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COUNTERING TRANSNATIONAL ORGANIZED CRIME (CTOC)

CORRUPTION

In India, subtle corruption robs villagers of roads
Jon Wallace – Princeton University: 11 January 2018

A recent study says that dozens of rural roads in India — designated, paid for and completed — were in fact not even started, indicating widespread corruption. The lack of completed roads also meant that the isolated villages remained largely unconnected to the rest of India.


What Saudi Arabia could learn from South Korea about fighting corruption
Jamal Khashoggi – The Washington Post: 8 January 2018

Saudi Arabia's investigation into and handling of corruption is not unique — other nations have similar stories. But perhaps the story most similar, one that could teach Saudi Arabia a lesson in how to handle investigations, can be found in South Korea. Transparency, public involvement and fair trials helped South Korea ensure that the day-to-day operations of its huge conglomerations were not interrupted and that the market was not affected.


For more on this theme:

Public servants report rise in corruption, prompting calls for federal watchdog

Commentary: Indonesia's anti-corruption drive needs a reality check

Poroshenko Is Targeting Ukraine's Anti-corruption Campaigners

Thousands of Panamanians Protest Corruption and Impunity

Four reasons why corruption matters

Lessons of hope from Afghanistan in SA's corruption fighting journey

Links Between Caste and Political Corruption Aren't Based on Concrete Evidence
https://thewire.in/212322/how-connecting-caste-and-political-corruption-presents-an-incomplete-picture/
DRUG TRAFFICKING

U.S. Sets Up Team To Investigate Hizballah For Drug Trafficking
Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty: 12 January 2018

The U.S. Department of Justice is creating a task force to investigate drug trafficking and money laundering operations linked to Hezbollah after an article in Politico last month claimed that the previous administration turned a blind eye to such activities to preserve the Iran nuclear deal. https://www.rferl.org/a/us-sets-up-team-investigate-alleged-drug-trafficking-iranian-ally-hizballah-sessions/28970350.html

Iran Eases Death Penalty for Drug Crimes, Saving Potentially Thousands of Lives
Thomas Erdbrink – The New York Times: 10 January 2018

Thousands on death row for drug crimes in Iran will escape hanging as a new, softened anti-narcotics law is enforced. Judiciary chief Ayatollah Sadeq Larijani ordered judges to halt death sentences for convicted convicts and review their cases. The new law retroactively “clarifies the fate of some 5,000 sentenced to death for drug trafficking.” Most convicted drug traffickers will see death sentences commuted to jail terms of 25 to 30 years. https://www.nytimes.com/2018/01/10/world/middleeast/iran-drugs-death-penalty.html

For more on this theme:

To combat drug smuggling, Trump signs bill to provide $9 million for opioid sensors

The Power of Crime: Ties Between Drug Trafficking and Politics in Brazil
http://www.rioonwatch.org/?p=40620

Mexican Drug Cartels May Use Legal Marijuana to Take Over Northern California

Socioeconomic Shifts Could Challenge Cuba Drug Policy: Report

Tорched RHIB shines light on strait drug traffic

Colombia Sends 2,000 Troops to Fight Drug Trafficking in Southwestern Region
http://www.laht.com/article.asp?ArticleId=2448731&CATEGORYID=12393

China-Myanmar Security Operation Spotlights Big Drug Challenge

Drug trafficking in Albania: an evergreen problem

GameChangers 2017: Drug Trade Dynamics Shape Latin America’s Criminal Landscape
TRAFFICKING IN SCARCE OR PROTECTED RESOURCES

**WWF Blockchain To Track Sustainable Tuna From Bait To Plate**

Jeremy Nation – ETHNews.com: 8 January 2018

The World Wildlife Fund (WWF) in Australia has joined forces with partners in Fiji and New Zealand to stamp out illegal fishing and slave labor in the tuna fishing industry. Using blockchain technology, the WWF is helping tuna fishing and processing companies track when a tuna is caught, through processing and to the distributor.


