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COUNTERING TRANSNATIONAL ORGANIZED CRIME (CTOC)

CORRUPTION

Corruption threatens Africa's 2063 growth plan – EFCC Chair
Soni Daniel – Vanguard: 12 July 2021

The chairman of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, Abdulrasheed Bawa, has said that the African 2063 development vision will be a mirage if corruption is not decisively dealt with.


Who Paid for That Mansion? A Senator or the Haitian People?

Valued at U.S. $3.4 million, a Haitian senator’s Montreal villa has become a potent emblem of the growing gap between Haiti’s impoverished citizens and its wealthy political elite.

https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/10/world/canada/Haiti-Canada-Celestin-corruption.html

For more on this theme:

Buying Babies In Turkmenistan: ‘Rampant’ Corruption Drives Couples To Illegal Adoptions
https://www.rferl.org/a/turkmenistan-buying-babies/31346163.html

Local steps, global goals: How ordinary people promote sustainable development by reporting corruption

African Anti-corruption Day 2021: Will governments enable citizens to join the fight?

Ex-Deputy Interior Minister of Albania Placed Under House Arrest for Corruption

Mexican ex-economy minister accused of corruption

Corruption deadliest enemy of society, says Gujarat high court

Anti-Corruption Reformists Win Moldovan Parliamentary Election

Corruption in Costa Rica: could the Cochinilla Case be a sign of progress?

Illicit Enrichment Laws: Asia’s Ignored Anti-Corruption Weapon
DRUG TRAFFICKING

Did Guatemala Military Help Escort Sinaloa Cartel’s Cocaine?
Alex Papadovassilakis – InSight Crime: 8 July 2021

A United States investigation has shed light on the alleged participation of Guatemalan soldiers in a cocaine smuggling network linked to Mexico’s Sinaloa Cartel, a reminder of the pivotal role the armed forces can play in the international drug trade.


For more on this theme:

CDC: Record number of Americans suffered drug overdose deaths in 2020

No More Masks - Jalisco Cartel Members Reveal Their Faces

The Laundromat: Hezbollah’s Money-Laundering and Drug-Trafficking Networks in Latin America
https://besacenter.org/hezbollah-money-laundering-drug-trafficking/

Smuggled Drugs More than Double in H1 amid Pandemic
http://koreabizwire.com/smuggled-drugs-more-than-double-in-h1-amid-pandemic/194541

In Mekong region, drug trade thrives
https://www.bangkokpost.com/opinion/opinion/2148899/in-mekong-region-drug-trade-thrives

NDLEA decries youths’ involvement in drug trafficking

A Large Drug Trafficking Network Was Just Busted In Lebanon
https://www.the961.com/drug-trafficking-network-just-busted-lebanon/

Marijuana slaves in Spain: a year imprisoned in a warehouse

Drug Use Deaths Increase Sharply Among Black Americans

Treat illegal drug use as health issue, says UK government review – here’s why
TRAFFICKING IN SCARCE OR PROTECTED RESOURCES

Endangered Species Are Paying the Price of COVID-19
Lindsey Kennedy and Nathan Paul Southern – Foreign Policy: 11 July 2021
Diminishing tourism has created new incentives for the illegal wildlife trade.

Armed with data and smartphones, Amazon communities boost fight against deforestation
Sheryl Lee Tian Tong – Mongabay: 12 July 2021
Teaching Indigenous communities in the Amazon to tap on remote-monitoring technologies during forest patrols can reduce illegal deforestation, a new study has found.

For more on this theme:
An illegal gold rush is igniting attacks on Indigenous people in the Amazon

Satellite imaging leads to tenfold jump in illegal loggings detected in Finland

Protecting forests: Are early warning systems effective?
https://www.brookings.edu/blog/future-development/2021/07/02/protecting-forests-are-early-warning-systems-effective/

Colombia deforestation increased 8% last year, environment minister says

From AI-enabled devices to low cost monitoring systems: How technology can save our seas

Venezuela’s Indigenous Warao Press-Ganged into Guyana’s Illegal Gold Mines

John Scanlon on the Case for Criminalizing Wildlife Trafficking under International Law

Task force tackling piracy and wildlife trafficking in the Sulu and Celebes Seas to be launched
ORGANIZED CRIME AND MONEY LAUNDERING

**FinCEN Sets Eyes on Corruption, Cybercrime in New Anti-Money Laundering Priorities**  
*Eric Hylton – Whistleblower Network News: 8 July 2021*

The Financial Crimes Enforcement Network released its latest “anti-money laundering and countering the financing of financial terrorism national priorities,” signaling the network’s near-term focus.

https://whistleblowersblog.org/opinion/fincen-sets-eyes-on-corruption-cybercrime-in-new-anti-money-laundering-priorities/

