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COUNTERING TRANSNATIONAL ORGANIZED CRIME (CTOC)

CORRUPTION

Why some of Ghana’s private media fight corruption: reasons, rules and resources
Joseph Yaw Asomah – The Conversation: 21 October 2021
The Ghanaian media have mostly abandoned their watchdog functions in the Fourth Republic. Why?

Corruption complaints within Australia’s law enforcement agencies soar
Sarah Martin – The Guardian: 27 October 2021
Corruption complaints within Australia’s law enforcement agencies have surged to their highest level in 15 years, with almost 500 matters referred for investigation last year.

For more on this theme:
South Africa’s mixed messages on procurement corruption
https://issafrica.org/iss-today/south-africas-mixed-messages-on-procurement-corruption

Previous government did not have the will to fight corruption: Modi

Government Launches New Department to Fight Corruption in Public Administration

Former Iranian central bank chief sentenced to 10 years on corruption charges

Does South Africa need a new anti-corruption body or a new modus operandi?

DOJ Announces Central America Anti-Corruption Tip Line

Former head of Chinese weapons giant to face corruption charges after formal arrest approved

Senate seeks improved funding for ICPC to fight corruption
https://www.icirnigeria.org/senate-seeks-improved-funding-for-icpc-to-fight-corruption/
**DRUG TRAFFICKING**

**Arrest of most wanted Colombian crime lord unlikely to turn tide in drug war**
*Reuters: 26 October 2021*

Trafficking is likely to continue, with rebels, crime gangs and former guerrillas who reject a peace deal all participating in drug trafficking, according to security sources.


**Methamphetamine and online sales: How Mexican drug cartels are gaining ground in the US and Europe**
*Francesco Manetto – El Pais: 27 October 2021*

Mexican cartels have strengthened their presence in the United States and Europe, and drug seizures on the border have doubled, according to a new report from the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. Trafficking also has increased in Asia and Oceania.


Full report:

**Synthetic Drugs and New Psychoactive Substances in Latin America and the Caribbean 2021**

*For more on this theme:*

- **Entre Ríos: Argentina’s Rising Drug Trafficking Transit Hub**

- **Nigerian Mafia Use Venezuelan Drug Mules to Reach Europe**

- **Impact of Illicit Fentanyl Felt on Both Sides of US-Mexico Border**

- **The Brutal Drug Trafficking Matriarch Who Brought Down Her Own Clan**

- **Drugs, crime and protests: Ecuador stares into the abyss**

- **How Yachts Contribute to Trans-Atlantic Cocaine Trade**

- **From Afghanistan to Mozambique’s Cabo Delgado – the implications of Taliban rule for the southern African drug trade**

- **Las Patronas: The Rise of Female Drug Bosses in Latin America**
TRAFFICKING IN SCARCE OR PROTECTED RESOURCES

How Dogs Can Help Find — and Protect — Endangered Animals
Courtney L. Sexton – Slate: 26 October 2021
Animals at risk of extinction may have a new best friend.

Hidden costs of global illegal wildlife trade
University of Adelaide: 21 October 2021
An international team of experts, including researchers from the University of Adelaide, has highlighted that the illegal and unsustainable global wildlife trade has bigger ramifications on our everyday lives than you might think.
https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2021/10/211021121050.htm

For more on this theme:
Illegal logging by organized crime has depleted 15% of the country

Indigenous boys' drowning prompts allegations over illegal mining

In Guinea, an illegal $6b gold ‘bonanza’ threatens endangered chimpanzees

Pandemic's Economic Impact in Kenya Has Driven Some to Illegal Fishing

NGOs unite to #StopWildlifeCrime in Europe

Chile to Dubai, a Thriving Route for Gold Traffickers

After crackdown on cattle-smuggling, Indo-Bangladesh border sees spike in wildlife trafficking

‘Rapid evolution’ of tuskless elephants caused by ivory trade, scientists say

VP: Brazil to seek zero deforestation by 2028, up from 2030
HUMAN TRAFFICKING AND IRREGULAR MIGRATION

Facebook has known it has a human trafficking problem for years. It still hasn't fully fixed it
Clare Duffy – CNN: 25 October 2021
Facebook has for years struggled to crack down on content related to what it calls domestic servitude: “a form of trafficking of people for the purpose of working inside private homes through the use of force, fraud, coercion or deception,” according to internal Facebook documents reviewed by CNN.