**In Africa, Geneticists Are Hunting Poachers**

Gina Kolata – The New York Times: 8 January 2018

A statistical study shows how powerful the Rhinoceros DNA Index System, or RhODIS, is in linking forensic evidence to particular animals. Established in 2010, the database contains more than 20,000 rhino samples from living animals, stockpiled horns and poaching cases.


For more on this theme:

- Murder and corruption in the mining town the world forgot

- Explosives ban to stop illegal mining

- As Afghanistan’s Mining Race Stalls, the Taliban and ISIS Tap Into Illegal Mines

- US Makes Moves to Crack Down on Illegal Seafood
  https://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/us-makes-moves-to-crack-down-on-illegal-seafood_us_5a551c-cde4b0f9b24bf31b47

- Ship-Sinking Policy Continues Despite Top-Level Criticism

- Peru Protects More Than 2 Million Acres of Rainforest by Creating Yaguas National Park

- Why prosecuting cases affecting wildlife is key to conservation efforts
  http://www.nation.co.ke/news/-prosecuting-cases-affecting-wildlife-is-key/1056-4252622-3aw5eez/index.html

- Japan’s ivory market caters unabated to Chinese clients due to absence of regulations
HUMAN TRAFFICKING AND IRREGULAR MIGRATION

We Cannot End Sex Trafficking Without Addressing Demand
Sarah Godoy – Forbes: 11 January 2018

To identify and help the victims of human trafficking isn’t enough, nor is simply taking out the suppliers. To truly end the scourge of sex trafficking, we must also find, prosecute and punish those responsible for the demand side of the trade.

https://www.forbes.com/sites/rebeccasadwick/2018/01/11/human-trafficking-demand/#6e0e100c4b7c

For more on this theme:

How to identify human trafficking victims often ‘hidden in plain sight’

Let Europe face up to human trafficking in 2018

Human smuggling, Libya’s political endgame
https://www.herald.co.zw/human-smuggling-libyas-political-endgame/

Sudan’s state-supported smugglers
https://mg.co.za/article/2018-01-12-00-sudans-state-supported-smugglers
INTERNET GOVERNANCE

China’s cyber sovereignty: paper tiger or rising dragon?
Scott Shackelford and Frank Alexander – Asia & the Pacific Policy Society; 12 January 2018

China has long espoused its desire to have digital sovereignty over its internet. The most recent World Internet Conference in China focused on technology, but the underlying questions were about China’s views on and actions toward internet governance.

https://www.policyforum.net/chinas-cyber-sovereignty/

For more on this theme:

(Global) A role for trade rules in Internet governance

(Global) 2018 will be the year in which liberal democracies begin to confront misinformation
http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/mediapolicyproject/2018/01/05/2018-beginning-of-the-end-for-fake-news/

(U.S.) Net neutrality: Decentralization is the future of the Internet

INTERNET FREEDOM

For Iranians, Freedom Begins And Ends With An Open Internet
Nasdaq: 11 January 2018

Iran’s protesters are being rebuffed as they attempt to use the internet to gather and share their stories. Iran is systematically closing apps and sites as well as completely disrupting services.


For more on this theme:

(China) China Says It Shut Down 128,000 Websites in 2017

(U.S.) In the Wake of the FCC’s Net Neutrality Repeal, California Eyes Its Own Net Neutrality Law

(Pakistan) Cyber armies, enforced disappearances, and other Internet freedom threats in Pakistan
PRIVACY AND SECURITY

EU privacy boom’s a business bust
Laurens Cerulus – Politico: 8 January 2018

Europe’s high demand for privacy has driven a whole world of privacy-related services and gadgets designed to protect data, identities and myriad other aspects, particularly as the world becomes more and more connected via the internet. But why isn’t that translating into cash for the businesses with the gadgets?