*For more on this theme:*

**Is Organized Crime Tied to Haiti President’s Assassination?**  

**Is Nepal becoming a haven for Chinese criminals?**  
https://english.khabarhub.com/2021/08/195617/

**Law Enforcement Facing Global Surge in Cyber and Organized Crime**  

**Dutch Shooting Flags Risks for European Crime Reporters**  

**British Police Seize $250 Million Of Cryptocurrency In International Money Laundering Crackdown**  

**Bosnia intelligence chief detained in money laundering probe**  

**Japan watchdog, BOJ to assess banks’ anti-money laundering steps**  

**EU to set up new agency to fight money laundering**  
https://www.dailysabah.com/business/finance/eu-to-set-up-new-agency-to-fight-money-laundering

**The story behind Lithuania’s Centre of Excellence in Anti-Money Laundering**  

**UAE, US discuss anti-money laundering and countering financing of terrorism**  
https://goachronicle.com/uae-us-discuss/

**AI: Technology to Fight Financial Criminals and Money Launderers**  
PROGRAM ON CYBER SECURITY STUDIES (PCSS)

INTERNET GOVERNANCE

US to seek global rules on AI misuse, Blinken says
Agence France-Presse: 14 July 2021

U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken urges action on abuse of AI as he addresses the National Security Commission on Artificial Intelligence Global Emerging Technology Summit in Washington, D.C.


For more on this theme:

(Global) Internet Governance in perspective

(Global) Global cities urged to form policies to ensure responsible use of tech

INTERNET FREEDOM

Cuba restricting internet in response to protests: monitor
Agence France-Presse: 13 July 2021

Cuban authorities have cut access to major social media platforms to stem the flow of information in the face of anti-government protests, a web monitoring organization said.


For more on this theme:

(Iran) Iran poised to be plunged into utter cyber-darkness

(India) India internet law adds to fears over online speech, privacy
https://apnews.com/article/technology-entertainment-business-music-india-2458a729cff255c8a8f83d84101372d8

(China) LGBTQ in China lament ‘dark day’ after social media crackdown
https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/7/13/china-lgbtq
SECURITY

NITA-U launches cyber security awareness campaign
The Independent: 9 July 2021
The National Information Technology Authority Uganda has launched a Cyber Security Awareness Campaign aimed at increasing public vigilance about day-to-day cyber threats.

For more on this theme:
(China) China issues notice on cyber security loophole management
(Global) How to prevent ransomware attacks with a zero-trust security model
(Pakistan) President stresses need for effective measures to strengthen country’s cyber security

PRIVACY

Game Over: Chinese Company Deploys Facial Recognition to Limit Youths’ Play
Tiffany May and Amy Chang Chien – The New York Times: 8 July 2021
Tencent Games says it has been using facial recognition to enforce China’s rules on how much time people under 18 can spend playing video games.

For more on this theme:
(Asia) Will China-like data privacy laws force big tech out of HK and into Southeast Asia?
(U.K.) The Darker Side of Artificial Intelligence: The Data Privacy Compliance impact of AI-Powered Medical Devices
https://www.lexology.com/library/detail.aspx?g=6e8c2fab-8711-479f-bc2a-aa74960b0d5b
(Global) Your Right to Be Forgotten. Can it Be Achieved?
https://www.cpomagazine.com/data-protection/your-right-to-be-forgotten-can-it-be-achieved/
CYBERCRIME

National security and cybercrime: This is not your grandpa’s battleground
Robert H. Bishop – The Hill: 13 July 2021

The United States’ pending exit from its 20-year presence in Afghanistan marks the end of a chapter in our nation’s history. It also signals a shift into a new era of conflict, where bullets and bombs take a backseat to technology in the fight against our enemies.


For more on this theme:
(Russia, Global) REvil: Ransomware gang websites disappear from internet

(Kuwait) Kuwait Against Cyber Crimes
https://securityboulevard.com/2021/07/kuwait-against-cyber-crimes/

(U.S.) New York City opens cyber defense center

CYBERATTACKS, THREATS AND VULNERABILITIES

Iran’s Rail Network Hit by Possible Cyber Attack, State TV Says
Patrick Sykes – Bloomberg: 9 July 2021

A potential cyberattack on Iran’s state railway company created “unprecedented chaos” at stations across the country and led to cancellations and delays on hundreds of lines, state TV reported.


