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COUNTERING TRANSNATIONAL ORGANIZED CRIME (CTOC)

CORRUPTION

Sri Lanka parliament passes anti-corruption bill without vote
Uditha Jayasinghe – Reuters: 19 July 2023

The bill is aimed at improving governance in the crisis-hit country and meeting requirements linked to a $2.9 billion bailout from the International Monetary Fund.

Ukraine’s Other Front: The War on Corruption
Tamar Jacoby – Washington Monthly: 17 July 2023

The besieged nation has a deep-seated culture of graft that must end if it is to rebuild successfully.
There are hopeful signs from Kharkiv, Ukraine’s second-largest city and once one of its most corrupt.
https://washingtonmonthly.com/2023/07/17/ukraines-other-front-the-war-on-corruption/

For more on this theme:
Rare Singapore corruption probe widens to include Grand Prix owner

Pakistan: Federal Investigation Agency arrests Customs officers in mega corruption scandal

Mandela Day Blues as South Africans Worry About Ongoing Corruption

How South Africa’s government hopes to tackle its construction corruption problem

(Transnational) Organized crime and corruption in conflict settings: Interview with Ms Ghada Waly

President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud’s Bold Move To Combat Corruption In Somalia – OpEd

Major Corruption Scandal in Nepal Exposes Deep-Rooted Kleptocracy

The Luxury French Real Estate of Alleged Latin American Money Launderers and Officials Accused of Corruption
DRUG TRAFFICKING

Drug trafficking fuels other deforestation drivers in the Amazon: report
Maxwell Radwin – Mongabay: 14 July 2023

The illegal activity is intimately connected to cattle ranching, illegal mining, wildlife trafficking and land grabbing, all of which have major environmental footprints in the region.


Ukraine War May Increase Drug Trafficking on Balkan Route — Report
Fjori Sinoruka – Balkan Insight: 17 July 2023

A report from the Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime finds the war may be dislocating traditional routes through that country to the benefit of traffickers in Southeast Europe.


Full report:
Disruption or displacement?
https://globalinitiative.net/analysis/ukraine-war-impact-drug-markets-south-eastern-europe/

For more on this theme:
Venezuelan ex-spy chief, Chávez confidant, extradited to US on drug trafficking charges

Combating drug trafficking

AI Cyber Patrol to Crack Down on Drug Trafficking Using Social Media
https://japannews.yomiuri.co.jp/society/general-news/20230702-119978/

Why Israel needs to focus on Syria’s drug trafficking
https://www.jpost.com/middle-east/article-749284

From Sicily to Sinaloa: Contrasting the Mafia and Drug Cartels

Guinea Bissau: Mafia, drugs and a former president’s son

Hezbollah’s Narco Empire
https://video.vice.com/en_us/video/hezbollahs-narco-empire/645e5ab34fa56d36d45ac413

Treasury Sanctions Fentanyl Network Run by Sinaloa Cartel Family Members
TRAFFICKING IN SCARCE OR PROTECTED RESOURCES

Can Tech Stop Animal Poachers in Their Tracks?

Deepa Padmanaban – Mother Jones: 15 July 2023

Indian authorities turn to an app to fight wildlife crime.


African e-commerce platforms must address thriving illegal wildlife trade, urge international non-profits

Susan Chacko – Down To Earth: 17 July 2023

Illegal trade in wild species undermines natural resources, threatens species with extinction, affects community livelihoods and can increase risks of new zoonotic diseases.


For more on this theme:

Forests in the furnace: Can fashion brands tackle illegal logging in their Cambodian supply chains?


