

# APSNet Semi-Weekly Bulletin, November 19, 2009

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### **[1. Minister spurns PM's region idea](#), Daniel Flitton, Age, 2009-11-19**

Indonesia has blown Kevin Rudd a further diplomatic raspberry, this time taking aim at the Prime Minister's pet project to reshape regional ties in the Asia-Pacific. Indonesia's new Foreign Minister Marty Natalegawa said he wasn't convinced of the need for Mr Rudd's idea to build an "Asia-Pacific community" to tackle regional security and economic threats. "What benefit would there be by forming a new forum, having more meetings, more acronyms, with addressing challenges like climate change and poverty?" Mr Natalegawa said.

- [Rudd's foreign policy made on the run - and it's showing](#), Josh Frydenberg, SMH, 2009-11-17

## **[2. Australia expected to resettle asylum seekers](#), Geoff Thompson, ABC, 2009-11-19**

After four weeks off the coast of Indonesia, the Customs ship Oceanic Viking weighed anchor and began the journey back to Australian waters. The stand-off may be over but it has clearly left a bad taste in the mouths of many Indonesian officials, if not the country's president. Indonesia's top official dealing with the month-long saga, Dr Sujatniko, says the asylum seekers and his government expect Australia to keep its promise to resettle them soon.

- [SBY to visit Australia in February](#), Jakarta Post, 2009-11-18

## **[3. Nato chief promises Afghanistan will get 'substantially more forces'](#) Julian Borger, Guardian, 2009-11-17**

Nato and its allies will order "substantially more forces" into battle in Afghanistan over the next few weeks, the alliance's secretary general said. Barack Obama is expected to make a long-awaited declaration on US troop levels and strategy in the next few days. But Rasmussen pre-empted the president by predicting the alliance as a whole would pursue a broad counter-insurgency approach, requiring many more soldiers, rather than the narrower focus on counter-terrorism - such as targeting suspected jihadist leaders - advocated by the US vice-president, Joe Biden.

- [German cabinet approves extension of Bundeswehr missions](#), Michael Lawton, Deutsche Welle, 2009-11-18
- [Slovakia to Add 250 NATO Troops](#), Raphael G. Satter, AP, 2009-11-18

## **[4. British army tells soldiers to bribe Taliban](#), Michael Evans, Times Online, 2009-11-16**

British forces should buy off potential Taleban recruits with "bags of gold", according to a new army field manual. Army commanders should also talk to insurgent leaders with "blood on their hands" in order to hasten the end of the conflict in Afghanistan. The edicts, contained in rewritten counter-insurgency guidelines, mark a strategic rethink after three years in which British and Nato forces have failed to defeat the Taleban. The manual is also a recognition that the Army's previous doctrine for success against insurgents, which was based on the experience in Northern Ireland, is now out of date.

- [UK: Taliban must be in government](#), Aljazeera, 2009-11-18

## **[5. Spoils of war go East as Kabul looks for highest bidder](#), Jeremy Page, Times Online, 2009-11-19**

Thirty miles south of Kabul there is a complex of blue and white bungalows, ringed by a blast-proof fence, that bears testament to the new Great Game in Central Asia. Inside, several hundred Chinese engineers are renovating the Aynak copper mine, rights to which were bought by the state-run Metallurgical Corporation of China (MCC) in 2007 for \$3 billion. Outside, however, it is US troops from the 10th Mountain Division who keep the Taleban away from one of the world's largest untapped copper deposits. To some, this is welcome co-operation between the US and China which, despite mutual suspicion, share an interest in ridding Afghanistan of militants and drugs.

- [\\$30m bribe claim sours West's hope that Karzai can show he is fit to lead](#), Richard Beeston, Times

Online, 2009-11-19

- [Afghanistan runs on well-oiled wheels](#), Pratap Chatterjee, Asia Times, 2009-11-18

## **[6. Indian uranium sales a 'lost chance' for Australia](#), Brendan Nicholson, Age, 2009-11-19**

Canada's decision to resume uranium sales to India signals a huge lost opportunity for Australia, deputy Opposition leader Julie Bishop has said. A new agreement will give India the opportunity to buy nuclear technology and uranium from Canada for the first time since 1974, when Canada banned uranium sales after India used nuclear fuel from Canadian-made reactors to build an atom bomb. Australia has the world's biggest commercially viable uranium reserves but has refused to sell India uranium because India is not part of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

- [Nuclear deal with India near, Harper suggests](#), Rick Westhead, Star, 2009-11-18

## **[7. Pakistani military takes Taliban strongholds; Maulana Fazlullah surfaces in Afghanistan](#), Juan Cole, Informed Comment, 2009-11-18**

David Kilcullen's bizarre prediction last spring that the Pakistani government could fall to the Taliban or al-Qaeda within six months was always downright looney, but recent events have underlined the extent of its daftness. The 650,000-strong Pakistani army has made mincemeat of the Pakistani Taliban wherever they have seriously taken them on.

- [Warning that Pakistan is in danger of collapse within months](#), Paul McGeough, SMH, 2009-04-13

## **[8. Aust denies involvement in Iranian funding saga](#), Ednal Palmer, Solomon Star, 2009-11-18**

Australia has denied any involvement in the Iranian funding saga. "The Australian government had no role in ANZ's decision not to accept the transaction," High Commissioner Frank Ingruber said. It was reported recently that the Australian government prevented the ANZ bank from transferring funds from Iran to the Solomon Islands government to help pay the airfares of Solomon Islands students who will study in Cuba.

- [Australia forces Solomon Islands to return Iranian money](#), Alfred Sasako, Solomon Star, 2009-1-16
- [ANZ refuses Iran transfer to Solomons](#), Campbell Cooney, Australia Network News, 2009-11-17

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