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1. We should co-operate, not compete, with China's military rise, Rory Medcalf, Age, 2009-04-29

Whatever its motives, China has great potential to expand its role in the delivery of public goods in global security and Australia could help shape this capacity for mutual benefit. Beneath the surface, we should hedge against the possible strategic impacts of China's rise. But it is premature to make this the mainstay of our defence policy or to trumpet plans for related capabilities we may never end up buying.

- Winds of change demand hard debate, Hugh White, AFR, Lowy, 2009-04-28
- Diplomatic doubt on China defence visit, John Kerin, AFR*, 2009-04-27
  * Subscription required.

2. $167m satellite link for defence forces, Patrick Walters, Australian, 2009-04-28

The Australian Defence Force will spend $167 million to buy a special satellite payload to boost its tactical communications for military serving in Afghanistan and nearby theatres in the Indian Ocean region. The ADF will own the UHF payload on board the Intelsat 22 satellite, which will be launched in mid-2012.

3. Plan shies away from sharp end, Greg Sheridan Australian, 2009-04-30

The Prime Minister's news conference revealed a shift in the public justification for the Australian deployment. The emphasis now is on the need to prevent future terrorist threats to Australia. The real reason for the deployment - loyalty to the US alliance - has been shuffled back to No 2. This reflects the growing unpopularity of the war in public opinion and the need to provide a more Australia-centric justification for it.

- Pakistan must be saved from collapse, Greg Sheridan, Australian, 2009-04-30
- Expect more Afghanistan deaths says Kevin Rudd as force boosted to 1550, Mark Dodd, Australian, 2009-04-30
- Gordon Brown: 700 more troops for Afghanistan, Telegraph, 2009-04-29
- Australia in Afghanistan: Quick guide, Australia in Afghanistan, Nautilus Institute

4. ADF plays down warlord's role on crucial supply chain, Mark Dodd and Jeremy Kelly, Australian, 209-04-28

Australian special forces have been working closely with a top Afghan warlord whose 2000-strong paramilitary force has proved invaluable in protecting the main Kandahar-to-Tarin Kowt supply route from Taliban attacks.

- Long road to Tarin Kowt, Jeremy Kelly, Australian, 2009-04-28

5. Poppies a target in fight against Taliban, Dexter Filkins, NYT, 2009-04-28

American commanders are planning to cut off the Taliban’s main source of money, the country’s multimillion-dollar opium crop, by pouring thousands of troops into the three provinces that bankroll much of the group’s operations. The plan to send 20,000 Marines and soldiers into Helmand, Kandahar and Zabul Provinces promises weeks and perhaps months of heavy fighting, since American officers expect the Taliban to vigorously defend what makes up the economic engine for the insurgency.

- Opium intervention: Government policy, Australia in Afghanistan, Nautilus Institute

6. Angry soldiers run riot in Papua, Christian Motte and Markus Junianto Sihaloho, Jakarta Globe, 2009-04-30

Hundreds of soldiers went after senior officers and damaged their battalion headquarters in Papua after the family of a deceased soldier was told to pay half the cost of flying his body home. Members of the 751 Battalion, in the first such incident in the decade since the fall of former President Suharto, also fired shots into the air and beat civilian onlookers and journalists trying to cover the mutiny

7. China uses global crisis to assert its influence, Ariana Eunjung Cha, Washington Post, April 23, 2009

Chinese officials increasingly are challenging the primacy of the dollar, warning other countries about the danger of keeping reserves in just one or two currencies, such as dollars and euros. In the past five months, China has signed $95 billion in currency swap agreements with six countries that now hold part of their reserves in yuan. The government has also begun to allow companies in southern China to settle contracts with foreign neighbors in yuan instead of dollars or euros.

- Indonesian electricity firm PLN wants Chinese loans in Yuan, AsiaPulse via COMTEX, 2009-04-27
- A helping Chinese hand, Brian McCartan, Asia Times, 2009-04-30

8. Warning on East Timor instability by World Bank, Mark Dodd, Australian, 2009-04-29

East Timor's security forces and civil service are politicised, a situation that has not been reconciled and could trigger a return to instability on the restive half-island nation, a World Bank report says. The role of highly paid expatriate advisers is also cited as a factor undermining government capacity. The report says multi-million-dollar inflows of royalties from the oil and gas rich Timor Sea have failed to bring any fall in East Timorese poverty.

- PNG aid misspent, says Kevin Rudd, AAP, Australian, 2009-04-28

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