

THE MARSHALL CENTER

transnational weekly



A CURRENT AWARENESS SERVICE FROM THE MARSHALL CENTER

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COUNTERING TRANSNATIONAL ORGANIZED CRIME (CTOC)

CORRUPTION

Pope vows to fight corruption but sees it as uphill struggle

Philip Pullella – Reuters: 30 October 2020

Pope Francis hints he's ramping up his fight against corruption in the Vatican, weeks after the ousting of a cardinal over embezzlement accusations.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-pope-corruption/pope-vows-to-fight-corruption-but-sees-it-as-uphill-struggle-idUSKBN27F22S>

Hundreds of crooked cops in South Africa under investigation for corruption

Business Tech: 4 November 2020

The South African Police Service has admitted that nearly 400 of its members are implicated in corruption. It surmised that the majority of offenders are low-ranking officials.

<https://businesstech.co.za/news/government/445728/hundreds-of-crooked-cops-in-south-africa-under-investigation-for-corruption/>

For more on this theme:

Goldman Sachs subsidiary pleads to US charges in 1MDB probe

<https://apnews.com/article/politics-malaysia-najib-razak-asia-538f0543e305ccf31b665c3fca6c01bf>

Ex-Ninevah governor arrested as Iraqi government reins in corruption

<https://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2020/10/iraq-baghdad-tahrir-nineveh-corruption-protests-kadhimi.html>

In Beirut port, all of Lebanon's ills are laid bare

<https://www.reuters.com/article/uk-lebanon-crisis-port-insight/in-beirut-port-all-of-lebanons-ills-are-laid-bare-idUKKBN27D1JF>

Berlin's 'new' airport: A story of incompetence and corruption

<https://www.dw.com/en/berlins-new-airport-a-story-of-incompetence-and-corruption/av-55459073>

UN drugs and crime wing advises Kenya to use blockchain against corruption

<https://cointelegraph.com/news/un-drugs-and-crime-wing-advises-kenya-to-use-blockchain-against-corruption>

Former Kazakh Health Minister Detained in Corruption Probe

<https://thediplomat.com/2020/11/former-kazakh-health-minister-detained-in-corruption-probe/>

Zelensky newly determined to root out corrupt oligarchs and Russian influence

<https://www.eureporter.co/frontpage/2020/11/03/zelensky-newly-determined-to-root-out-corrupt-oligarchs-and-russian-influence/>

South Africa's draft procurement bill falls short of what's required to fight corruption

<https://theconversation.com/south-africas-draft-procurement-bill-falls-short-of-whats-required-to-fight-corruption-148454>

TRAFFICKING IN SCARCE OR PROTECTED RESOURCES

China's Crackdown on Illegal Fishing Rings Hollow

Adam Minter – Bloomberg: 2 November 2020

China has launched a 100-day crackdown on illegal fishing in its territorial waters. Ironically, China's distant fishing fleets are the leading culprits of illegal fishing in other countries' waters.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/opinion/articles/2020-11-02/china-s-illegal-fishing-crackdown-rings-hollow>

'Era of Pandemics' to Intensify Without Transformative Change, Report Says

Steve Baragona – Voice of America: 30 October 2020

Science experts warn that deadly pandemics are likely to keep happening if action is not taken to protect natural environments.

<https://www.voanews.com/covid-19-pandemic/era-pandemics-intensify-without-transformative-change-report-says>

For more on this theme:

From safaris to slaughter: Butchered for valuable horns, rhinos are among the tragic victims in a new poaching epidemic - as Africa's deserted game reserves lose the tourist millions that protected its wildlife wonders

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-8849595/How-Africas-deserted-game-reserves-shifted-safaris-slaughter.html>

Romania's forests – source of biodiversity, resource for 'wood mafia'

<https://www.euractiv.com/section/energy-environment/news/romania-s-forests-source-of-biodiversity-resource-for-wood-mafia/>

Working group of nations go after China's flags of convenience

<https://www.seafoodsource.com/news/environment-sustainability/working-group-of-nations-go-after-china-s-flags-of-convenience>

Illegal Fishing Increasing Due To Covid

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/videos/2020-10-09/2020-election-the-final-stretch-video>

Colombia's President Duque confident in cutting deforestation in half

<https://in.reuters.com/article/colombia-environment-idINKBN27D2PS>

Indonesia balances war on illegal fishing with international obligations (commentary)

<https://news.mongabay.com/2020/10/indonesia-balances-war-on-illegal-fishing-with-international-obligations-commentary/>