Victims of human trafficking being ‘punished and stigmatized’
United Nations News: 27 October 2021
Victims of trafficking by terrorist groups are too often being punished instead of protected, a human rights expert warned the U.N. General Assembly.

For more on this theme:
No safe harbour: lifting the lid on a misunderstood trafficking crime
Trafficked to Europe for sex: A survivor’s escape story
UN, US sanction Libyan official over human trafficking
https://www.arabnews.com/node/1956261/middle-east
Why Education is One of the Best Human Trafficking Prevention Tool
Apple threatened to pull Facebook and Instagram from its app store over human trafficking
PROGRAM ON CYBER SECURITY STUDIES (PCSS)

INTERNET GOVERNANCE

India Internet Governance Forum Looks at Universal Internet Access
Samaya Dharmaraj – Open Gov: 26 October 2021
The India Internet Governance Forum (IIGF) curtain-raiser, a precursor to the main IIGF, has concluded. The objective of the curtain-raiser was to discuss the road map for digitization and reaffirm India as an essential participant on the global stage by highlighting its role in international policy development on internet governance.

For more on this theme:

(Global) The Fall and Rise of Techno-Globalism

(Global) Internet of Things (IoT): Regulatory Trends
https://www.verdict.co.uk/internet-of-things-iot-regulatory-trends/

(Global) Reflections on using Podcasts to Fight for Digital Rights

(China) A Chinese Starlink? PRC Views on Building a Satellite Internet Megaconstellation
https://jamestown.org/program/a-chinese-starlink-prc-views-on-building-a-satellite-internet-megaconstellation/

INTERNET FREEDOM

Slowdowns and shutdowns: Africans challenge internet restrictions
Kim Harrisberg and Nita Bhalla – Reuters: 27 October 2021
Internet curbs and shutdowns in African countries have disrupted communication and complicated everyday life for millions of people over the past year, with Sudan becoming the latest nation hit by sweeping connectivity blocks.
https://news.trust.org/item/20210811180324-le23s

For more on this theme:

(Global) Apple Still Plans to Scan Phones for Child Pornography. Experts Are Sounding the Alarm.

(Sudan) Sudan shuts down the internet after a military coup

(China) Microsoft to shut down LinkedIn website in China as internet censorship increases in the country
CYBER CAPACITY BUILDING

US State Department Creates Bureau to Tackle Digital Threats

Nike Ching – Voice of America: 27 October 2021

The U.S. State Department is creating a new Bureau of Cyberspace and Digital Policy to focus on growing threats. A new special envoy for critical and emerging technology will lead the technology diplomacy agenda with U.S. allies.


For more on this theme:

(U.S.) NSA is surging its collaboration with the private sector

(India) India in final stages of clearing national cybersecurity strategy

(Ghana) Security community sensitised to Cyber Security Act

CYBERCRIME

Ransomware: Industrial services top the hit list - but cyber criminals are diversifying

Danny Palmer – ZDNet: 25 October 2021

Ransomware gangs are heavily targeting industry with attacks, but increased competition means cybercriminals are expanding their targets.


For more on this theme:

(U.S.) Cyber Criminals Using Spoofed Unemployment Benefit Websites to Defraud U.S. Public

(Lagos) Lagos fights cyber crime with youth empowerment

(Global) How using the purple team approach helps in addressing cybercrime
https://www.hackread.com/purple-team-approach-addressing-cybercrime/

(Nigeria) ‘Nigeria Must be Deliberate in Building Competitive Technology Hub Centres’
Ransomware attacks in UK have doubled in a year, says GCHQ boss

The head of the United Kingdom spy agency GCHQ has disclosed that ransomware attacks on British institutions have doubled in the past year.