For more on this theme:
(Australia) NSW Department of Education cyber attack leaves teachers stranded

(Germany) First German ‘cyber-catastrophe’ declared

(Singapore) Ransomware and botnets among top cyber threats in Singapore
PROGRAM ON TERRORISM AND SECURITY STUDIES (PTSS)

ISIS AND FOREIGN FIGHTERS

**Heightened importance of defeating ISIS in Africa – analysis**
Seth J. Frantzman – The Jerusalem Post: 10 July 2021

Given the growing footprint of China, Russia, Turkey and others in Africa, the United States must coordinate anti-extremist policies.


‘They will never let go’: Isis fighters regroup in the heart of Iraq
Ghaith Abdul-Ahad – The Guardian: 11 July 2021

Four years after their defeat in the battle of Mosul, ISIS militants are regrouping, with small bands of fighters attacking military and police checkpoints, assassinating local leaders and assailing electricity transmission grids and oil installations.


For more on this theme:

The murky link between DR Congo's ADF and Islamic State

Dutch court gives gov't deadline to repatriate from Syria five women with suspected ISIS ties

Italy Calls For Anti-ISIL African Task Force As France's Task Force Prepares Exit

Almost 300 IDPs leave Mosul camp
https://www.rudaw.net/english/middleeast/turkey/04072021

Sales consultant guilty of Bitcoin Islamic State terrorism funding

Syrian Kurds Transfer 20 Children To Russia For Repatriation From Islamic State Camps
https://www.rferl.org/a/islamic-state-russia-repatriation/31339424.html

Confronting Islamist Insurgencies in Africa: The Case of the Islamic State in Mozambique
TERRORISM AROUND THE WORLD

Israel says it’s targeting Hamas’ cryptocurrency accounts
The Associated Press: 8 July 2021
Israel says it will begin seizing cryptocurrency accounts that the Palestinian Hamas group uses to raise money for its armed wing.
https://apnews.com/article/hamas-middle-east-israel-cryptocurrency-business-5fe4e70d357545ff-d22a152eb4358980

Addressing the Boko Haram challenge in Nigeria
Kate Meagher – Vanguard: 11 July 2021
Addressing the Boko Haram insurgency in northern Nigeria requires policymakers to look beyond Western security templates of Islamic terrorism to grasp the underlying causes of what is primarily a Nigerian conflict.

For more on this theme:
Al-Qaïda, Islamic State Set to Reconstitute in Afghanistan, Beyond

Officials: Afghan delegation, Taliban to talk peace in Qatar

Two militants of Al-Qaeda-supported outfit arrested, were planning to use human bombs: UP Police

Mogadishu police chief survives al-Shabab attack, several killed

Nigerians Are Being Kidnapped For Ransom — But This Time It’s Not Boko Haram
https://www.npr.org/2021/07/14/1016093356/nigerians-are-being-kidnapped-for-ransom-but-this-time-its-not-boko-haram

Boko Haram Growing Arms Stockpile: Why Lake Chad Basin Leaders Should Be Worried

How Hezbollah has permeated the Lebanese state
https://www.arabnews.com/node/1890926/middle-east

Countering terrorism on Malaysia’s borders
https://www.eastasiaforum.org/2021/07/10/countering-terrorism-on-malaysias-borders/

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IRREGULAR WARFARE: PROXY FORCES AND PRIVATE MILITARY GROUPS

Keeping up attacks, some Iraq militias challenge patron Iran

Iran’s expeditionary Quds Force commander brought one main directive for Iraqi militia faction leaders long beholden to Tehran when he gathered with them recently in Baghdad: Maintain calm, until after nuclear talks between Iran and the United States. But he was met with defiance.

https://apnews.com/article/joe-biden-middle-east-religion-iran-lebanon-17a5d13c97f72e1992b-b6254445e32f2

For more on this theme:

IRGC official urged Iraq militias to continue hitting US, report

France’s exit from Sahel war offers Russia an opportunity to move in

IRREGULAR WARFARE: INFORMATION WARFARE

Information Warfare Looms Larger in Russia’s New Security Strategy
Patrick Tucker – Defense One: 13 July 2021

The Russian government sees itself as increasingly vulnerable to foreign and domestic subversion, according to an update to the Kremlin’s 2015 national security strategy, and it is moving to shield Russian citizens from outside voices and improve its influence-warfare capabilities.


For more on this theme:

How Vietnam’s ‘influencer’ army wages information warfare on Facebook

Putin’s Dangerous Ukraine Narrative
https://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/putin-denial-of-ukrainian-independence-could-lead-to-war-by-anders-aslund-2021-07

Russian Media Misrepresents US Anti-Terrorism Strategy to Justify Repressions in Russia

Moscow Says US Waging Biological War Against Russia
https://jamestown.org/program/moscow-says-us-waging-biological-war-against-russia/

How Russian officials use legal tools against journalists
https://jamestown.org/program/moscow-says-us-waging-biological-war-against-russia/

The foreigners in China’s disinformation drive