China's 'Dark' Fishing Fleet Lays Waste to Global Ecosystems

<https://www.rfa.org/english/news/china/fishing-10262020123150.html>

Ghanaian workers report alleged abuses on Chinese-owned fishing vessels

<https://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/Ghanaian-workers-report-alleged-abuses-on-Chinese-owned-fishing-vessels-1095754>

Researchers find most shark fins in fish markets are from species caught in coastal zones, not the open ocean

<https://phys.org/news/2020-10-shark-fins-fish-species-caught.html>

DRUG TRAFFICKING

Mexican Cartels Are Using More U.S. Citizens to Smuggle Drugs Because of COVID

Deborah Bonello and Luis Chaparro – VICE: 5 November 2020

Some 90% of recent apprehensions for smuggling drugs at ports of entry along the Mexico-United States border were U.S. citizens. Last year, that figure was significantly less, about 70%.

<https://www.vice.com/en/article/88aazb/mexican-cartels-are-using-more-us-citizens-to-smuggle-drugs-because-of-covid>

For more on this theme:

Nicaragua Not Spared As Cocaine Flows Through Central America

<https://www.insightcrime.org/news/analysis/nicaragua-cocaine-flows/>

'Not guilty': Mexican ex-army chief pleads in high stakes cartel case

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-mexico-corruption/mexican-ex-defense-minister-to-plead-in-drugs-case-straining-u-s-ties-idUSKBN27L2MP?il=0>

Colombia Farc: The former rebels who need bodyguards to stay safe

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-latin-america-54778291>

HUMAN TRAFFICKING AND IRREGULAR MIGRATION

The pandemic has created a second crisis in India — the rise of child trafficking

Jessie Yeung and Priyali Sur – CNN: 26 October 2020

When India went into a strict lockdown in March, schools and workplaces closed. Human traffickers have exploited the situation by targeting desperate families, activists said.

<https://www.cnn.com/2020/10/24/asia/india-covid-child-trafficking-intl-hnk-dst/index.html>

For more on this theme:

DHS Launches Center to 'Combat and Dismantle' Human Trafficking

https://www.ntd.com/dhs-launches-center-to-combat-and-dismantle-human-trafficking_519128.html

Insights from Morocco into how smartphones support migration

<https://theconversation.com/insights-from-morocco-into-how-smartphones-support-migration-147513>

IOM launches continental strategy on migration for Africa

<https://eagle.co.ug/2020/10/24/iom-launches-continental-strategy-on-migration-for-africa.html>

Smith: COVID Puts More Children at Risk of Exploitation

<https://www.wtma.com/news/smith-covid-puts-more-children-at-risk-of-exploitation/>

ORGANIZED CRIME

Gangs in lockdown: Impact of Covid-19 restrictions on gangs in east and southern Africa

Julia Stanyard – Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime: October 2020

As the coronavirus pandemic began to infiltrate East Africa and Southern Africa, authorities across the region imposed unprecedented restrictions on the movements and freedoms of their citizens. Now gangs in South Africa and Kenya are using the COVID-19 ramifications to recruit children.

<https://globalinitiative.net/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Gangs-in-lockdown-Impact-of-Covid-19-restrictions-on-gangs-in-east-and-southern-Africa-GITOC.pdf>

For more on this theme:

Italian mafia sees German justice system as ‘a joke’

<https://www.dw.com/en/italian-mafia-sees-german-justice-system-as-a-joke/a-55285412>

Mexico City Braces for Impact from Jalisco Cartel Advance

<https://www.insightcrime.org/news/analysis/mexico-city-jalisco-cartel-impact/>

The Network: How a Secretive Phone Company Helped the Crime World Go Dark

<https://www.vice.com/en/article/v7m4pj/the-network-vincent-ramos-phantom-secure>

When the Italian Mafia Moved Into Aberdeen

<https://www.vice.com/en/article/88a9mx/antonio-la-torre-mafia-aberdeen>

Civil Society Observatory to counter organized crime in South Eastern Europe

<https://globalinitiative.net/analysis/seeobs-risk-bulletin-2/>

PROGRAM ON CYBER SECURITY STUDIES (PCSS)

INTERNET GOVERNANCE

Switzerland outlines digital foreign policy strategy

Swissinfo.ch: 4 November 2020

Switzerland wants to help shape international law to give people better control of their data and improve digital governance around the world. These are key pillars of the country's digital foreign policy strategy for 2021-2024.

