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A CURRENT AWARENESS SERVICE FROM THE MARSHALL CENTER

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COUNTERING TRANSNATIONAL ORGANIZED CRIME (CTOC)

CORRUPTION

Perspectives: Artificial intelligence boosts anti-corruption efforts in Armenia *Eurasianet: 12 May 2023*

The chair of Armenia's Corruption Prevention Commission says artificial intelligence is helping agency representatives combat corruption and "hold themselves and other sections of government accountable to the citizens they serve."

https://eurasianet.org/perspectives-artificial-intelligence-boosts-anti-corruption-efforts-in-armenia

How China uses 'geostrategic corruption' to exert its influence in Latin America

Eduardo Gamarra and Valeriia Popova - The Conversation: 17 May 2023

Traditionally, it has funneled down domestic routes, with local politicians, business interests and drug lords benefiting from graft and dodgy dealings. But over the past two decades, a new form of corruption has taken hold in Latin American countries.

https://the conversation.com/how-china-uses-geostrategic-corruption-to-exert-its-influence-in-latin-america-201119

For more on this theme:

The Abdukadyr Family Made A Fortune In Collusion With Corrupt Central Asian Officials. Now They've Built A Global Business Empire.

https://www.rferl.org/a/uzbekistan-abdukadyr-corruption-smuggling-bribery-investigation-mirziyoev/32368790.html

Venezuela's New Asset Forfeiture Law Unlikely to End Corruption

https://insightcrime.org/news/venezuelas-new-asset-forfeiture-law-unlikely-to-end-corruption/

Rampant Corruption at Energy Provider Drags Down South Africa

https://www.bloomberg.com/news/features/2023-05-08/crime-corruption-are-dragging-down-south-africa-s-energy-giant#xj4y7vzkg

Indonesia has lost its way on corruption and freedom

https://asia.nikkei.com/Opinion/Indonesia-has-lost-its-way-on-corruption-and-freedom

The Psychologies of Corruption

https://fcpablog.com/2023/05/08/the-psychologies-of-corruption/

Facing impeachment for corruption, Ecuador's president dissolves congress

https://www.france24.com/en/americas/20230517-ecuador-s-president-dissolves-congress-amid-impeach-ment-trial

Nicolas Sarkozy loses appeal on corruption conviction

https://www.politico.eu/article/former-president-sarkozy-france-loses-corruption-appeal/

Ukraine authorities expose piles of cash in Supreme Court corruption probe

https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/ukraine-authorities-expose-piles-cash-supreme-court-corruption-probe-2023-05-16/

DRUG TRAFFICKING

A History of the Caribbean's Most Powerful Drug Kingpins

Douwe Den Held and Gavin Voss – InSight Crime: 12 May 2023

Caribbean countries seized record amounts of cocaine in recent months, but the roots of the region's persistence as a key corridor for the drug stretch back half a century.

https://insightcrime.org/news/history-caribbean-most-powerful-drug-kingpins/

Gulf Cartel Still 'Public Enemy No. 1' on US-Mexico Border: Homeland Security

Steven Dudley and Parker Asmann – InSight Crime: 18 May 2023

The cartel has maintained a presence across from south Texas for nearly a century, but recent events suggest that criminal dynamics may be changing in this strategic corridor. https://insightcrime.org/news/gulf-cartel-public-enemy-us-mexico-border-homeland-security/

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What is Captagon, the addictive drug mass-produced in Syria? https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/5/9/what-is-captagon-the-addictive-drug-mass-produced-in-syria Captagon: the drug fuelling the Gulf party scene — and Syria's finances https://news.yahoo.com/captagon-drug-fuelling-gulf-party-150819834.html Mexico's Laws to Regulate Chemicals Work on Paper But Not in Practice https://insightcrime.org/investigations/mexico-laws-regulate-chemicals-work-on-paper/ In Africa's 'first narco-state', rehab can mean torture for addicts https://www.telegraph.co.uk/global-health/terror-and-security/africas-first-narco-state-rehab/ Serbian Officials Capture Balkans' Largest Drug Trafficking Group https://www.occrp.org/en/daily/17625-serbian-officials-capture-balkans-largest-drug-trafficking-group Syrian Drug Flow Into Middle East May Be Outside Assad's Control https://themedialine.org/by-region/syrian-drug-flow-into-middle-east-may-be-outside-assads-control/ Largest-ever Colombian "narco sub" intercepted in the Pacific Ocean https://www.cbsnews.com/news/narco-sub-record-size-intercepted-colombia-pacific-ocean/ Iran Executes Five People Over Drug Trafficking https://www.voanews.com/a/iran-executes-five-over-drug-trafficking/7094596.html Europe's Weakest Border? Smuggling Between Suriname and French Guiana https://insightcrime.org/news/europes-weakest-border-smuggling-between-suriname-and-french-guiana/ How El Chapo's four sons — Los Chapitos — built a fentanyl empire that is now poisoning America

