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COUNTERING TRANSNATIONAL ORGANIZED CRIME (CTOC)

CORRUPTION

It’s the luxuries that give it away. To fight corruption, follow the goods
Reza Tajaddini and Hassan F. Gholipour – The Conversation: 28 April 2019

If governments followed the luxury goods, they could better tackle corruption, according to The Conversation. Data indicates that luxury goods are sold at substantially higher rates in countries where corruption is rampant.

How the (Once) Most Corrupt Country in the World Got Clean(er)
Jonah Blank – The Atlantic: 2 May 2019

Indonesia has created an independent body to investigate and prosecute corrupt politicians, a major step in shedding its image as one of the most corrupt countries in the world. While there remain numerous challenges, Indonesia has climbed its way up from the bottom of Transparency International’s list of most corrupt countries.
https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2019/05/lessons-indonesia-fighting-corruption/588358/

For more on this theme:

NGO wants PNG anti-corruption body to be strong
https://www.radionz.co.nz/international/pacific-news/387367/ngo-wants-png-anti-corruption-body-to-be-strong

Technology Helps to Fight Corruption – and complicate it

How greed and corruption blew up South Korea’s nuclear industry

Study documents electoral corruption in Hungary
https://news.yale.edu/2019/04/22/study-documents-electoral-corruption-hungary

Canada slowly pushes for corporate transparency as part of anti-corruption push

Algerian billionaires in court as part of anti-corruption drive

Brazil’s Judiciary, Once Symbol of Anti-Corruption Drive, Now Faces Scrutiny

Latin America is fed up with corruption. Leaders need to face the reckoning.
https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2019/04/25/latin-america-is-fed-up-with-corruption-leaders-need-face-reckoning/
DRUG TRAFFICKING

Berlin park designates ‘pink zone’ areas for drug dealers
Kate Connolly – The Guardian: 9 May 2019

The manager of Berlin’s notorious Görlitzer Park has come under fire after creating zones for drug dealers to conduct their business. Amid harsh political criticism, authorities say the action is capitulating to criminal gangs.


Between tradition and trafficking: opium in Arunachal Pradesh
Nivedita Khandekar – The Third Pole: 8 May 2019

Indian authorities have done little to stem illicit opium cultivation for two decades, but a recent police case against the cultivators is cause for hope.


For more on this theme:

Denver becomes first US city to decriminalize ‘magic mushrooms’

Tariffs won’t solve U.S.-Mexico drug crime

Colombia’s medical marijuana industry: a way to end the stigma surrounding drugs?
https://www.equaltimes.org/colombia-s-medical-marijuana#.XMutKaoRg0E

Fentanyl Speedballs Are the Latest Disturbing Trend in America’s Opioid Crisis

Dark web blamed for rise in drugs sent by post from Netherlands

Marijuana Crop on Argentina Border is Testing Ground for Smugglers
https://www.insightcrime.org/news/brief/marijuana-argentina-paraguay-testing-ground/

How the US military’s opium war in Afghanistan was lost

Belize Fights Transnational Organized Crime

Costa Rica Sees Growing Demand for Ketamine, Synthetic Drugs
TRAFFICKING IN SCARCE OR PROTECTED RESOURCES

Ghana is losing its rainforest faster than any other country in the world
Kwasi Gyamfi Asiedu – Quartz: 1 May 2019

Global Forest Watch used remote sensing and satellite data to estimate that Ghana lost 60 percent more of its rainforest in 2018 compared to 2017 — the highest percentage of any nation in the world.

