

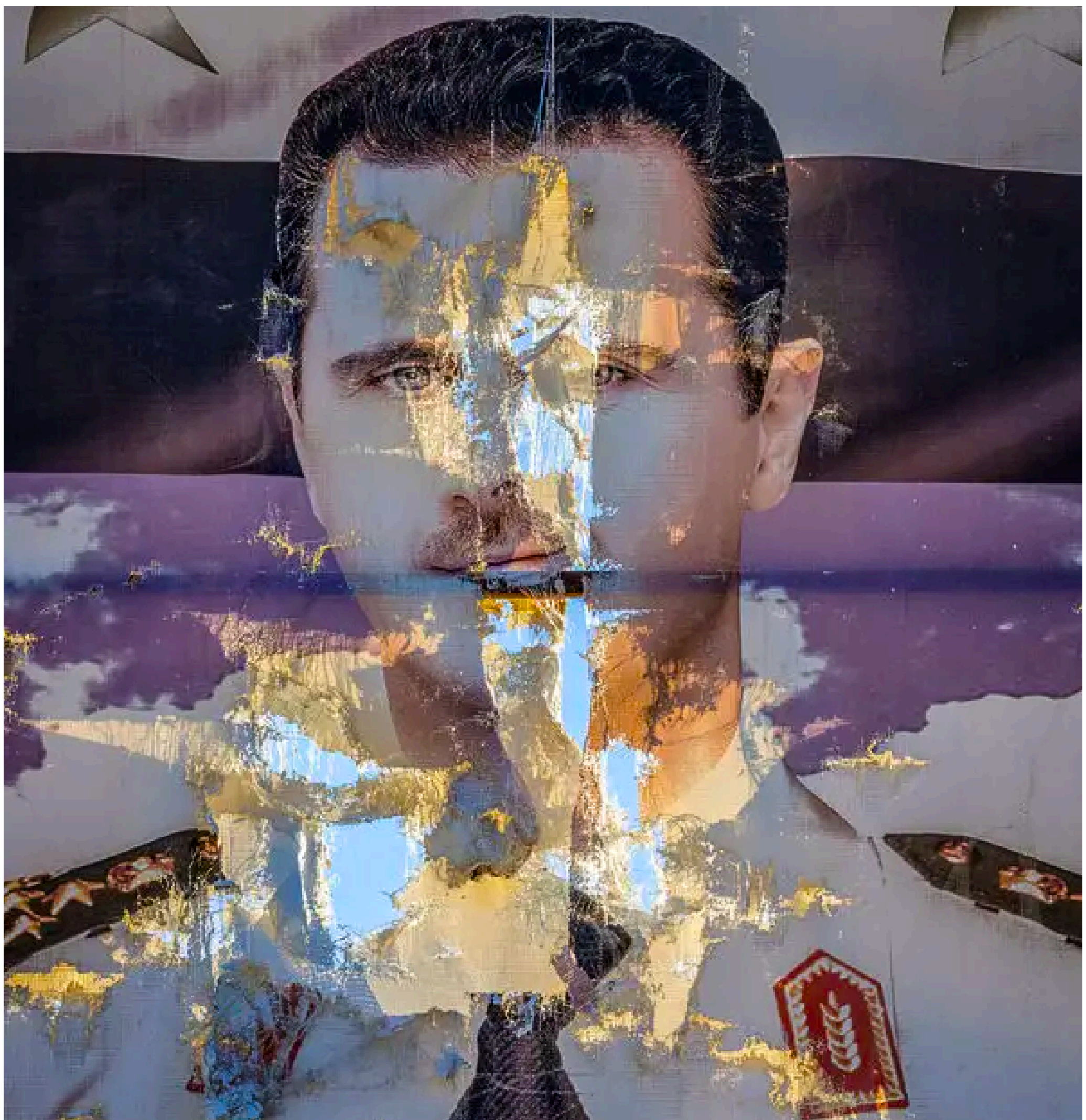


SNAPSHOTS

Monthly Bytes

2024

December Edition



The Fall Of The Assad Regime: 61 Years Of Rule Has Ended



Assad Loyalists Hunted As Interim Government Stabilizes

Thursday 26th December, 2024

The New Syrian administration has launching a combing operation to neutralize pro-Assad loyalists which according to SANA is required to “restore security, stability and peace for the region”. The operation comes after 14 officers were killed in an ambush set by Assad loyalists in Tartous. The governor of the region, Ahmed al-Shami insisted the public “works together to to open new paths to build a new free Syria”. [TheNewArab](#)