Calculated Risk: Australia’s Exposure to Illegal Logging (July 2023)


In Lula’s first six months, Brazil Amazon deforestation dropped 34%, reversing trend under Bolsonaro


Brazil says illegal miners driven from Indigenous territory, but ‘war’ not over


Brazil Launches Investigation into R$80 Million in Illegal Gold


EU tightens the net on illegal fishing with restructuring of fisheries control rules


In Venezuela, Contraband Networks Supply Rampant Wildcat Mining


In Peru, an Amazonian community fights illegal logging and state neglect

INTERNET GOVERNANCE

Regulating artificial intelligence: How the EU just got us closer
Melinda Rankin – The Interpreter: 18 July 2023

In these times of high-tech angst, a draft act passed in the European Parliament sets the scene for the future of artificial intelligence.

https://www.lowyinstitute.org/the-interpreter/regulating-artificial-intelligence-how-eu-just-got-us-closer

For more on this theme:

(Global) How privacy legislation can help address AI
https://www.brookings.edu/articles/how-privacy-legislation-can-help-address-ai/

(U.S., Europe) On AI and Tech, the US Must Avoid Europe’s Mistakes
https://cepa.org/article/on-ai-and-tech-the-us-must-avoid-europes-mistakes/

(Global) Déjà Vu: Is the UN Attempting to Take Over the Internet (Again)?
https://cepa.org/article/deja-vu-is-the-un-attempting-to-take-over-the-internet/

(Global) Towards Digital Platforms and Public Purpose: Final Report of the Democracy and Internet Governance Initiative

INTERNET FREEDOM

India’s Frequent Internet Shutdowns Discussed at G20 Meeting
The Wire: 17 July 2023

Responding to a query on the frequent bans, former Intelligence Bureau chief and member of National Human Rights Commission Rajiv Jain reportedly stated that the right to life is sometimes in conflict with the right to freedom of expression and right to privacy.

https://thewire.in/government/indias-frequent-internet-shutdowns-discussed-at-g20-meeting

For more on this theme:

(China) China launches another internet crackdown targeting online rumours

(Nigeria) Government’s Role in Enhancing Internet Freedom in Nigeria

(Ethiopia) Social Media Access In Ethiopia Back After 5-month Shutdown
CYBER CAPACITY BUILDING

Study: Africa Cybersecurity Improves but Lacks Cross-Border Frameworks

Dan Raywood – Dark Reading: 19 July 2023

While preparedness in Africa is on the upswing, the continent still lacks agreements on international security standards and sharing threat intelligence.

https://www.darkreading.com/dr-global/study-africa-cybersecurity-improves-but-lacks-cross-border-frameworks

For more on this theme:

(Indonesia) How Indonesia’s national data centres promise to overcome digital governance barriers


(U.S.) Millions could lose internet access next year — we can’t let that happen

https://thehill.com/opinion/technology/4101292-millions-could-lose-internet-access-next-year-we-cant-let-that-happen/

(UAE) The laws behind Dubai’s digital transformation: A look at the pioneering legislations fuelling the city’s goal to be the world’s digital economy capital

https://wam.ae/en/details/1395303177676

CYBERATTACKS

Norwegian Refugee Council hit by cyberattack

Daryna Antoniuk – The Record: 13 July 2023

The Norwegian Refugee Council said the attack targeted an online database that stores the personal information of project participants.

https://therecord.media/norwegian-refugee-council-hit-by-cyberattack

For more on this theme:

(Global) Google restricting internet access to some employees to reduce cyberattack risk

https://www.cnbc.com/2023/07/18/google-restricting-internet-access-to-some-employees-for-security.html

(Russia, New Zealand) Parliament hit by cyber attack, Russian hacker group claims responsibility


(Australia) Australia’s Fortescue Hit by Cyber Attack That Disclosed Some Network Data

https://www.insurancejournal.com/news/international/2023/07/19/731215.htm#
CYBERCRIME

**NCA: Nation States Using Cybercrime Groups as Proxies**
*Phil Muncaster – InfoSecurity: 19 July 2023*

The new chief of the United Kingdom’s National Crime Agency has warned that hostile states are increasingly teaming up with organized crime.


