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1. Burma's nuclear bomb alive and ticking, Desmond Ball and Phil Thornton, Bangkok Post, 2009-08-02

Our own starting position was one of deep skepticism, but the testimonies from two defectors forced us to consider the uncomfortable possibilities of a Burma with nuclear capability. The essence of Moe Jo and Tin Win's testimonies is that Burma has key parts of the nuclear fuel cycle already in place. In the event that the testimonies of the defectors are proved, the alleged ''secret'' reactor could be capable of being operational and producing one bomb a year, every year, after 2014.

- Burma and the bomb, Daniel Flitton, Age, 2009-08-01
- Sound the alarm: How to stop Burma from getting nukes, Catherine Collins, Foreign Policy, 2009-07-24
- Burma and nuclear proliferation: policies and perceptions, Andrew Selth, Regional Outlook Paper No. 12, 2007 [PDF, 216KB]

2. John Faulkner won't meet arms dealers, Matthew Franklin, Australian, 2009-07-31

Defence Minister John Faulkner has refused to attend a meeting of arms dealers and defence company executives who have paid the Labor Party up to $110,000 for special access to government ministers. Senator Faulkner had made clear he would not honour an agreement made by his predecessor, Joel Fitzgibbon, to host a roundtable of defence industry representatives organised for November by the Labor Party's NSW branch Business Dialogue. Labor was asking businesspeople to pay $110,000 for premium membership of the group, entitling them to special access to NSW and Rudd government ministers.

- Anna Bligh bans MPs from fundraisers, Sean Parnell and Nicola Berkovic, Australian, 2009-08-03
- Crisis may spark funding overhaul, Cosima Marriner, Age, 2009-08-01

3. Hu case would breach Australian law: China, ABC, 2009-08-03

A senior Chinese Government official says the crimes allegedly committed by Rio Tinto mining executive Stern Hu would have breached Australian law, had they happened here. The Chinese Government has rebuffed Australia's pleas for more details on the case against Mr Hu. The Chinese Vice Foreign Minister, Liu Jieyu, is visiting Australia to observe the Labor Party national conference.

4. Iraq experience helps stem the growth of evil flowers in Afghanistan, Patrick Walters, Australian, 2009-08-02

The past month has been by far the bloodiest for the US-led coalition in the eight-year war in Afghanistan. A great deal has been learned from Iraq, particularly in defeating IED's triggered by radio signals or other methods using the electro-magnetic spectrum. From the explosive ordnance expert on the ground using mini-robots to detect hidden devices to vehicles built to withstand roadside bombs and manned aerial vehicles able to conduct 24-hour surveillance using infra-red cameras, the IED threat has spawned remarkably swift and innovative counter-measures.

- July is deadliest month in Afghanistan for U.S. forces, foreign allies, Laura King, LA Times, 2009-07-31
- Civilian toll rising in Afghanistan, U.N. says, Sharon Otterman, NYT, 2009-07-31
- US set to ask Australia for more help in Afghan war, Peter Hartcher and Anne Davies, SMH, 2009-07-31
- IEDs and Counter IED Task Force, Australia in Afghanistan, Nautilus Institute

5. Afghan, Pakistani conflicts spilling into Central Asian states? Abdujalil Abdurasulov, Christian Science Monitor, 2009-07-30

A spate of militant clashes in Tajikistan may indicate that the conflicts in Afghanistan and Pakistan are spilling beyond their borders – a top concern for neighboring Central Asian nations and Russia. The rise in violence comes as Pakistan wraps up an assault on militants in the north and Western forces intensify a campaign against insurgents in Afghanistan ahead of an Aug. 20 election. The offensives may be pushing foreigners fighting in either country to flee the conflict and return home.

6. Flag lowered as last 12 Diggers leave Iraq, Mark Dodd, Australian, 2009-08-01

The last 12 Australian troops serving with US units in Iraq have finished their mission and are heading home, formally ending Canberra's controversial six-year involvement in the bloody conflict. Yesterday marked the historic fulfilment of a key election pledge by the Rudd government to withdraw all Australian combat forces from Iraq.

7. Mine killings put a vital treaty at risk, Jim Elmslie, Age, 2009-08-03

Without independent scrutiny, any findings by the Indonesian authorities [in the investigation into the recent shootings at the Freeport Mine in Papua] will be open to question. This would in turn undermine the Lombok Treaty. In fact, in the worst case, these crimes could be used as an excuse to tighten the screws on the West Papuans, to increase their suppression, and to stain their legitimate and peaceful calls for self-determination as the acts of a terrorist group.

- 5 more jailed as police investigate attacks near Freeport Mine, Farouk Arnaz, Jakarta Globe, 2009-07-31

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