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COUNTERING TRANSNATIONAL ORGANIZED CRIME (CTOC)

CORRUPTION

The 2023 Capacity to Combat Corruption Index

AS/COA: 27 June 2023

The index explores 15 Latin American countries' ability to detect, punish and prevent corruption.

https://www.as-coa.org/articles/2023-capacity-to-combat-corruption-index

For more on this theme:

Corruption trial begins for former Indonesia IT minister over mobile phone tower project

https://abcnews.go.com/Business/wireStory/corruption-trial-begins-former-indonesia-minister-mobile-phone-100401303

Corruption inquiry in Australia uncovers China links to state lawmaker

https://news.yahoo.com/former-premier-australias-south-wales-004159856.html

Arrest warrants issued against high-ranking officials in Iraq: Anti-corruption body

https://www.rudaw.net/english/middleeast/iraq/23062023

Zambian Police Arrest Former President's Son and His Wife on Corruption Charges

https://www.voanews.com/a/zambian-police-arrest-former-president-s-son-and-his-wife-on-corruption-charges-/7154942.html

Corruption risk assessment highlights challenges, enables reform, in justice system

https://www.osce.org/mission-to-skopje/546007

Honduras anti-corruption activist says she left country after threats

https://www.reuters.com/world/americas/honduras-anti-corruption-activist-says-she-left-country-after-threats-2023-06-19/

Practical mechanisms for rooting out corruption

https://blogs.worldbank.org/youth-transforming-africa/practical-mechanisms-rooting-out-corruption

Five approaches for young people to speak up against corruption

https://blogs.worldbank.org/youth-transforming-africa/five-approaches-young-people-speak-against-corruption

A new super-regulator takes aim at rampant corruption in Chinese finance

https://finance.yahoo.com/news/super-regulator-takes-aim-rampant-100610643.html

Ukraine's Anti-Corruption Front

https://www.gmfus.org/news/ukraines-anti-corruption-front

As well as fighting Russia, Ukrainians are battling corruption at home

https://www.theguardian.com/world/2023/jun/16/as-well-as-fighting-russia-ukrainians-are-battling-corruption-at-home

Palm oil giants face corruption charges as Indonesia probe widens

https://news.mongabay.com/2023/06/palm-oil-giants-face-corruption-charges-as-indonesia-probe-widens/

DRUG TRAFFICKING

Myanmar junta says failing to halt surge in drug trafficking

AFP: 26 June 2023

Authorities said they torched almost a half-billion dollars' worth of illegal drugs but warned they were failing to stop a surge in the production and trafficking of narcotics.

https://www.france24.com/en/live-news/20230626-myanmar-junta-says-failing-to-halt-surge-in-drug-trafficking

In the Sahel, drug trafficking thrives thanks to armed groups

Rédaction Africanews with AFP: 27 June 2023

Nonstate armed groups are very active in the African region, according to a United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime report.

https://www.africanews.com/2023/06/27/in-the-sahel-drug-trafficking-thrives-thanks-to-armed-groups/2023/06/27/in-the-sahel-drug-trafficking-thrives-thanks-to-armed-groups/2023/06/27/in-the-sahel-drug-trafficking-thrives-thanks-to-armed-groups/2023/06/27/in-the-sahel-drug-trafficking-thrives-thanks-to-armed-groups/2023/06/27/in-the-sahel-drug-trafficking-thrives-thanks-to-armed-groups/2023/06/27/in-the-sahel-drug-trafficking-thrives-thanks-to-armed-groups/2023/06/27/in-the-sahel-drug-trafficking-thrives-thanks-to-armed-groups/2023/06/27/in-the-sahel-drug-trafficking-thrives-thanks-to-armed-groups/2023/06/27/in-the-sahel-drug-trafficking-thrives-thanks-to-armed-groups/2023/06/27/in-the-sahel-drug-trafficking-thrives-thanks-to-armed-groups/2023/06/27/in-the-sahel-drug-trafficking-thrives-thanks-to-armed-groups/2023/06/27/in-the-sahel-drug-trafficking-thrives-thanks-to-armed-groups/2023/06/27/in-the-sahel-drug-trafficking-thrives-thanks-thrives-t

