

Mexico Foreign Press Chatter

February 20, 2026

Headlines this week continued to cover Mexico's security challenges, as recent events have cast doubts on Sheinbaum's strategy. The AP used the case of disappeared miners in Sinaloa to illustrate how cartels fighting undercut government claims of increasing control. Meanwhile, The Guardian cited *México Evalúa* data, which estimates a 200% increase in disappearances over the last 10 years, underscoring a full-on crisis that dangerously "invisibilizes" violence and forces families to search on their own. For its part, Bloomberg focused on extortion, using the recent arrest of Tequila's mayor to highlight both the impact on business and the government's readiness to pursue corruption within Morena. At the border, the LA Times framed last week's airspace closure in El Paso as a reminder to Mexican officials of how fragile U.S.-Mexico's coordination remains. Also on drones, Brookings had a deep dive on their "extensive and growing" use by cartels. Still, successful military operations continue to take place, with the AP reporting on a seizure of over 10 tonnes of cocaine by the Mexican and Salvadorian navies, while Reuters highlighted the discovery of a tunnel network in Hidalgo used for fuel theft and storing drugs.

Increasing political pressure and disputes also gathered headlines on an array of topics. Bloomberg examined how Cuba's energy crisis is forcing Sheinbaum to balance historic solidarity with Havana against economic realities tied to Washington, dividing opinion within her own party — a dilemma sharpened as the UN recognizes a humanitarian emergency on the island and the WSJ notes Mexico's recent aid is unlikely to ease the strain. Meanwhile, The Guardian covered Sheinbaum's formal protest of the UK's asylum decision for Karime Macías, wanted in Mexico for alleged embezzlement tied to her ex-husband Javier Duarte's corruption case. In Congress, Sheinbaum's proposed electoral reform continues to stall coalition concerns over funding and seats, per Bloomberg. Elsewhere, the AP explored the social costs of World Cup infrastructure upgrades in Mexico City, pushing out sex workers and street vendors long embedded in the social fabric of the neighborhoods surrounding the Estadio Azteca. And in one of the most bizarre stories on Mexican politics in past few years, the FT reported on the dismissal of Marx Arriaga, an Education Ministry official who refused to update textbooks on ideological grounds, and who commandeered his former office for four days.

On business and the economy, Bloomberg reported that President Sheinbaum's is privately seeking advice from business leaders and economists, as her "Plan Mexico" fails to get traction amid lingering doubts over last year's judicial reform. The approaching USMCA review adds another layer of risk, though Bloomberg's J.P. Spinetto argued in an op-ed that deep supply-chain integration and deeply entrenched economies make a U.S. exit unlikely, even if adjustments are inevitable and necessary. In this context, both Bloomberg and Reuters reported on a meeting between Mexican and Canadian representatives held on Monday, which reaffirmed their commitment to trilateral trade while strengthening bilateral ties. On the other hand, the New York Times reported President Trump is considering dropping Canada from the regional trade

agreement. Meanwhile, in the auto industry, Bloomberg reported that the government's crackdown on "huachicol" has added bureaucracy to lubricant and grease imports necessary for car manufacturing, putting stress on one of Mexico's largest manufacturing sectors. Elsewhere, the FT reported on Ricardo Salinas Pliego's legal battle against lenders he accuses of fraud. In more positive news, fintech continues to increase its offerings to Mexico's largely underbanked population, with Plata card granted the final approval to start operations as a bank, while used-car platform Kavak secured US\$300 mn in a major funding round. Pemex also raised funds, returning to debt markets in a move that meant Mexico's debt issuance reached a monthly record, per Bloomberg.

Shifting gears, the WSJ reported on Mexicans' new-found obsession with the capybara, a rodent native to South American countries, which puts into question exactly why it has gained such cultural traction in Mexico. In sports, The Athletic followed up on last week's announcement of the NFL's return to Mexico City, reporting that the San Francisco 49ers will play in Mexico for this year's game. Meanwhile, the AP examined the resurgence of lucha libre masks — an enduring emblem of Mexican identity that has spilled into other sports — as tourism and the upcoming World Cup fuel what could become a commercial "boom."

Notable blogs in English on Mexico

Mexico-related Substacks also focused on security issues. In [Mexico Decoded](#) Viri Ríos explored the apparent mismatch between the increasing perception of insecurity in polls, and government data showing falling crime rates, especially homicides. Ioan Girlo in [Crashout](#) visits the town of Xalatalco, which has seen a surge of crystal meth addiction cases, as synthetic drugs have begun to spread to small towns at low prices, affecting working-class communities. In [SendNews](#), Katarina Szulc investigated the abduction of the 10 miners in Sinaloa. Meanwhile, [The Mexpatiate](#), argued that Marx Arriaga's dismissal from the education ministry underlines Sheinbaum's broader institutional approach within the 4T, suggesting the move was aimed at being adaptable and less ideological.

