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COUNTERING TRANSNATIONAL ORGANIZED CRIME (CTOC)

CORRUPTION

How Corruption Gets in the Way of Happiness in Bangladesh
Mahmudul Islam – The Diplomat: 4 November 2023
If high economic growth alone could make a nation happier, Bangladesh’s happiness ranking should have advanced over time.

What’s behind the latest corruption trial in Hanoi?
Zachary Abuza – Radio Free Asia: 5 November 2023
The anti-corruption campaign seems to be no longer be targeting senior officials instead focusing on their proteges, families, and business partners.

For more on this theme:

Portugal’s prime minister resigns as his government is involved in a corruption investigation
https://apnews.com/article/portugal-corruption-arrests-costa-935d9f33c9e5179e920dc7e1bcd95eea

Indian journalist targeted with NSO spyware, anti-corruption group says

Former Indonesian information minister sentenced to 15 years for corruption

Malaysian lawmaker found guilty of corruption by high court – Bernama

Zelenskiy says Kyiv can ensure reconstruction is free from corruption
https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/reuters-next-zelenskiy-says-kyiv-can-ensure-reconstruction-is-free-corruption-2023-11-08/

Ukraine issues arrest warrant for lawmaker alleged of corruption

How Slain Colombian Journalist May Be Proved Right on Corruption Claims

UN Global Compact Launches Call-to-Action for Companies and Governments to Work Together on Strengthening Governance and Anti-Corruption Efforts
DRUG TRAFFICKING

Drug trafficking imperils national park and Indigenous reserves in the Peruvian Amazon
Enrique Vera – Mongabay: 3 November 2023

Deforestation for illegal drug production is on the rise in and near Otishi National Park, Asháninka Communal Reserve and Machiguenga Communal Reserve.

‘Cheaper than beer’: Laos meth prices plummet as Myanmar chaos fuels trade
Alastair McCready – AlJazeera: 7 November 2023

Front-line workers say methamphetamine pills are now being sold for as little as 25 cents each as traffickers flood the country with unprecedented amounts of drugs.

For more on this theme:

UN Warns of Growing Money Laundering, Shadow Banking Risk from Mekong Casinos

Treasury Sanctions Sinaloa Cartel Network Flush with Illicit Fentanyl on Southwest Border

Ecuador Seizes Tons of Drugs with US Cooperation

Turkey arrests alleged Australia drug kingpin in big crime bust

Suriname VP, Ex-President Linked to Drug Trafficking in Colombia AG Emails

Oracle Employee Helped Cocaine Dealers Hide $54 Million In Crypto, DOJ Says

Belgium in race to burn seized cocaine before gangs steal it back

A new drug is worsening the fentanyl crisis and complicating treatment

‘The country, the whole region, is being flooded’: tracking meth to Australia
TRAFFICKING IN SCARCE OR PROTECTED RESOURCES

S’pore scientists apply faster, cheaper DNA method to trace origins of poached pangolins
Shabana Begum – The Straits Times: 6 November 2023

Scientists in Singapore have used cheaper techniques to show that smuggled pangolin scales from massive seizures in 2019 were probably from previously untouched parts of western and west-central Africa.

Ex-FARC members aim to restore 1 million native trees in the Colombian Amazon
Monica Pelliccia – Mongabay: 7 November 2023

Former fighters in the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia are working to restore the region through a cooperative called Comucum. Their goal, despite ongoing conflicts and danger, is to counteract deforestation from illegal mining, logging and coca cultivation.

For more on this theme:

75% of exclusive hardwood may be illegally harvested

Guatemalans Fight To Reclaim Central America’s Largest Reserve From Illegal Activities

Tinubu Takes Bold Steps To End Illegal Mining Activities
https://sciencenigeria.com/tinubu-takes-bold-steps-to-end-illegal-mining-activities/

Illegal Mining in Ghana: The Devastating Destruction for Gold

How a Tiny Team of Journalists Held the World’s Biggest Fishing Fleet to Account

Illegal wildlife trade has become one of the ‘world’s largest criminal activities’

Combatting Illegal Exotic Pet Trade: New Campaign Focuses On EU Regulation

Wildlife crimes in Cameroon: Prosecution needs to be bolstered as poaching remains a menace despite measures

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INTERNET GOVERNANCE

China Renews Its Pitch on AI Governance at World Internet Conference
Shannon Tiezzi – The Diplomat: 9 November 2023

The big question is whether the country’s initiative will get a buy-in from the other major players — starting with the United States.