1 Million Animal And Plant Species Are At Risk Of Extinction, U.N. Report Says
Bill Chappell and Nathan Rott – National Public Radio: 6 May 2019

One million of the planet’s 8 million species are threatened with extinction by humans, scientists warned in what is described as the most comprehensive assessment of global nature loss ever.
https://www.npr.org/2019/05/06/720654249/1-million-animal-and-plant-species-face-extinction-risk-u-n-report-says

For more on this theme:
The Military Response to Poaching
https://daily.jstor.org/the-military-response-to-poaching/

NZDF Supports British Army’s Counter-Poaching Operation

ASEAN’s pangolin disaster
https://theaseanpost.com/article/aseans-pangolin-disaster

One Million Species Extinctions? Not on New York’s Watch!
https://www.nrdc.org/experts/elly-pepper/one-million-species-extinctions-not-new-yorks-watch

New DNA test stops illegal shipment of endangered eels

In Uganda, Threatened Chimps Find Protection in Former Poachers
https://undark.org/article/budongo-forest-uganda-chimpanzees-poachers/

We asked people in Vietnam why they use rhino horn. Here’s what they said

Illegal logging poised to wipe Cambodian wildlife sanctuary off the map

Operation Mercury 2019 Counters Illegal Mining

Inside India’s sand mafia
https://bigthink.com/politics-current-affairs/india-sand-mafia
HUMAN TRAFFICKING AND IRREGULAR MIGRATION

Mobile App Aids Detection of Human Trafficking at Sea
International Organization for Migration (IOM): 30 April 2019

IOM Indonesia created a new mobile app that helps law enforcement determine if members of a non-Indonesian fishing crew are willing workers or trafficked individuals.

For more on this theme:

Law students call for task force to fight human trafficking

Donald Trump wants asylum seekers to pay application fee

Radical approach to human trafficking
https://barbadostoday.bb/2019/05/10/radical-approach-to-human-trafficking/

Human trafficking prevention to benefit from 1€ billion initiative

IOM Tasks Traditional, Religious Leaders To Stop Irregular Migration
https://www.independent.ng/iom-tasks-traditional-religious-leaders-to-stop-irregular-migration/

Migrants in Yemen languish in detention as Ramadan begins

Woman migrants: forgotten victims of South Africa’s xenophobia
https://issafrica.org/iss-today/woman-migrants-forgotten-victims-of-south-africas-xenophobia

Stopping Human Trafficking in Central America and the U.S.

DNA testing at the border is dangerous
https://thehill.com/opinion/immigration/442050-dna-testing-at-the-border-is-dangerous
INTERNET GOVERNANCE

As the Internet divides
Antony Funnell – Australian Broadcasting Corp.: 12 May 2019
China has been building internet infrastructures for many countries around the world — an estimated 38 to date — and they are being built in the image of China’s highly censored internet.
https://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/futuretense/as-the-internet-divides/11087990

For more on this theme:
(China) China’s internet governance offers global example
http://www.globaltimes.cn/content/1148913.shtml
(Caribbean) Experts call for Caribbean to make its voice heard on global Internet governance
https://www.breakingbelizenews.com/2019/05/06/experts-call-for-caribbean-to-make-its-voice-heard-on-global-internet-governance/
(Global) There’s a solution to our Facebook problem and it’s mind-bogglingly simple

INTERNET FREEDOM

Chad Smashes The Record For Social Media Censorship
Christine Ro – Forbes: 3 May 2019
Chad has controlled the internet for over a year, setting the record for longest direct internet blockage of social media.
https://www.forbes.com/sites/christinero/2019/05/03/chad-smashes-the-record-for-social-media-censorship/#47a21214742a

For more on this theme:
(Africa) DRIF19: As Experts Converged Over Digital Rights In Africa
https://leadership.ng/2019/05/04/if19-as-experts-converged-over-digital-rights-in-africa/
(Sri Lanka) Say no to cyber-nanny state in Sri Lanka
(Russia) Russians don’t like the new internet censorship law, but it’s happening anyway
PRIVACY AND SECURITY

Cybersecurity for Indonesia: what needs to be done?
Tangguh Chairil – The Conversation: 9 May 2019

By embracing digital technology, Indonesia could flourish. But first the country needs to focus on securing its internet against cyber attacks.

https://theconversation.com/cybersecurity-for-indonesia-what-needs-to-be-done-114009

For more on this theme:

(U.S., Global) Why Surveillance Is the Climate Change of the Internet

(Europe) Europe’s sweeping privacy rule was supposed to change the internet, but so far it’s mostly created frustration for users, companies, and regulators
https://www.cnbc.com/2019/05/04/gdpr-has-frustrated-users-and-regulators.html