<https://www.swissinfo.ch/eng/switzerland-outlines-digital-foreign-policy-strategy/46140976>

For more on this theme:

(Global) RIPE NCC Tackles Importance of Internet Governance and Its Impact on the Economy

<https://www.albawaba.com/business/pr/ripe-ncc-tackles-importance-internet-governance-and-its-impact-economy-1389066>

(Global) Statement by President von der Leyen at the roundtable 'Internet, a new human right' after the intervention by Sir Berners-Lee

https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/STATEMENT_20_1999

(Singapore) Singapore to work with UN to help nations implement norms for responsible cyber behavior

<https://www.straitstimes.com/tech/singapore-to-work-with-un-to-help-nations-implement-norms-for-responsible-cyber-behaviour>

INTERNET FREEDOM

Nigerians are bracing for another government attempt to regulate social media after national protests

Yomi Kazeem – Quartz: 3 November 2020

"We need a technology to shut down social media at will when it becomes a menace to the country's security," said Lai Mohammed, Nigeria's information minister, in a recent media briefing. With renewed calls for internet regulation now coming from key government leaders, two controversial pieces of proposed legislation might be resurrected.

<https://qz.com/africa/1926334/endsars-nigerian-government-looks-to-regulate-social-media/>

For more on this theme:

(China) Web browsers hopping the Great Firewall in China suggest a new era of opening up and a new means of control

<https://www.scmp.com/tech/apps-social/article/3105839/web-browsers-hopping-great-firewall-china-suggest-new-era-opening>

(China, Global) Chinese-style censorship is no fix for the COVID-19 infodemic

<https://www.eastasiaforum.org/2020/11/04/chinese-style-censorship-is-no-fix-for-the-covid-19-infodemic/>

CYBER STATECRAFT

National Cyber Security Strategy 2020-2023 is Launched!

News5 :5 November 2020

The Ministry of National Security in partnership with the Public Utilities Commission has launched Belize's first national cyber security strategy.

<https://edition.channel5belize.com/archives/211126>

For more on this theme:

(U.S., Iran) U.S. undertook cyber operation against Iran as part of effort to secure the 2020 election

https://www.washingtonpost.com/national-security/cybercom-targets-iran-election-interference/2020/11/03/aa0c9790-1e11-11eb-ba21-f2f001f0554b_story.html

(Global) Cybercrime: Nation-States Go Prime Time

<https://www.darkreading.com/vulnerabilities---threats/cybercrime-nation-states-go-prime-time/a/d-id/1339188>

(Asia) Vietnam exerts all efforts to maintain cyber security cooperation within ADMM-Plus: Commander

<https://en.vietnamplus.vn/vietnam-exerts-all-efforts-to-maintain-cyber-security-cooperation-within-admm-plus-commander/189720.vnp>

CYBER ATTACKS, THREATS AND VULNERABILITIES

Another Indian pharmaceutical giant reports cybersecurity breach within two weeks of ransomware hack on Dr Reddy's

Prabhjote Gill – Business Insider: 5 November 2020

Indian pharmaceutical company Lupin has confirmed that an “information security incident” has affected multiple internal systems. The incident comes within weeks of a ransomware attack on another pharma company, Dr Reddy's.

<https://www.businessinsider.in/tech/enterprise/news/lupin-reports-cybersecurity-breach-within-two-weeks-of-ransomware-hack-on-dr-reddys/articleshow/79061065.cms>

For more on this theme:

(Africa) Africa can't risk a major maritime cyber attack

<https://issafrica.org/iss-today/africa-cant-risk-a-major-maritime-cyber-attack>

(Global) Cyber-Espionage Group BAHAMUT Responsible for “Staggering” Number of Attacks

<https://www.infosecurity-magazine.com/news/cyber-espionage-bahamut-staggering/>

(Australia) Government must take cyber threat to democracy seriously

<https://www.aspistrategist.org.au/government-must-take-cyber-threat-to-democracy-seriously/>

CYBER CRIME

U.K. Spies Help NHS Fight Pandemic-Fueled Cyber Crime Attacks

Thomas Seal – Bloomberg: 2 November 2020

A state security agency in the United Kingdom is helping Britain's National Health Service repel a surge in cyber crime linked to the coronavirus pandemic.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2020-11-03/u-k-spies-help-nhs-fight-pandemic-fueled-cyber-crime-attacks>

For more on this theme:

(Global) When digital vigilantism turns into cybercrime

<https://issafrica.org/iss-today/when-digital-vigilantism-turns-into-cybercrime>

(U.S., Global) How Healthcare Organizations Can Combat Ransomware

<https://www.darkreading.com/vulnerabilities---threats/how-healthcare-organizations-can-combat-ransomware/a/d-id/1339173>

(U.S.) U.S. Hospitals Targeted In Rising Wave Of Ransomware Attacks, Federal Agencies Say

<https://www.npr.org/2020/10/29/928979988/u-s-hospitals-targeted-in-rising-wave-of-ransomware-attacks-federal-agencies-say>

CYBER CAPACITY BUILDING

COVID-19 pandemic accelerated pace of broadband penetration in India: Deloitte-CII report

Asian News International: 6 November 2020

A new report finds that the lockdown during the COVID-19 pandemic accelerated India's rapid pace of broadband penetration and data consumption.

