

THE MARSHALL CENTER

transnational weekly



A CURRENT AWARENESS SERVICE FROM THE MARSHALL CENTER

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COUNTERING TRANSNATIONAL ORGANIZED CRIME (CTOC)

CORRUPTION

Russian police raid journalists probing government corruption

Andrew Roth – The Guardian: 29 June 2021

Russian police have raided the apartments of several investigative journalists as they prepared to publish a report alleging that one of Vladimir Putin's top ministers had secretly amassed a corrupt fortune.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/jun/29/russian-police-raid-proekt-journalists-probing-government-corruption>

For more on this theme:

India's Covid-19 vaccine is at the center of a corruption scandal in Brazil

<https://qz.com/india/2027345/brazil-suspends-deal-with-indias-bharat-biotech-for-covaxin/>

Ukrainian Lawmakers OK Bills On Reforms Requested By Western Donors

<https://www.rferl.org/a/ukraine-imf-corruption-reforms-laws/31331924.html>

Croatian anti-corruption police arrest state TV head-media

<https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/croatian-anti-corruption-police-arrest-state-tv-head-media-2021-06-30/>

RCMP lay corruption charges against two Ottawa police officers

<https://www.thestar.com/news/canada/2021/06/24/rcmp-lay-corruption-charges-against-two-ottawa-police-officers.html>

The new Andalusian way: building a quality government, tackling corruption

<https://www.politico.eu/sponsored-content/the-new-andalusian-way-building-a-quality-government-tackling-corruption/>

South African Court Jails Former President Zuma for Contempt

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-06-29/zuma-is-jailed-for-shunning-south-african-corruption-inquiry>

Report Finds Graft in Prison System in Australia's Victoria Region

<https://www.occpr.org/en/daily/14718-report-finds-graft-in-prison-system-in-australia-s-victoria-region>

DRUG TRAFFICKING

COVID pandemic fuelling major increase in drug use worldwide: UN report

United Nations News: 24 June 2021

About 275 million people used drugs worldwide during the year of unprecedented upheaval caused by the COVID-19 pandemic – up by 22% from 2010. That’s among the key findings of the latest annual report released by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, which also provides an overview of global drug markets, as well as their impact on people’s health and livelihoods.

<https://news.un.org/en/story/2021/06/1094672>

For more on this theme:

COVID-19 restrictions may have accelerated drug trafficking via Internet: Report

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/covid-19-restrictions-may-have-accelerated-drug-traffic-ing-via-internet-report/article34954894.ece>

Science, evidence-based facts, key to help end scourge of drug abuse: UN chief

<https://news.un.org/en/story/2021/06/1094832>

Colombia coca crop area expanded to 245,000 hectares in 2020 – report

<https://www.reuters.com/world/americas/colombia-coca-crop-area-expanded-245000-hectares-2020-re-port-2021-06-26/>

Memo Fantasma, Colombia’s Underworld Ghost, is Captured in Bogotá

<https://insightcrime.org/news/accused-drug-trafficker-guillermo-acevedo-memo-fantasma-captured-in-bo-gota/>

Hashish: New Player in Brazil Drug Markets

<https://insightcrime.org/news/hashish-brazil-drug-markets/>

Buhari: Drug Trafficking, Abuse Pose More Threat than Insurgency, Banditry

<https://www.thisdaylive.com/index.php/2021/06/27/buhari-drug-trafficking-abuse-pose-more-threat-than-insurgency-banditry/>

Madagascar emerging as a drug trafficking hub

<https://www.theeastafrican.co.ke/tea/news/rest-of-africa/drug-trafficking-hub-3447882>

What COVID-19? Synthetic drug trade thrives in Mekong Region

<https://news.abs-cbn.com/spotlight/06/30/21/illegal-drugs-shabu-golden-triangle-asia>

Albanian Crime Story: Hostage to the Cocaine Supply Chain

<https://balkaninsight.com/2021/07/01/albanian-crime-story-hostage-to-the-cocaine-supply-chain/>

Sri Lanka, Maldives emerge as major destinations of drug cargoes originating from Gwadar

<https://zeenews.india.com/india/sri-lanka-maldives-emerge-as-major-destinations-of-drug-cargoes-origi-nating-from-gwadar-2373046.html>

TRAFFICKING IN SCARCE OR PROTECTED RESOURCES

Wildlife trafficking goes online during pandemic: Report

CNBC: 26 June 2021

Just as the world underwent a rapid digital transformation during COVID-19 lockdowns, wildlife trafficking has adapted as well. Wildlife trafficking declined significantly because of restrictions on travel and shipping, but the sale of trafficked items has moved online, reported Earth Journalism Network.

