

20 August 2008

Chem-Bio News

1. FBI PRESENTS FORENSIC EVIDENCE ON ANTHRAX ATTACKS SUSPECT: *"Looking to address skepticism over the case, the FBI yesterday offered journalists and academic journal editors a briefing on what the bureau called "a body of powerful evidence" against Bruce Ivins."*

2. GEORGIA CHAOS HALTS NUCLEAR SECURITY EFFORT: *"The chaos in Georgia has forced the United States to halt a high-priority program that was helping the former Soviet republic to identify possible smugglers of nuclear bomb components across its borders, long considered a transit point for terrorists seeking to obtain weapons of mass destruction, according to US officials."*

3. IMPLEMENTATION OF UNITED NATIONS ANTI-WMD RESOLUTION UNFINISHED, COMMITTEE SAYS: *"Resolution 1540, enacted in 2004, requires U.N. members to combat efforts by "nonstate actors" to acquire, produce and transfer weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems."*

Chem-Demil News

1. CHEMICAL WEAPON DEPOTS LOOK TO WEAPON-LESS FUTURE: *"The fear comes not from the threat of foreign spies, but rather the possibility of being undercut by competing private manufacturers."*

CB Daily Report

Chem-Bio News

FBI PRESENTS FORENSIC EVIDENCE ON ANTHRAX ATTACKS SUSPECT

Global Security Newswire

August 20, 2008

"The anthrax used in the 2001 mailings was a perfect genetic match to a supply of the agent possessed by an Army scientist the U.S. Justice Department contends is responsible for the attacks, the Washington Post reported (see GSN, Aug. 18).

Looking to address skepticism over the case, the FBI yesterday offered journalists and academic journal editors a briefing on what the bureau called "a body of powerful evidence" against Bruce Ivins.

A genetic assessment of anthrax used in the mailings found it matched a mixture of standard and mutant strains of the bacteria possessed by Ivins, a microbiologist at the U.S. Army Research Institute of Infectious Diseases at Fort Detrick, Md."

"The FBI gathered more than 1,000 samples of the bacteria from around the world and determined only eight included the same four mutant strains as the mixture in the mailings. All eight of those samples had been drawn from Ivins's supply of the agent, dubbed RMR-1029, officials said.

Investigators determined that just one scientist working alone could have grown and dried the anthrax spores, said James Burans, head of the National Bioforensics Analysis Center. The analysis found no weaponizing agent on the spores to make them easier to inhale.

Using equipment possessed by Ivins, an FBI laboratory recreated an "extremely friable" version of the anthrax powder that could spread with little effort, said Vahid Majidi of the FBI's Weapons of Mass Destruction Directorate. "It would have been easy to do this at USAMRIID," he said.

However, researchers, attorneys and other skeptics continued to express doubts about the evidence, and even participants in the investigation admitted that questions remained."

The full article can be found at: http://www.nti.org/d_newswire/issues/2008_8_19.html

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GEORGIA CHAOS HALTS NUCLEAR SECURITY EFFORT

By Bryan Bender
The Boston Globe
August 19, 2008

"The chaos in Georgia has forced the United States to halt a high-priority program that was helping the former Soviet republic to identify possible smugglers of nuclear bomb components across its borders, long considered a transit point for terrorists seeking to obtain weapons of mass destruction, according to US officials.

A team from the US Nuclear Security Administration was providing Georgian authorities with radiation equipment and training at key border crossings and the Batumi airport on the country's Black Sea coast when Russia invaded two weeks ago. The advisers were forced to flee the country within days, according to a spokesman from the Department of Energy."

"Officials also fear that the chaos could loosen security at several facilities inside Georgia containing radioactive materials. Although the nuclear weapons that had been stationed on its territory during the Cold War have been removed, Georgia has three nuclear research facilities - including one located in a province that has been a flashpoint in the recent conflict with Russia.

The I. Vekua Institute of Physics and Technology in Sukhumi, in the pro-Russia province of Abkhazia, is not safeguarded by the International Atomic Energy Agency. Georgian authorities have previously reported they believe some radioactive materials that had been stored there - including highly enriched uranium - have been sold to terrorists, an assertion

the local government has denied.”

The full article can be found at: http://www.boston.com/news/world/europe/articles/2008/08/19/georgia_chaos_halts_nuclear_security_effort/

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IMPLEMENTATION OF UNITED NATIONS ANTI-WMD RESOLUTION UNFINISHED, COMMITTEE SAYS

Global Security Network

August 20, 2008

“U.N. nations have yet to completely carry out their obligations under a resolution intended to counter the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, one high-level committee said yesterday (see GSN, May 8).

Resolution 1540, enacted in 2004, requires U.N. members to combat efforts by “nonstate actors” to acquire, produce and transfer weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems.

States have taken a variety of actions to meet their commitments under the resolution, the U.N. Security Council’s 1540 Committee said in its second report. These include enacting legislation and regulations, developing enforcement measures and putting assistance programs into place.”

The full article can be found at: http://www.nti.org/d_newswire/issues/2008_8_19.html

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Chem-Demil News

CHEMICAL WEAPON DEPOTS LOOK TO WEAPON-LESS FUTURE

Arkansas Business.com

August 18, 2008

“During the Cold War, the Pine Bluff Arsenal held the secrets of the nation's stockpile chemical and biological weapons against prying Soviet eyes. Now, arsenal commander Col. Bill Barnett worries about disclosing how many gas masks and mortar rounds workers can produce in a day.

The fear comes not from the threat of foreign spies, but rather the possibility of being undercut by competing private manufacturers.

"We are a business," the former Special Forces warrior said. "It's a very unique environment."

The full article can be found at: <http://www.arkansasbusiness.com/article.aspx?aID=107343.20172.119484>

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