For more on this theme:
(U.S., Global) House votes to renew surveillance powers revealed by Snowden

(Global) Digital dystopia: tech slavery and the death of privacy – podcast

(China) Internet giants mired in alleged privacy violations

CYBER STATECRAFT DEVELOPMENT

Cyberweapons Now A ‘Core Tool’ Of Iranian Statecraft
Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty: 5 January 2018

According to the Carnegie Endowment, Iran is becoming more sophisticated and damaging in its attacks. As cyber operations become key in Iranian offensive operations, its homegrown capabilities are increasingly dangerous.
https://www.rferl.org/a/carnegie-report-iran-cyberweapons-core-tool-statecraft/28957033.html

Full report:
Iran’s Cyber Threat: Espionage, Sabotage, and Revenge

For more on this theme:
(U.S., China) In space and cyber, China is closing in on the United States

(Estonia, U.S.) Is Estonia’s Approach to Cyber Defense Feasible in the United States?

(Japan, Estonia) Abe to seek Estonia’s help in cyberdefense on European tour
PUBLIC/PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP

For Smart City Tech, What's the Best Public-Private Partnership Model?
Gordon Feller – RTInsights.com: 6 January 2018

With public/private partnership models, looking to the past may be one way of determining how to best move forward with the new partnerships required to build and create smart cities.

For more on this theme:
(U.S.) Director Addresses Cyber Conference

(U.S.) Perdue: Rural broadband is our duty to farmers

(Canada) Deloitte: 25 per cent of Canadians will get internet from cellular mobile networks this year

PROTECTION OF INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

Russian Cyber-Spies Are Carrying Out Some Pretty Clever Hacks These Days
Catalin Cimpanu – Bleeping Computer: 10 January 2018

Cyber-espionage group Turla is reportedly targeting embassies and consulates in the post-Soviet states using a new tool to dupe potential victims into installing malware to steal data.

For more on this theme:
(Global) War Games: Cyber Espionage and the New ‘Cold War’

(Iran) Working like an unofficial startup, Iranian hackers are carrying out cyber-espionage

(GLOBAL) Hacking expert warns over cyber espionage
CYBER CAPACITY BUILDING

**Exclusive: Aspen Institute launches cybersecurity initiative**
*Shannon Vavra – Axios: 5 January 2018*

The Aspen Institute is taking on a new project to help train the next generation of cyber security experts. Additionally, the center hopes to become the hub for public and private sectors to get information and advice on cyber security issues.

[https://www.axios.com/exclusive-aspen-institute-launches-cybersecurity-initiative-1515262283-aa0a99b7-db7e-4513-af8e-b7d76759edae.html](https://www.axios.com/exclusive-aspen-institute-launches-cybersecurity-initiative-1515262283-aa0a99b7-db7e-4513-af8e-b7d76759edae.html)

*For more on this theme:*

**(Sweden) Sweden steps up cyber defence measures**

**(Global) Artificial Intelligence as a tool to Defend against Cyber Attacks**

COMBATING TERRORISM AND CYBER CRIME

**Cybercrime victims can complain online**
*Vijaita Singh – The Hindu: 9 January 2018*

The Indian Home Ministry has launched a web portal where people who are victims of online abuse or cyber crimes can report what occurred on a real-time basis.


*For more on this theme:*

**(Africa) Known unknowns: the threat of cybercrime in Africa**
https://issafrica.org/amp/iss-today/known-unknowns-the-threat-of-cybercrime-in-africa

**(Global) The Role of Blockchain in Cybersecurity**
https://www.infosecurity-magazine.com/next-gen-infosec/blockchain-cybersecurity/

**(India) Assam Police steps to tackle cyber crimes**
INFORMATION SHARING

House Passes Cyber Vulnerability Disclosure Reporting Act
The National Law Review: 12 January 2018

The U.S. House of Representatives recently passed the Cyber Vulnerability Disclosure Reporting Act. It requires the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to report on policies and procedures for coordination of cyber vulnerability disclosures. If the bill becomes law, DHS will have to submit the report within nine months.


