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CORRUPTION

In final report, UN body says Guatemala ‘captured’ by graft

Guatemala is “captured” by corruption, says a final report by the International Commission against Impunity in Guatemala. The United Nations created the commission 12 years ago to fight corruption in the country. But it is being disbanded by President Jimmy Morales, whom critics accuse of trying to protect himself from the commission’s work.

https://apnews.com/24390710df404d7e84c3e0ece3b60444

Corrupt Anti-Corruption Campaigns

Kaushik Basu – Project Syndicate: 28 August 2019

The wildfire crisis in the Amazon shows what can happen when governments bow unequivocally to business interests. It also highlights how anti-corruption efforts can be manipulated to undermine democracy and advance an authoritarian political agenda.


For more on this theme:

Study Examines Corruption Costs

Corruption and Courts Matter but Universities Are Key
https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/ukrainealert/corruption-and-courts-matter-but-universities-are-key

Can Cambodia’s “corrupt” combat corruption?
https://theaseanpost.com/article/can-cambodias-corrupt-combat-corruption

Fight against top-level corruption is needed in Slovakia, says monitoring report

The Dirty Problems With Operation Car Wash

Will Corruption Poison Ukraine’s New President?
https://nationalinterest.org/feature/will-corruption-poison-ukraines-new-president-74281

Rampant Corruption In The World’s Last Oil Frontier

Kazakhstan to increase its fight against corruption
https://www.neweurope.eu/article/kazakhstan-to-increase-its-fight-against-corruption/
DRUG TRAFFICKING

The flow of fentanyl: In the mail, over the border
Sari Horwitz and Scott Higham – The Washington Post: 23 August 2019

The lack of safeguards in the U.S. Postal Service’s shipping practices made fentanyl much more likely to reach its destination when shipped from China. To this day, the postal service has numerous security gaps that allow synthetic opioids to slip through the border.


How Innovative Responses to Prohibition Set Off a Deadly Fentanyl Explosion
Jacob Sullum – Reason: 29 August 2019

Overcoming the synthetic opioid crisis requires innovative strategies and rethinking "conventional" policies, according to a new Rand study.


Full Report:

The Future of Fentanyl and Other Synthetic Opioids
https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR3117.html

For more on this theme:

As Africa’s infrastructure develops, so too does its drug supply to Australia

The Uncounted Dead of Duterte’s Drug War

Why drug trafficking cartels favour smuggling their illicit cargo in consignments of fruit

Mexican court says cocaine use is legal -- for two people

Synthetic Drugs Will Change the Global Drug Trade Forever

‘I Need the Money But I Feel Guilt.’ How a Drought-Resistant Crop Turned Women in Kenya into Reluctant Drug Lords
https://time.com/5649891/khat-miraa-kenya-women/

How America’s opioid epidemic could get even worse
TRAFFICKING IN SCARCE OR PROTECTED RESOURCES

How Drug Traffickers Became Masters of Honduras’ Forests
Héctor Silva Ávalos – InSight Crime: 26 August 2019

Illegal timber and drug trafficking go hand in hand in northeastern Honduras. Criminal groups dabble in both to maximize profits and diversify earnings. Environmental agencies say that as much as 60% of the $70 million Honduran timber trade comes from illegal logging, especially from the cocaine corridor in the northeast.


Combating Wildlife Crime: linked to the internet: global trends and China’s experiences
TRAFFIC: 20 August 2019

In this study from the nongovernmental organization TRAFFIC, experts reviewed China’s policies and efforts to address wildlife cyber crime over the past 10 years. It compared China’s efforts with several other countries and agencies.


