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1. Haneef Was Not a Threat: ASIO, Michelle Grattan, Age, 2008-07-30

The Australian Security Intelligence Organisation consistently told the Howard government it had no reason to believe that Indian doctor Mohamed Haneef was a security threat. This included advice issued just three days before he was charged with terrorism offences.

- Please Explain: Haneef Mystery Thickens, Yuko Narushima, SMH, 2008-07-30

2. Detention Rules Change Welcomed, Sarah Smiles and Andra Jackson, Age, 2008-07-30

Under the changes, only people who pose a threat to the community or have repeatedly breached their visa conditions will be detained long-term. Others, such as those who overstay their visa, will remain in the community as their cases are assessed. Senator Evans said the Government would maintain strong border security by continuing to detain boat arrivals on Christmas Island. Arrivals who were not a security risk would live in community housing. He said fewer boat arrivals was the result of better engagement with Indonesia, and denied the changes would result in a "mass release".

- New Directions in Detention - Restoring Integrity to Australia's Immigration System, Chris Evans, Australian National University, Canberra, 2008-07-29

3. On Al Qaeda, Good News and Bad News, Mike Nizza, NYT Blog, 2008-07-29

In more than 200 pages, a RAND study takes issue with the Bush administration's "war on terror," from its focus on military force to the very title of the effort. As others have also argued, the authors of the report conclude that terrorists are criminals - not "holy warriors" - who should be fought mainly by police officers and intelligence agents under the rubric of "counterterrorism," rather than by soldiers.

- U.S. Should Rethink "War on Terrorism" Strategy to Deal with Resurgent Al Qaida, News Release, RAND, 2008-07-29

4. Torres Strait Islanders Welcome NT Coast Rights Ruling, ABC, 2008-07-31

Torres Strait Islanders say an Australian High Court decision on the Northern Territory has major implications for their long running sea claim. The court granted Aboriginal traditional owners exclusive access rights to about 80 per cent of the Northern Territory's coast. Torres Strait Islander leader Maluwap Nona says the ruling will help their native title sea claim between Cape York and Papua New Guinea.

- High Court Upholds Landmark Blue Mud Bay Ruling, NIT, 2008-07-30
- Northern Territory of Australia v Arnhem Land Aboriginal Land Trust, Gleeson CJ, Gummow, Kirby, Hayne, Heydon, Crennan and Kiefel JJ, High Court Of Australia, 2008-07-30
- Fishing Case Tests Economic Waters for Traditional Owners, Sean Brennan and Peta MacGillivray, Vol. 7, No.2, Indigenous Law Bulletin 18, 2008 [PDF, 269 KB]

5. Iran Backs Rudd's Plan to End Spread of Nuclear Weapons, Brendan Nicholson, Age, 2008-07-29

Prime Minister Kevin Rudd's ambitious plan to reverse the spread of nuclear weapons has won strong support - from Iran's ambassador to Canberra. Mahmoud Movahhedi urged Australia to use its experience in the Middle East and its close relationship with its Western allies to help negotiate a result in the Geneva talks on Iran's nuclear enrichment program.

6. Iran, Indonesia Keen to Expand Ties, Antara, Jakarta Post, 2008-07-30

The foreign ministers of Iran and Indonesia met here Monday evening to discuss bilateral relations. Expressing his satisfaction with the current state of Tehran-Jakarta relations, Mottaki said the two countries' leaders are determined to boost existing ties. Mottaki lauded Jakarta's logical stance toward Iran's peaceful nuclear program.

7. So What? Matching Policy to Australian Interests in West Asia, Anthony Bubalo, Lowy Institute, July 2008

Since 2001 the weight of Australian interests in West Asia has increased substantially. But the evolution of policy has also been uneven, contingent and ad hoc. Often Australia is still using old policy approaches to deal with new and emerging sets of interests. It is time to renew Australia's policy framework for West Asia.

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