<https://www.cnbc.com/2021/06/26/wildlife-trafficking-has-goes-online-during-pandemic-report-9789011.htm>

For more on this theme:

Study warns of impacts of unregulated trade in Indonesian porcupines

<https://news.mongabay.com/2021/06/study-warns-of-impacts-of-unregulated-trade-in-indonesian-porcupines/>

Using technology to combat trafficking of shark products

<https://www.sapromo.com/news/using-technology-to-combat-trafficking-of-shark-products/>

The Great Cover-Up: Substitute Species in Illegal Wildlife Trade

<https://www.onegreenplanet.org/animalsandnature/the-great-cover-up-substitute-species-in-illegal-wildlife-trade/>

DNA Analysis Finds Eel Products Are Being Fraudulently Labeled

<https://www.technologynetworks.com/genomics/news/dna-analysis-finds-eel-products-are-being-fraudulently-labeled-350386>

Brazil redeploys troops to Amazon rainforest, bans fires

<https://apnews.com/article/joe-biden-caribbean-brazil-business-deforestation-0a6f2d09206cb28831fab6d6efb0ce2>

NGOs call on EU to require electronic monitoring to stop illegal fishing

<https://www.seafoodsource.com/news/environment-sustainability/ngos-call-on-eu-to-require-electronic-monitoring-to-stop-illegal-fishing>

Landmark international agreement enters into force-legally prohibiting unregulated commercial fishing in the Central Arctic Ocean

<https://finance.yahoo.com/news/landmark-international-agreement-enters-force-155200753.html>

ORGANIZED CRIME AND MONEY LAUNDERING

A Reporter's Guide: How to Investigate Organized Crime's Finances

Paul Radu – Global Investigative Journalism Network: 15 June 2021

Investigative journalists and activists play an important role in investigating organized crime because jurisdictional borders often limit law enforcement agencies in their authority and goals.

<https://gijn.org/2021/06/15/a-reporters-guide-how-to-investigate-organized-crimes-finances/>

For more on this theme:

ICU Beds Trafficked in Peru Amidst COVID-19 Spike

<https://insightcrime.org/news/icu-beds-trafficked-peru-amidst-covid-19-spike/>

Anti-Money Laundering Trends and Challenges

<https://globalinvestigationsreview.com/review/the-european-middle-eastern-and-african-investigations-review/2021/article/anti-money-laundering-trends-and-challenges>

Huge Quantities of Chinese Cigarettes Smuggled Into Ukraine

<https://www.occrp.org/en/loosetobacco/china-tobacco-goes-global/huge-quantities-of-chinese-cigarettes-smuggled-into-ukraine>

How to fight money laundering by thinking like launderers

<https://www.thehrdirector.com/features/hr-in-business/to-fight-money-laundering-staff-need-to-think-like-launderers/>

As Money Launderers Buy Dalís, U.S. Looks at Lifting the Veil on Art Sales

<https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/19/arts/design/money-laundering-art-market.html>

As organised crime makes headlines, are bikie gangs the threat they are made out to be?

