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Twice weekly report from the Nautilus Institute at RMIT, Australia.

Monday 1 October 2007

1. Afghanistan: Resurgent Taliban Challenge Diggers
2. Iraq: Maliki Calls Land Proposal a 'Catastrophe'
3. Singapore: Web of Cash, Power and Cronies
4. PNG Police on Alert over Reported PM Arrest Plans
5. Oil: Timor's Double-Edged Sword
6. Commission of Inquiry into the April 2006 Civil Unrest in Honiara

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1. Resurgent Taliban Challenge Diggers, Tom Hyland, Age, 2007-09-30With a surge by the Taliban, the Dutch Government announced yesterday it was sending 80 troops to reinforce a small base at Deh Rawood, west of the joint Dutch-Australian base in Tarin Kowt.
   - On the Brink, Tom Hyland, Age, 2007-09-30
   - Diggers Defeat Taliban Attack in Heavy Fighting, Media Release, CPA 338/07, Australian Defence Department, 2007-09-27
   - Coalition Forces - Netherlands, Australia in Afghanistan, Nautilus Institute, 2007-08-05

- Operation Slipper, Australian Defence Department

2.
3. Maliki Calls Land Proposal a 'Catastrophe', Qassim Abdul-zahra, AP, Philadelphia Inquirer, 2007-09-29Iraq's prime minister said that a U.S. Senate proposal to split the country into regions according to religious or ethnic divisions would be a "catastrophe." The Kurds in three northern Iraqi provinces are running a virtually independent country within Iraq, while nominally maintaining relations with Baghdad. They support a formal division. But both Sunni and Shiite Muslims have reacted with extreme opposition to the Senate proposal.
   - Senate Backs Separating Iraq into 3 Regions, Noam N. Levey, Los Angeles Times*, 2007-09-27
   *Subscription required

4.
5. Web of Cash, Power and Cronies, Eric Ellis, Age, 2007-09-29Singapore does a useful trade keeping Burma's military rulers and their cronies afloat. By providing Burma's pariah junta with the crucial equipment mostly denied by Western sanctions, Singapore has helped keep the junta and its cronies afloat for 20 years.
   - Howard Vows to Get Tough, Craig Skehan, SMH, 2007-10-01

6.
7. PNG Police on Alert over Reported PM Arrest Plans, ABC, 2007-10-01PNG police are on full alert after unconfirmed reports that disgruntled soldiers are planning to arrest the prime minister, Sir Michael Somare, over the Julian Moti affair. A defence force board of inquiry found Sir Michael responsible for the escape of wanted Australian lawyer, Julian Moti, to Solomon Islands last year. PNG's Police Commissioner, Gari Baki is taking the threat seriously. PNG Defence officials have dismissed the reports.
   - Somare Threat, PNG Post-Courier, 2007-10-01

8.
9. Oil: Timor's Double-Edged Sword, Angus Grigg, AFR*, 2007-10-01The value of East Timor's oil and gas reserves, and how they are used, will determine whether East Timor can become a viable, independent country. The onus is on the government to create jobs and infrastructure to alleviate the present 40 per cent unemployment. The UN estimates that 40 per cent of children are malnourished and 60 per cent of the population illiterate.
   *Subscription required
10. Commission of Inquiry into the April 2006 Civil Unrest in Honiara, Second Interim Report, Prime Minister's Department, Solomon Islands, 2007-09-07 [PDF 2.56mb]There is evidence that the civil unrest in Honiara was orchestrated and planned. The Commission's investigation is not at this stage sufficiently convinced it is in a position in which it is proper to name those individuals, political groups and organisations that were responsible for the planning. There is now a clearer picture of the unprepared status of policing on the 18th of April 2006.
    - Solomon Islands, IMF Country Report No. 07/304, IMF, September 2007 [PDF 812 kb]

11.

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