

APSNet Semi-Weekly Bulletin, January 25, 2010

Recommended Citation

"APSNet Semi-Weekly Bulletin, January 25, 2010", APSNet Semi-Weekly Bulletin, January 25, 2010, <https://nautilus.org/apsnet/apsnet-25-january-2010/>

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[1. Australian defence force mulls options for increased role for reservists](#), Jamie Walker, Australian, 2010-01-25

The Australian Defence Force has acknowledged the potential for an increased role for reservists on the front line, saying it was examining options to make "more effective use" of them. The Weekend Australian revealed a secret plan before Defence chiefs to have part-time soldiers shoulder more responsibility in Afghanistan and other hot spots. Australia Defence Association executive director Neil James said it appeared that the government was maintaining its existing policy on sending reservists to war zones.

- [Weekend warriors facing front line in Afghanistan](#), Sean Parnell, Australian, 2010-01-23

2. Warships herald 'a new era', John Kerin, AFR*, 2010-01-22-26

The opening of a \$120 million shipbuilding facility at the government-owned ASC in Adelaide has paved the way for the ramping up of construction work on Australia's most complex naval shipbuilding project. Prime Minister Kevin Rudd opened the new facility and said the \$8 billion building project for the three Air Warfare Destroyers was one of the most complex engineering projects undertaken in Australia.

* [Subscription required]

3. Afghanistan to postpone elections, Matthew Green and Fazel Reshad, FT*, 2010-01-24

Afghanistan has postponed parliamentary elections from May to September, a move that will appease Western allies anxious to avoid a repeat of the massive fraud that marred last year's presidential polls. Western powers want Hamid Karzai, the president, to commit to electoral reforms as part of a raft of pledges he will make at conference in London this week in return for renewed international support in the face of a spreading Taliban insurgency.

* [May require free registration]

4. Okinawa mayor-elect opposes U.S. base, Martin Fackler, NYT, 2010-01-24

A candidate who opposes a planned American air base on Okinawa won a crucial mayoral election, raising pressure on Japan's prime minister to move the base off the island, something opposed by Washington. Sunday's election result in the small city of Nago could force Tokyo to scrap or at least significantly modify a 2006 deal to build a replacement facility in the city for the busy Futenma United States Marine air station, currently in a crowded part of the southern Japanese island.

- [Anti-U.S. base candidate Inamine wins Nago mayoral election](#), Kyodo News, 2010-01-25

5. US unveils civilian strategy for Afghanistan, Pakistan, Lachlan Carmichael, AFP, 2010-01-23

US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton unveiled a long-term, non-military strategy to stabilize Afghanistan and Pakistan that calls for sending more civilian experts to the region. A week before a London conference aimed at promoting Afghanistan's development, the new civilian strategy outlines plans to rebuild the Afghan farm sector, improve governance, and bring extremists back into mainstream society. It also calls for boosting neighboring Pakistan's capabilities to fight a growing Islamist insurgency and to enhance the US partnership with Islamabad, partly through supporting political and economic reforms.

- [US to end Pakistan 'trust deficit'](#), Aljazeera, 2010-01-22
- [Gates says Taliban must take legitimate Afghan role](#), Elisabeth Bumiller, NYT, 2010-01-22
- [Afghanistan will take longer to tackle than Iraq. General David Petraeus says](#), Deborah Haynes, Times, 2010-01-25

6. Looking ahead to North Korea's demise, Donald Kirk, Asia Times, 2010-0-23

If there's one sure way to infuriate the North Koreans, it's to talk of "regime collapse" and "contingency planning". As far as Pyongyang is concerned, such speculation is proof positive of United States-led plotting of a "pre-emptive strike". Against this background, one should not be surprised if the North Koreans see a study conducted by Rand Corporation analyst Bruce Bennett and Dartmouth College scholar Jennifer Lind as the most conclusive evidence to date that the planning is in an advanced stage.

- [Managing catastrophic North Korea risks](#), Bruce W. Bennett, Rand Corporation, 2010-01-21
- [N Korea issues warning to South](#), Aljazeera, 2010-01-24

7. Govt unconcerned as critics plan protest, Jakarta Globe, 2010-01-24

The government is playing down a protest to mark President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono's 100 days in office, saying it would bring nothing new but more traffic jams. "Nothing much will come out of this rally," State Minister for Youth and Sports Affairs Andi Mallarangeng said. Andi, a top executive in Yudhoyono's Democratic Party, defended the government's achievements in bringing development to the country and improving people's welfare. He said the rally was aimed at developing a people-power movement to oust the president, a goal outlined by the organizer, Petisi 28 — a group of activists and academics set up in October last year.

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