For more on this theme:

(Global) Cyber Governance: Growing Expectations for Information Security Oversight and Accountability

(Global) WHOIS data discussions and internet governance: key takeaways from ICANN78 in Hamburg: Domain Watch (Oct/Nov)

(Canada, Global) Ottawa’s lack of support for Montreal bid for global Internet conference is a win for autocracy

INTERNET FREEDOM

First ever Russia VPN lawsuit filed against Kremlin’s censorship machine
Chiara Castro – TechRadar: 2 November 2023

The provider, HideMyName, sues the infamous regulator. More than 167 virtual private networks have already reportedly been blocked in the country.


For more on this theme:

(Russia) Russian Government’s Battle to Control the Internet: VPNs in the Crosshairs

(Yemen) Yemen: Human rights groups condemn internet blocking and censorship

(China) China removes anonymity of bloggers’ accounts with more than 500,000 followers
https://www.reuters.com/world/china/china-removes-anonymity-bloggers-accounts-with-more-than-500000-followers-2023-10-31/
CYBERATTACKS

Biggest-ever DDoS attack threatens companies worldwide, and other cybersecurity news to know this month

Akshay Joshi – The European Sting and World Economic Forum: 2 November 2023

Companies including Google and Amazon say they have fought off the world’s biggest distributed denial of service attack, but are warning internet users that cybersecurity measures must be stepped up.


For more on this theme:

(Cyprus) Cyberattacks hit 25 per cent of Cyprus businesses
https://cyprus-mail.com/2023/10/27/cyberattacks-hit-25-per-cent-of-cyprus-businesses/

(UK) UK organisations vulnerable to 48% of cyber attacks, Tenable research reveals
https://datacentrenews.uk/story/uk-organisations-vulnerable-to-48-of-cyber-attacks-tenable-research-reveals

(Israel, Iran) Israel’s cyber defense chief tells CNN he’s concerned Iran could increase severity of its cyberattacks

CYBER CAPACITY BUILDING

Ghanaian Armed Forces to establish Cyber Security and Electronic Warfare Directorate

Military Africa: November 2023

The country’s military recognizes the critical need to safeguard its data, networks and communication infrastructure from cyberattacks.

For more on this theme:

(UK, Southeast Asia) The United Kingdom commits to cyber capacity building in Southeast Asia

(Singapore) 5G launches cybersecurity training programme

(Global) How digitalization can improve climate resilience in the Global South
CYBERCRIME

How a tiny Pacific Island became the global capital of cybercrime
Jacob Judah – MIT Technology Review: 2 November 2023

Despite a population of just 1,400, Tokelau’s .tk domain had more users than any other country, until recently. Here’s why.

For more on this theme:
(India) Cyber threats pose serious challenges to India’s digital transformation dreams

(Kenya) Kenya cyber-attacks down 55pc on awareness drives, digital signatures

(Global) Forty countries agree to stop paying cyberattack ransoms at US summit

CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE PROTECTION

India’s Cyber Vulnerabilities Grow
Rajeswari Pillai Rajagopalan – The Diplomat: 6 November 2023

Unless New Dehli makes security of information and data a priority, the consequences will be severe.

For more on this theme:
(U.S., Iran) U.S. officials hold their breath for Iranian cyberattacks

(Global) How to Protect the Offshore Oil and Gas Industry Against Cyberattack

(Global) Undersea war; the Internet Cables War between the US and China

(Global) Guarding the gates: a look at critical infrastructure security in 2023
PROGRAM ON TERRORISM AND SECURITY STUDIES (PTSS)

TERRORISM AROUND THE WORLD

Groups linked to al-Qaida and the Islamic State take root on the coast of West Africa
Sam Mednick – The Associated Press: 8 November 2023
Militants have been spreading from the vast, arid expanse south of the Sahara Desert into the continent’s wealthier nations.
https://apnews.com/article/benin-jihadi-violence-sahel-africa-70cf142cfedf49a2f59cc59664483d54

Opinion: How jihadist groups are using the Israel-Hamas war to inspire and recruit lone wolf extremists
Colin P. Clarke – LA Times: 6 November 2023
It didn’t take long after the attack in Israel for terrorist groups to flood the internet with praise for the killings. The next step for entities such as al-Qaida and the Islamic State group is to capitalize on antisemitism to fuel homegrown attacks in the West.

For more on this theme:
Operation Black Lion: Challenges That Lay Ahead of Somalia's Second Phase of the Offensive

Fight against terrorism across EU strengthened by more information sharing with Eurojust

How do we stop terrorism when its repercussions are so devastating?

Is Indonesia at Risk of Terror Attacks During the Presidential Election?