https://www.abc.net.au/news/2023-05-14/el-chapos-four-sons-los-chapitos-built-fentanyl-empire/102324636

TRAFFICKING IN SCARCE OR PROTECTED RESOURCES

Report: Animals at risk as wildlife crime falls down the list of policing priorities *Nottingham Trent University: 12 May 2023*

Despite being one of the highest-value areas of crime globally, wildlife infractions are not a core police issue because of a lack of data, resources and expertise, according to research led by Nottingham Trent University.

https://phys.org/news/2023-05-animals-wildlife-crime-falls-policing.html

The Dark Web Sells Thousands of Wild Animals. But Not as Pets.

Tessa Koumoundouros – Science Alert: 12 May 2023

The illegal wildlife trade poses one of the greatest threats to many species' existence. Alas, the internet has allowed this trade to flourish.

https://www.sciencealert.com/the-dark-web-sells-thousands-of-wild-animals-but-not-as-pets

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Criminal Gangs are Logging the World's Last Brazilwood Trees to Make Violin Bows

https://www.occrp.org/en/37-ccblog/ccblog/17611-criminal-gangs-are-logging-the-worlds-last-brazilwood-trees-to-make-violin-bows

Gun-toting gold miners resist Brazil's attempt to take back the Amazon

https://news.yahoo.com/gun-toting-gold-miners-resist-100000226.html

Indigenous youths use tech as 'weapon' to protect Amazon

https://news.yahoo.com/indigenous-youths-tech-weapon-protect-020458410.html

EU deforestation tracking regulation sparks division among groups, producers

https://news.mongabay.com/2023/05/eu-deforestation-tracking-regulation-sparks-division-among-groups-producers/

Latin America had the most attacks on environmental defenders in 2022, says report

https://news.mongabay.com/2023/05/latin-america-had-the-most-attacks-on-environmental-defendersin-2022-says-report/

Illegal mining booms in Brazilian Amazon 'promised land'

https://phys.org/news/2023-05-illegal-booms-brazilian-amazon.html

Illegal mining threatens Ghana forests

https://www.africanews.com/2023/05/04/illegal-mining-threatens-ghana-forests/

Ecuador deploys soldiers against illegal mines in Amazonian areas

https://www.reuters.com/world/americas/ecuador-deploys-soldiers-against-illegal-mines-amazonian-areas-2023-05-08/

Study: China's squid fleet avoids Peru to dodge new port law

https://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/study-chinas-squid-fleet-avoids-peru-dodge-new-99101623



PROGRAM ON CYBER SECURITY STUDIES (PCSS)

INTERNET GOVERNANCE

We Blinked and the World Changed: Challenges of Generative AI

to Internet Governance

Mark Datysgeld – CircleID: 11 May 2023

The pace of artificial intelligence development has been astonishing to the degree that the normative space has been unable to keep up. As governments start looking into technology such as ChatGPT, more advanced techniques and products continue to emerge.

https://circleid.com/posts/20230511-we-blinked-and-the-world-changed-challenges-of-generative-ai-to-internet-governance

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(Global) UNCTAD calls for balanced global approach to manage digital data

https://unctad.org/news/unctad-calls-balanced-global-approach-manage-digital-data

(Global) If Code Is Law, Then Protocols Are Good Manners That Help Us Get Along

https://circleid.com/posts/20230510-if-code-is-law-then-protocols-are-good-manners-that-help-us-get-along

