

## [Trump storms out of talks on shutdown, bemoans 'total waste of time'](#)

U.S. President Donald Trump said he left a meeting on border wall funding with Democratic congressional leaders on Wednesday because it was a "total waste of time," while Democrats said he walked out in a "temper tantrum."

## [U.S. Fed may be open to changes to balance sheet plan, minutes show](#)

Federal Reserve policymakers have indicated they may be open to tweaking a longstanding plan to shrink the central bank's balance sheet, including by shedding housing-backed bonds earlier than anticipated or keeping a bigger-than-expected portfolio of assets.

## [Senate finance chair says no to giving Trump more tariff authority](#)

U.S. Senate Finance Committee Chairman Charles Grassley said that Congress will not grant any expansion of President Donald Trump's executive authority over tariff and other trade remedies.

## [Fitch warns of possible cut to US triple-A rating if shutdown continues](#)

Fitch has warned of a possible cut to the US triple-A sovereign credit rating later this year if the ongoing government shutdown leads to it hitting its debt ceiling and hampering budget setting.

## [China's Dec factory-gate inflation at 0.9 pct y/y, lowest since Sept 2016](#)

China's producer price index in December rose 0.9%, marking the lowest rate since September 2016. The consumer price index added 1.9% last month compared with a year earlier, also below market expectations for a 2.1% gain.

## [China says trade talks with U.S. set foundation to resolve concerns](#)

China's commerce ministry said trade talks with the United States this week were extensive and detailed, and established a foundation for the resolution of each other's concerns.

## [Xi Jinping accepts offer to visit Pyongyang, says North Korea state media](#)

Chinese President Xi Jinping accepted an offer to visit Pyongyang after meeting North Korean leader Kim Jong-un, North Korea state media reported on Thursday.

### North Korea's Kim says to work for 'welcomed' result in second Trump summit - Xinhua

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un said his country would try to make a second summit with U.S. President Donald Trump achieve a result that the international community would welcome.

### China relaxed rules on shorting stock index futures - Reuters

Reuters is out with the latest announcement from the China Financial Futures Exchange (CFFEX), citing that the exchange last month relaxed trading rules on stock index futures and vowed to boost liquidity of that market.

### Toe the line: China bans foot fetish videos and political spoofs as censorship tightens

The China Netcasting Services Association released new guidelines on censoring short videos on Wednesday, prohibiting everything from foot fetishes to spoofing the national anthem, as Beijing continues to clamp down on "harmful" information.

### Car sales drop in China for the first time in 20 years

Car sales in China dropped 5.8% in 2018 to 22.4 million vehicles. It's the first annual decline in nearly 20 years, according to state broadcaster CCTV. The deceleration comes amid a slowdown in China's economy which has hit performance at car manufacturers around the world.

### May suffers parliament defeat as Brexit debate resumes

British Prime Minister Theresa May suffered an early defeat to her Brexit plans on Wednesday when parliament demanded the government come up with a plan-B within days if she loses a vote on her deal to leave the European Union.

### Hammond says no-deal Brexit would harm its people

Britain's Chancellor of the Exchequer Philip Hammond said it would be against British people's interests to leave the European Union without an exit deal, but declined to say how the government would respond if parliament refused to back its Brexit plans.

### Japan's Abe to meet PM May as Brexit crunch approaches

Japan's Shinzo Abe and British Prime Minister Theresa May will discuss the economic opportunities that exist for both nations as the UK leaves the European Union, Downing Street said ahead of the meeting.

### UK retailers suffer worst Christmas in a decade - BRC

The British Retail Consortium said British retailers failed to increase their Christmas sales and reported zero year-on-year total sales growth in December, the worst performance for the month since 2008.

#### [Oil falls one percent on swelling U.S. supply, but mood generally upbeat on trade hopes](#)

Oil prices dropped 1% on Thursday on swelling U.S. supply. U.S. bank Morgan Stanley cut its 2019 oil price forecasts by more than 10% on Wednesday, pointing to “weakening economic growth expectations” and rising oil supply from outside OPEC as reasons for their lower price forecast.

#### [Cuban president replaces ministers in first cabinet reshuffle](#)

Cuban President Miguel Diaz-Canel replaced his transport and finance ministers this week in his first cabinet reshuffle since forming his own government in July and amid a cash crunch and growing discontent with the island’s transport sector.

#### [Alibaba buys German data analysis start-up](#)

Alibaba Group Holding has acquired German data analysis firm Data Artisans, the Berlin-based startup said, in a deal reported to be worth around 90 million euros (\$103 million).

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