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1. Barack Obama to push Kevin Rudd for more troops, Brad Norington, Australian, 2009-11-30

Kevin Rudd could be asked to send more Australian troops to Afghanistan when he meets President Barack Obama at the White House. The Prime Minister was forced on the defensive, after a report that much of the discussion between Mr Rudd and Mr Obama on Afghanistan would focus on whether Australia could contribute additional troops to the eight-year war. Although not ruling out a possible request from Washington, Mr Rudd's office said none had been received and the Prime Minister adhered to his position that the current commitment was "about right".

- Ministerial Statement on Afghanistan, Statement by the Minister for Defence, Senator the Hon John Faulkner, Department of Defence, 2009-11-26

2. DEN segera susun pengembangan PLTN [National Energy Council to immediately assess nuclear power], Suara Pembaruan, 2009-11-24

[Indonesian language]

Commission VII of the People's Representative Council has urged the National Energy Council (DEN) to ensure that nuclear power is developed in line with the strategy to utilise various potential sources of energy. Minister for Energy and Mineral Resources Darwin Zahedy Saleh, said that DEN will immediately compile a recommendation on a nuclear power plant, dealing with both strengths and weaknesses. "There was a feeling in the DPR that we should not be frightened of building a nuclear power plant. We will consider nuclear development without ignoring concerns. In December there will be a meeting of ministers involved, with President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono as chair of the National Energy Council" he said.

- Government nuclear announcements, Indonesian nuclear power proposals, Nautilus Institute
- Guangdong Nuclear Power Plans for Greater Uranium Use, Jing Yang, Wall Street Journal, 2009-11-26
- Indonesia Needs $4 Billion for Energy Efficiency: ADB, Reva Sasistiya, Jakarta Globe, 2009-1--27

3. Pakistan's leader cedes nuclear office, Sabrina Tavernise and David E. Sanger, NYT, 2009-11-28

President Asif Ali Zardari has ceded his position in Pakistan's nuclear command structure to his prime minister, in a sudden political maneuver widely seen as a fresh sign of turmoil on the eve of President Obama's strategy announcement for the region. The move, announced in a news release was an all-out attempt to head off domestic political pressure as Mr. Zardari's two-year presidency hit a new low. With the end of a political amnesty program, Mr. Zardari and his allies now face potential corruption and criminal charges, and the opposition is demanding that he relinquish many of his powers or resign.

4. Afghanistan summit to plan for withdrawal, Nicholas Watt and Mark Townsend, Observer, 2009-11-29

A lengthy withdrawal of international forces from Afghanistan will start unfolding towards the end of next year under plans to be agreed by allied powers at a conference in London in January. Days before President Barack Obama outlines his new military and political strategy for the country, Gordon Brown set out detailed benchmarks that would ensure Afghan forces can eventually assume control. This week, Obama is expected to endorse the central thrust – although not necessarily the exact findings – of General Stanley McChrystal's landmark report. The US commander in Afghanistan is calling for a more sophisticated strategy, involving a surge of around 35,000 extra troops, designed to pave the way for a future withdrawal of American forces.

- Rudd supporting Afghanistan summit, SMH, AAP, 2009-11-29

5. Afghans offer jobs to Taliban rank and file if they defect, Dexter Filkins, NYT, 2009-11-27

The American-backed campaign to persuade legions of Taliban gunmen to stop fighting got under way here recently, in an ornate palace filled with Afghan tribal leaders and one very large former warlord leading the way. The meeting is part of a battlefield push to lure local fighters and commanders away from the Taliban by offering them jobs in development projects that Afghan tribal

leaders help select, paid by the American military and the Afghan government.

6. HIV/AIDS: the global outlook, Dennis Altman, Inside Story, Current Affairs and Culture, 2009-11-26

If the prejudices and barriers thrown up in the name of religion, culture and tradition can be overcome, preventing HIV is not that difficult. The major obstacle comes from fundamentalists who preach against condoms and needle exchange in the name of morality, a key issue in parts of Papua New Guinea. This is why the honesty in President Yudhoyono's August speech was so significant. Only when governments, churches and international organisations are able to accept the diversity of human behaviours without imposing ideological strictures will a successful set of global prevention programs be able to halt the spread of HIV.

- The third era of AIDS, Background Briefing, Radio National, 2009-09-20 [Audio]

7. Commonwealth urges Fiji to restore democracy, SMH, AFP, 2009-11-30

Commonwealth leaders called on Fiji's interim government to "commit itself to a credible, inclusive and time-bound political dialogue towards the restoration of constitutional civilian democracy without further delay". In a final statement after three days of talks in Trinidad, the 54-nation body also urged the regime led by navy strongman Voreqe Bainimarama who toppled the elected government in a December 2006 coup, to protect rights.

- The quixotic shades of Bainimarama, Paul McGeough, SMH, 2009-11-30

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