Full report:

UNODC World Drug Report 2023

https://reliefweb.int/report/world/unodc-world-drug-report-2023-enarruzh

For more on this theme:

UNE's One-Pronged Strategy

https://insightcrime.org/investigations/guatemala-elections-2023-unes-one-pronged-strategy/

After Peralta, Dominican Republic's Cocaine Crackdown Targets Smaller Cities

https://insightcrime.org/news/peralta-dominican-republics-cocaine-crackdown/

Cartels using social media to recruit teens for drug smuggling and human trafficking

https://www.12 news.com/article/news/local/cartels-are-recruiting-teens-for-human-and-drug-smuggling/75-39b0cab6-a1a4-44cd-9e6a-d9fdff7890b7

Saudi Arabia's War on Drugs and Foreign Influence

https://politicstoday.org/saudi-arabias-war-on-drugs-and-foreign-influence/

Interview: Tackling transnational trafficking in Southeast Asia from the grass roots up

https://news.un.org/en/story/2023/06/1137757

Fiji: Illicit Drugs, Major Challenge for National Security

https://www.telesurenglish.net/news/Fiji-Illicit-Drugs-Major-Challenge-for-National-Security-20230615-0003.html

Tackling the fentanyl and opioid crisis

https://share.america.gov/tackling-fentanyl-opioid-crisis/

EU drug report 2023: 'We never had so many drugs smuggled or produced in Europe'

https://www.euronews.com/my-europe/2023/06/16/eu-drug-report-2023-we-never-had-so-many-drugs-smuggled-or-produced-in-europe

Multi-billion dollar drug trade flooding Australia: explosive new details emerge

https://www.dailytelegraph.com.au/news/nsw/multibillion-dollar-narco-drug-trade-flooding-australia-explosive-new-details-emerge/video/63639e113204b3d88613e6f861cd3d6b

TRAFFICKING IN SCARCE OR PROTECTED RESOURCES.

Al in the Wild: Applications to Combat the Illegal Wildlife Trade

Earth.org: 26 June 2023

As artificial intelligence intersects more regularly with daily life, many in the conservation field hope it may provide entry points to embed the technology within their efforts.

https://earth.org/combat-illegal-wildlife-trade/

Wildlife trafficking risks future pandemics and needs addressing, says new research University of Sussex – Phys.org: 26 June 2023

The trafficking also risks triggering a loss of biodiversity and need to be tackled, finds new research into how global supply chains are being hijacked by criminals.

https://phys.org/news/2023-06-wildlife-trafficking-future-pandemics.html

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Increasingly Brazen Gaitanistas Attack Colombia's Biggest Gold Mine

https://insightcrime.org/news/increasingly-brazen-gaitanistas-attack-colombias-biggest-gold-mine/

A Southeast Asian marine biodiversity hotspot is also a wildlife trafficking hotbed

https://news.mongabay.com/2023/06/a-southeast-asian-marine-biodiversity-hotspot-is-also-a-wildlife-trafficking-hotbed/

CITES: A historic treaty protecting endangered species turns 50. Is it still an effective tool?

https://www.wbur.org/onpoint/2023/06/08/cites-a-historic-treaty-protecting-endangered-species-turns-50-is-it-still-an-effective-tool

Dark Web Sells Thousands of Wild Animals For Their Psychedelic Properties

https://www.onegreenplanet.org/animals/dark-web-sells-wild-animals-psychedelic-properties/

Brazil's Lula unveils plan to stop deforestation in Amazon by 2030

https://www.reuters.com/world/americas/brazils-lula-launches-plan-stop-deforestation-amazon-by-2030-2023-06-05/

Brazilian Amazon at risk of being taken over by mafia, ex-police chief warns

https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2023/jun/01/brazil-amazon-crime-dom-phillips-bruno-pereira

Extreme reforestation: Baobab planters confront fires, loggers, cattle and more

https://news.mongabay.com/2023/06/extreme-reforestation-baobab-planters-confront-fires-loggers-cattle-and-more/

