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1. SAS 'assassinate' Taliban leader Mullah Noorullah, Mark Dodd, Australian, 2009-05-07

Australian special forces have taken part in a targeted assassination of a senior Taliban leader, an operation army commanders claim will disrupt the insurgents' campaign in southern Oruzgan. Mullah Noorullah was killed in a combined operation involving coalition troops and Australian special forces.

- Pressure mounts as another Taliban leader is killed, Media Release, Department of Defence, 2009-05-06
- Special Operations Task Group, Australia in Afghanistan, Nautilus Institute

2. East Timor says it won't approve Woodside LNG plan,

Angela Macdonald-Smith, Bloomberg, 2009-05-06

The East Timor government said it doesn't intend to approve plans by Woodside Petroleum Ltd., Australia's second-largest oil and gas producer. The East Timor government said today it favors an onshore plant on its soil and is also considering leaving the field for future development.

- Sunrise Gas Field, Timor Sea, Australia, Hydro-carbons Technology.com
- Sunrise LNG in Timor-Leste: Dreams, Realities and Challenges, Guteriano Neves, Charles Scheiner and Santina Soares, La'o Hamutuk, February 2008

3. Obama stresses joint action against Taliban push in South Asia, Scott Wilson, Washington Post, 2009-05-06

President Obama declared that "the security of Pakistan, Afghanistan, and the United States are linked" after meeting with the presidents of those countries, saying his strategy to combat rising extremism through increased development aid and military support reflects that "fundamental truth." The rare trilateral meeting underscored Obama's view that the rising instability in Pakistan and Afghanistan is a single problem, bound by geography, weak central governments and a cross-border insurgency.

- Pakistan's American problem, Anatol Lieven, Opendemocracy, 2009-05-06
- A matter of urgency, Ahmed Rashid, Age, 2009-05-07

4. U.S. asks S. Korea to decide on deployment of troops in Afghanistan, Hankyoreh, 2009-05-03

A government official said that the U.S. government recently presented specific requests through diplomatic channels, including troop deployment and increased financial support from the South Korean government toward the reconstruction of Afghanistan. "If we ultimately do have to deploy troops to Afghanistan, it will be in the form of humanitarian non-combatant troop support," a government official said.

- Seoul to step up support in Afghanistan, Kim Ji-hyun, Korea herald, 2009-05-07

5. China a 'peaceful force' in Beijing's response to defence paper, Michael Sainsbury and Cameron Stewart, Australian, 2009-05-06

China has called for Australia and other countries to have a more objective approach to its rising military power, in its first official response to the Rudd Government's defence white paper. In Washington, the chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff, Admiral Michael Mullen, said the US would need to work more closely with Pacific allies such as Australia to respond to Beijing's increasing military capabilities.

- China military build-up seems U.S.-focused: Mullen, Reuters, 2009-05-04
- Collision course, Brian Toohey, Inside Story, 2009-05-06

6. Defence white paper gives US a rocket, Jonathan Pearlman and Anne Davies, SMH, 2009-05-06

The Rudd Government has split with the United States - and effectively sided with China - by declaring its opposition to the development of national missile defence programs. In a small section of the 140-page defence white paper it said it opposed unilateral defence systems "by any nation because such a system would be at odds with the maintenance of global nuclear deterrence".

7. $400m to hit human trafficking networks, Tom Allard, SMH, 2009-05-07

The Federal Government will unveil a $400 million package to combat people-smuggling in the budget. There will be significant new funding for the Border Protection Command, the joint Customs and Defence effort to patrol the sea routes to Australia's north. The package will also seek to engage neighbouring countries by bolstering their law enforcement and immigration surveillance capabilities.

- People-smuggling baron Ali Cobra seized in action, Stephen Fitzpatrick, Australian, 2009-05-07
- Boat people strain facilities, Tom Arup, Age, 2009-05-06

8. Papuan villagers block road after police kill local, Nurfika Osman, Jakarta Globe, 2009-05-07

Hundreds of residents from Harapan village near Sentani Airport in Papua took to the streets following the death of a villager, identified as Agus Ohee, who was shot by a police officer. The protesters blocked the only road linking the airport to provincial capital Jayapura.

- Between guns and dialogue: Papua after the exile's return, Richard Chauvel, Austral Policy forum, nautilus Institute, 2009-04-23

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