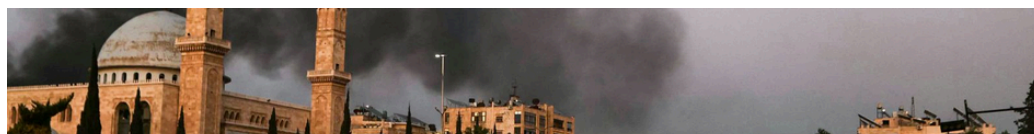
Sunday 8th December, 2024
★★★★★ 

Heath Clark

The recent overthrow of President Bashar al-Assad’s regime in Syria has initiated a complex transition period, raising questions about the nation’s future governance and regional stability. On December 8, 2024, opposition forces, led by Hay’at Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) under Ahmed al-Sharaa, captured Damascus, prompting Assad to flee to Russia, where he was granted asylum.

[Al Jazeera](#)

In the immediate aftermath, Syria has experienced significant instability. Reports indicate incidents of looting, including the ransacking of banks and embassies, contributing to a chaotic environment. International reactions have been varied. U.S. President Joe Biden described Assad’s fall as a “fundamental act



of justice” but cautioned about potential risks and uncertainties in the Middle East. [AP News](#)

French President Emmanuel Macron hailed the end of a “barbaric state” and expressed support for the Syrian people. Conversely, Iran has called for dialogue and a cessation of conflict, while Israel has viewed Assad’s ousting as a strategic advantage against Hezbollah and Iran.

The power vacuum has raised concerns about the future governance of Syria. HTS, previously linked to al-Qaeda, now faces the challenge of establishing a stable and inclusive government. The group’s leader, al-Sharaa, has attempted to project a more moderate image, promising to

protect religious and ethnic minorities. However, skepticism remains due to HTS’s Islamist roots and al-Sharaa’s controversial past.

Experts emphasize the importance of a comprehensive and inclusive political process to ensure Syria’s stability. The international community is urged to support efforts that promote dialogue among diverse Syrian factions, protect minority rights, and facilitate humanitarian assistance. The situation remains fluid, with the potential for significant geopolitical repercussions in the region.

★★★★★



South Korea’s President And Acting President Impeached

Wednesday 27th November 2024

Earlier this month, South Korea’s parliament voted to impeach President Yoon Suk Yeol after his attempt to enact marshal law over the country due to alleged “North Korea Influence”. The impeachment was voted on by all 300 constituents of the parliament, with 200 needed to impeach the president with a result of 204, resulting in President Yoon being suspended from office while under investigation. On the 28th, South Korea’s acting president Han Duck-Soo was impeached by the parliament due to failing to appoint 3 high court justices by the Democrat Party (DP), Korea’s currently largest party in the parliament. (READ MORE Pg. 3)



Korea's Martial Law, Impeachments

Monday 16th December, 2024



Heath Clark

South Korea is experiencing significant political upheaval following President Yoon Suk Yeol's declaration of martial law on December 3, 2024. Citing threats from "anti-state forces" and North Korea, Yoon's unprecedented move in the democratic era was swiftly overturned by the National Assembly, which voted to nullify the declaration within hours. [AP News](#)

The imposition of martial law, reminiscent of South Korea's authoritarian past, led to widespread protests and calls for Yoon's impeachment. Critics, including members of his own conservative People Power Party, labeled the action unconstitutional. The opposition-controlled National Assembly initiated impeachment proceedings, resulting in Yoon's suspension from office pending a Constitutional Court review. [The Times](#)

In the interim, Prime Minister Han Duck-soo assumed the role of

acting president. However, Han faced impeachment by the National Assembly for failing to appoint justices to the Constitutional Court, a crucial step in advancing the impeachment process against Yoon. The Assembly's vote to impeach Han passed with 192 in favor and none opposed, as ruling party members boycotted the session. [AP News](#)