Death in the Amazon: Dangers of Environmental Reporting

https://www.voanews.com/a/death-in-the-amazon-dangers-of-environmental-reporting-/7122155.html

Decoding the covert ties between wildlife trafficking and financial crime

https://fintech.global/2023/06/15/decoding-the-covert-ties-between-wildlife-trafficking-and-financial-crime/

Engaging young Africans is key to defending wildlife

https://africa.businessinsider.com/local/engaging-young-africans-is-key-to-defending-wildlife/22bl32t

PROGRAM ON CYBER SECURITY STUDIES (PCSS)

INTERNET GOVERNANCE

Internet Multistakeholder Model: A Trade Association With Multistakeholder Theater Farzaneh Badii - CircleID: 28 June 2023

Did you know that we are swimming in Domain Name System abuse? Apparently, doomsday is near if we do not do something about it.

https://circleid.com/posts/20230628-internet-multistakeholder-model-a-trade-association-with-multistakeholder-theater

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(Southeast Asia) Southeast Asia to set 'guardrails' on Al with new governance code

https://telecom.economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/internet/southeast-asia-to-set-guardrails-on-aiwith-new-governance-code/101043498

(Global) What is Technology Governance?

https://www.jagranjosh.com/general-knowledge/technology-governance-1687779582-1

INTERNET FREEDOM

Manipur's State-Wide Internet Shutdown

The Wire: 22 June 2023

The Internet Freedom Foundation has issued a statement expressing its concern over the continuing shutdown. India has the dubious distinction of being the "internet shutdown capital of the world."

https://thewire.in/rights/internet-freedom-foundation-deeply-troubled-by-ongoing-internet-shutdown-in-manipur

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(Hong Kong) Hong Kong: Internet intermediaries must resist censorship of protest anthem

https://www.article19.org/resources/hong-kong-internet-intermediaries-must-resist-censorship-of-protest-anthem/

(Global) The 10 worst countries for web freedom (and the 10 best)

https://www.independent.co.uk/advisor/vpn/worst-countries-for-web-freedom

(Russia) Kremlin shutting down Russia's VPN window to the world

https://www.intellinews.com/kremlin-shutting-down-russia-s-vpn-window-to-the-world-282507/

(Pakistan) Pakistan's Long History of Throttling Press Freedom

https://thediplomat.com/2023/06/pakistans-long-history-of-throttling-press-freedom/

(China) China's banned online communities have found a new home on Reddit

https://restofworld.org/2023/reddit-china-online-communities/

CYBER CAPACITY BUILDING

Cyber-insecurity: Preparing for public sector to better mitigate cyber-risk

Allyson Brunette – Reuters: 22 June 2023

Cybersecurity has become a growing challenge for all levels of government, especially as digitalization and remote working increase among government agencies.

https://www.thomsonreuters.com/en-us/posts/government/government-agencies-mitigating-cyber-risk/

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(U.S.) Cyber Shield Hones Skills, Builds Partnerships

https://www.army.mil/article/267703/cyber_shield_hones_skills_builds_partnerships

(U.K., Ukraine) UK to harden Ukraine's cyber defenses against Russian attacks on critical infrastructure

https://euromaidanpress.com/2023/06/18/uk-to-harden-ukraines-cyber-defenses-against-russian-attacks-on-critical-infrastructure/

(Namibia) Namibia leads southern Africa in Internet access assessment

https://economist.com.na/80391/education/namibia-leads-southern-africa-in-internet-access-assessment/

CYBER STRATEGY AND RISKS

Assessing Pakistan's Cyber Security Landscape

Gulraiz Igbal - Modern Diplomacy: 21 June 2023

Through the implementation of the policies, legislative reforms and awareness initiatives, Pakistan is forming a cyber ecosystem that is secure, works effectively and bolsters the resilience of infrastructure.

https://moderndiplomacy.eu/2023/06/21/assessing-pakistans-cyber-security-landscape/