<https://theconversation.com/as-organised-crime-makes-headlines-are-bikie-gangs-the-threat-they-are-made-out-to-be-157425>

Organized Crime Is Targeting South Africa's 'Green Gold': Avocados

<https://kuow.org/stories/organized-crime-is-targeting-south-africa-s-green-gold-avocados>

Colombia Drug Trafficking Money Laundered Through Modified Gold

<https://insightcrime.org/news/urabenos-gold-launder-drug-money-colombia/>

Previous Pakistan governments did not curb terrorist financing, money laundering, says minister

<https://www.deccanherald.com/international/world-news-politics/previous-pakistan-governments-did-not-curb-terrorist-financing-money-laundering-says-minister-1000630.html>

Bodies of 20 suspected illegal miners found near abandoned South Africa goldmine

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/jun/17/south-africa-bodies-20-suspected-miners-found-goldmine-abandoned>

PROGRAM ON CYBER SECURITY STUDIES (PCSS)

INTERNET FREEDOM

Chinese censorship found at Australian universities – rights group

Kirsty Needham – Reuters: 29 June 2021

High numbers of Chinese students at Australian universities have created an environment of self-censorship. Lecturers avoid criticism of Beijing, and Chinese students stay silent in fear of harassment, Human Rights Watch said.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/china/chinese-censorship-surveillance-found-australian-universities-rights-group-2021-06-29/>

For more on this theme:

(India) India's Legal Action Over Tweets Criticized

<https://www.voanews.com/press-freedom/indias-legal-action-over-tweets-criticized>

(Hong Kong) Hong Kong's Apple Daily to live on in blockchain, free of censors

<https://www.cnn.com/2021/06/24/hong-kongs-apple-daily-to-live-on-in-blockchain-free-of-censors.html>

SECURITY

Cyber insurance isn't helping with cybersecurity, and it might be making the ransomware crisis worse, say researchers

Danny Palmer – ZDNet: 28 June 2021

Allowing organizations to claim back ransom payments could be making the problem of ransomware worse – but cyber insurance could be used to help improve security, says a RUSI research paper.

<https://www.zdnet.com/article/ransomware-has-become-an-existential-threat-that-means-cyber-insurance-is-about-to-change/>

Full report:

Cyber Insurance and the Cyber Security Challenge

<https://rusi.org/explore-our-research/publications/occasional-papers/cyber-insurance-and-cyber-security-challenge>

For more on this theme:

(U.S.) DOD Wants Partners to Up Their Cybersecurity Game, Official Says

<https://www.defense.gov/Explore/News/Article/Article/2672689/dod-wants-partners-to-up-their-cybersecurity-game-official-says/>

(India) NPA to create new bureau for cybersecurity threats

<http://www.asahi.com/ajw/articles/14380328>

(Global) UN Security Council confronts growing threat of cyber attacks

<https://www.france24.com/en/live-news/20210629-un-security-council-confronts-growing-threat-of-cyber-attacks>

PRIVACY

Clubhouse collects excessive data, undermines user privacy, says Internet Freedom Foundation

Aditya Saroha – The Hindu: 24 June 2021

With almost 2.6 million users in India, Clubhouse has emerged as a popular social media platform in the past few months. While over a million users congregate in Clubhouse's discussion rooms regularly, India's digital rights advocacy group has raised privacy concerns about audio-based social network.

<https://www.thehindu.com/sci-tech/technology/clubhouse-collects-excessive-data-undermines-user-privacy-says-internet-freedom-foundation/article34946113.ece>

For more on this theme:

(Global) Google delays Chrome's cookie-blocking privacy plan by nearly 2 years

<https://www.cnet.com/news/google-delays-chromes-cookie-blocking-privacy-plan-by-nearly-2-years/>

(India) India's digital database for farmers stirs fears about privacy, exclusion

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-india-tech-farming-trfn-idUSKCN2E01XI>

(U.S.) U.S. lawmakers say it is time to boost privacy protections around cloud data

<https://www.reuters.com/legal/government/microsoft-executive-says-us-overuses-secret-orders-americans-data-2021-06-30/>

CYBER STATECRAFT

UN Official Warns Digital Technologies Open Areas for Attack

Edith M. Lederer – The Associated Press: 29 June 2021

The United Nations disarmament chief is warning that digital technologies are lowering barriers to malicious intrusions and opening potential areas for governments, armed groups, terrorists and criminals to carry out attacks, including across international borders.

