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1. Faulkner wants limited Afghan role, Jonathan Pearlman, SMH, 2009-06-15

The new Defence Minister, John Faulkner, has told his Dutch counterpart that Australia will not be taking over Holland's leadership role in southern Afghanistan. The move is likely to leave the US to fill the void, as it deploys more than 20,000 extra troops across southern Afghanistan.

2. Mission possible: Abort shopping spree, Brian Toohey, AFR*, 2009-06-13

Rather than rush into huge purchases, Faulkner should remedy one of the defects in the recent defence white paper by publishing comparative cost-effectiveness studies to justify the purchase of a particular weapons platform.
* Subscription required.

3. Heat of Afghanistan battle bonds brothers in arms, Tom Hyland, Age, 2009-06-14

A veil of official secrecy shrouding combat involving Australian SAS troops in Afghanistan has been lifted in Holland, revealing details of harrowing fighting that is still withheld by the Australian military. The Australian Defence Force keeps a tight grip on all information about special forces troops, especially the SAS. But an official report on a Dutch soldier's bravery award paints a detailed picture of the intense battles they have fought.

- Military Order of William, Netherlands Ministry of Defence*
  * Dutch language.

4. General David Petraeus flags a change of strategy in Afghanistan, Brad Norington, Australian, 2009-06-13

The US military's Central Command chief is predicting difficult times in the Afghanistan war, after the worst violence of the conflict erupted over the past week.
General David Petraeus gave a frank assessment about the deterioration of conditions in Afghanistan, saying the only hope lay in a revised strategy that combined a combat surge with greater emphasis on civilian needs.

- General Petraeus Keynote Address, Center for New American Security, 2009-06-11
- Insurgents want 'bloodiest' Afghan summer yet: Minister, ABC, 2009-06-15
- Afghan civilian casualties must be cut: US, NATO, AFP, 2009-06-13

5. Pakistan calls for help to defeat Taliban, Farhan Bokhari, Financial Times, 2009-06-14

Pakistan has warned that the Taliban could spread beyond its borders to neighbouring India and as far as the Persian Gulf, unless it receives international aid to help battle militancy on its soil. Shah Mahmood Qureshi, the foreign minister, said Pakistan would need up to $2.5bn (€1.8bn, £1.5bn) in emergency relief and for long-term reconstruction of the Swat valley and the surrounding region, once the fighting between government troops and militants, now in its final stage, had ended. That figure compares to the $1bn in aid initially estimated by government officials.

- Transcript: Interview with Pakistan’s foreign minister, Financial Times, 2009-06-14
- Pakistan declares war on Taliban leader Baitullah Mehsud, Saeed Shah, McClatchy, 2009-06-14

6. Indonesia: Deteriorating primary defense weapon system, Carolina Rumuat, Global Voices, 2009-06-11

Another Indonesian military helicopter crashed on Monday in Cianjur, West Java, raising concerns among Indonesians regarding the country's deteriorating Primary Defense Weapon System. Indonesia is currently having an unease bilateral relation with the neighbor country Malaysia over Ambalat. Despite the agreement made by both governments to eliminate show of force, many believes that it's a crucial moment for Indonesia to defend its sovereignty.

7. Japanese give POW Joe Coombs a hearing, Peter Alford, Australian, 2009-06-12

Joe Coombs, the Digger who slaved as a prisoner of war in mines owned by the family of Japanese Prime Minister Taro Aso, will meet Aso Corporation officials to make his case for compensation and demand an apology. The meeting is a breakthrough for the 88-year-old and other former POWs, because Mr Aso and the successor companies of Aso Mining have distanced themselves from the affair.

8. Mindanao: Poverty on the frontlines, Mark Dearn, openDemocracy, 2009-06-11

The Filipina economist Solita Collas-Monsod delivered a grim warning last month when she revealed that the number of people living in poverty in the Philippines is growing, despite sustained economic growth and a rising GDP. Growing economic inequality looks all the starker in the midst of the world's second longest running internal conflict, the ongoing violence in the south of the country.

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