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(Germany) German National Security Strategy leaves out cyber counter-attacks

https://www.euractiv.com/section/cybersecurity/news/german-national-security-strategy-leaves-out-cyber-counter-attacks/

(U.S., China) How DISA plans to use its workforce to combat China and global adversaries

https://www.nextgov.com/cxo-briefing/2023/06/how-disa-plans-use-its-workforce-combat-china-and-global-adversaries/387125/

(Malaysia) PM Anwar: Cyber Security Bill to be drafted immediately

https://www.malaymail.com/news/malaysia/2023/06/15/pm-anwar-cyber-security-bill-to-be-drafted-immediately/74413

CYBERCRIME

The Great Exodus to Telegram: A Tour of the New Cybercrime Underground

Bleeping Computer: 21 June 2023

Threat actors, ransomware gangs, malware developers and others are increasingly moving off the dark web and onto illicit Telegram channels specializing in cybercrime.

https://www.bleepingcomputer.com/news/security/the-great-exodus-to-telegram-a-tour-of-the-new-cyber-crime-underground/

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(Global) Combatting the Threat of Cyber-Enabled IP Theft

https://www.orfonline.org/research/combatting-the-threat-of-cyber-enabled-ip-theft/

(U.S.) Cybercrime: Reporting Mechanisms Vary, and Agencies Face Challenges in Developing Metrics

https://www.gao.gov/products/gao-23-106080

(New Zealand) More vigilance urged as cyber crime losses soar by two-thirds in value

https://www.rnz.co.nz/news/business/492355/more-vigilance-urged-as-cyber-crime-losses-soar-by-two-thirds-in-value

(Global) Cybercrime Doesn't Take a Vacation

https://www.darkreading.com/vulnerabilities-threats/cybercrime-doesnt-take-a-vacation

CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE PROTECTION

Emerging Technologies Broaden Attack Surface as Cyber Criminals Target Critical Marine Transportation System

Bridget Johnson - Homeland Security Today: 15 June 2023

The U.S. Coast Guard's 2022 Cyber Trends and Insights in the Marine Environment report said there was a 20% increase in cyber-event reporting in 2022 compared with the previous year.

https://www.hstoday.us/featured/emerging-technologies-broaden-attack-surface-as-cyber-criminals-target-critical-marine-transportation-system/

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(U.S.) How Zero Trust Can Protect Critical Infrastructure & Secure Edge Devices

https://www.govconwire.com/2023/06/how-zero-trust-can-protect-critical-infrastructure-and-secure-edge-devices/

(Philippines) PH needs more cybersecurity professionals as criminals start to target 'critical infra'

https://cebudailynews.inquirer.net/508819/ph-needs-more-cybersecurity-professionals-as-criminals-start-to-target-critical-infra

(Australia) Policy, Guns and Money: Cybersecurity and critical infrastructure

https://www.aspistrategist.org.au/policy-guns-and-money-cybersecurity-and-critical-infrastructure/

PROGRAM ON TERRORISM AND SECURITY STUDIES (PTSS)

ISIS AND FOREIGN FIGHTERS

UN: Islamic State-Led Violence Kills 1,000 Civilians in Taliban-Run Afghanistan *Ayaz Gul – Voice of America: 27 June 2023*

The United Nations said that bombings and other militant violence in Afghanistan had killed more than 1,000 civilians since the Taliban regained control nearly two years ago.

https://www.voanews.com/a/un-report-more-than-1-000-afghans-killed-in-deliberate-attacks-since-2021-/7154474.html

Islamic State Khorasan and Central Asia

Jason Wahlang – Manohar Parrikar Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses: 28 June 2023

The Islamic State's Afghanistan affiliate has Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan in its cross-hairs. The Taliban's heavy-handed approach toward its ethnic minorities has played a crucial role in aiding the recruitment of Central Asians into the group's ranks.

https://www.idsa.in/issuebrief/islamic-state-khorasan-and-central-asia-jwahlang-280623

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Where does ISIS have a presence now? Group's reign of terror wanes in Middle East

https://www.thenationalnews.com/mena/2023/06/08/where-does-isis-have-a-presence-now-groups-reign-of-terror-wanes-in-middle-east/

