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1. ASIO admits threat of internet spying, Julian Bajkowski, AFR*, 2009-11-04

The Australian Security and Intelligence Organisation has broken decades of official silence surrounding cyber attacks launched by foreign governments against local targets, warning that "internet-enabled espionage" has become "a rapidly growing threat to the national interest". *[Subscription required]

- Director-General's review, Report to Parliament 2008-09, Australian Security and Intelligence Organisation, 2009-10-27
- Australia and Cyber-warfare, Gary Waters, Desmond Ball and Ian Dudgeon, Canberra Papers on Defence 168, Strategic and Defence Studies Centre, ANU, July 2008

2. Australia to combine four Mideast bases, AAP, Max Blenkin, SMH, 2009--31

By the end of the year, Australia's four bases in the Middle East will have become one under a rationalisation program designed to cut costs and improve efficiencies for fighting the conflict in Afghanistan. The new facility will host RAAF AP-3C Orion maritime surveillance aircraft and C-130 Hercules transport aircraft as well as support troops serving in Afghanistan. It will also house around 500 Australian Defence Force (ADF) personnel with capacity to accommodate another 500 as troops transit to and from Afghanistan.

- ADF locations, Middle East, Central Asia and Indian Ocean, Australian Bases Abroad, Nautilus Institute

3. Tit-for-tat diplomacy no solution, Jon Fraenkel, Australian, 2009-11-05

The expulsion of the Australian and New Zealand heads of mission from Fiji represents a further lurch into isolation by Frank Bainimarama's government. That government, which came into office after a military coup in December 2006, has openly defied international pressure to hold elections. In April, Fiji's constitution was abrogated, and Bainimarama, who still remains military commander as well as interim prime minister, announced that elections would not be held until 2014.

- ANU may complain over Fiji expulsion, AAP, Bonny Symonds-Brown, Age, 2009-11-05
- Military ruler will simply thumb his nose at us, Peter Hartcher, SMH, 2009-11-05

4. Rudd urges Jakarta to honour deal to process Oceanic Viking asylum-seekers, Samantha Maiden, Australian, 2009-11-05

Kevin Rudd has bluntly told Indonesia it must honour an agreement to process asylum-seekers on the Oceanic Viking but refused to rule out sending them to Christmas Island if the standoff continues. Earlier, Indonesia warned its patience was running out. "There is a limit,'' Indonesian Foreign Ministry spokesman Teuku Faizasyah said. "On that particular issue it really depends very much on the progress Australia can make. You must resolve your problems on board the vessel."

- Liberalism’s asylum dilemma, Savitri Taylor and Brynna Rafferty-Brown, Inside Story, 2009-11-05
- Go ashore, UN advises sit-in asylum group, Radio Australia, 2009-11-05

5. How an alleged war criminal in East Timor escaped justice, Lindsay Murdoch, SMH, 2009-11-05

Maternus Bere, a Timorese-born Indonesian citizen accused of crimes against humanity, was ushered secretly across the border from East Timor into Indonesia, ending weeks of behind-th--scenes intrigue in Dili. In the days before the 10th anniversary of the vote for independence, the Indonesian Government privately pressured East Timor's President Jose Ramos Horta to release Bere, who had been the commander of one of the most brutal militia in East Timor in 1999.

- Martinus Bere, Masters of Terror

6. Karzai vows 'inclusive' government, Aljazerra, 2009-11-05

Hamid Karzai, who won re-election as Afghan president after his rival withdrew from a runoff vote, has vowed that his government will represent all his countrymen. "Today I would like to say that no one will see themselves distant in this process and all of us will be a part of the Afghanistan government," he said in a low-key victory speech.

- Abdullah rules out joining new Afghan government, Reuters, 2009-11-04

7. Meet Afghanistan's model police force: inexperience, drugs and double agents, Jon Boone and Peter Beaumont, Guardian, 2009-11-04

The Afghan national police has achieved a reputation for being badly trained, riddled with drug addicts and, many fear, infiltrated by secret Taliban agents. Despite the importance of the Afghan police – increasingly seen by counterinsurgency experts and desperate western politicians as vital to gradually bringing conflict in Afghanistan to a close – it is now acknowledged that the international community failed to build an effective and functioning police force. Many critics have argued that, because it was raised locally, not nationally, the loyalties of officers have often been to local leaders.

- Bloody betrayal raises fresh doubts about Britain's campaign in Afghanistan, Philip Webster, and Michael Evans, Times Online, 2009-11-05
- Taliban claims attack that killed 5 U.K. soldiers, Brown Says, Caroline Alexander and Brian Lysaght, Bloomberg, 2009-11-04

8. Seoul to resend troops to Afghanistan, Lee Jong-Heon, UPI, 2009-10-30

South Korea has made a domestically unpopular decision to dispatch troops to Afghanistan in a bid to bolster its alliance with the United States, which plays the key role in deterring nuclear-armed North Korea. The South Korean foreign ministry announced on Friday that South Korea would send more civilian aid workers to help rebuild war-torn Afghanistan and dispatch some 300 troops to protect them. The troop dispatch decision is widely seen as a move to reciprocate Washington's pledge to step up its military forces to shield South Korea from North Korea's military threats.

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