For more on this theme:
Wildlife trade conference ends with progress on key issues but others still unresolved

Stopping illegal wildlife trade means engaging local communities
https://www.star2.com/living/2019/08/22/wildlife-conservation-local-communities/

Wildlife Trafficking And More Hinder Nations’ Sustainable Development

Positive steps for Asian elephants facing skinning threat

Inside the faltering fight against illegal Amazon logging

Adorable? Demand for Cute Selfies Killing Animals at Risk
https://www.voanews.com/europe/adorable-demand-cute-selfies-killing-animals-risk

ASEAN SMART Patrol, a hope for the region’s forests

A Once Common Gecko Is Vanishing from Parts of Asia

Punjab floods: Ropar locals blame illegal mining, say it was a tragedy waiting to happen
https://indianexpress.com/article/india/punjab-floods-ropar-locals-blame-illegal-mining-say-it-was-a-tragedy-waiting-to-happen-5926877/
MONEY LAUNDERING

The EU is launching a new money-laundering blacklist, after its last one was nixed for naming Saudi Arabia
Max de Haldevang – Quartz: 22 August 2019

Vera Jourova, the European Union’s commissioner for justice, announced that she is undertaking a new attempt to create an EU blacklist of countries that are open to fraud and money laundering. The former list was rejected in February by several EU member states after pressure from Saudi Arabia and the United States.

https://qz.com/1692089/the-eu-is-set-to-relaunch-a-money-laundering-blacklist/

How We Can Stop Global Money Laundering
Alexander Lebedev – The National Interest: 21 August 2019

Money laundering has become part of today’s “financial capitalism” according to the author, who advocates using the International Financial Court as a solution.

https://nationalinterest.org/feature/how-we-can-stop-global-money-laundering-75201

For more on this theme:

Brazil tightens controls over money laundering and illicit financial activities

Cayman brings together public and private sector in fight against money laundering

From money-laundering to sanctions busting: the real value of cryptocurrency may soon be clear

Why AI is the Only Option for Combating Money Laundering, Terrorist Financing and Other Illicit Financial Threats

20 Nepali officers start training in India on anti-money laundering
https://english.khabarhub.com/2019/19/39182/

Money Laundering and the Illegal Wildlife Trade: Financial Action at Last?

Estonia, at epicenter of EU money laundering scandals, ranked country least likely to launder money: AML index
https://www.acfcs.org/estonia-at-epicenter-of-eu-money-laundering-scandals-ranked-country-least-likely-to-launder-money-aml-index/
SMUGGLING, PIRACY AND COUNTERFEITING

Argentina’s Evolving Role in the Global Arms Trade
Josefina Salomón and Carolina Sampó – InSight Crime: 14 August 2019

A recent case involving the seizure of hundreds of weapons in Argentina offers great insight into the criminal dynamics along the border with Paraguay, but does little to shine a light on Argentina’s role in the global arms trade.


For more on this theme:

Pirates, Slavers and Poachers: Violence on the High Seas
https://www.nytimes.com/2019/08/19/books/review/outlaw-ocean-ian-urbina.html

Counter Smuggling and Piracy Exercise Underway

People are using Snapchat to sell smuggled guns

The Gulf’s war on smugglers
http://www.arabnews.com/node/1543406/middle-east

German owners call for fighting West Africa piracy

Ghana partners neighboring countries to fight piracy on Gulf of Guinea

Study on Amazon and Fake CDs Makes Sweeping Claims After Testing Fewer Than 100 Albums
INTERNET GOVERNANCE

Exporting digital authoritarianism
Alina Polyakova and Chris Meserole – Brookings: August 2019

Russia and China are pressing nations around the world to adopt their way of governing the internet. They are exporting their digital authoritarianism across the globe.

https://www.brookings.edu/research/exporting-digital-authoritarianism/

For more on this theme:

(Global) The Barlowian Internet: The Faults Of The Internet Are Also Its Opportunity, But It's Up To Us To Embrace Them
https://www.techdirt.com/articles/20190819/15270042820/barlowian-internet-faults-internet-are-al-also-opportunity-up-to-us-to-embrace-them.shtml

(Benin) Benin officially launches Internet Universality Indicators Assessment

(Global) World leaders, stand by these principles for a healthy digital society
https://www.g7openletter.org/

INTERNET FREEDOM

Australia will block domains with extremist material during terror attacks
Jon Fingas – Engadget: 25 August 2019

The Australian government plans to crack down on extremists who exploit digital platforms by posting violent content. Websites and social media companies that host terrorist material during attacks will be blocked.