A Revival of Online Terror Propaganda Ecosystems in Afghanistan and Pakistan

As the Middle East strains, fears of extremism rise

How anti-Semitism is a breeding ground for terrorism
https://asiatimes.com/2023/11/how-anti-semitism-is-a-breeding-ground-for-terrorism/
Israel says Hamas won't rule Gaza. So who will?

Greg Myre – NPR: 6 November 2023

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu says his country will never again let Hamas rule the territory. But here's the problem: Right now, no one else wants to rule the Gaza Strip.


For more on this theme:
The global consequences of the Israel–Hamas war

Hamas is fighting ‘sacred’ war with Israel, says Hezbollah chief

Netanyahu’s premiership will not outlast the war with Hamas

How Hezbollah Sees the War in Gaza
https://www.cfr.org/in-brief/how-hezbollah-sees-war-gaza

Hezbollah chief Hassan Nasrallah makes first speech on Israel-Gaza war

G7 nations urge ‘urgent action’ to help civilians trapped in Gaza, including pauses in the fighting
https://apnews.com/article/japan-us-g7-blinken-gaza-russia-de8e0b1f293e91781de84de6d70df249

Terror-gram: Hamas channels on Telegram are soaring – and Israel can't do anything
https://www.calcalistech.com/ctechnews/article/dd3bdl4wj

How Hamas aims to trap Israel in Gaza quagmire

Israel-Hamas War Poses New Security Challenges for Europe
https://www.voanews.com/a/7343655.html

One of Israel's military challenges in Gaza is dealing with Hamas’ network of tunnels

Goldman Sachs says the Israel-Hamas war could have major implications for Europe's economy

Hamas Attack Will Inspire Greatest US Terror Threat since ISIS, FBI Director Says
https://www.hstoday.us/subject-matter-areas/counterterrorism/hamas-attack-will-inspire-greatest-us-terror-threat-since-isis/fbi-director-says/
For more on this theme:

Freeing hostages, hosting Hamas: Qatar’s influence in Israel-Gaza war, explained
https://www.npr.org/2023/11/02/1210110109/qatar-israel-gaza-hamas-war

Israel–Hamas war misinformation is everywhere. Here are the facts
https://apnews.com/article/israel-hamas-war-fact-check-e829d1dddcc2dad05f99c6f353ad

Israel–Hamas 2023 Symposium – What Is and Is Not Human Shielding?
https://lieber.westpoint.edu/what-is-and-is-not-human-shielding/

Israel–Hamas 2023 Symposium – Participation in Hostilities During Belligerent Occupation
https://lieber.westpoint.edu/participation-hostilities-during-belligerent-occupation/

Israel–Hamas War Divides Latin America Along Partisan Lines

Amid War in the Middle East, India-Israel Ties Reach New Milestone

Heather Ashby on How the Israel-Hamas War Affects Russia and Ukraine

How Iran Really Sees the Israel-Hamas War
https://foreignpolicy.com/2023/11/02/how-iran-really-sees-the-israel-hamas-war/

‘Everybody got it wrong’: How did Israel fail to detect Hamas’ planned invasion?

War with Hamas to cost Israel above $50 billion, Calcalist reports

Iranian State Media Confirm Meeting between Khamenei, Hamas’ Haniyeh in Tehran

In a Worldwide War of Words, Russia, China and Iran Back Hamas

Israel-Hamas war: Lebanese peace plan reflects country’s lack of appetite for more conflict

Defense Department Continues to Stress Law of War With Israel
ISRAEL/HAMAS

For more on this theme:

Israel’s military spokesperson says Hamas has lost control in northern Gaza
https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/israels-military-spokesperson-says-hamas-has-lost-control-northern-gaza-2023-11-08/

China’s Response to the Israel–Hamas War

Israel has only weeks to defeat Hamas as global opinion sours, former PM Ehud Barak says

Analysis: Houthis declare war on Israel, but their real target is elsewhere
https://www.aljazeera.com/features/2023/11/2/analysis-houthis-declare-war-on-israel-but-their-real-target-is-elsewhere

Release Of Hostages Could Be First Step Towards Ending Gaza War – Analysis

Interview: The War on Disinformation
https://iwpr.net/global-voices/interview-war-disinformation

Will the Palestinian Authority survive Israel's war on Gaza?
https://www.newarab.com/analysis/will-palestinian-authority-survive-israels-war-gaza

Middle East Power Play: The Israel-Palestine Conflict In US-Iran Rivalry – Analysis

IntelBrief: Palestinian Politics Key to Post-Hamas Gaza
https://thesoufancenter.org/intelbrief-2023-november-7/

IntelBrief: Diplomacy Aims to Secure Hundreds of Hostages Caught Up in Gaza War Fighting
https://thesoufancenter.org/intelbrief-2023-november-6/

IntelBrief: Iran's Proxy Network Provides Tehran with Strategic Depth in the Middle East
https://thesoufancenter.org/intelbrief-2023-november-3/

Hamas wants to wreck years of US efforts to mend Israel-Arab ties — and it looks like it's working

The Gaza war raises questions about the future of Iran's Resistance Axis
ISRAEL/HAMAS

For more on this theme:

‘Backlash Effect’: Why the Middle East Conflict Triggers Hate Crimes in the US

Opinion: Defeating Hamas would be a win for the Muslim world

Latin American Countries’ Diplomatic Tensions Amid Israel-Hamas Conflict

How Does the Israel-Hamas War Impact Russia and Ukraine?