Following Han's suspension, Finance Minister Choi Sang-mok was appointed as the new acting president. Choi has emphasized the importance of maintaining economic stability amid the political crisis, warning of potential economic repercussions reminiscent of past financial downturns. The Constitutional Court is expediting its review of the impeachment cases against both Yoon and Han. Public sentiment appears to favor Yoon's removal, with large-scale protests and labor strikes reflecting widespread disapproval of his actions. The Court's decisions are anticipated to have profound implications for South Korea's political landscape and its democratic institutions. [Reuters](#)



Justin Trudeau Position "Untenable", Conservative MP Calls For No Confidence Motion

Friday 27th December 2024

Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's minority Liberal government faces a no-confidence vote set for late January 2025. Conservative MP John Williamson announced plans for a vote in the House of Commons following a public accounts committee meeting on January 7. The motion has gained support from the New Democratic Party (NDP) and the Bloc Québécois, making its success highly likely.

Trudeau is under mounting pressure after Finance Minister Chrystia Freeland's recent resignation, which highlighted internal party dissent. Over 50 Liberal MPs have called for Trudeau's resignation amid declining public support linked to voter fatigue, high living costs, and a housing crisis. The NDP, led by Jagmeet Singh, has positioned itself as a center-left alternative, while polls show strong Conservative Party support under leader Pierre Poilievre.

Trudeau has acknowledged the criticism but has not indicated plans to resign. The potential fall of the government could trigger early elections, potentially reshaping Canada's political landscape.

Georgia Protests Erupt Following EU Bid Delayed

Sunday 29th December 2024

On December 29, 2024, Mikheil Kavelashvili was inaugurated as Georgia's president amid significant political unrest. Outgoing President Salome Zourabichvili refused to recognize his legitimacy, citing alleged fraud in the October parliamentary elections. She addressed supporters in Tbilisi, declaring herself the "only legitimate president" and calling for new elections. Kavelashvili, associated with the ruling Georgian Dream party, was the sole candidate in the recent election. His inauguration has intensified public dissent, with thousands participating in protests, including human chains, opposing the government's direction and perceived shift away from European Union integration.



Trump Supporters Divided Over Skilled Immigration Policy, And Musk



Romanian Election Cancelled Over Alleged Interference



Sunday, December 29th 2024



HEATH CLARK

A debate has emerged within President-elect Donald Trump's support base over the H-1B visa program, which permits U.S. companies to employ foreign workers in specialized fields. Tech leaders like Elon Musk and Vivek Ramaswamy advocate for the program, emphasizing its role in attracting top-tier talent essential for maintaining America's competitive edge in technology and innovation. Musk, who previously held an H-1B visa, has been particularly vocal, proposing reforms such as increasing the minimum salary for visa holders to address concerns about undercutting American wages.

Conversely, some of Trump's supporters argue that the H-1B program disadvantages

American workers by suppressing wages and reducing job opportunities. This internal conflict intensified following Trump's appointment of Sriram Krishnan, an Indian American venture capitalist, as an adviser on artificial intelligence, prompting criticism from those favoring stricter immigration policies.

In response, President-elect Trump has expressed support for the H-1B program, describing it as beneficial for U.S. businesses seeking specialized talent. This stance marks a shift from his 2016 position, where he criticized the program for harming American workers. The ongoing debate highlights a division within Trump's coalition between proponents of business-driven immigration policies and advocates for more restrictive measures. As the new administration

prepares to take office, the future of the H-1B program remains a contentious issue.

Trump Urges Tik Tok Ban Delay

The U.S. Supreme Court has temporarily halted a nationwide ban on TikTok, citing legal challenges over free speech and executive overreach. Proposed by President-elect Donald Trump over national security concerns tied to TikTok's Chinese parent company, ByteDance, the ban has faced criticism from civil rights groups and tech advocates. President Joe Biden has called for a review to ensure the measure aligns with security priorities while protecting constitutional rights. The decision underscores ongoing U.S.-China tensions over technology and data security, leaving TikTok's future in the U.S. uncertain.

