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COUNTERING TRANSNATIONAL ORGANIZED CRIME (CTOC)

CORRUPTION

US will resume food aid to millions across Ethiopia after monthslong pause over massive corruption

*The Associated Press: 15 November 2023*

The United States Agency for International Development says it plans to restart deliveries in December, five months after halting its program over massive corruption by local officials.

https://apnews.com/article/ethiopia-usaid-food-aid-resumption-us-3588aeb9788f9d52da082ca02ed95e06

For more on this theme:

Portuguese prosecutors reportedly mistranscribed wiretaps that implicated PM in corruption scandal


Sri Lankan Parliament asks cricket board officials to resign over corruption charges


Myanmar Military Court Sentences Ousted General to 5 Years for Corruption


Canada needs to move beyond poorly enforced bribery laws and tackle corruption’s root causes


The Dictators’ Bank: How Central America’s Main Development Bank Enabled Corruption and Authoritarianism


Sean Smith: What behavioural science can teach us about corruption


Educate youth vs corruption, lawmaker urges

https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1853777/educate-youth-vs-corruption-lawmaker-urges

Chinese Military Corruption Won’t Slow PLA Expansion, Panel Says

https://news.usni.org/2023/10/31/chinese-military-corruption-wont-slow-pla-expansion-panel-says

Leadership: Russian Internal Conflicts and Corruption


How China’s Anti-Corruption Campaign Impacted Firm Performance

DRUG TRAFFICKING

Cocaine still Colombia drug gangs' top export despite fentanyl's ascendancy
Luis Jaime Acosta – Reuters: 15 November 2023

Rising use, low production costs and logistical advantages could lead producers to focus on fentanyl, a police official said, but cocaine remains the country's top drug export.


How a Brazilian prison gang became an international criminal leviathan
Tom Phillips – The Guardian: 11 November 2023

The First Capital Command arose in the country’s notoriously brutal penitentiaries 30 years ago but now controls a billion-dollar drug trade supplying much of Europe’s cocaine.


For more on this theme:
Philippine Drug War Critic Free But Still Fighting

Pandas, fentanyl and Taiwan — takeaways from Biden's long-awaited meeting with Xi
https://apnews.com/article/joe-biden-xi-jinping-takeaways-c8384d40661322aa276ee8ca97f35003

UN: Opium Cultivation in Afghanistan Plunges By 95%

Cocaine: How do you destroy two tonnes of illegal drugs?

Huge cyber leak offers new proof of how Maduro has turned Venezuela into a narco-state

Did a stimulant known as ‘the drug of jihad' fuel Hamas terror on Oct. 7?

NarcoFiles: The new Criminal Order

South Africa Witnesses A Surge In Drug Smuggling Cases From Brazil

Cocaine Everywhere All at Once: How Drug Production Is Spreading Into Central America, Europe, and Beyond
TRAFFICKING IN SCARCE OR PROTECTED RESOURCES

Wildlife Trade Body takes steps to combat illegal trade in tigers, precious timbers, sharks and elephants.
WWF: 10 November 2023
The CITES Standing Committee closed its 77th session in Geneva having successfully covered a wide range of issues.

How wild monkeys ‘laundred’ for science could undermine research
Gemma Conroy – Nature: 16 November 2023
Demand is fueling an illegal trade, but smuggled monkeys carry diseases that can disrupt experiments and lead to unreliable data.
https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-023-03533-1

For more on this theme:
Deforestation continues in Kenya’s largest water capturing forest, satellites show

Colombia Amazon deforestation seen down 70% through September – minister

Community forest association helps hold the line to protect Mount Kenya forest

Lifted sanctions on gold, oil could slow conservation efforts in Venezuela

China Bends to Seoul’s Demands on Tracking Fishing Boats

Montenegro: Dynamite fishing ongoing despite ban

O.K. Coral: Outlaw fisher turns reef marshal in Indonesia’s Sumbawa

The Exotic Wildlife Trade Is Thriving in Texas

Deforestation in Brazilian Amazon down 22% in a year
PROGRAM ON CYBER SECURITY STUDIES (PCSS)

INTERNET GOVERNANCE
A Digital Protocol From Kyoto and a Cyber Message From Hamburg: IGF and ICANN Are Well Prepared for the Future
Wolfgang Kleinwächter – CircleID: 5 November 2023
The 18th Internet Governance Forum (IGF), with more than 9000 registered participants, was the largest IGF since its inception.