https://newsadvance.com/news/national/un-official-warns-digital-technologies-open-areas-for-attack/article_a2248fde-fc93-539b-afda-c00b0a15285b.html

For more on this theme:

(Global) NATO Warns That Cyber Attacks on Member States Could Trigger a Coordinated Military Response

<https://www.cpomagazine.com/cyber-security/nato-warns-that-cyber-attacks-on-member-states-could-trigger-a-coordinated-military-response/>

(U.K.) UK Cyber Security Council launches inaugural initiatives

<https://www.computerweekly.com/news/252503214/UK-Cyber-Security-Council-launches-inaugural-initiatives>

(Australia) Australia should bet on digital engagement with Southeast Asia

<https://www.aspistrategist.org.au/australia-should-bet-on-digital-engagement-with-southeast-asia/>

CYBERCRIME

Inside a ransomware attack: how dark webs of cybercriminals collaborate to pull them off

David S. Wall – The Conversation: 18 June 2021

It's important to look at ransomware attacks in detail to understand how the U.S. and the G7 might go about tackling the increasing number of ransomware attacks we've seen during the pandemic, with at least 128 publicly disclosed incidents taking place globally in May 2021.

<https://theconversation.com/inside-a-ransomware-attack-how-dark-webs-of-cybercriminals-collaborate-to-pull-them-off-163015>

For more on this theme:

(E.U.) EU announces Joint Cyber Unit to tackle escalating online crime

<https://eandt.theiet.org/content/articles/2021/06/eu-announces-joint-cyber-unit-to-tackle-escalating-online-crime/>

(Global) Could curtailing cryptocurrency calm cyber crime wave?

<https://www.scmagazine.com/home/security-news/cryptocurrency/could-curtailing-cryptocurrency-calm-cyber-crime-wave/>

(Global) Deepwatch: 'Organized cyber crime would be the world's third-largest economy right now if it were a country'

<https://wgnradio.com/john-williams/deepwatch-organized-cyber-crime-would-be-the-worlds-third-largest-economy-right-now-if-it-were-a-country/>

CYBERATTACKS, THREATS AND VULNERABILITIES

Cyber-Attacks Are Primary Funding Source for North Korea

Phil Muncaster – Info Security: 24 June 2021

Cybercrime is now the primary means by which the North Korean state is funded, according to researchers at Venafi, who concluded that the Asian dictatorship now monetizes cyberattacks to circumvent economic sanctions and keep the Kim Jong-un regime alive.

<https://www.infosecurity-magazine.com/news/cyberattacks-primary-funding-north/>

For more on this theme:

(Russia, Germany) Russian Hackers Mounted Cyber Attack on German Banks, Bild Says

<https://www.bnnbloomberg.ca/russian-hackers-mounted-cyber-attack-on-german-banks-bild-says-1.1623499>

(Denmark, Russia) Denmark's Central Bank Compromised by SolarWinds Cyber Attack: Media Report

<https://www.insurancejournal.com/news/international/2021/06/30/620681.htm>

(Canada, China) Cyber Attacks Involving Huawei Devices in Canada Spiked after Meng Wanzhou Arrest

<https://thetyee.ca/News/2021/06/24/Cyber-Attacks-Involving-Huawei-Devices-Spiked-After-Meng-Wanzhou/>

PROTECTION OF CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Maritime Cyber Attacks Are Among the Greatest Unknown Threats to the Global Economy

Avital Sincai – CPO Magazine: 28 June 2021

If the maritime industry suddenly disappeared without a trace, the economic, social, and political impacts would be devastating. We saw a taste of this early this year, when a ship lodged itself in the Suez Canal, blocking other ships from getting through. The incident cost the world nearly \$10 billion in trade each day the ship was stuck. This is only a fraction of the damage that could be caused by cyberattacks in the maritime industry.