Israel Incursion Into Syrian Territory As Assad Regime Falls

Monday 9th December 2024

After the fall of Bashar al-Assad's regime, Israel launched military operations in Syria, targeting over 350 military sites to prevent advanced weaponry from falling into hostile hands. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu emphasized the necessity of these actions to safeguard Israel's security and regional stability, describing them as temporary and defensive measures. While the operations have faced criticism from Syrian villagers and international bodies over humanitarian concerns, Israel maintains its focus on countering threats and preventing extremist groups from exploiting the power vacuum.



Friday 6th December, 2024

Romania's Constitutional Court has annulled the first round of its presidential election following evidence of Russian interference. Far-right, pro-Russian candidate Călin Georgescu had unexpectedly led the vote, with reports revealing a sophisticated Moscow-backed campaign, particularly on TikTok. The decision has divided the nation. Georgescu condemned it as a "formalized coup d'état," while his opponent, Elena Lasconi, called it an assault on democracy. With the election rerun likely scheduled for early next year, Romania faces challenges in safeguarding its democratic processes against external manipulation.

Australia's Nuclear Energy Debate, Costings Released

Friday December 13th, 2024

Australia's energy future is under heated discussion as nuclear power emerges as a polarizing topic. The Coalition, led by Peter Dutton, has proposed expanding nuclear energy to deliver what it calls a "cheaper, cleaner, and more consistent" energy mix, positioning the issue as a potential election battleground. However, the proposal has drawn sharp criticism, particularly from the Labor government and environmental groups, who cite cost and feasibility concerns.

The Coalition argues that nuclear power offers a stable and long-term solution to Australia's energy needs. Dutton claims the plan could save households money while reducing emissions, presenting nuclear energy as a reliable alternative to renewables and fossil fuels. A report commissioned by the Coalition estimates the cost of establishing



nuclear reactors at \$387 billion, arguing this is a necessary investment for energy security. Labor and independent energy experts have strongly criticized the nuclear proposal, labeling it as costly and impractical. The Climate Council and CSIRO highlight that nuclear energy would cost twice as much as renewable alternatives like wind and solar. Labor has also called the proposal "economic madness," citing potential costs as high as \$14 trillion to replace coal-fired plants with nuclear reactors in New South Wales alone.

Environmental advocates have further raised concerns about the time required to establish nuclear infrastructure, suggesting that Australia would fall behind its emissions reduction targets while waiting for reactors to be built. Labor leaders also warn of potential safety risks associated with nuclear energy and the challenges of waste management.



Brad Battin: Victoria's New Liberal Leader

Friday December 27th, 2024

Brad Battin has been elected as the new leader of the Victorian Liberal Party, succeeding John Pesutto after a closely contested leadership battle. Battin, a former police officer and member for Berwick, has pledged to unite the party and rebuild its image following internal divisions and poor election results. The Liberals face challenges in reconnecting with suburban and regional voters while balancing traditional and progressive values. Battin has prioritized policy renewal and stronger community engagement, focusing on cost-of-living issues, housing, and public safety. Observers highlight that Battin's leadership will be tested by his ability to maintain party unity and present a credible alternative to the Andrews government ahead of the 2026 state election.



Study Finds Majority Of Australian's Distaste For Mainstream Media

Australians are voicing dissatisfaction with the current state of political news, criticizing its focus on conflict and sensationalism over meaningful analysis. Many are calling for coverage that prioritizes clear explanations of policy impacts, solutions to national challenges, and diverse perspectives. This shift, they argue, would help rebuild trust in journalism and foster a more informed public. Media experts suggest that addressing these concerns could not only improve political discourse but also reconnect journalism with the broader community by focusing on substantive issues that directly affect Australians' lives. The findings present an opportunity for a rethink in political reporting.

RBA Prepared For "All Economic Situations", Includes Rate Hikes

Friday December 13th, 2024

The Reserve Bank of Australia (RBA) is preparing for possible interest rate hikes as it monitors persistent inflation and economic uncertainties. Governor Michele Bullock emphasized the need for flexibility, noting inflation remains above the target range of 2-3%.