For more on this theme:
(�Global) Time to Act: Building the Technical and Institutional Foundations for AI Assurance

(�Global) The Role of Blockchain in Shaping the Future of Telecommunications and Internet Governance

INTERNET FREEDOM
Internet to the UN: Hands-Off
Fiona Alexander – CEPA: 7 November 2023
Russia, China and other authoritarian governments could use a new United Nations Digital Cooperation Forum to undermine internet freedom. Democracies are working to torpedo the idea.
https://cepa.org/article/internet-to-the-un-hands-off/

For more on this theme:
(�Global) 85% of people worry about online disinformation, global survey finds

(Turkey) Turkey’s spy chief had access blocked to hundreds of news articles, social media posts

(China, Israel) Wiped off the map: Chinese tech giants erase Israel
https://www.calcalistech.com/ctechnews/article/c6d0e19h1
CYBERATTACKS

Microsoft Discovers Chinese Cyber Group Spying on Guam, Other US Locations
Rojoef Manuel – The Defense Post: 6 November 2023

The group, called Volt Typhoon, specializes in espionage and information gathering that target critical infrastructure organizations.
https://www.thedefensepost.com/2023/11/06/us-chinese-cyber-spy-guam-microsoft/?expand_article=1

For more on this theme:

(Russia, Ukraine) “Infamous” Cyber Attack: Russian Malware Threatens Ukrainian Military Data

(Switzerland) Political motives behind cyberattacks on Swiss government websites
https://www.swissinfo.ch/eng/sci-tech/political-motives-behind-cyberattacks-on-swiss-government-websites/48946134

(UAE) UAE has thwarted 71 million cyber attacks this year, authorities say

CYBER CAPACITY BUILDING

Data Breaches Plague Philippines as Country Scrambles to Bolster Cyber Defences
Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada: 7 November 2023

A rash of recent cyberattacks targeting the government and private sector have undermined national security and exposed millions of citizens’ personal data.
https://www.asiapacific.ca/publication/data-breaches-plague-philippines-country-scrambles-bolster

For more on this theme:

(GLOBAL) Global cybersecurity workforce grows, but still confronts shortfall of 4M people

(India) Call to address the changing landscape of organised cybercrime in India

(SOUTH KOREA, NORTH KOREA, U.S.) S. Korea, U.S. pursue ‘wide range of actions’ against N. Korea’s cyberthreats: State Dept.
https://en.yna.co.kr/view/AEN20231108002200315

(SOUTHEAST ASIA) Strengthening Cyber Resilience in Southeast Asia
CYBER STRATEGY AND RISKS

Cyber Escalation in Modern Conflict: Exploring Four Possible Phases of the Digital Battlefield
Flashpoint: 7 November 2023

The cyber warfare phases in modern conflicts like Israel-Hamas and Russia-Ukraine illustrate the evolving threats in both virtual and physical battlefields.

https://flashpoint.io/blog/four-phases-cyber-warfare/

For more on this theme:
(China, Global) Defense Department Report Highlights Cyber Threat from China

(Australia) Could Australia’s Cybersecurity Strategy Benefit From More Data Science Rigour?

(EU) Europe is trading security for digital sovereignty
https://cyberscoop.com/europe-cybersecurity-digital-sovereignty/

CYBERCRIME

Key Highlights from the 2023 UK Cyber Crime Landscape
Tripwire: 8 November 2023

It’s 2023, and the landscape of cybercrime in the United Kingdom is evolving unprecedentedly. This year’s cyber threat landscape is shaped by many factors, from the continuing effects of the global pandemic to the ever-expanding digital footprint of individuals and organizations.

https://www.tripwire.com/state-of-security/key-highlights-uk-cyber-crime-landscape

For more on this theme:
(Malaysia) Malaysia setting up new anti-cybercrime task force

(Global) Rise in Cybercrime Exploiting Artificial Intelligence Hype Leads to Growing Threats Within the .ai Domain Space
https://circleid.com/posts/20231108-artificial-intelligence-hype-leads-to-growing-threats-within-.ai-domain-space

(Nigeria) Journalist’s Trial Renews Concern About Nigeria’s Cybercrime Law
A Network of Possibilities: How the Haqqani Network Changed the Face of Global Terrorism Forever
Apurva Ramakrishnan – Georgetown Security Studies Review: 13 November 2023
The international community often overlooks the Pakistan/Afghanistan-based organization that continues to play a strong role across prominent Islamist movements.

Hezbollah operations in South America: what we know
Agence France-Presse: 10 November 2023
The arrest in Brazil of two people accused of planning terrorist attacks has put a spotlight on alleged operations by the Lebanese militant group, which Israel says orchestrated the plot.

For more on this theme:
What is Tehreek-e-Jihad Pakistan, the group that attacked Pakistan air force base?