(Global) Google’s New Privacy Features Put the Responsibility on Users

CYBER STATECRAFT DEVELOPMENT

Did Israel Have the Right to Bomb Hamas’ Cyber HQ?
Stefan Soesanto – Defense One: 8 May 2019

Israel launched the first kinetic strike on a Hamas cyber operations center in response to offensive cyber operations, according to media reports. The question is whether this will be seen as a one-off or the beginning of a new norm.

https://www.defenseone.com/ideas/2019/05/did-israel-have-right-bomb-hamas-cyber-hq/156829/

For more on this theme:

(Australia) An agenda for Australia’s lead cyber negotiator

(Estonia) Estonia shows the way to an inclusive digital society
https://www.inventiva.co.in/2019/05/09/estonia-shows-the-way-to-an-inclusive-digital-society/

(India) Why does India prime minister Narendra Modi rely on social media so much?
PUBLIC/PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP

Public Private Partnerships And The Cybersecurity Challenge Of Protecting Critical Infrastructure
Chuck Brooks – Forbes: 6 May 2019

The author is principal market growth strategist for cyber security and emerging technologies at General Dynamics’ mission systems business. He thinks the U.S. government should form a comprehensive and adaptive partnership with industry to address cyber threats to critical U.S. infrastructure.


For more on this theme:
(Ghana) Public private partnership crucial to combat cyber crime in Ghana – ICCS

(U.S.) Between Hacks and Hostilities: Are the US government and private sector ready for persistent engagement?

PROTECTION OF INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

Nation state actors, affiliates behind increasing amount of data breaches
Larry Dignan – ZDNet: 8 May 2019

A new report by Verizon demonstrates how espionage by nation states is worrying businesses. Attacks by nation states and their proxies represented 23 percent of data breaches in 2019, up from 12 percent in 2018.


For more on this theme:
(Global) You Can't Protect Your Data If You Don’t Even Know It Exists
https://www.forbes.com/sites/tonybradley/2019/05/09/you-cant-protect-your-data-if-you-dont-even-know-it-exists/#149931312950

(China) How China uses cyber theft and information warfare
https://fcw.com/articles/2019/05/06/china-information-warfare-dod-report.aspx

(Australia, China) Attributing the hack on Australia’s parliament will give clarity to the China relationship
CYBER CAPACITY BUILDING

Taking a Byte Out of Cyber Crime
Kimberly Underwood – The Cyber Edge: 7 May 2019
The U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation is tasked with domestic federal crime, but cyber crime is becoming an increasing part of its portfolio, even when the perpetrators are overseas.
https://www.afcea.org/content/taking-byte-out-cyber-crime

For more on this theme:
(Africa) How Africa’s women can drive the 4IR forward
https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2019/05/africas-women-can-drive-the-4ir-forward/

(Global) Helping small businesses fight cybercrime benefits the global ecosystem

COMBATING TERRORISM AND CYBER CRIME

‘The greatest threat facing the country today’: Is Canada doing enough to thwart cyber crime?
Kathryn Kyte – Yahoo Finance Canada: 9 May 2019
Cyber crime can be expensive. With 25 Canadian companies reporting an average of 75 major cyber attacks in 2018, the country is asking whether more can be done to combat cyber crime.

For more on this theme:
(Europe) No-deal Brexit ‘could threaten evidence-sharing with Europe’ on cyber crime

(Sri Lanka) Sri Lanka’s unsung cyber security champions

(Global) Illuminating the Dark Web
https://www.infosecurity-magazine.com/opinions/illuminating-dark-web-1-1-1/
INFORMATION SHARING

Leveraging cyber threat intelligence to benefit security posture
Security Brief: 7 May 2019

The sharing of cyber threat intelligence is critical to stopping cyber crime in its tracks. But a recent survey says 20 percent of companies don’t know the value of sharing this information.


For more on this theme:

(Global) Protecting Data Privacy in a Data-Sharing World

(Global) Hackers are causing breaches, but can companies realistically protect themselves?