Key factors shaping the RBA's outlook include household spending, labor market trends, and global economic conditions. While the bank aims for stability, it is prepared to act if economic data requires tighter monetary policy. The RBA's balanced approach reflects its focus on managing inflation while supporting employment and economic growth. Future decisions will be closely watched by economists and markets.





North Korea Releases Toughest Anti-US Policy Ever In Key Party Meeting

Sunday December 29th, 2024

North Korea's ruling Workers' Party has outlined an aggressive strategy for 2024, emphasizing military modernization and a hardline stance against the United States. During a high-profile meeting, leader Kim Jong Un urged the nation to strengthen its nuclear deterrence and implement the "toughest-ever strategy" against perceived US hostility.

State media highlighted dual priorities: advancing missile capabilities and addressing the nation's economic challenges. Kim acknowledged North Korea's ongoing struggles, worsened by sanctions and isolation, while calling for greater self-reliance in agriculture and industry. This rhetoric is expected to heighten tensions on the Korean Peninsula, complicating diplomatic efforts and raising regional security concerns for South Korea, Japan, and the US.



Parramatta's MP Faces Questions On Links To Indian Australian Lobbyists

Andrew Charlton, Parramatta's 14th MP, has drawn attention for ties with figures linked to Australia-India relations, including Amit Singh, Centre for Australia-India Relations board member, and Harish Velji, a lobbyist for nuclear sales to India. His speeches praising Diwali and Hindu Heritage Month align with growing cultural diplomacy but also spark scrutiny amid allegations of foreign influence. A 2022 Four Corners exposé on Indian government subversion campaigns has intensified calls for transparency. Critics question Charlton's alignment with national interest safeguards.



Mozambique's Political Crisis After Controversial Election Upheld

Mozambique's President-elect Filipe Nyusi has called for unity amid escalating violence in the northern Cabo Delgado region, which has displaced thousands and created a humanitarian crisis. Insurgent attacks have destabilized the resource-rich area, with critics questioning the government's ability to restore security.

The unrest has also disrupted regional trade, prompting South Africa to reroute key routes through Eswatini to safeguard supply chains. As tensions rise, Nyusi has pledged to prioritize peace and dialogue, but the crisis continues to threaten its stability and economic prospects.

Myanmar's "Military Junta" Unfit To Host Elections

Tuesday December 24th, 2024

Myanmar's political crisis continues to escalate as pro-democracy forces and ethnic armed groups intensify their resistance against the military junta, which seized power in 2021. Clashes in Sagaing and Chin State have highlighted the growing challenges faced by the junta, which has struggled to maintain control despite claiming progress in stabilizing certain areas.

The ongoing conflict has displaced millions, creating a severe humanitarian crisis. Civilians face limited access to food, healthcare, and education, with aid delivery obstructed by restrictions in contested zones. Reports of airstrikes and alleged human rights abuses have drawn international condemnation, but efforts by ASEAN and the UN to mediate peace have made little headway.

As both sides refuse to compromise, Myanmar remains locked in prolonged instability. Analysts warn that without significant intervention or internal change, the nation's crisis will continue, with devastating consequences for its people and regional stability.



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What's Happening @ Thought Digest?

Recently we've changed our publication standards to provide you with more in depth and valuable content such as some of the articles you may have seen listed here. We believe we need to make a difference in the media landscape and we hope with this new approach, our new team members and your support we are able to make the greatest change we possibly can, so you can enjoy the news with minimal bias, spin or blackspots.



EIC's Announcement

As of 31st December I will be stepping down as Editor-In-Chief of Thought Digest Media in order to focus my efforts elsewhere within the platform. The position will remain vacant until notified - Heath Clark

As owner of the platform, I will find other ways to guide Thought Digest to achieve its aims

New Members/Contributors

We are proud to announce 3 new contributors/team members of Thought Digest Media: "face266", "evasmodnar" and "realmelon"

Podcast Series

As the 2025 Australian Federal election comes closer, we will also be hosting political candidates and hear what they want to do for their communities

Big Updates

Due to popular demand, our YouTube news videos will continue, while our website articles will be cut due to lack of engagement.



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