For more on this theme:
(U.K.) Cyber-attack hits UK internet phone providers

(Global) Natural Disasters Create Circumstances for Cyber Attacks

(U.S.) Ann Arbor transit system investigating cyber attack that caused temporary disruptions

Cyberattack Cripples Iranian Fuel Distribution Network
Elizabeth Montalbano – Threat Post: 27 October 2021

Gas pumps in Iran shut down as attackers flashed the phone number of Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei across video screens.


For more on this theme:
(Global) Shared Responsibility Key to Protecting Critical Infrastructure

(U.S.) FBI, NSA, CISA and EPA Issued Joint Cybersecurity Advisory on Cyber Threats Targeting Water Facilities

CYBER SURVEILLANCE AND SOCIAL CREDITS

China’s new strategies to control Uyghurs include community policing, targeting users of Mobile app Zapya
ANI: 21 October 2021

The methods used in Xinjiang are proving lucrative not only for local officials but for others across the country. Xinjiang has become a testing ground for the rest of China.

For more on this theme:
(Russia) Ignoring Sanctions, Russia Renews Broad Cybersurveillance Operation

(China) FCC revokes authorization of China Telecom’s U.S. unit
https://www.reuters.com/business/media-telecom/fcc-votes-terminate-china-telecom-americans-authority-provide-us-services-2021-10-26/

(U.S.) US rolls out new rules governing export of hacking and cyberdefense tools

(China) Foreign firms in China concerned over huge data transfer due to draconian social credit system: Report
A lull not a loss': Islamic State is rebuilding in Syria, say Kurdish forces

Martin Chulov – The Guardian: 14 October 2021

Those who fought the so-called ISIS caliphate fear a U.S. withdrawal could help the terrorist group to rise again.

Senior Pentagon official says ISIS-K could be capable of attacking US next year

Oren Lieberman and Ellie Kaufman – CNN: 26 October 2021

Speaking before the U.S. Senate Armed Services Committee, Undersecretary of Defense for Policy Colin Kahl said the group does not have the ability to attack the U.S. right now, but “we could see ISIS-K generate that capability in somewhere between six or 12 months.” He said that al-Qaida would take a year or two to rebuild that capability.

For more on this theme:

US Student Faces Prison for Helping Islamic State

Will US Drawdown in Iraq Reboot Islamic State Militants?

Analysis: Islamic State confirms Sahelian leader’s death, criticizes Al Qaeda

The Taliban Can’t Take on the Islamic State Alone
https://warontherocks.com/2021/10/the-taliban-cant-take-on-the-islamic-state-alone/

Biden administration attempts to overcome reluctance of nations to repatriate Islamic State fighters from Syria

Ahead Of Talks, Putin Claims IS Has 2,000 Fighters In Afghanistan
https://www.rferl.org/a/putin-afghanistan-islamic-state-fighters/31511407.html

Some IS-Linked Western Women in Syrian Camps Seek Redemption

German ISIS bride sentenced to 10 years in prison over death of Yazidi girl left to die in sun
TERRORISM AROUND THE WORLD

**Profit from illicit mining, not political power, behind insurgency in Great Lakes**
*Patrick Ilunga – The East African: 24 October 2021*

Huge profits from mineral smuggling is the main reason behind a surge in rebel movements in Africa’s Great Lakes region.


**UN Says Boko Haram is Weakened, but Remains a Threat, Calls for Renewed Efforts to Rebuild Cameroon**
*Moki Edwin Kindzeka – Voice of America: 21 October 2021*

A top United Nations official for Central Africa recently visited the Lake Chad Basin to assess living conditions in the area. Years of attacks by Boko Haram have left much of the infrastructure in ruins.