<https://www.aninews.in/news/business/business/covid-19-pandemic-accelerated-pace-of-broadband-penetration-in-india-deloitte-cii-report20201106134855/>

For more on this theme:

(South Africa) South Africa has failed to harness the digital revolution: how it can fix the problem

<https://theconversation.com/south-africa-has-failed-to-harness-the-digital-revolution-how-it-can-fix-the-problem-147799>

CYBER PROTECTION OF CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

U.S. Department of Energy Launches Program to Enhance Partnerships Between Government and Critical Infrastructure

U.S. Department of Energy: 4 November 2020

The U.S. Department of Energy launched the Operational Technology Defender Fellowship that will deepen the cyber security knowledge of key U.S. front-line critical-infrastructure defenders.

<https://www.energy.gov/articles/us-department-energy-launches-program-enhance-partnerships-between-government-and-critical>

For more on this theme:

(Global) How Vulnerable Is Critical Infrastructure to a Cyberattack?

<https://www.govtech.com/blogs/lohrmann-on-cybersecurity/how-vulnerable-is-critical-infrastructure-to-a-cyberattack.html>

(Global) Intelligence to thwart cyber threats to shipping and ports

<https://www.rivieramm.com/news-content-hub/news-content-hub/intelligence-to-thwart-cyber-threats-to-shipping-and-ports-61612>

(India, Global) Threats to critical infra in post-Covid-19 world

<https://www.deccanherald.com/opinion/in-perspective/threats-to-critical-infra-in-post-covid-19-world-911882.html>

PROGRAM ON TERRORISM AND SECURITY STUDIES (PTSS)

ISIS AND FOREIGN FIGHTERS

Vienna gun attack by Islamic State sympathizer shatters an evening of revelry

Denise Hruby, Loveday Morris and Luisa Beck – The Washington Post: 3 November 2020

Austrian officials said a perpetrator of an attack in Vienna, Austria, that killed at least four people and wounded 14 others was an ISIS sympathizer.

https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/europe/austria-attacks-gunman-islamic-state/2020/11/03/cb-b4e6ec-1d6f-11eb-ad53-4c1fda49907d_story.html

IS finds biological warfare best weapon amid pandemic: Study

The Shillong Times: 31 October 2020

The Islamic State and al-Qaida propagandists blame Western or Chinese powers for creating and spreading COVID-19.

<https://theshillongtimes.com/2020/10/31/is-finds-biological-warfare-best-weapon-amid-pandemic-study/>

For more on this theme:

Jihadi Insurgency in Mozambique Grows in Sophistication and Reach

<https://ctc.usma.edu/jihadi-insurgency-in-mozambique-grows-in-sophistication-and-reach/>

Will Upcoming Trials of ISIS Women in Syria Speed Up Repatriations of Some?

<https://www.hstoday.us/subject-matter-areas/counterterrorism/will-upcoming-trials-of-isis-women-in-northeast-syria-speed-up-repatriations-of-some/>

Why the West Should NOT Worry about ISIS External Operations

<https://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/why-west-should-not-worry-about-isis-external-operations>

ISIS says it executed Vienna rampage

<https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2020/nov/3/isis-says-it-executed-vienna-rampage/>

Albanian IS Repatriation From Syria Will Be Long Journey, Experts Say

<https://www.voanews.com/extremism-watch/albanian-repatriation-syria-will-be-long-journey-experts-say>

Philippines: Security Forces Kill Islamic State Suspect, Foil Bomb Plot

<https://www.benarnews.org/english/news/philippine/suspect-killed-11052020121934.html>

Islamic State claims responsibility for church attack in Congo: Amaq

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-congo-islamic-state-security-idUSKBN27F2UV>

Asia Watch: ISIS sneaking back

<https://aijac.org.au/australia-israel-review/asia-watch-isis-sneaking-back/>

TERRORISM AROUND THE WORLD

Family Ties and New Recruits: Abu Sayyaf Proves Hard to Dislodge in the Philippines

Michael Hart – Geopolitical Monitor: 2 November 2020

The threat from the ISIS-affiliated Abu Sayyaf Group is alive and evolving rapidly in the Philippines. However, headline-grabbing tactics aside, its 6-year-old pledge of allegiance to the Islamic State now matters little. As in most of its 30-year history, Abu Sayyaf's violence is best explained by local dynamics, family ties and its ability to attract new recruits.