Taliban Vs. ISKP: Warring Actors In An Unstable Afghanistan – Analysis

https://www.eurasiareview.com/15062023-taliban-vs-iskp-warring-actors-in-an-unstable-afghanistan-analysis/

US Sees Islamic State Affiliates Pooling Resources, Growing Capabilities

https://www.voanews.com/a/us-sees-islamic-state-affiliates-pooling-resources-growing-capabilities/7129093.html

Interview: Why the Islamic State group is 'returning to its roots' in the Syrian desert

https://observers.france 24.com/en/middle-east/20230614-islamic-state-organisation-syria-attacks-terrorism

Snapshot: The ISIS survivors rebuilding their lives

https://metro.co.uk/2023/06/17/snapshot-the-isis-survivors-rebuilding-their-lives-18941763/

Kurdish Official Lists ISIS and Climate Change as Top Threats

https://www.usip.org/publications/2023/06/kurdish-official-lists-isis-and-climate-change-top-threats

Popular demands to participate in trial of ISIS mercenaries

https://hawarnews.com/en/haber/popular-demands-to-participate-in-trial-of-isis-mercenaries-h36898. html

TERRORISM AROUND THE WORLD

Climate-vulnerable communities are falling prey to armed groups

Jack Durrell and Siobhan O'Neil - The Nation: 27 June 2023

Newly collected data from Iraq suggests that the Islamic State group — and other armed groups — may have historically benefited from the climate crisis, and a resurgent group, or others, may try to do so again.

https://www.thenationalnews.com/opinion/comment/2023/06/27/climate-change-conflict-war/

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Hamas military commander shot dead in Gaza

https://www.thenationalnews.com/mena/2023/06/22/hamas-military-commander-shot-dead-in-gaza/

Israel seizes cryptocurrency said to be used to finance Hezbollah and Iran's Revolutionary Guard

https://apnews.com/article/israel-iran-hezbollah-cryptocurrency-ff5bfd5ddce532c30c2e-3c939901c199

Taliban Flouts Terrorism Commitments by Appointing al-Qaida-Affiliated Governors

https://www.voanews.com/a/taliban-flaunts-terrorism-commitments-by-appointing-al-qaida-affiliated-governors-/7153860.html

Wagner group mercenaries in Africa: why there hasn't been any effective opposition to drive them out

https://the conversation.com/wagner-group-mercenaries-in-africa-why-there-hasnt-been-any-effective-opposition-to-drive-them-out-207318

Brief: Cameroonian President Holds Emergency Meeting to Address ISWAP Attacks

https://jamestown.org/program/brief-cameroon-prepares-to-respond-to-recent-iswap-attacks/

Global Terrorist Threat Evolves as the West Focuses on Great Power Competition

https://thesoufancenter.org/intelbrief-2023-june-16/

We Must Intensify Our Work to Create Future without Terrorism, Secretary-General Tells High-Level Conference

https://press.un.org/en/2023/sgsm21844.doc.htm

Afghan Taliban and Al Qaeda aiding Pakistani Taliban's insurgency

https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2023/06/afghan-taliban-and-al-qaeda-aiding-pakistani-talibans-insurgency.php

EU terror report

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What Boko Haram founders told me about insurgency – Obasanjo

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Afghanistan: Taliban 'may be responsible for gender apartheid' says rights expert

https://news.un.org/en/story/2023/06/1137847

CRIME AND CONFLICT

A Criminal Cancer Spreads in Southeast Asia

Priscilla A. Clapp and Jason Tower - United States Institute of Peace: 26 June 2023

In post-coup Myanmar, crime syndicates are working with the military and moving into more complex fraud schemes.

https://www.usip.org/publications/2023/06/criminal-cancer-spreads-southeast-asia

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What To Do About The Taliban's Continued War Crimes

https://inkstickmedia.com/what-to-do-about-the-talibans-continued-war-crimes/

UN adds Russia to list of shame for killing children in Ukraine

https://www.reuters.com/world/un-adds-russia-list-shame-killing-children-ukraine-2023-06-22/

UN report finds Russia tortured, executed civilians in Ukraine; Kyiv also abused detainees

https://ca.sports.yahoo.com/news/un-report-finds-russia-tortured-111309069.html

RUSSIA/UKRAINE

What Does the Wagner Mutiny Mean for Putin and His War on Ukraine?