The role of cryptocurrency in financing terrorist organizations
https://www.pbs.org/newshour/show/the-role-of-cryptocurrency-in-financing-terrorist-organizations

Kidnappings in the Sahel – a favoured weapon of war

Hungary Intelligence Warns of Taliban Involvement in Migrant Smuggling at Serbia Border

Crowdfunding for Terrorism Financing
https://www.hstoday.us/subject-matter-areas/counterterrorism/crowdfunding-for-terrorism-financing/

The TTP’s Rhetoric And Identity Politics: A Threat To Pashtun Culture – OpEd

Somalia’s Al-Shabaab Offensive Stalls After Early Success

Of stigmatisation and repentant Boko Haram terrorists
ISRAEL/HAMAS

Israel-Hamas war: How tech, social media spur misinformation
Rita Cheng – Radio Free Asia: 8 November 2023

Impartial audiences find themselves grappling with the challenge of distinguishing fact from fiction.


For more on this theme:

Let's Talk About Hamas and ‘Intelligence Failure'

Israel and the Court of Public Opinion

IntelBrief: What is Egypt's Role in the Future of Gaza?
https://thesoufancenter.org/intelbrief-2023-november-13/

Arab and Muslim leaders demand immediate end to Gaza war

The Gaza war probably won't change Iran's nuclear strategy. It'll make it difficult to reach a long-term agreement, though.
https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/iransource/gaza-israel-iran-nuclear-strategy/

An Interview with Erik Skare on the Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ)
https://www.icct.nl/publication/interview-erik-skare-palestinian-islamic-jihad-pij

Online Platforms' Responses to Terrorism
https://www.lawfaremedia.org/article/online-platforms-responses-to-terrorism

Israel’s War Cabinet: A Brief History of War Powers and Institutional Ambiguity
https://www.lawfaremedia.org/article/israels-war-cabinet-a-brief-history-of-war-powers-and-institutional-ambiguity

How the conflict between Hamas and Israel fuels terror threats in the West

Generative AI sees spike in extremists propaganda use amidst Israel-Hamas war

Lebanon front with Israel heats up, stoking fears of wider war

Hezbollah's strategic calculation: Israel, Gaza and the domestic equation
ISRAEL/HAMAS

For more on this theme:

Iran’s Proxies in Syria Move Toward Escalation With Israel

EU weighs sanctions against Iran over Israel-Hamas war
https://www.politico.eu/article/eu-weighs-sanctions-against-iran-over-israel-hamas-war/

Hostages at center of Israel’s focus

Tensions rise in U.K. amid large-scale protests over Israel-Hamas war
https://www.pbs.org/newshour/show/tensions-rise-in-u-k-amid-large-scale-protests-over-israel-hamas-war

UN rights chief says both Israel and Hamas have committed war crimes

Despite the pain of the Israel-Hamas war, freedom of speech must be protected

What Israelis Think of the War With Hamas
https://time.com/6333781/israel-hamas-poll-palestine/

Israel-Hamas 2023 Symposium – Targeting Gaza’s Tunnels
https://lieber.westpoint.edu/targeting-gazas-tunnels/

Israel-Hamas 2023 Symposium – Distinction and Humanitarian Aid in the Gaza Conflict
https://lieber.westpoint.edu/distinction-humanitarian-aid-gaza-conflict/

The Israel-Hamas war is exposing Europe’s divisions

Can a Two-State Solution Survive the Israel-Hamas Conflict?

Will Netanyahu step down after Israel-Hamas war is over?

Cyber ops linked to Israel-Hamas conflict largely improvised, researchers say
https://cyberscoop.com/iran-reactionary-opportunistic-hamas-israel/

Nearly half of Gaza home have been destroyed, damaged by Israel-Hamas conflict: UN
https://thehill.com/policy/international/4305328-nearly-half-of-gaza-home-have-been-destroyed-damaged-by-israel-hamas-conflict-un/
ISRAEL/HAMAS

For more on this theme:

Hamas planned extensive attacks on Israel for over a year, documents reveal: Report

The Arab Gulf and Israel’s War on Gaza
https://carnegieendowment.org/sada/91002

Could AI Redeem the Israel-Hamas War?
https://www.techopedia.com/could-ai-redeem-the-israel-hamas-war

UN report warns war has already set Gaza and West Bank economy back more than a decade

Analysis: How would Israel find, map, take and keep Gaza’s tunnels?