For more on this theme:

(Canada) Financial firm outsourcing increasing risk of cyber-attacks: IIAC

(U.S.) DHS S&T Award to Create Platform to Spur Cyber Controls Info-Sharing

CYBER PROTECTION OF CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Cyber-attack risk on nuclear weapons systems ‘relatively high’ – thinktank
Ewen MacAskill – The Guardian: 10 January 2018

Nuclear weapons may face a “relatively high” risk of cyber attacks as technology becomes more advanced and hackers grow more sophisticated, according to the Chatham House think tank. With the potential for catastrophic consequences from a nuclear attack, it is crucial to have the most robust nuclear policies in place.


Full report:
Cybersecurity of Nuclear Weapons Systems: Threats, Vulnerabilities and Consequences

For more on this theme:

(Global) Cyber Security can no longer be ignored as part of the maritime industry’s future
https://www.lexology.com/library/detail.aspx?g=a7a9dc06-df80-4cfa-ad26-9aa38934b29f

(U.S.) 3 ways DHS is helping states with election security
PROGRAM ON TERRORISM AND SECURITY STUDIES (PTSS)

ISIS

The war against Islamic State will be won — or lost — on the cyber battlefield
Matthew R. A. Heiman – Los Angeles Times: 8 January 2018

The author, a visiting fellow with the National Security Institute at George Mason University’s Antonin Scalia Law School, suggests a two-pronged approach to the cyber war with ISIS. First, defeating ISIS’ online propaganda and recruitment operations and, second, shoring up defenses against ISIS’ ability to carry out cyber attacks.

Virtual Caliphate Rebooted: The Islamic State’s Evolving Online Strategy
Charlie Winter and Jade Parker – Lawfare: 7 January 2018

ISIS is left with little territory in the real world, but that doesn’t mean its virtual presence has fallen by the wayside — quite the contrary. The online presence has evolved significantly as its physical presence has diminished. This article examines ISIS’ status and what’s next.
https://www.lawfareblog.com/virtual-caliphate-rebooted-islamic-states-evolving-online-strategy

For more on this theme:
Islamic State retreats online to ‘virtual caliphate’

Jordan Says It Foiled ‘Massive’ Terror Plot Linked to IS
https://apnews.com/6dd584f18b934e22be23257aae65ab10/Jordan-says-it-foiled-%27massive%27-terror-plot-linked-to-IS

Islamic State Cells Expand Into Kabul
http://newsweekpakistan.com/islamic-state-cells-expand-into-kabul/

Islamic State’s Baghdadi likely to be in Africa, experts say
https://www.iraqinews.com/iraq-war/islamic-states-baghdadi-likely-africa-experts-say/

Coalition Analysis Warns of Potential Islamic State Resurgence

Think tank report raises concern over growing IS presence in northern Sindh, Balochistan

Islamic State’s rise in Afghanistan

In view of its financial problems, ISIS is selling coins that it minted at the time of the Islamic State.
TERRORISM AROUND THE WORLD

Islamic State declares war on Hamas as Gaza families disown sons in Sinai
Iyad Abuheweila and Isabel Kershner – The Irish Times: 12 January 2018

ISIS’ war against Hamas was declared via gruesome video a few weeks ago. ISIS called the Palestinian armed group “apostates” and called upon ISIS followers to attack. Shortly thereafter, ISIS posted an article in its weekly bulletin attempting to prove why Hamas policies contradict Islam.


Al Qaeda maintains operational tempo in West Africa in 2017
Caleb Weiss – Long War Journal: 5 January 2018

According to data compiled by the Long War Journal, al-Qaeda is maintaining its operational tempo in West Africa, launching nearly 300 attacks in the region in 2017 alone.


