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1. Diggers assassinate Taliban leader Mullah Karim, Mark Dodd, Australian, 2009-08-25

Australian special forces have killed a senior Afghan Taliban leader, Mullah Karim, an officially sanctioned assassination designed to rid Oruzgan province of hardcore militants. Karim's death brings the number of senior insurgent leaders killed in top secret operations targeting Taliban militants responsible for attacks on coalition soldiers to more than half a dozen.

- Insurgent commander, Mullah Abdul Karim, killed in Oruzgan, Media Release, Department of Defence, 2009-08-26

2. Minister farewells AFP members to Afghanistan, Minister for Home Affairs, 2009-08-18

Australian Federal Police (AFP) members are deploying to Afghanistan to contribute to local police training and capacity building of the local police force. The AFP officers will deliver training activities and advise and mentor the Afghan and international trainers who are assisting to rebuild and retrain the Afghan National Police.

- AFP in Afghanistan, Australia in Afghanistan, Nautilus Institute
- A long and winding road: Australia's role in building an Afghan National Army, Raspal Khosa, ASPI, 2009-08-27

3. U.S. military says its force in Afghanistan is insufficient, Helene Cooper, NYT, 2009-08-24

American military commanders with the NATO mission in Afghanistan told President Obama's chief envoy to the region that they did not have enough troops to do their job, pushed past their limit by Taliban rebels who operate across borders. The commanders emphasized problems in southern Afghanistan, where Taliban insurgents continue to bombard towns and villages with rockets despite a new influx of American troops, and in eastern Afghanistan, where the father-and-son-led Haqqani network of militants has become the main source of attacks against American troops and their Afghan allies.

- Nato suffers deadliest year in Afghanistan since 2001 invasion, Ben Farmer, Telegraph, 2009-08-25
- Chinese troops offer an Afghan solution, Francesco Sisci, Asia Times, 2009-08-27

4. East Timor's stability being undermined, Adam Gartrell, SMH, 2009-08-27

The failure to pursue and prosecute most of those responsible for the violence that marred East Timor's 1999 independence vote poses a continuing threat to the country's stability, a new report warns. The Timorese and Indonesian governments have adopted policies aimed at reconciliation that have demoralised victims, not delivered them justice.

- We cry for justice, Amnesty International, 2009-08-27 [PDF, 460KB]
- An International Tribunal for Timor-Leste: an idea that won't go away, Patrick Walsh, Austral Policy Forum 09-17A, Nautilus Institute, 2009-08-27 [PDF 194 Kb, Indonesian version]

5. East Timor seeks pipeline action, Mark Dodd, Australian, 2009-08-27

East Timor has called for an end to delays over the development of the oil and gas-rich Greater Sunrise field in the Timor Sea after new interest from investors in Malaysia, China and South Korea. Dili says Malaysian, South Korean and Chinese parties have expressed support for a pipeline from the reservoir to a production facility in East Timor rather than in Darwin. East Timor Natural Resources Secretary Alfredo Pires said yesterday talks had been held recently with China on the feasibility of an LNG pipeline from Greater Sunrise to the south coast of East Timor.

6. Region's biggest maritime surveillance operation acts to stop illegal fishing, Anouk Ride, FFA, 2009-08-21

Operation Kurukuru 2009, a coordinated maritime surveillance operation in which countries cooperate to detect activities such as illegal, unregulated and unreported fishing, smuggling and people trafficking, was hosted by FFA over 10 days. It resulted in 8 boardings of vessels and 1

apprehension of a vessel which has been escorted to port for further investigation. Surveillance was conducted by individual countries within their respective EEZ's using 7 Pacific Class Patrol Boats. This was supported by aerial surveillance provided by 4 Maritime Patrol Aircraft (2 P-3 Orions supplied by Australia & New Zealand, a Guardian supplied by France and a Hercules C-130 from the US Coast Guard).

- Operation Kurukuru, Australia in Tonga, Nautilus Institute

7. Defence Treaty back on track, John Kerin, AFR*, 2009-08-26

Minister for Defence Materiel Greg Combet said a US-Australia defence trade treaty that would provide industry with better access to a $US300 billion a year weapons market was back on track after a 10 month delay. Mr Combet said the treaty should improve the government's management of it's $100 billion 10-year weapons procurement process because streamlining of approvals and licenses would help "expidite delivery of new defence projects".
* Subscription required

8. Rudd's hostility forces nuclear group to bale out, Phillip Coorey, SMH, 2009-08-25

Some of Australia's biggest nuclear power advocates have given up the cause, believing Australia has "missed the boat" on embracing the energy source. As the debate about nuclear power refuses to die amid the broader argument of climate change, it is understood that even if the Government changed its mind today, it would be at least 14 years before a plant could be built. This is because the demand for nuclear power has accelerated worldwide and there is a growing waiting list for the equipment to build a reactor.

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