Israel faces new fronts of attack in its war against Hamas

Everything Secretary of State Antony Blinken Has Said About the Israel-Hamas War

Germany suggests UN take control in Gaza after Israel-Hamas war ends

For Hezbollah, Timing Is the Essence
https://carnegie-mec.org/diw/90972

China, Ukraine, and Israel in the cyberwar spotlight as tensions rise

Arab Leaders Fear Their Countries And Region Face Risk Of Insecurity – Analysis

Arab And Muslim Leaders Put Limited Influence And Differences On Display – Analysis

On a knife’s edge: How the conflict in Gaza could tip the scales in North Africa

War in the Middle East Is Boosting Russia-Turkey Ties
https://carnegieendowment.org/politika/91020
ISRAEL/HAMAS

For more on this theme:

Podcast: What Does Russia Stand to Gain From the Israel-Hamas War?
https://carnegieendowment.org/politika/90963

How the Israel-Hamas War could help Russia’s war campaign in Ukraine

RUSSIA/UKRAINE

China’s support for Russia has been hindering Ukraine’s counteroffensive
Markus Garlauskas, Joseph Webster and Emma C. Verges – Atlantic Council: 15 November 2023

Russian President Vladimir Putin visited Beijing in October to meet with his Chinese counterpart, Xi Jinping, as Ukraine’s counteroffensive against Russian invaders stalled. It is important to acknowledge another vital factor behind Ukraine’s struggle to regain its land – the People’s Republic of China’s economic lifeline to Moscow.
https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/new-atlanticist/chinas-support-for-russia-has-been-hindering-ukraines-counteroffensive/

For more on this theme:

Sustaining peace in Ukraine: the Sinai model

Amid Shelling, Kherson Marks Year Since Liberation From Russia
https://www.voanews.com/a/zelensky-addresses-paris-peace-forum/-7350804.html

Ukraine’s top general believes technology can defeat Putin’s Russia
https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/ukrainelert/ukraines-top-general-believes-technology-can-defeat-putins-russia/

Some Ukraine drone pilots fear early advantage over Russia now lost

Zelensky Reveals Key Conditions for Ceasefire With Russia
https://www.newsweek.com/zelensky-ukraine-russia-ceasefire-conditions-1842358

Under Pressure, Central Asia Migrants Leaving Russia Over Ukraine War

Ukraine Says Those Calling for Talks With Russia ‘Uninformed’

How Russia is recruiting Wagner fighters to continue war in Ukraine
RUSSIA/UKRAINE

For more on this theme:

Ukraine sees NATO air technology as key to a breakthrough on the ground

Why Ukraine refuses to negotiate with “habitual liar” Vladimir Putin

Importing Instability – How the War Against Ukraine Makes Russia Less Secure

Ukraine wants frozen Russian assets for war damage, not just interest
https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/ukraine-wants-frozen-russian-assets-war-damage-not-just-interest-2023-11-09/

A long road to freedom: How Russia stole 2,000 Ukrainian prisoners

How a secret underground movement is battling the Russian occupation of Crimea

Understanding China’s Policy in the Russia-Ukraine War and Implications for China-US Relations

Give Putin His Ceasefire, Get Another War
https://cepa.org/article/give-putin-his-ceasefire-get-another-war/

Putin’s War: Where Does It End?
https://cepa.org/article/putins-war-where-does-it-end/

Putin fears the emergence of Ukraine as a modern, democratic state: UK statement to the OSCE

Russia and Ukraine are building up huge armies, but they both have the same problem with using them in battle

What’s next for Ukraine’s bid to join the European Union

Blinken Promises Ukraine Support for Winter
https://www.voanews.com/a/blinken-promises-ukraine-support-for-winter-/7353853.html
RUSSIA/UKRAINE

For more on this theme:

**Mass Protests Against Putin’s Mobilization Planned in Russia**
https://www.newsweek.com/mass-protests-putin-mobilization-russia-ukraine-war-1843888

**OSINT takes center stage in Russia’s war in Ukraine**
https://defence-blog.com/osint-modern-warfare-ukraine-defense/

**Ukraine braces for another winter of Russian attacks on power grid**
https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/ukrainealert/ukraine-braces-for-another-winter-of-russian-attacks-on-power-grid/

**Reports of Russian pullback in Ukraine: a skirmish in the information war**
https://apnews.com/article/russia-ukraine-pullback-reports-media-fake-d14a8d8f42e7f4334c-7f241a94c16901

**Turkic States Cut Their Ties With Mother Russia – Analysis**

**Moscow Purges Security Officials And Takes Preventative Steps In North Caucasus**

**Russian Popular Attitudes Not A Constraint On Putin As Far As His War In Ukraine Goes**

**EU Enlargement: A View from the North**
https://cepa.org/article/eu-enlargement-a-view-from-the-north/