Photo of the Week



Members of a group that searches for missing people walk alongside soldiers in El Verde, Sinaloa. Photo by Juvencio Villanueva for AP.

FOREIGN PRESS COVERAGE

[Abduction of Mexican mine workers raises doubts over touted security improvements](#)

02/16/26, AP, Aarón Ibarra and María Verza

[Disappearances in Mexico surge by 200% over 10 years](#)

02/16/26, Guardian, Oscar Lopez

[Tequila Capital Seeks to Curb Extortion After Alleged Shakedown](#)

02/13/26, Bloomberg, Amy Stillman, Maya Averbuch, and Valentine Hilaire

[Mexican officials feared El Paso airspace closure signaled U.S. incursion into Mexico](#)

02/13/26, LA Times, Steve Fisher

[How Mexican cartels are using drones, now and in the future](#)

02/18/26, Brookings, Vanda Felbab-Brown

[With discovery of secret tunnel, Mexican authorities strike blow against black-market fuel trade](#)

02/19/26, Reuters, Stefanie Eschenbacher

[Mexico and El Salvador make big cocaine seizures at sea as US continues lethal strikes](#)
02/19/26, AP, Staff

[Mexico's Cuba Obsession Puts Its President in a Bind With Trump](#)
02/15/26, Bloomberg, Gonzalo Soto

[Cuba's Food and Water Supplies Threatened Under U.S. Pressure, U.N. Says](#)
02/13/26, WSJ, Ryan Dubé, Vera Bergengruen, Samantha Pearson

[Mexican president challenges UK asylum given to woman accused of corruption](#)
02/17/26, Guardian, Oscar Lopez

[Mexico Election Reform Stalls as Sheinbaum's Junior Coalition Partners Object](#)
02/16/26, Bloomberg, Gonzalo Soto and Alex Vasquez

[World Cup means slashed wages and displacement for some workers in Mexico City](#)
02/13/26, AP, Megan Janetsky and Eduardo Verdugo

[Mexico's school textbook author refuses to leave desk four days after sacking](#)
02/17/26, FT, Ciara Nugent

[Mexico President Claudia Sheinbaum Grows Uneasy as Her Investment Plan Stumbles](#)
02/18/26, Bloomberg, Alex Vasquez and Gonzalo Soto

[Mexico Can Call Trump's Bluff on Trade](#)
02/18/26, Bloomberg, Juan Pablo Spinetto

[Canada, Mexico Meet to Boost Trade Amid USMCA Uncertainty](#)
02/18/26, Bloomberg, Alex Vasquez

[Canada, Mexico want a trilateral agreement under USMCA review, Canadian minister says](#)
02/18/26, Reuters, Promit Mukherjee

[Trump Mulls a North American Trade Pact Without Canada](#)
02/19/26, NYT, Ana Swanson, Matina Stevis-Gridneff and Tyler Pager

[Mexico's Fuel-Smuggling Crackdown Hobbles Nation's Auto Industry](#)
02/17/26, Bloomberg, Gonzalo Soto

[The crypto-loving billionaire and the \\$400mn 'perfect fraud'](#)
02/19/26, FT, Paul Caruana Galizia

[Mexico's Plata Wins Banking License, Heating Up Fintech Race](#)
02/18/26, Bloomberg, Valentine Hilaire and Maria Clara Cobo

[Andreessen Horowitz Backs Unicorn Kavak in \\$300 Million Round](#)

02/18/26, Bloomberg, Michael O'Boyle

[Pemex Issues \\$1.8 Billion in Debt in Return to Mexico Markets](#)

02/13/26, Bloomberg, Kelsey Butler

[Pemex's Jumbo Debt Sale Pushes Mexico Issuance to Monthly Record](#)

02/16/26, Bloomberg, Kelsey Butler

[Mexico Has Fallen in Love With the Capybara for No Apparent Reason](#)

02/16/26, WSJ, Xavier Martinez

[From Arena Mexico to the World Cup, a wrestling-mask boom is taking shape](#)

02/13/26, AP, Carlos Rodríguez

[San Francisco 49ers will play in Mexico City in 2026](#)

02/18/26, The Athletic, Devon Henderson