Heather Ashby and Mary Glantz – United States Institute of Peace: 27 June 2023

The war in Ukraine revealed the rot within the Russian state; Yevgeny Prigozhin's desperate moves show that Putin's rule is more brittle than ever.

https://www.usip.org/publications/2023/06/what-does-wagner-mutiny-mean-putin-and-his-war-ukraine

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Expect Changes in Russia as Response to Wagner Rebellion

https://www.cfr.org/in-brief/expect-changes-russia-response-wagner-rebellion

Wagner revolt in Russia dims outlook for its operations in Africa

https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/6/24/wagner-revolt-in-russia-clouds-outlook-for-its-operations-in-

Experts react: What Russia's Wagner Group rebellion means for Putin, Ukraine, China, and more

https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/new-atlanticist/experts-react/prigozhin-rebellion/

Where Does Wagner Get Its Money? How Russia's Mercenaries-Turned-Rebels **Earned Millions From Contracts And Mining Deals.**

https://www.forbes.com/sites/anafaguy/2023/06/25/where-does-wagner-get-its-money-how-russias-mercenaries-turned-rebels-earned-millions-from-contracts-and-mining-deals/?sh=1ce256cecf9e

Did Prigozhin Just Save Taiwan?

https://www.cfr.org/blog/did-prigozhin-just-save-taiwan

RUSSIA/UKRAINE

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Wagner Group: The Evolution Of A Private Army

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The Prigozhin Uprising, the Aftermath, and What Comes Next

https://cepa.org/article/the-prigozhin-uprising-the-aftermath-and-what-comes-next/

Russia's Security Forces Learn Bitter Lessons From Putin's Maneuvering

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Putin and Prigozhin avert bloodshed, but their feud is not over

https://www.theguardian.com/world/2023/jun/25/vladimir-putin-and-yevgeny-prigozhin-avert-bloodshed-buttheir-feud-is-not-over

Moscow Scrambling to Solve Manpower Shortages — Without Another Mobilization

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The beginning of the end for Putin?

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https://www.aspistrategist.org.au/prigozhins-putsch-putin-wont-forget-or-forgive/

Putin insists Russia is united after the Wagner Group uprising, vows to uphold deal

https://www.npr.org/2023/06/26/1184390064/putin-speech-prigozhin-wagner-group-deal

Ukraine Battles Fierce Despite Chaos in Russia

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Analysis: Why Prigozhin's bid for power in Russia failed

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GMF Expert Analysis: Mutiny in Russia

https://www.gmfus.org/news/gmf-expert-analysis-mutiny-russia

What Prigozhin's Half-Baked "Coup" Could Mean for Putin's Rule

https://www.newyorker.com/news/q-and-a/what-prigozhins-half-baked-coup-could-mean-for-putins-rule

Prigozhin's Mutiny: A Reminder About Analytic Humility

https://www.thecipherbrief.com/column/cipher-brief-expert-view/prigozhins-mutiny-a-reminder-about-analytic-humility

What the Russian Crisis Means for Europe

https://carnegieeurope.eu/strategiceurope/90052

RUSSIA/UKRAINE

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Who Was Prigozhin Counting On to Back His Failed Mutiny?

https://carnegieendowment.org/politika/90051

Prigozhin's Mutiny Took Russian Propaganda by Surprise

https://jamestown.org/program/prigozhins-mutiny-took-russian-propaganda-by-surprise/

A very Russian revolution

https://www.aspistrategist.org.au/a-very-russian-revolution/

Public records map Wagner Group's Hong Kong connections

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Is the Wagner Group really getting into the ransomware business?

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Will a short-lived mutiny be the end of Russia's Wagner Group?

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RUSSIA/UKRAINF

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