<https://www.cpomagazine.com/cyber-security/maritime-cyber-attacks-are-among-the-greatest-unknown-threats-to-the-global-economy/>

For more on this theme:

(U.S.) Greater focus on defense of critical infrastructure against cyber attacks is needed, says cyber agency chief

<https://www.cnn.com/2021/06/27/politics/brandon-wales-cyber-security-cnntv/index.html>

(Global) Managing the Cyber-Physical Security Risks to Critical Infrastructure and Healthcare

<https://www.cpomagazine.com/cyber-security/managing-the-cyber-physical-security-risks-to-critical-infrastructure-and-healthcare/>

(India, Global) UNSC: India says cyber tools are used to target critical infra

<https://www.livemint.com/news/india/unsc-india-says-cyber-tools-are-used-to-target-critical-infra-11624980216689.html>

PROGRAM ON TERRORISM AND SECURITY STUDIES (PTSS)

ISIS AND FOREIGN FIGHTERS

Isis-linked groups open up new fronts across sub-Saharan Africa

Jason Burke – The Guardian: 25 June 2021

Military victories, combined with new alliances, and shifts in strategy reinforce the positions of Islamic State affiliates across much of continent.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/jun/25/isis-linked-groups-open-up-new-fronts-across-sub-saharan-africa>

Global Coalition Fears Islamic State Expansion in Africa

Jeff Seldin – Voice of America: 28 June 2021

Western powers are promising that recent successes by the Islamic State group across Africa will not go unanswered, backing plans for a task force to focus on the terror group's spread from Iraq and Syria to Africa.

<https://www.voanews.com/europe/global-coalition-fears-islamic-state-expansion-africa>

For more on this theme:

State Department Terrorist Designation of Ousmane Illiassou Djibo

<https://www.state.gov/state-department-terrorist-designation-of-ousmane-illiassou-djibo/>

ISIS threat lingers in disputed territories

<https://www.rudaw.net/english/middleeast/iraq/290620211>

Opioid Painkiller Tramadol Abuse By Boko Haram And Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP)

<https://www.memri.org/reports/opioid-painkiller-tramadol-abuse-boko-haram-and-islamic-state-west-africa-province-iswap>

Germany, US warn of growing influence of 'Islamic State'

<https://www.dw.com/en/germany-us-warn-of-growing-influence-of-islamic-state/a-58071038>

Islamic State group says it's behind Congo suicide bombing

<https://apnews.com/article/islamic-state-group-africa-suicide-bombings-bombings-religion-36fd-b81a1df72177f0469788eb0b7c73>

Boko Haram fighters pledge to Islamic State in video, worrying observers

<https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/boko-haram-fighters-pledge-islamic-state-video-worrying-observers-2021-06-27/>

'Such Despair': Widows, Children Of Islamic State Fighters Given Second Chance In Kazakhstan

<https://www.rferl.org/a/such-despair-widows-children-of-islamic-state-fighters-given-second-chance-in-kazakhstan/31327679.html>

Kurdish-led forces intensify crackdown on Islamic State cells in northeast Syria

<https://www.al-monitor.com/originals/2021/06/kurdish-led-forces-intensify-crackdown-islamic-state-cells-northeast-syria>

TERRORISM AROUND THE WORLD

Fewer Kenyan Youths Joining al-Shabab

Mohammed Yusuf – Voice of America: 26 June 2021

Security agencies on Kenya's coast say fewer young people are crossing to Somalia to fight for al-Shabab – a sign that counterterrorism measures are working.

<https://www.voanews.com/africa/fewer-kenyan-youths-joining-al-shabab>

Iran 'giving Hezbollah cyber training' as it embraces digital warfare

Tim Stickings – The National: 29 June 2021

Iran's leadership has embraced cyber operations and provided training to its ally Hezbollah, according to a report by the International Institute for Strategic Studies. It said Iran sees itself as being in an "intelligence and cyber war" with its rivals.