CYBER PROTECTION OF CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

State Comptroller: Israel’s cyber defense inadequate
Uri Berkovitz – Globes: 7 May 2019

Some of the agencies in charge of Israel’s critical infrastructures are unprepared for the possibility of cyber attacks, according to a report published by Israel’s state comptroller.


For more on this theme:

(U.S.) At nations’ request, U.S. Cyber Command probes foreign networks to hunt election security threats

(U.S.) The Cybersecurity 202: A cyberattack just disrupted grid operations in the U.S. But it could have been far worse.
https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/powerpost/paloma/the-cybersecurity-202/2019/05/06/the-cy-bersecurity-202-a-cyberattack-just-disrupted-grid-operations-in-the-u-s-but-it-could-have-been-far-worse/5ccf61eda7a0a46cfe152c3e/

(U.S.) Despite ongoing warnings, U.S. critical infrastructure remains vulnerable
PROGRAM ON TERRORISM AND SECURITY STUDIES (PTSS)

ISIS

Welcome to the Post-Middle East ISIS
Hassan Hassan – Foreign Policy: 3 May 2019

ISIS is no longer confined to the Middle East. It has shifted its focus outward toward a global reach, making the group possibly more dangerous than ever.
https://foreignpolicy.com/2019/05/03/welcome-to-the-post-middle-east-isis/

Why Did the Islamic State Target Sri Lanka?
Vishal Arora – The Diplomat: 8 May 2019

ISIS’ attack on Sri Lanka certainly got the attention of the world, but was it simple opportunism or part of a larger, calculated strategy to expand operations and make the biggest impact?
https://thediplomat.com/2019/05/why-did-the-islamic-state-target-sri-lanka/

For more on this theme:
ISIS strategy relying more on local groups
https://www.youtube.com/watch?reload=9&v=RjQE9W_JjG4
ISIS Relaunches as a Global Platform
ISIS and Suicide Bombers gathered funds via Bitcoins to fund Sri Lanka Easter Attacks – Reports
ISIS 3.0: After Sri Lanka
https://lobelog.com/isis-3-0-after-sri-lanka/
Islamic State recognizes new Central Africa Province, deepening ties with DR Congo militants
Islamic State: Do They Remain Powerful?
https://www.abc.net.au/radio/programs/nightlife/islamic-state:-how-powerful-do-they-remain/11064964
Explained: The influence of Islamic State in India
https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/sri-lanka-blasts-islamic-state-isis-nia-explained-5699515/
After 'caliphate' collapse, ISIS militants head to Afghanistan to plot attacks
ISIS Feeds Off the Chaos of War
https://www.counterpunch.org/2019/04/30/isis-feeds-off-the-chaos-of-war/
TERRORISM AROUND THE WORLD

Taliban Open New Front Against Aid Workers While Talking Peace

During negotiations for peace with the U.S., the Taliban killed at least five people in a suicide attack on the offices of a U.S. aid group in the heart of the Afghan capital, claiming it targeted the group because it promoted women “mixing” with men.


Reinvigorating the Forgotten Financial Fight Against Al-Shabaab
Tom Keatinge – Royal United Services Institute: 8 May 2019

By applying the lessons learned in tracking ISIS’ funding, the international community could disrupt the finances of al-Shabaab.


For more on this theme:

Women, girls ‘preyed on as the spoils of war’
https://www.newsday.co.zw/2019/05/women-girls-preyed-on-as-the-spoils-of-war/

ICYMI: Kidnapping as the new Boko Haram

Islamic State's feud with al-Qaeda puts Australia at risk as rivals jostle to become king of the jihadis

Examining the Global Terrorism Landscape

UN Demands ‘Hezbollah’s’ Disarmament

Osama bin Laden: Eight years after his death, where is al-Qaeda?