For more on this theme:
Boko Haram insurgency not over yet – UN

US designates al-Shabab deputy leader as ‘global terrorist’
https://www.apnews.com/ee37b4a26192484e916a7788144cd25c

Hamas Co-Founder Accidentally Shoots Himself in the Head

Hamas, Islamic Jihad and Israel Make Up Gaza’s ‘Unsolvable Equation’

Osama bin Laden’s 12-year-old grandson is dead, says al-Qaeda leader’s ‘heir’

War of the jihadists continues as ISIS captures more ground from Al-Qaeda in northeast Hama

Bitcoin can help terrorists secretly fund their deadly attacks

3 Years After Charlie Hebdo Attack, Global Terrorism Is Greater Threat Than Ever
https://www.haaretz.com/opinion/.premium-1.833501
FOREIGN FIGHTERS

Born in the wrong place: Europe's Islamic State offspring
Brenda Stoter – Al-Monitor: 10 January 2018

Though born in Iraq or Syria, many children of ISIS are now in limbo as the countries their parents are from try to decide what to do with them. Fearing radicalization, many countries are wary of taking back the children and wives of ISIS fighters, but Iraq and Syria no longer want them there either.


Managing the Risk of the ISIS’ Diaspora in the Caribbean
Serena Joseph-Harris – The Cipher Brief: 12 January 2018

As foreign fighters leave former ISIS territory, it is unclear how many will return home. But the small Caribbean nations worry many will try to return, and officials fear for their countries’ safety and security.

https://www.thecipherbrief.com/managing-risk-isis-diaspora-caribbean

For more on this theme:

She Left France to Fight in Syria. Now She Wants to Return. But Can She?

Children of Terror Left Behind in Iraq

Managing the Risk of the ISIS’ Diaspora in the Caribbean

Germany expects return of over 100 children of Islamist fighters

Children of ‘Islamic State’ struggle to integrate in Germany

France: Daesh foreign fighters can be tried by Kurds in Syria

Why do people volunteer to fight in foreign wars?

Presence of foreign terrorists remains a challenge in PH
https://www.rappler.com/nation/193276-foreign-jihadis-remain-challenge-philippines
RADICALIZATION AND MESSAGING

Home ministry to study causes of radicalisation among youth
Azaan Javed – Hindustan Times: 9 January 2018

The research wing of the Indian Home Ministry has undertaken a nationwide project to determine the reasons behind the radicalization of youth and how to counter religious extremism in the country. Called the "Rad and Derad programme," the project is under the aegis of the National Police Mission program.


For more on this theme:

Taking aim at Islamic State's perversion of religion

Poverty Is One Factor In Radicalization, Not The Only Factor

CEP Releases Interactive Map on Extremism & Counter-Extremism

Workshop on Counter Violent Extremism concludes

Commentary: Radicalisation not a threat that can be flushed out

Centre adopts Singapore model of de-radicalisation, IB to formulate SOP to counter threat

‘There's a lot of repenting’: why Australian prisoners are converting to Islam

Scottish far-right extremists sent to same de-radicalisation units as potential Islamist terrorists
http://www.heraldscotland.com/news/15810670.Scottish_far_right_extremists_sent_to_same_de_radi-
calisation_units_as_potential_Islamist_Terrorists/

Online propaganda of global terror outfits to be discussed at IB meet
COUNTERTERRORISM STRATEGIES

We Can Learn From Leaders Fighting Terror Decades Ago
Nitsana Darshan-Leitner – Newsmax: 8 January 2018

By looking to two of the most influential counterterror pioneers of the past, we can see their influence on today’s battles.


For more on this theme:

India-ASEAN Summit to focus on counter-terrorism, security, trade
https://en.vietnamplus.vn/indiaasean-summit-to-focus-on-counterterrorism-security-trade/124718.vnp

A look at the year ahead for Special Operations Command

French counterterrorism inquiry launched into prison attack