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1. Australia, US call on China for war games, Jonathan Pearlman, SMH, 2009-09-03

The US and Australia will invite China to join three-nation military exercises to allay concerns about China's military ambitions and pave the way for stronger diplomatic ties. The head of the US Pacific Command, Timothy Keating, and the Chief of the Australian Defence Force, Angus Houston, met and agreed to approach the Chinese Ministry of National Defence separately to hold exercises and develop military relations ''at the earliest opportunity''.

- Biggest India-US war game follows China's largest army exercise, Indo-Asian News Service, Thaindian News, 2009-08-26

2. Jakarta to stiffen laws on terror, Stephen Fitzpatrick, Australian, 2009-0-

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Indonesia is considering tough new anti-terror legislation that would enable detention without charge for up to two years and prosecution of radical preachers who glorify terrorist acts. The new laws could see the targeting of Muslim clerics such as Abu Bakar Bashir, who gave his blessing to the 2002 Bali bombers but escaped attempts to convict him of terrorism.

- TNI siap bantu kepolisian atasi teroris, ANTARA, 2009-09-03 [Indonesian language]

3. PNG Cabinet considering State of Emergency in Morobe, RNZI, 2009-09-03

Papua New Guinea's National Executive Council, the Cabinet, is meeting now to decide whether a state of emergency should be declared in Morobe Province where disease has killed dozens of people since the middle of last month. Meanwhile it's been confirmed that dysentery and common flu, complicated by acute chest infections, are to blame for many of the deaths in the Menyamya district. Tests in Brisbane have eliminated H1N1, or swine flu, as the cause of the deaths. Dr Theo says the confirmed death toll in the region is 80 but he fears it will go higher.

- Triple killer diseases strike in PNG, Firmin Nanol, ABC, 2009-09-01
- Death toll from famine in Indonesia's Papua mounts, RNZI, 2009-09-03

4. Call for justice over journalists' killings, John Aglionby, Financial Times, 2009-08-28

José Ramos-Horta, East Timor's president, has called for those responsible for the death of Sander Thoenes, the Financial Times journalist killed during 1999 violence in the territory, to be brought to justice. "It's not that one human life is worth more or less," he told the FT. "It's that . . . we have hundreds, if not thousands of East Timorese who collaborated with Indonesians. Are we going to try everybody?"

- E Timor defends Indonesian's pardon, Al Jazeera, 2009-09-02
- U.N. condemns release of East Timor militia leader, China Post, 2009-09-02

5. NATO committed to Afghanistan regardless of poll worries, Reuters, 2009-09-02

NATO will remain committed to Afghanistan and must step up its effort there regardless of the outcome of contested presidential elections, the alliance's secretary-general said. Anders Fogh Rasmussen said it was for Afghans to judge whether the elections could be considered credible.

- Taliban surprising U.S. forces with improved tactics, Karen DeYoung, Washington Post, 2009-09-2
- Bomb kills Afghan spy chief, Australian, 2009-09-03

6. Contractors outnumber U.S. troops in Afghanistan, James Glanz, NYT, 2009-03-02

Civilian contractors working for the Pentagon in Afghanistan not only outnumber the uniformed troops, according to a report by a Congressional research group, but also form the highest ratio of contractors to military personnel recorded in any war in the history of the United States.

- Department of defense contractors in Iraq and Afghanistan: Background and analysis, Moshe Schwartz, Congressional Research Service, 2009-08-13 [PDF, 260KB]
- Private security contractors, Australia in Afghanistan, Nautilus Institute
- Taliban hit American bull's eye with guerilla force, Paul McGeough, SMH, 2009-09-02

7. Urgent check for toxic chemical on navy subs, Mark Dodd, Australian, 2009-09-03

The navy's Collins-Class submarines have been ordered to undergo urgent checks for the toxic chemical cadmium. Defence said that despite the chemical's presence, the fleet's two operational submarines had not been recalled to port. Testing of the two boats would be "a matter of priority".

8. Australia pressed on climate aid, Tom Arup and Adam Morton, Age, 2009-09-02

Australia is under pressure to explain how it and other wealthy nations will find the billions of dollars needed to help poor countries tackle climate change seen as crucial to securing a climate treaty in Copenhagen.

- Children go hungry in Solomons' climate change, Kate McPherson, ABC, 2009-09-03
- Great Barrier Reef faces catastrophe, Tom Arup, Age, 2009-09-03

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