Opinion: Here’s Why ISIS And Al-Qaida Will Lose Their War Of Attrition
https://www.npr.org/2019/05/03/719529790/opinion-heres-why-isis-and-al-qaida-will-lose-their-war-of-attrition

Nine Reasons Why Declaring the Muslim Brotherhood a Terrorist Organization Would Be a Mistake

‘Coming Soon’: The ‘jihadi’ threat to West Bengal is very real. We need to take it very seriously
RADICALIZATION AND MESSAGING

An education in Islamic State extremism
Robert Postings – The Defense Post: 8 May 2019

ISIS formalized school training while it was in control of parts of Iraq and Syria. Children were taught through practice and with books how to serve ISIS. With tens of thousands of these children now living in overcrowded camps, it is unclear what will become of their extremist indoctrination.

https://thedefensepost.com/2019/05/08/islamic-state-education-children/

For more on this theme:

Tackling terrorists’ exploitation of youth

Pakistan Islamic School Reforms Aim to Curb Extremism

Recode Daily: Inside 8chan — a nexus of radicalization on the internet

What parents need to know about online radicalization

How Muslim and non-Muslim countries tackle Islamic radicalization
https://menafn.com/1098491776/How-Muslim-and-nonMuslim-countries-tackle-Islamic-radicalization

Confronting the Rise of Domestic Terrorism in the Homeland

In strategies to counter violent extremism, politics often trump evidence
https://www.brookings.edu/blog/order-from-chaos/2019/05/06/in-strategies-to-counter-violent-extremism-politics-often-trumps-evidence/

The spread of lone-wolf terrorism is no accident
https://theweek.com/articles/838593/spread-lonewolf-terrorism-no-accident

India, Australia to share best practices in de-radicalisation & combat terror financing

Training of Trainers completed as part of the Prevention of Violent Extremism through Education (PVE-E) in Mosul Pilot Project [EN/AR]

Study: Terrorists Recruit Young Western Women Without Jobs
https://www.wunc.org/post/study-terrorists-recruit-young-western-women-without-jobs
FOREIGN FIGHTERS

Thousands of ISIS Children Suffer in Camps as Countries Grapple With Their Fate

ISIS employed children as scouts, spies, cooks, bomb planters and even as fighters and suicide bombers. These same children are now in limbo as countries around the world decide their fates. “They’re victims of the situation because they went against their will,” said Peter Neumann, director of the International Center for the Study of Radicalization at King’s College London, “but that doesn’t mean that they’re not, in some cases at least, a risk.”


Fears Grow Islamic State’s Foreign Fighters Ready to Carry On
Jeff Seldin – Voice of America: 7 May 2019

It’s unclear how many foreign fighters are still free and ready to act or even where they may be in the world — and that is a huge worry. This is part one of a four-part series on foreign fighters.


For more on this theme:

More than 500 Foreign ISIS Members Convicted in Iraq

Should former ISIL fighters have the right to return home?

COUNTERTERRORISM STRATEGIES

As ISIS Regroups, the U.S. Is Forgetting the Lessons of Counterinsurgency — Again
Judah Grunstein – World Politics Review: 1 May 2019

Even before the death of Osama bin Laden in 2011, but especially after, the West had been lulled into a sense of complacency in the fight against Islamist extremists. After a wake-up call with ISIS, the U.S. now seems to have reached a point of terror fatigue.


For more on this theme:

Counter-Terrorism: Old School Cash Flow

NATO and the United Nations mark continued cooperation against terrorism

Terms-of-trade and counterterrorism externalities
CONSEQUENCE MANAGEMENT

WATER SECURITY

For U.S. Commandos in the Philippines, a Water Pump Is a New Weapon Against ISIS

Though ISIS lost its physical “caliphate” in Iraq and Syria, the group is poised for a resurgence in its enclave in the Philippines. Instead of taking the group head-on right now, the U.S. military is focusing on winning hearts and minds through new plumbing.

For more on this theme:

OPINION: What More Than 150 Members Of ISIS Taught Us About Water Security
https://dailycaller.com/2019/04/17/speckhard-shajkovci-isis-water/

International Water Conference to focus on water security, peace

Water management in northern Australia is a national security issue

Why the MENA Region Needs to Better Prepare for Climate Change
https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/menasource/why-the-mena-region-needs-to-better-prepare-for-climate-change

Will Bengaluru become uninhabitable in the upcoming years due to a water crisis?
https://thepolicytimes.com/will-bengaluru-become-uninhabitable-in-the-upcoming-years-due-to-a-water-crisis/