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1. [Gillard runs risk of destabilising already fragile neighbour](#), Daniel Flitton, Age, 2010-07-07

Julia Gillard has taken a big gamble. A regional hub to process asylum claims can work to stop people risking the journey to Australia on the high seas - but by foisting it on East Timor, she may undermine the fragile nation on our doorstep that Australia has worked a decade to create.

- [East Timor asylum plan a legal minefield](#), Stephen Fitzpatrick, Australian, 2010-07-07
- [Regional co-operation best way to deal with asylum seekers](#), Julia Gillard, 2010-07-07
- [Sending Hazaras back to Afghanistan 'extremely dangerous'](#), Kirsty Needham, SMH, 2010-07-06

2. [Preparing for Gillard's world](#), Daniel Flitton, Age, 2010-07-03

Does the new Prime Minister have much of a view on how Australia should be positioned in the world? So far she has pledged support for the US alliance and the troops in Afghanistan. Very conventional, nothing too controversial. Steady as it goes is the message.

- [Gillard rejects Rudd's Asia vision](#), Peter Hartcher, SMH, 2010-07-05

- [Moving Australia forward](#), Julia Gillard, Speech at the Lowy Institute, 2010-07-06 [MP3, 13MB]

3. [Fire-prone tanks were known risk](#), Dan Oakes, Age, 2010-07-06

The Department of Defence knew before it bought the army's \$550 million battle tank fleet that the tanks are prone to engine fires. Internal documents show that there had been numerous fires in the engine compartment of the Abrams M1A1 tanks in the United States, and that the problem was well known before Defence bought 59 second-hand tanks from the US government in 2004.

4. [China fears overlook the drive for harmony](#), Hu Shan, Age, 2010-07-02

Almost half of Australians think China will be a military threat within 20 years, according to this year's Lowy Institute foreign policy poll. Such concern is caused by inadequate understanding of the Chinese culture and China's foreign policy.

- [The 2010 Lowy Institute Poll](#), Fergus Hanson, Lowy Institute, 2010-05-31

5. [British troops to withdraw from Sangin in Afghanistan](#), Patrick Wintour and Richard Norton-Taylor, Guardian, 210-07-06

British forces are to be pulled out of Sangin, the remote district of Helmand that has become the most deadly place in Afghanistan for Nato soldiers. Out of the 312 British service personnel to have died in Afghanistan, more than 100 were killed in Sangin.

- [Sangin troop withdrawal: Four years in hell, and Taliban remain undefeated](#), Declan Walsh, Guardian, 2010-07-6
- [Information is not beautiful: Afghanistan](#), David McCandless, DataBlog, Guardian, 2009-11-13

6. [Audit of Afghan troops dismissed](#), Mark David, SMH, 2001-07-02

The Minister for Defence, John Faulkner, has insisted that a scathing verdict on the system for evaluating the skills of Afghan troops does not alter the Australian Defence Force's assessment that Australia will be able to finish training an Afghan brigade in two to four years.

- [Actions needed to improve the reliability of Afghan security force assessments](#), Office of the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, 2010-06-29 [PDF, 2.6 MB]

7. [US cuts Afghan aid in corruption probe](#), Simon Mann, Age, 2010-07-02

A US congressional committee has pulled the plug on \$US4 billion of aid to Afghanistan as the spotlight intensifies on allegations of widespread corruption in the country.

- [Statement by Chairwoman Nita M. Lowey](#), State and Foreign Operations Appropriations Subcommittee, 2010-06-30 [PDF, 68KB]
- [Corruption suspected in airlift of billions in cash from Kabul](#), Matthew Rosenberg, Wall Street Journal, 2010-06-29

8. Indonesia: The Dark Side of Jama'ah Ansharut Tauhid (JAT), ICG, 2010-0-06

The truth is that the jihadi project has failed in Indonesia. There is no indication that violent extremism is gaining ground. The far bigger challenge for Indonesia is to manage the aspirations of the thousands who join JAT rallies for its public message: that democracy is antithetical to Islam, that only an Islamic state can uphold the faith, and that Islamic law must be the source of all justice.

- [Indonesian cleric Bashir back on police radar: Analyst](#), AFP, 2010-07-06

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