<https://www.thenationalnews.com/world/europe/iran-giving-hezbollah-cyber-training-as-it-embraces-digital-warfare-1.1251159>

For more on this theme:

Terrorism Spreading 'Unabated' Across Africa, Warns US Commander

<https://www.voanews.com/africa/terrorism-spreading-unabated-across-africa-warns-us-commander>

Lebanon's Hezbollah says logistics ready for Iranian fuel imports

<https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/lebanons-hezbollah-says-logistics-ready-iranian-fuel-imports-2021-06-25/>

Hezbollah leader, Hamas chief talk recent Gaza war in Beirut

<https://apnews.com/article/hezbollah-hamas-beirut-lebanon-middle-east-571e48b66229683666d657acd1e54f44>

Terrorists become increasingly 'innovative', in a world shaken by COVID-19

<https://news.un.org/en/story/2021/06/1095132>

Despite advances, terrorist threats continues to persist and diversify

<https://news.un.org/en/story/2021/06/1094952>

UN opens office for counter-terrorism and training in Africa

<https://apnews.com/article/united-nations-africa-terrorism-05a2e42a8237abc231f1baaee7c7af90>

The economic cost of terrorism in Africa

<https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/the-economic-cost-of-terrorism-in-africa>

Taliban Fighters Return To Central Asia's Borders

<https://www.rferl.org/a/taliban-fighting-central-asia/31326424.html>

IRREGULAR WARFARE: PROXY FORCES AND PRIVATE MILITARY GROUPS

US strikes in Iraq and Syria target Iran-backed militia facilities

BBC: 29 June 2021

The U.S. carried out airstrikes against Iran-backed militias near the Iraq-Syria border in response to drone attacks on its forces in Iraq.

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-57633360>

For more on this theme:

UN panel accuses Russia of Africa killings; Moscow says no

<https://apnews.com/article/united-nations-africa-russia-europe-business-3b3890485de7717dd4b-5b1a79c90313d>

IRREGULAR WARFARE: INFORMATION WARFARE

Europe, US Warn About Disinformation Campaign Around Russia's Sputnik V Vaccine

Anush Avetisyan – Voice of America: 30 June 2021

Efforts are taking place around the world to vaccinate as many people as possible to protect against COVID-19. Officials are tracking the safety and effectiveness of those efforts, but some medical experts say they aren't getting the information they need on Russia's Sputnik V vaccine.

<https://www.voanews.com/episode/europe-us-warn-about-disinformation-campaign-around-russias-sputnik-v-vaccine-4733761>

For more on this theme:

What Really Happened in the Black Sea? A Victory for Russian Disinformation

<https://www.defenseone.com/ideas/2021/06/what-really-happened-black-sea-victory-russian-disinformation/174939/>

Bundestag Speaker Warns Of 'Great' Danger Of Outside Meddling In German Elections

<https://www.rferl.org/a/germany-elections-foreign-interference-russia-schaeuble/31327630.html>

China and Russia Seeking to Divide EU and NATO, US Diplomat Says

<https://balkaninsight.com/2021/06/28/china-and-russia-seeking-to-divide-eu-and-nato-us-diplomat-says/>

IRREGULAR WARFARE: CYBER

China, Russia exploiting high-tech in 'hybrid warfare' costs up to \$100B per year in Canada: report

Sam Cooper – Global News: 24 June 2021

Hostile military and intelligence forces are targeting Canada in a new “sophisticated, multi-faceted” type of warfare, according to a report by Clairvoyance Cyber Corp. It says the forces are using a range of tools, from criminal gangs to cyber hackers to high-tech companies such as Huawei and China Telecom.

<https://globalnews.ca/news/7975330/china-russia-exploiting-high-tech-hybrid-warfare-cost-billions-canada/>

For more on this theme:

Holding the LINE: Chinese Cyber Influence Campaigns After the Pandemic

<https://www.justsecurity.org/77094/holding-the-line-chinese-cyber-influence-campaigns-after-the-pandemic/>

'The Future Is About Information Dominance:' Gen. Nakasone

<https://breakingdefense.com/2021/06/the-future-is-about-information-dominance-gen-nakasone/>

Russia's Little Cyber Green Men Versus the U.S. Digital Army

<https://www.newsweek.com/russias-little-cyber-green-men-versus-us-digital-army-1604932>

Antony Blinken Warns Russia 'We Will Respond' If Cyber Attacks Continue

<https://www.newsweek.com/russia-antony-blinken-cyber-attack-solarwinds-we-will-respond-1605028>