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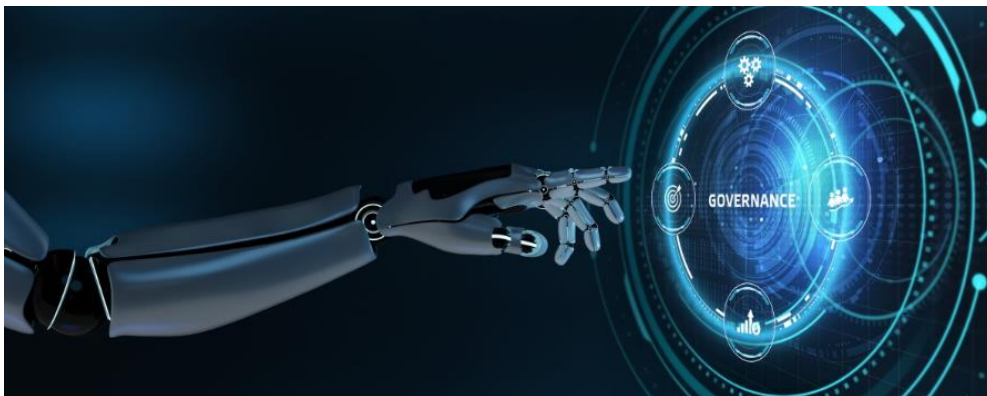
Monthly Digest

Issue 11/23 (November)

A monthly round-up of significant news around the world

Artificial Intelligence

Artificial Intelligence Governance towards a Brighter Future

"AI governance helps manage privacy, ethical and societal risks associated with AI"
– Utility Analytics Institute

1.　　Artificial Intelligence (AI) is defined by *Harvard Online* as any theory, computer system or software developed to enable machines to perform tasks that normally require human intelligence. In recent years, AI has seen breakthroughs that have brought many benefits to the society. For example, AI-powered systems have been used to: (a) enhance efficiency in the workplace through automation; (b) develop innovative products and services; and (c) improve healthcare services through better diagnoses, new treatments and personalised care-giving.

2.　　However, along with the benefits of AI are also unique challenges, particularly in the realm of disinformation. As *The Wall*

Street Journal reported, AI can be harnessed by malicious actors to create sophisticated misinformation or disinformation that are often indistinguishable from human-generated content. Examples of AI threats include deep fakes and social bots used to stir human emotions and manipulate public opinion, such as during political elections or amid geopolitical tensions.

3.   On the flip side, according to a 2022 *NATO Strategic Communications Centre of Excellence Report,* AI can also be harnessed to counter malicious AI acts. For example, AI can be used to detect deep fakes in digitally manipulated images, videos, and audio recordings. Some of the tell-tale signs of deep fakes include visual inconsistencies, background distortions, and anomalies in facial expressions. In addition, AI can be used to detect social bots, which might not look suspicious at the individual account level, but appear hostile and inauthentic when clustered at the group level. These social bots can be discovered through measuring the similarities among social media accounts to suss out behavioural patterns and coordinated activities.

4.   The importance of AI governance cannot be understated in our rapidly evolving technological landscape. As AI continues to permeate various facets of society and our daily lives, it becomes paramount to establish frameworks and systems for AI governance so as to minimise the accompanying AI risks. To counter the negative impacts of AI, policymakers and AI developers around the world have developed AI strategies and guidelines at the national, regional and international levels.

5.   For instance, policymakers or government could consider **formulating a comprehensive national AI strategy,** such as the Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD) AI principles for strategy development. Within Asia, China released its draft Measures for the Management of Generative AI Services to the public for comments in April 2023, and these measures are expected to take effect after a review of the comments. ASEAN Member States have also made headway in developing governance

frameworks for AI. For example, Thailand had published its draft Royal Decree on AI System Service Business in early 2023, although legally binding AI regulation has yet to materialise. Indonesia has been working on a draft of its 2045 National AI Strategy since 2020, which would become a legal framework for AI in the country. Similarly, Singapore has developed a National AI Strategy involving the government, private sector and academics to deepen the use of AI to transform its economy by 2030.

6.   Policy-makers around the world could also consider **establishing a regional, multi-stakeholder AI governance body.** For instance, in June 2018, the European Commission appointed an AI High-Level Expert Group (AI HLEG) to develop ethics guidelines and provide policy recommendations for trustworthy AI, as well as to guide users in designing practical assessment tools and implementation approaches for different sectors. The AI HLEG's recommendations were often used as references for policymaking by the European Commission and its Member States. In June 2023, ASEAN Member States declared their intent to adopt the ASEAN Guide on AI Governance and Ethics by 2024.

7.   Nations around the world had also sought to strengthen cooperation in **AI governance.** In November 2023, the UK government held the first AI Safety Summit, in which the European Union (EU) and 28 governments[1], as well as heads of leading AI companies attended and signed the Bletchley Declaration. This is a notable collaborative initiative among nations towards establishing a universal framework for governing AI. The Declaration aims to address frontier AI risks through focusing on (a) identifying AI safety risks of shared concern, and building a shared scientific and evidence-based understanding of these risks as capabilities continue to increase; and (b) building respective risk-based policies across countries to ensure safety in light of AI risks, and collaborating where appropriate while recognising the different national circumstances and legal

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[1] The declaration was signed by the EU and 28 countries, including Australia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kenya, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Netherlands, Nigeria, the Philippines, Republic of Korea, Rwanda, Singapore, Spain, Switzerland, Türkiye, Ukraine, UAE, the UK, and the US.

frameworks.

The Bletchley Declaration signed by attendees at the first AI Safety Summit in November 2023

8.	In essence, the fast and evolving field of AI holds the potential to yield unprecedented technological growth that could be coupled with catastrophic outcomes for nations, societies and individuals. As responsible members of the international community, it is necessary that countries continue to participate in dialogues encouraging the responsible development and use of AI, including establishing clear guidelines for the development, deployment, and use of AI technologies among the different sectors. That said, these debates should be balanced with the need to create space for cutting-edge technology to thrive. Our approach towards AI technologies could signal the boon or bane for the information landscape for nations and societies. We should therefore remain vigilant while embracing the rapid rise of AI, and leverage these technologies to pave the way to a brighter future for humankind.

Terrorism

Regional Terrorism Developments

1.　　　Following the arrest of an administrator of a prominent Indonesian pro-ISIS media group, *Tamkin media* on 19 October 2023, a new media group, *An-Nur Media Foundation* had emerged on 30 October 2023. *An-Nur* translated ISIS official newsletter *Al-Naba*'s 414 infographics into Bahasa Indonesia titled "Among the Fruits of Faith and Good Deeds" and "Harvest of the Soldiers", which espoused ISIS ideology and "achievements". Such ISIS-aligned media groups also continued to disseminate terror propaganda inciting attacks against Jews amidst the ongoing Israel-Hamas conflict.

2.　　　Over in the Philippines, a pro-ISIS supporter affiliated with the Philippines ISIS-aligned media *al-Fursan Media* continued to share past incitement and commentary videos and photos featuring Filipino militants, which is part of pro-ISIS supporters' strategy to glorify attacks in the southern Philippines.

CONTACT DETAILS

All reports can be retrieved from our website at www.acice-asean.org/resource/.

For any queries and/or clarifications, please contact ACICE at ACICE@defence.gov.sg.

Prepared by:
ADMM Cybersecurity and Information Centre of Excellence

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Terrorism

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