*For more on this theme:*

**Lebanon MPs hide in fear of Hezbollah assassins**
https://www.arabnews.com/node/1949251/middle-east

**Taliban promise cash, land, to families of suicide bombers**
https://apnews.com/article/afghanistan-kabul-taliban-f5a69b1c2676f9345b8dce490798d4ee

**Norway and England Bow-and-Arrow and Political Assassination Attacks Reveal Lone Actor Jihadist Terrorism Trend in Europe**

**Hijrah to Arakan? The Stunted Start of Rohingya Jihadism in Myanmar**

**Pakistan’s Peace Talks with Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan: Ten Times a Failure?**

**Blurred Photos Of Interior Minister Haqqani Raise Questions About What The Taliban Has To Hide**
https://gandhara.rferl.org/a/taliban-photos-sirajuddin-haqqani/31530629.html

**Still Dangerous, Boko Haram Hanging On in West Africa**

**Facebook did little to moderate posts in the world’s most violent countries**

**U.S. airstrike in Syria kills al Qaeda senior leader, Pentagon says**
RADICALIZATION

The Extremism Equation: Busting Myths About Terrorism
BORGEN Magazine: 26 October 2021

Since 9/11, poverty reduction has been on the radar of developed countries to counter terrorism. However, people are still skeptical of the connection between poverty and terrorism. Violent extremism exploits numerous factors and uses many variables; much like a mathematical equation, there is no single variable that determines violent extremism.

https://www.borgenmagazine.com/extremism/

For more on this theme:
Uganda pilots UN project to de-radicalise prisoners
https://www.monitor.co.ug/uganda/news/national/uganda-pilots-un-project-to-de-radicalise-prisoners-3589850

IRREGULAR WARFARE: PROXY FORCES AND PRIVATE MILITARY GROUPS

UN urges CAR to cut ties with Russia’s Wagner mercenaries over rights abuses
France 28: 24 October 2021

United Nations experts urged the Central African Republic to cut ties with Russia’s Wagner group, accusing the private security force of violent harassment, intimidation and sexual abuse.


For more on this theme:
Iran behind attack on US base at al-Tanf: report

IRREGULAR WARFARE: CYBER

Microsoft: Russian-backed hackers targeting cloud services

Microsoft said the same Russia-backed hackers responsible for the 2020 SolarWinds breach continue to attack the global technology supply chain and have been relentlessly targeting cloud-service companies and others since summer.

https://apnews.com/article/technology-business-europe-russia-1e65777560b39e35209e11dbccfcab1f

For more on this theme:
Russian Cyber Gang Grief Claims Ransomware Attack On NRA
https://www.forbes.com/sites/teakvete@2021/10/27/russian-cyber-gang-grief-claims-ransomware-attack-on-nra/?sh=17b0f7742423

US warns that Chinese government is using ‘wide variety’ of methods, some illegal, to steal trade secrets
https://www.cyberscoop.com/china-ai-quantum-national-security/
IRREGULAR WARFARE: INFORMATION OPERATIONS AND MALIGN INFLUENCE

Australia expands footprint in Southeast Asia to tackle China’s influence
Tom Allard – Independent: 27 October 2021

Australia and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations agreed to establish a “comprehensive strategic partnership,” a sign of Canberra’s ambition to play a bigger role in the region.
https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/australasia/australia-southeast-asia-china-influence-b1946380.html

For more on this theme:

- China hounds Taiwan with ‘greyzone’ war plane incursions
  https://news.yahoo.com/china-hounds-taiwan-greyzone-war-035919214.html
- Australia accuses China of undermining world trade
- China’s U.N. Interference Reaches a Brazen New Stage
  https://www.nationalreview.com/corner/chinas-u-n-interference-reaches-a-brazen-new-stage/
- China exploits Afghan vacuum
- China’s influence in South Asia grows amid Covid-19 pandemic: Report
- Is Russia Starting to Sour on China?
  https://thediplomat.com/2021/10/is-russia-starting-to-sour-on-china/
- Wake Up: China Is Engaging in Media Warfare Against Taiwan
  https://nationalinterest.org/blog/buzz/wake-china-engaging-media-warfare-against-taiwan-195477
- How China Learned to Harness Israel’s Media and Booming Tech Scene
- Europe must defend itself against Vladimir Putin’s energy weapon
  https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/ukrainenews/europe-must-defend-itself-against-vladimir-putins-energy-weapon/
- Kosovo Expels Two Russian Diplomats
  https://www.rferl.org/a/kosovo-expels-russian-diplomats/31524923.html
- Three groups of influence pushing Russia’s interests operating in Ukraine — NSDC secretary