*For more on this theme:*

(Hong Kong) **Hong Kong to set up new subdivision of prosecutors to handle cybercrimes, says deputy justice minister**


(Jordan) **Controversy over cybercrimes bill before Jordan parliament**

https://www.arabnews.com/node/2338982/middle-east

(South Africa) **SA on the brink of being Africa’s capital of cybercrime, say digital experts**


CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE PROTECTION

**China poses ‘alarming’ threat to US power grid, lawmakers told**
*Bloomberg: 19 July 2023*

Lawmakers were told that a Chinese attack could plunge military and other sensitive sites into darkness.


*For more on this theme:*

(Japan) **Critical infrastructure cyberattack on Japan’s biggest port**


(Global) **Lithuania’s cyber chief unimpressed: attacks against NATO were PR stunts**


(Canada) **The cyber threat against Canada**

https://incyber.org/en/the-cyber-threat-against-canada/
PROGRAM ON TERRORISM AND SECURITY STUDIES (PTSS)

ISIS AND FOREIGN FIGHTERS

**Why ISIS Cannot Bring the Caliphate Back to Life**
Mohammed Hassan – Carnegie: 18 July 2023

Since the defeat of Islamic State group forces at Al-Baghouz in 2019, five factors have stymied the group’s revival in Syria and Iraq.
https://carnegieendowment.org/sada/90221

**Media Jihad Campaign: The Islamic State’s Response to Deplatforming**
Danielle Haberfeld and Eitan Azani – International Institute for Counter-Terrorism: 15 July 2023

The recent campaign by the Islamic State group and its online supporters focuses on the concept of “media jihad” and its significance in response to deplatforming efforts.
https://ict.org.il/media-jihad-campaign-islamic-state-response-to-deplatforming/

For more on this theme:

**Islamic State and Al-Qaeda actively plotting terror attacks in the UK; govt warning expected soon**

**Fighting to free the women and children enslaved by IS**

**The Netherlands takes steps to prosecute crimes against Yazidis**
https://www.aljazeera.com/features/2023/7/12/the-netherlands-takes-steps-to-prosecute-crimes-against-yazidis

**Revealed: How ISIS planned to unleash terror in India**

**Islamic State funds terror along DRC-Uganda border**

**Mali Frees IS-Linked Jihadists in Prisoner Swap: Sources**

**Brief: ISGS Returns to Burkina Faso in Force**

**ISCAP in Mozambique Forecast: Fear, Investment, and Technology**
TERRORISM AROUND THE WORLD

What the Taliban’s Defensive Public Messaging Reveals
Andrew Watkins – United States Institute of Peace: 13 July 2023

Recent statements show how closely the group follows global media coverage and how concerned they are by narratives that could undermine their own.


For more on this theme:

Terror groups in Africa, a breeding ground for attacks in the West

Questions Surround Pakistani Taliban’s Inroads into Balochistan: Organizational Expansion or Propaganda Stunt?
https://jamestown.org/program/questions-surround-pakistani-talibans-inroads-into-balochistan-organizational-expansion-or-propaganda-stunt/

Somalia Counterterrorism: Anticipated Trends and Strategies

What Goes On In The Mind Of A Terrorist Woman?

Report exposes extravagant lifestyle of Hezbollah financier’s family
https://www.arabnews.com/node/2333861/middle-east

Thanks to the Taliban, Afghanistan is once again a hotbed of terrorism

Experts: Taliban treatment of women may be “gender apartheid”

Africa’s Battle Against Terrorism
https://www.telesurenglish.net/news/Africas-Battle-Against-Terrorism-20230710-0022.html

Countering terrorism in today's world

Assessing Person-Centered Outcomes in Women and Children Returning from Violent Extremist Conflict

The world urgently needs to broaden its approach to counter-extremism
RUSSIA/UKRAINE

Ukraine Has Not Transformed EU Foreign Policy
Judy Dempsey – Carnegie: 20 July 2023

The bloc has not changed enough in response to Russia’s war. To be effective, it needs a strategic foreign and security policy.
https://carnegieeurope.eu/strategiceurope/90234

