

Headlines:

- **Russia's Syria Talks Stall**
- **US to Arm Ukraine**
- **Pakistan-India Diplomacy**

Details:

Russia's Syria Talks Stall

More than three dozen Syrian rebel groups have rejected a Russian-led initiative for talks next month in Sochi on ending Syria's war. Russia, Iran and Turkey agreed to hold a "Congress of National Dialogue" in the Black Sea resort of Sochi on 29 and 30 January. Syria's government swiftly said it would attend but rebels have pushed back, calling it a Russian bid to eclipse a United Nations-led process in Geneva. "We completely reject Russia's attempt.....We call on all forces to stand in one rank against these alarming dangers." the rebels said in a joint statement. It was signed by 40 factions, including Ahrar al-Sham and was backed by the US such as the Mutasem Brigades.

US to Arm Ukraine

U.S. President Donald Trump is about to approve the sale of anti-tank missiles to Ukraine, The sale, which could likely include Javelin anti-tank missiles, would change the balance of power in the conflict with Russia. If Trump approves the plan, Congress will have 30 days to approve the measure. On Dec. 21, the Trump administration approved a \$47 million commercial sale of lethal weapons to Ukraine, the first time such transfers have been granted. The weapons will assist Ukrainian forces in their fight against Russian-backed separatists. Despite the coordination in Syria, for the US Ukraine is a different conflict, driven by a different set of interests.

Pakistan-India Diplomacy

On Christmas Day Pakistan's rulers permitted the Indian naval officer, Kulbhushan Jadhav, who confessed to orchestrating terrorist attacks in Pakistan, to meet his wife and mother. Pakistan guaranteed complete security and safety for the meeting. The Pakistani government and media extensively reported the event showing it can have relations with India and can play a role of facilitating this through such acts of diplomacy. This has been in contract to numerous Pakistani citizens such as the neuroscientist Afia Siddique, Hizb ut Tahrir spokesman Naveed Butt and hundreds of thousands of individuals who have bene handed over the US on flimsy accusations.