For more on this theme:

(Australia) Canberra's creeping culture of secrecy

(Hong Kong) The Hong Kong Internet Service Providers Association warns that restricting online access would be ruinous for the region

(China) China Intercepts WeChat Texts From U.S. And Abroad, Researcher Says

(Ethiopia) Months after pledge to open internet, Ethiopia disrupts connectivity amidst communal violence, tension
PRIVACY AND SECURITY

I Visited 47 Sites. Hundreds of Trackers Followed Me.

Shockingly, or not so, everything we do online is tracked and logged. We essentially have no privacy. A journalist demonstrates by having all his digital activity tracked and examined in detail.

For more on this theme:
(Global) What is the right way of regulating social media?
https://www.thehindu.com/opinion/op-ed/what-is-the-right-way-of-regulating-social-media/article29291424.ece

(India) The seduction of data sovereignty in India

(Kazakhstan) Web Giants Counter Kazakhstan’s Spying Tool

(Global) Is Privacy Dead in the World of the Internet of Things?

CYBER STATECRAFT DEVELOPMENT

What Would Happen If the Whole Internet Just Shut Down All of a Sudden?
Daniel Kolitz – Gizmodo: 19 August 2019

If the internet suddenly disappeared, would chaos ensue? Gizmodo asked a number of experts what they imagine would happen.

For more on this theme:
(India, France) Indo-French road map on cyber security and digital technology

(EU, U.K.) Brexit could cause major disruption to EU-UK data flows

(Global) The WIRED Guide to Cyberwar
https://www.wired.com/story/cyberwar-guide/
CYBER CAPACITY BUILDING

Developing Indonesia’s digital ecosystem
Teresa Umali – Open Gov: 29 August 2019
The Indonesian government is creating a digital ecosystem, according to a recent press release. The country hopes to mitigate risks and disruption and boost digital economic development.
https://www.opengovasia.com/developing-indonesias-digital-ecosystem/

For more on this theme:
(Philippines) Gov’t allots P1.1 B for free Internet in public places
(Nigeria) Digital transformation: How ready is Nigeria?
https://www.sunnewsonline.com/digital-transformation-how-ready-is-nigeria/
(Mexico) Timeline: Mexico’s efforts to expand broadband service through wholesale deals

PROTECTION OF INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

Canberra to create cyber and IP taskforce to protect unis from foreign interference
Chris Duckett – ZDNet: 28 August 2019
The Australian government plans to establish a University Foreign Interference Taskforce to protect sensitive research from foreign governments.

For more on this theme:
(China, U.S.) Real China threat isn’t trade. It’s national security and intellectual property theft.
(Middle East) Middle East cyber-espionage is heating up with a new group joining the fold
https://www.zdnet.com/article/middle-east-cyber-espionage-is-heating-up-with-a-new-group-joining-the-fold/
(China, U.S.) China’s Spies Are on the Offensive
https://www.technewsworld.com/story/86211.html
CYBER ATTACKS, THREATS AND VULNERABILITIES

Hackers are actively trying to steal passwords from two widely used VPNs
*Dan Goodin – Ars Technica: 24 August 2019*

To nobody’s surprise, hacker groups have started exploiting vulnerabilities that were made public in August, launching attacks against enterprise VPN products such as Pulse Secure and Fortinet’s FortiGate.


*For more on this theme:*

(U.S., Iran) U.S. Cyberattack Hurt Iran’s Ability to Target Oil Tankers, Officials Say

(North Korea, South Korea) North Korean state hackers target retired diplomats and military officials

(Russia) Russian APT ‘Silence’ Steals $3.5 Million in One Year

COMBATING TERRORISM AND CYBER CRIME

Which Countries Are Best-Prepared for Cybercrime Response?
*Rob Marvin – PC: 16 August 2019*

When comparing how well countries are prepared to respond to cyber crime, it is no surprise that those countries with the more developed infrastructure and technical capabilities get the best marks. But readiness is only an indicator of the capacity to defend against such threats.

https://www.pcmag.com/news/370202/which-countries-are-best-prepared-for-cybercrime-response

*For more on this theme:*

(U.S.) Destination Atlanta: Ransomware Lessons for Municipalities and Law Enforcement

(Global) By 2021 Cost of Cybercrime to Top Annual Natural Disasters and Global Drug Trade Costs, Says Report

(Global) Disrupting Cybercriminal Strategy With AI and Automation
NOTEWORTHY PODCASTS

The CyberWire Daily Podcast – Episode 917
CyberWire: 29 August 2019

In this podcast, Professor Ben Yelin of the University of Maryland’s Center for Health and Homeland Security explains the proliferation of privately owned license plate readers, and Martin Zizi from the tech company Aerendir offers his perspective on biometric security technologies.