Hear Putin speak on Israel-Hamas war

Russia is turning increasingly hostile toward Israel as it picks sides in the Middle East

Central Asia Fears Israel-Gaza War Could Fuel Radicalisation
https://iwpr.net/global-voices/central-asia-fears-israel-gaza-war-could-fuel-radicalisation

Aid to Ukraine and Israel is Connected

Central Asian Countries Try To Manage Public Passions Around Israeli-Palestinian Conflict
RUSSIA/UKRAINE

The Need for Strategic Patience in Ukraine
Kristine Berzina and Jackson Janes – The German Marshall Fund of the United States: 8 November 2023

Leaders in the United States and Europe need to push back against so-called “Ukraine fatigue” with a truthful narrative that makes clear what is at stake in the war and how long it could take to achieve the objectives.

https://www.gmfus.org/news/need-strategic-patience-ukraine

For more on this theme:
Russia seeks benefit from the Gaza conflict
https://www.iowayinstitute.org/the-interpreter/russia-seeks-benefit-gaza-conflict

Israel-Hamas war: Is Russia benefiting from the conflict?
https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/explained-global/israel-hamas-russia-benefit-9012443/

What Does the Conflict in the Middle East Mean for Ukraine?
https://carnegieendowment.org/politika/90945

Ukraine Frets Over Media's New Focus on Middle East
https://iwpr.net/global-voices/ukraine-frets-over-medias-new-focus-middle-east

Putin Prepares for Reelection Amid Potemkin Villages and a Virtual Russia
https://carnegieendowment.org/politika/90905

Some Preliminary Thoughts on Ukraine’s Position in the War

Europe’s Concerns of Falling International Support for the Ukraine Effort

G7 ‘united’ on Ukraine as Russia warns over Western ‘aggression’

EU executive to propose starting membership talks with Ukraine as Russia war drags on
https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/eu-weighs-advancing-ukraines-membership-bid-russia-war-drags-2023-11-06/

North Atlantic Council statement on the Allied response to Russia’s withdrawal from the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe
https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natoqs/official_texts_219811.htm

Putin insists Russia and China are not building Cold War-like alliances as defense officials meet
RUSSIA/UKRAINE

For more on this theme:

North Korea sends Putin tons of ammo. Europe can’t do the same for Ukraine

Russia reportedly is using Ukrainian POWs to fight in their homeland on Moscow’s side

Europe can’t afford to get war fatigue, Ukrainians tell Meloni

How Ukraine is Pioneering New Ways to Prosecute War Crimes
https://time.com/6331902/ukraine-war-crimes-prosecutor/

Silent Victim: Environmental Damage From Russia-Ukraine War Totals $56 Billion

US says Russia funds Latin America-wide anti-Ukraine disinformation drive

Russians not collectively to blame for Ukraine war: Human rights expert

Peace is impossible while Vladimir Putin denies Ukraine’s right to exist
https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/ukrainealert/peace-is-impossible-while-vladimir-putin-denies-ukraines-right-to-exist/

Why aren’t more Russians opposing the Ukraine war?

Ukraine war: the Wagner Group is back, led by Prigozhin’s son, Russian media report

Russia's Unprovoked Invasion Of Ukraine Taking Huge Toll On Children's Education, Says Rights Watchdog

Chinese Strategists Evaluate the Use of ‘Kamikaze' Drones in the Russia-Ukraine War

Russian disinformation campaign draws false parallels between Ukraine and Gaza
RUSSIA/UKRAINE

For more on this theme:

Analysis: Hamas's asymmetric warfare against Israel – lessons from Ukraine

Russia Violates Promises Of Pay, Pardons For Contract Soldiers – Analysis

Zelenskyy says the Israel-Hamas war is distracting from Russia’s invasion of Ukraine. It is, which benefits Putin.

Russia Continues to Forcibly Recruit Prisoners and Migrant Workers for War in Ukraine (Part Two)

The Kremlin Resumes Nuclear Testing in Escalation of War in Ukraine (Part Two)