<https://www.geopoliticalmonitor.com/family-ties-and-new-recruits-abu-sayyaf-proves-hard-to-dislodge-in-the-philippines/>

Telegram battles to vet extremists flocking to its encrypted platform

Tom Ravlic – The Sydney Morning Herald: 1 November 2020

There is no evidence at this stage that the terrorist attack in Nice, France, used Telegram, but the app's administrators are struggling to stamp out terror-related accounts. Telegram has become home to various forms of extremism in recent years, including the far right, as an alternative to platforms such as Facebook.

<https://www.smh.com.au/technology/telegram-battles-to-vet-extremists-flocking-to-its-encrypted-platform-20201024-p5686q.html>

For more on this theme:

Afghanistan- Taliban fund war machine by mining Raghistan's gold

<https://menafn.com/1101057967/Afghanistan-Taliban-fund-war-machine-by-mining-Raghistans-gold&source=26>

Deadly Afghanistan Attack Points Towards Drone-Use by Taliban

<https://www.thedefensepost.com/2020/11/03/afghanistan-attack-taliban-drone/>

Yemen File

<https://www.criticalthreats.org/briefs/yemen-file/yemen-file-iran-may-be-increasingly-seeking-to-promote-al-houthi-relations-to-threaten-regional-rivals#110220TheSalafi-JihadiMovementinYemen>

Ex al-Qaeda leader warns of militant attacks on French citizens as Malaysia, Indonesia tighten security

<https://www.scmp.com/week-asia/politics/article/3108319/ex-al-qaeda-leader-warns-militant-attacks-french-citizens>

The truth behind Al-Qaeda's silence in Afghanistan

<https://asiatimes.com/2020/11/the-truth-behind-al-qaedas-silence-in-afghanistan/>

Al-Shabaab tries to regain control of key town in central Somalia

<https://www.garoweonline.com/en/news/somalia/al-shabaab-tries-to-regain-control-of-key-town-in-central-somalia>

RADICALIZATION AND MESSAGING

Philippine military will monitor Islamic schools to counter violent extremism: Will it work?

Umair Jamal – ASEAN Today: 5 November 2020

Evidence suggests that militants linked to the Islamic State have been using Islamic schools to radicalize young students, but the Filipino military and Muslim organizations need to work together to counter violent extremism in the country.

<https://www.aseantoday.com/2020/11/philippine-military-will-monitor-islamic-schools-to-counter-violent-extremism-will-it-work/>

For more on this theme:

'Repentant Boko Haram': A look at Operation Safe Corridor deradicalisation and rehabilitation camp

<https://www.icirnigeria.org/repentant-boko-haram-a-look-at-operation-safe-corridor-deradicalisation-and-rehabilitation-camp/>

Vocational training to prevent terrorism can be counterproductive

<https://issafrica.org/iss-today/vocational-training-to-prevent-terrorism-can-be-counterproductive>

How can religiously inspired ideas explain violent extremism in Egypt?

<https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/global-extremes/how-can-religiously-inspired-ideas-explain-violent-extremism-egypt/>

IRREGULAR WARFARE: DISINFORMATION AND MALIGN INFLUENCE

Designation of the National Association for China's Peaceful Unification (NACPU) as a Foreign Mission of the PRC

United States Department of State: 28 October 2020

The U.S. State Department designated the National Association for China's Peaceful Unification as a foreign mission of the People's Republic of China under the U.S. Foreign Missions Act. The goal of this action is to shine a light on this organization and make clear that their messages come from Beijing.

<https://www.state.gov/designation-of-the-national-association-for-chinas-peaceful-unification-nacpu-as-a-foreign-mission-of-the-prc/>

For more on this theme:

Pandemic Pushes Slovakia to Finally Target Disinformation

<https://balkaninsight.com/2020/10/20/pandemic-pushes-slovakia-to-finally-target-disinformation/>

Russian Disinformation Shadows Ukrainian-British-US Joint Endeavor 2020 Exercise

<https://jamestown.org/program/russian-disinformation-shadows-ukrainian-british-us-joint-endeavor-2020-exercise/>

A trans-Atlantic awakening to the China challenge

<https://share.america.gov/trans-atlantic-awakening-to-china-challenge/>