For more on this theme:
(Global) Hong Kong Protests and the Rise of Online Influence Operations
https://www.recordedfuture.com/podcast-episode-122/

(Global) Securing your SMS.

(Global) The CyberWire Daily Podcast – Episode 914

STRATEGY AND POLICY

India to unveil cyber security strategy policy in January
Press Trust of India – The Week: 28 August 2019

India will release its cyber security strategy policy in January to enable the government to “cyber-secure the nation,” which will also help the country achieve its goal of a $5 trillion economy, an official said.

For more on this theme:
(U.K.) UK goes back to square one on Huawei as Johnson promises to re-examine 5G access
https://www.computing.co.uk/ctg/news/3080405/huawei-5g-uk

(U.S.) NIST Lays Out Roadmap for Developing Artificial Intelligence Standards

(Global) Regional Power Struggles Explain the Rationale Behind Cyber Operations
https://www.cfr.org/blog/regional-power-struggles-explain-rationale-behind-cyber-operations

(NATO, Global) Cyber attack on NHS would trigger full Nato response, says alliance’s general secretary
PROGRAM ON TERRORISM AND SECURITY STUDIES (PTSS)

ISIS AND FOREIGN FIGHTERS

The Islamic State is far from defeated. Here’s what you need to know about its affiliate in Afghanistan.
Claire Parker – The Washington Post: 19 April 2019

According to the United Nations, the number of ISIS fighters in Afghanistan is somewhere between 2,500 and 4,000. While the group has no territory to call its own, it is still able to conduct attacks, particularly against soft targets. But experts disagree on how much of a threat the group represents.

India, Sri Lanka, Turkey On Radar Of Resurgent Islamic State
Eurasia Review: 17 August 2019

Afghanistan, Burkina Faso, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, India, Libya, Mali, Saudi Arabia, Sri Lanka and Turkey are territories where ISIS has sprung up and is active, according to a report by Armed Conflict Location and Event Data, a U.S.-based conflict monitoring and crisis mapping body.

For more on this theme:

ISIS Is a Survivor
https://foreignpolicy.com/2019/08/27/isis-is-a-survivor/

ISIS Is Regaining Strength in Iraq and Syria

Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi Relinquishes Control of ISIS, but not the Islamic Caliphate

India and ISIS

Western Countries Continue to Resist Return of ISIS Children

Citizenship Stripping Is Not The Only Way To Deal With British Fighters Returning From Islamic State

How Islamic State is undermining Tunisia’s impressive but fragile gains from the Arab Spring
https://www.alaraby.co.uk/english/indepth/2019/8/16/is-attacks-undermine-tunisias-fragile-arab-spring-gains
TERRORISM AROUND THE WORLD

The Real Risks of Allowing Terrorist Safe Havens
Hal Brands – Bloomberg: 27 August 2019

Safe havens are relevant today, and critics who say they are not are ignoring 20 years of experience. Leaving Afghanistan to become a terrorist safe haven again would be a mistake, according to the author.


Al-Qaeda not down and out, even if Hamza dead
Tatiana Kanunnikova – Asia Times: 27 August 2019

Hamza bin Laden’s life and reported death should be seen less as an end to al-Qaida and more of a symbolic victory over the group.


For more on this theme:

Why do terrorists attack places of worship?

