuters, Raul Cortes and Aida Pelaez-Fernandez

[US, Mexico Strike Deal to Settle Rio Grande Water Dispute](#)

12/13/25, Bloomberg, Fabiola Zerpa

[Mexico opens trade investigations into some US pork imports](#)

12/15/25, Reuters, Staff

[US, Mexico sign new agreement on Tijuana River sewage crisis, EPA says](#)

12/15/25, Reuters, Staff

[Mexico Sees Small Inflation Impact From Tariffs on Chinese Goods](#)

12/15/25, Bloomberg, Alex Vasquez

[Mexico's China tariffs show the rise of Trump's trade template](#)

12/15/25, Financial Times, Peter Navarro

[India proposes trade deal to counter sharp tariff hike by Mexico](#)

15/12/25, Reuters, Shivangi Acharya

[Small plane crashes in central Mexico, killing at least 7 people, official says](#)

12/15/25, AP, Staff

[Mexico's Pemex awards five contracts to boost oil output, fails to draw big players](#)

12/17/25, Reuters, Ana Isabel Martinez Et. al

[Mexico's Oil Refining Hits 11-Year High as Key Plant Ramps Up](#)

12/16/25, Bloomberg, Lucia Kassai

[Mexico Plan to Centralize Power Contracts Sparks Company Outcry](#)

12/15/25, Bloomberg, Scott Squires and Michael O'Boyle

Mexico Plans to Add 6 GW to Power Generation Capacity in 2026

12/17/25, Bloomberg, Gonzalo Soto and Scott Squires

Citigroup Closes Deal to Sell Banamex Stake to Chico Pardo

12/15/25, Bloomberg, Michael O'Boyle

Mexican airlines Volaris and Viva Aerobus strike merger agreement

12/18/25, Reuters, Natalia Siniawski, David French and Kylie Madry

British baker outrages Mexicans with attack on their 'ugly' bread

12/17/25, Guardian, Oscar Lopez

Is This the Ultimate Winter Sun Destination?

12/12/25, New York Times, Sara Clemence

This Quiet Mexican Paradise Offers New Reasons to Fly South

12/17/25, Bloomberg, Jen Murphy

FIFA launches \$60 ticket tier amid criticism of 2026 World Cup pricing

12/17/25, Reuters, Angelica Medina and Kurt Hall

Meet the Indigenous women behind Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum's 'most stylish' looks

12/12/25, AP, Fernanda Pesce and Maria Verza

Mexican devotion to the Virgin of Guadalupe blends into national identity

12/12/25, AP, María Teresa Hernández

'Graciela Iturbide: Serious Play' Review: A Photographer's Haunting Views of Mexico

12/12/25, WSJ, Brian P. Kelly