(Global) The Internet as a Public Utility

https://circleid.com/posts/20230507-the-internet-as-a-public-utility

INTERNET FREEDOM

As net tightens, Iranians pushed to take up homegrown apps

Agence France-Presse: 14 May 2023

Iranians are accustomed to using virtual private networks, or VPNs, to evade restrictions and access prohibited websites or apps, including Facebook, Twitter and YouTube.

https://www.arabnews.com/node/2303051/middle-east

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(Brazil) Brazil Court Makes Telegram Scrap 'Censorship' Message

https://www.barrons.com/news/standoff-as-brazil-judge-threatens-to-suspend-telegram-26753c25

(Venezuela) Venezuela: Overcoming pandemic and censorship, reporters use messaging app for dialogue with their audiences

https://akademie.dw.com/en/venezuela-overcoming-pandemic-and-censorship-reporters-use-messag-ing-app-for-dialogue-with-their-audiences/a-65547354

(Kazakhstan) Unfreedom Monitor Report: Kazakhstan

https://advox.globalvoices.org/2023/05/11/unfreedom-monitor-report-kazakhstan/

(Pakistan) Pakistan shut down the internet — but that didn't stop the protests

https://news.yahoo.com/pakistan-shut-down-internet-didnt-210103092.html

CYBER CAPACITY BUILDING

How the United States Can Effectively Implement Its New Digital Transformation With Africa Initiative

Jane Munga – Carnegie: 17 May 2023

The United States' new digital initiative with Africa is timely and promising, but its vast potential will go unrealized if its mission isn't translated into targeted action. These three proposals could help.

https://carnegieendowment.org/2023/05/17/how-united-states-can-effectively-implement-its-new-digital-transformation-with-africa-initiative-pub-89755

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(Global) Digital Equity 2.0: How to Close the Data Divide

https://datainnovation.org/2023/05/digital-equity-2-0-how-to-close-the-data-divide/

(U.S., Costa Rica) US Helps Costa Rica Combat Cyberthreats

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(Pacific Islands) Working with the Pacific island nations to build resilience

https://www.aspistrategist.org.au/working-with-the-pacific-island-nations-to-build-resilience/

(Turkmenistan) First OSCE training on cybercrime and digital evidence in Turkmenistan

https://www.osce.org/centre-in-ashgabat/543765

CYBER STRATEGY AND RISKS

Into the Future: Paving way for the Digital India Act

Financial Express: 12 May 2023

As India's prime minister said, world economies must not resist the "natural flow of globalization," and given that globalization is increasingly dependent on digitalization, Indian laws need to be nimble.

https://www.financialexpress.com/opinion/into-the-future-paving-way-for-the-digital-india-act/3084885/

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(U.S.) DoD's Zero Trust Initiative is an Unique 'Unity of Effort,' Air Force CIO Says

https://www.nextgov.com/cybersecurity/2023/05/dods-zero-trust-initiative-unique-unity-effort-air-force-cio-says/386038/

(U.S., South Korea) U.S.-South Korea Cyber Cooperation Helps Contain China Regionally

https://www.oodaloop.com/archive/2023/05/10/u-s-south-korea-cyber-cooperation-helps-contain-china-regionally/

(U.S., Latvia) US Cyber Command 'Hunts Forward' in Latvia

https://www.voanews.com/a/us-cyber-command-hunts-forward-in-latvia/7087151.html



CYBERATTACKS

USS warns members' data may have been stolen by Capita hackers *Tom Williams – Times Higher Education: 12 May 2023*

Outsourcing firm used by the U.K.'s largest academic pensions provider was targeted in cyberattack.

https://www.timeshighereducation.com/news/uss-warns-members-data-may-have-been-stolen-capita-hackers

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https://www.reuters.com/technology/australias-technologyone-confirms-no-impact-customer-plat-forms-cyber-attack-2023-05-11/

(U.S.) Lowell Hit With Cyberattack, Some Data Released to Dark Web

https://www.nbcboston.com/news/local/lowell-hit-with-cyber-attack-some-data-released-to-dark-web-report/3045330/

(Global) Multinational tech firm ABB hit by Black Basta ransomware attack

https://www.bleepingcomputer.com/news/security/multinational-tech-firm-abb-hit-by-black-basta-ransomware-attack/

(U.S.) Philadelphia Inquirer severely disrupted by cyber-attack

https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2023/may/15/philadelphia-inquirer-cyber-attack

CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE PROTECTION

The threat of nation-state attacks in energy is growing

Matt Watson – Energy: 14 May 2023

Matt Watson of CovertSwam discusses infrastructure complexity and geographic diversity in relation to energy sector cybersecurity.

https://energydigital.com/technology-and-ai/the-threat-of-nation-state-attacks-in-energy-is-growing

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https://www.informationweek.com/security-and-risk-strategy/cisa-rolls-out-new-program-to-protect-critical-infrastructure-from-ransomware-infrastructure-f

(Australia) World-first intelligence sharing initiative defending Australian Critical Infrastructure

https://www.sunshinecoast.qld.gov.au/news/world-first-intelligence-sharing-initiative-defending-australian-critical-infrastructure

(U.S., Global) Securing the Supply Chain of the 5G Network Is Critical to Its Success

https://www.cpomagazine.com/cyber-security/securing-the-supply-chain-of-the-5g-network-is-critical-to-its-success/

PROGRAM ON TERRORISM AND SECURITY STUDIES (PTSS)

ISIS AND FOREIGN FIGHTERS

The New ISIS: How a Branch of the Terrorist Group Is Becoming a Top Threat Drew F. Lawrence – Military.com: 12 May 2023

The Islamic State group's Afghanistan affiliate has rapidly become the new boogeyman in the Middle East.

https://www.military.com/daily-news/2023/05/12/new-isis-how-branch-of-terrorist-group-becoming-top-threat.html

Brief: ISWAP Attacks Northern Nigerian State of Jigawa for First Time

Jacob Zenn – The Jamestown Foundation: 12 May 2023

In July 2021, an emir in Jigawa State in northern Nigeria announced that Jigawa was the "most peaceful state in the country" and that the state had "no problem [with] Boko Haram," referring to Islamic State in West Africa Province.

https://jamestown.org/program/brief-iswap-attacks-northern-nigerian-state-of-jigawa-for-first-time/

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Islamic State women use children as 'sex tools,' Syrian Kurdish officials say

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The Islamic State Has a New Target: Russia

https://foreignpolicy.com/2023/05/09/islamic-state-afghanistan-khorasan-propaganda-rus-sia-ukraine-war/

French jihadists who joined ISIS in Syria asks to be repatriated

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ICCT in the Media: Tanya Mehra on the Women of ISIS

https://www.icct.nl/multimedia/icct-media-tanya-mehra-women-isis

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Belgium Grapples with Lasting Impact of Islamic State Attacks

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Government Fails to Bring Australians from Syrian Camps Home

https://www.hrw.org/news/2023/05/10/government-fails-bring-australians-syrian-camps-home

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Disengaging and Reintegrating Violent Extremists in Conflict Zones Andrew Glazzard – United States Institute of Peace: 16 May 2023

Dealing with people who leave violent extremist groups has become one of the most pressing security issues of our time.

https://www.usip.org/publications/2023/05/disengaging-and-reintegrating-violent-extremists-conflict-zones

Sahel 'at a crossroads' as armed groups gain sway in Africa: UN

AlJazeera: 17 May 2023

International community is criticized after joint force battling armed groups left without sufficient funding and other needed support.

https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/5/17/sahel-at-a-crossroads-as-armed-groups-gain-sway-in-africa-un

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Reserve assets: Armed groups and conflict economies in the national parks of Burkina Faso, Niger and Benin

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Syria's main insurgent group seeks to distance itself from past al-Qaida ties

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Russia, meet Ukraine's iron dome

Veronika Melkozerova – Politico: 16 May 2023

Kyiv repels new Russian barrage, thanks to newly boosted air defenses.

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Ukraine Launches Sabotage Operations on Occupied Territories and Inside Russia

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Russian Imperial Movement Deepens Involvement in Ukraine War

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Russia agrees to extend Ukraine grain shipping deal another 2 months

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Council of Europe summit in Iceland seeks to hold Russia to account for waging war in Ukraine

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Russia's twilight zone, where wartime life is nearly normal

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With Taiwan in Mind, China Observes Attack Helicopter Operations in Ukraine

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Wrangling China to influence Russia in Ukraine is a fool's errand

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What the invasion of Ukraine means for unity in Southeast Asia

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Online search data shows Russian morale remained low and 'tacit dissent' spiked after invasion of Ukraine

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