A How-To Guide for Identifying Terrorists by Their Behavior
https://nationalinterest.org/blog/buzz/how-guide-identifying-terrorists-their-behavior-75161

Researching The Unresearched: Left-Wing Extremism And The Future Rules Of Governance – Analysis

Afghanistan’s Terror Threat Is Much Bigger Than the Taliban

Stacey Dooley investigates: ‘After my third husband died, they strapped a suicide bomb to me’
https://www.bbc.co.uk/bbcthree/article/2a93b8de-7b51-40f0-a7b8-9ec53fe97db3

How to Partner With the Taliban

Sectarian Violence and Jihadist Terrorism in West Africa

The fight against terrorism is far from over

Study Suggests Those Convicted of Terrorism Offenses Less Likely to Reoffend After Release
https://www.hstoday.us/subject-matter-areas/terrorism-study/study-suggests-those-convicted-of-terrorism-offenses-less-likely-to-reoffend-after-release/
RADICALIZATION AND MESSAGING

German state fights Islamist extremism with YouTube satire
Louisa Wright – Deutsche Welle: 25 August 2019

To fight Islamic extremism, one state in Germany is turning to wit and humor to save the day. North Rhine-Westphalia is using YouTube to launch a satirical channel to stop youths from becoming radicalized.


Controversial anti-radicalisation scheme Prevent could be scrapped as peer leading a new review admits ‘everything is up for discussion’
Joel Adams – Daily Mail: 23 August 2019

The man tasked with reviewing Prevent, the United Kingdom’s anti-radicalization program, has said “everything is up for discussion,” including scrapping the program. Former Parliament member Alex Carlile was appointed by the government to review Prevent, which seeks to stop people at risk of being radicalized from being drawn into terrorist ideologies.


For more on this theme:

Trouble in Sri Lanka
http://www.ft.lk/opinion/Trouble-in-Sri-Lanka/14-684814

Tackling terrorism and extremism before it starts

Socio-Political Profile Of Terrorism In South Asia – Analysis

Benevolent Radicalization: An Antidote to Terrorism

ISIS wives, children in Iraqi IDP camps ‘ticking time bomb’: security official
https://www.rudaw.net/english/middleeast/iraq/270820192

No easy way to deradicalize hate group members, experts say

India, UAE to intensify cooperation in de-radicalisation

No ‘silver bullet’ for extremism: Watts
https://www.innovationaus.com/2019/08/No-silver-bullet-for-extremism-Watts

New approach to understanding violent extremism
TERRORISM AND THE INTERNET

Internet infrastructure companies must help keep extremists offline
David Ibsen – The Hill: 16 August 2019

U.S. policymakers are joining the voices of their counterparts around the world in saying that social media companies need to do more to counter extremist content on their websites.


For more on this theme:

The physics professor who says online extremists act like curdled milk

How I stopped my teenager being recruited online

Sites like Facebook, Google and Twitter allowed white supremacists to flourish. Now what?

“Global Hate Highways” Reveal How Online Hate Clusters Multiply and Thrive
https://www.inverse.com/article/58681-online-radicalization-hate-cluster-map

WHITE NATIONALIST TERRORISM

New law needed to take on far-right extremism, says Blair thinktank
Jamie Grierson – The Guardian: 27 August 2019

A list of “designated hate groups” must be created so the British government can combat the types of extremism not covered by terror laws, a report has found. The Tony Blair Institute proposed that organizations on the list would be banned from making high-profile media appearances, thus preventing their ideology from spreading to new audiences. The report also suggests legislation that would allow these hate groups to be punished before they turn to violence.


For more on this theme:

Politicians pushing for laws to address domestic terrorism

Andrew C. McCarthy: Why a domestic terrorism law is a terrible idea

White Supremacist Terrorism And Islamophobia – OpEd
https://www.eurasiareview.com/28082019-white-supremacist-terrorism-and-islamophobia-oped/
IRREGULAR WARFARE

USE OF PROXY FORCES

How to Win Friends and Avoid Forever Wars
Betzalel Newman – Council on Foreign Relations: 14 August 2019

Think tank leaders offered a diverse set of recommendations for preventing and responding to internal violent conflict, including suggestions for improvements to conflict-mediation coordination between great powers and greater application of the “responsibility to protect” doctrine.


For more on this theme:

The Future of Conflict is Proxy Warfare, Again

Syria Changed the Iranian Way of War: And What That Means for a Future Conflict With the United States
https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/syria/2019-08-16/syria-changed-iranian-way-war

The Future of the Iraqi Popular Mobilization Forces

How a Proxy War Could Blow Up Iraq — Again

How Libya’s skies became battleground for UAE-Turkey proxy war
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