For more on this theme:

Ukraine’s Delicate Balancing Act With China

The Vilnius Summit: A Turning Point for NATO and Ukraine
https://carnegieendowment.org/politika/90236

What We Learned From Recent Calls for a Russian Nuclear Attack
https://carnegieendowment.org/politika/90232

Russia Expands Its War on Ukraine — to Global Food Supplies

One Vital Change Can Advance Long-Term Peace in Ukraine

Ukraine’s sea drone attack on Crimea bridge signals shift in strategy

IntelBrief: The Impact of the Ukraine War on Türkiye’s Relations with Russia
https://thesoufancenter.org/intelbrief-2023-july-21/

Russia suspends Ukraine grain deal. Here’s what it means for the rest of the world

Ukraine war: Russia strikes Ukraine grain after ending sea deal

China ‘complicit’ in Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, MI6 chief tells Politico

Zelenskyy says Russia ‘investing everything’ to stop Ukraine army

No sign of Russian intent to change tack on Ukraine war, Blinken says

Crowdsourced Cyber Warfare: Russia and Ukraine Launch Fresh DDoS Offensives
https://cepa.org/article/russia-ukraine-launch-cyber-offensives/
RUSSIA/UKRAINE

For more on this theme:

Russia Chooses to Starve the World's Poor (Again)
https://cepa.org/article/russia-chooses-to-starve-the-worlds-poor-again/

Could Ukraine Copy Israel's Military Tech Success?
https://cepa.org/article/could-ukraine-copy-israels-military-tech-success/

Putin's Popular Support: A Miasma of Jew Hate and Fatalism

‘Price of Blood’ Soars as Russia’s Draftees Evade Service

Tehran’s Anger Over Moscow’s Position on Ormuz Islands Prompts Russia to Back Down
https://jamestown.org/program/tehrans-anger-over-moscows-position-on-ormuz-islands-prompts-russia-to-back-down/

Putin’s Private Empire
https://jamestown.org/program/putins-private-empire/

Russia Reels From New Post-Vilnius Challenges

Russia’s invasion of Ukraine was never about NATO
https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/ukrainealert/russias-invasion-of-ukraine-was-never-about-nato/

“Pariah” Putin forced to cancel travel plans over fears of war crimes arrest

Putin’s biggest mistake was believing Ukrainians were really Russians
https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/ukrainealert/putins-biggest-mistake-was-believing-ukrainians-were-really-russians/

After Wagner: Could the Russian army now turn against Putin?

Prigozhin calls Russia’s war on Ukraine ‘a disgrace’ in another public affront despite Kremlin efforts to silence him

EU plans €20B fund to stock Ukraine’s military for years
https://www.politico.eu/article/eu-20-billion-fund-stock-ukraine-military-russia-war/

China-Russia Trade at Highest Since Start of Ukraine War
RUSSIA/UKRAINE

For more on this theme:

Ukraine: Russian Missile Strike on Lviv a Possible War Crime

The battle to adapt to Russia's evolving war tactics is essential if Ukraine is to emerge victorious

How Russia's invasion of Ukraine is reshaping Middle East arms market: Analysis
https://english.alarabiya.net/News/world/2023/07/20/How-Russia-s-invasion-of-Ukraine-is-reshaping-Middle-East-arms-market-Analysis

The Crimean bridge is vital for the Russians. Now, it could stop the war effort

Following Prigozhin’s Aborted Mutiny, What Will Happen to the Wagner Group?

Russia’s Turla hackers target Ukraine’s defense with spyware
https://therecord.media/turla-hackers-targeting-ukraine-defense

Russia-Ukraine war risks hampering transition to global low-carbon economy

The Ukraine War and Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

Russia’s War Machine Is Still Running on Western Equipment
https://www.barrons.com/articles/russia-ukraine-war-exports-sanctions-western-technology-5a3eff69