

10 August 2009

Chem-Bio News

1. INDIA INSPECTS NORTH KOREA SHIP FOR NUCLEAR MATERIAL: *"Indian authorities were inspecting a North Korean ship detained in the Bay of Bengal for nuclear material or fuel, officials said on Monday, the latest sign of the international noose tightening around the North."*

2. IRAN NEEDS FOUR YEARS TO PRODUCE NUCLEAR-WEAPON MATERIAL, U.S. SAYS: *"Iran would need until 2013 to produce weapon-grade nuclear material, the U.S. State Department's intelligence office concluded in a report provided to lawmakers earlier this year."*

3. NRC WANTS TO TIGHTEN OVERSIGHT OF OFTEN-LOST RADIOACTIVE DEVICES: *"The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission is proposing to apply stronger oversight to frequently lost radioactive devices -- items a Scripps Media investigation found have been recycled into metal used to manufacture consumer and other products."*

Chem-Demil News

1. WILDFIRES CONTAINED AT UMATILLA CHEMICAL DEPOT: *"Several lightning-caused wildfires at the Umatilla Chemical Depot have now been contained."*

CB Daily Report

Chem-Bio News

INDIA INSPECTS NORTH KOREA SHIP FOR NUCLEAR MATERIAL

By Sanjib Kumar Roy

Reuters

August 10, 2009

"Indian authorities were inspecting a North Korean ship detained in the Bay of Bengal for nuclear material or fuel, officials said on Monday, the latest sign of the international noose tightening around the North.

A preliminary investigation by a team of nuclear scientists failed to detect any radioactive presence on board the ship carrying a huge sugar consignment, Ashok Chand, a senior police officer in India's Andaman and Nicobar islands, told Reuters.

"There will be more checking today and we will open the hatch to check the entire consignment for any radioactive material," Chand said.

The MV Mu San dropped anchor off Hut Bay island in the Andaman islands on Wednesday

without permission and was detained by the coastguard after a more than six-hour chase."

The full article can be found at: <http://www.reuters.com/article/worldNews/idUSTRE5791HF20090810>

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IRAN NEEDS FOUR YEARS TO PRODUCE NUCLEAR-WEAPON MATERIAL, U.S. SAYS

Global Security Newswire

August 07, 2009

"Iran would need until 2013 to produce weapon-grade nuclear material, the U.S. State Department's intelligence office concluded in a report provided to lawmakers earlier this year.

The determination, reached by the department's Intelligence and Research Bureau, was disclosed in a document obtained by the Federation of American Scientists through a Freedom of Information Act request, the Washington Post reported today.

The United States and other Western governments have expressed concern that Iran's uranium enrichment could generate nuclear-weapon material; Tehran has insisted the effort would only produce nuclear power plant fuel (Walter Pincus, Washington Post, Aug. 7).

"When making judgments of when Iran would be 'technically capable' of producing enough highly enriched uranium for a nuclear weapon, we are estimating Iran's functional ability to perform the enrichment rather than making a judgment about when Iran might make any political decision to produce HEU," National Intelligence Director Dennis Blair wrote in the document, which answers questions posed by Senate Select Intelligence Committee members at a February hearing.

"While Iran made significant progress since 2007 in installing and operating centrifuges, [the Intelligence and Research Bureau] continues to assess it is unlikely that Iran will have the technical capability to produce HEU before 2013," Blair stated.

The State Department office "shares the [U.S.] intelligence community's assessment that Iran probably would use military-run covert facilities, rather than declared nuclear sites, to produce HEU. Outfitting a covert enrichment infrastructure could take years," he added. To generate nuclear-weapon material at a declared enrichment facility, Iran would have to expel U.N. inspectors from the site, confirming Tehran's nuclear-weapon ambitions to other nations.

U.S. intelligence agencies have "no evidence that Iran has yet made the decision to produce highly enriched uranium, and [Intelligence and Research Bureau] assesses that Iran is unlikely to make such a decision for at least as long as international scrutiny and pressure persist (Diane Barnes, Global Security Newswire, Aug. 7)."

The full article can be found at: http://gsn.nti.org/gsn/nw_20090807_4391.php

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NRC WANTS TO TIGHTEN OVERSIGHT OF OFTEN-LOST RADIOACTIVE DEVICES

By Isaac Wolf

ScrippsNews.com

August 08, 2009

"The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission is proposing to apply stronger oversight to frequently lost radioactive devices -- items a Scripps Media investigation found have been recycled into metal used to manufacture consumer and other products.

For years, the metal industry has asked the government to do a better job regulating items containing radioactive isotopes, such as X-ray machines, industrial sensors and gauges. But, in the past, federal authorities have been resistant, saying extra oversight wouldn't be worth the cost.

The new proposal, published August 3 in the Federal Register, would expand that oversight, giving federal and state officials more muscle by stiffening regulations on almost 2,000 items -- mostly industrial gauges containing radioactive material. Extra scrutiny would help cut down on lost material, government and private industry experts say.

The Metals Industry Recycling Coalition "believes that the stricter controls and greater stewardship associated with specific licensing are critical to ensuring that sources are properly managed from cradle to grave," spokesman John Wittenborn said Wednesday.

But Wittenborn said more action -- such as the expansion of a nationwide tracking system -- is needed to prevent radioactive material from entering the scrap-metal pipeline.

The NRC proposal would cover only a tiny fraction of the approximately 2 million radioactive devices in factories, hospitals, research facilities and other places nationwide. Of those, the U.S. Government Accountability Office estimates up to 500,000 of those devices are unaccounted for."

The full article can be found at: <http://www.scrippsnews.com/node/45457>

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Chem-Demil News

WILDFIRES CONTAINED AT UMATILLA CHEMICAL DEPOT

US Army Chemical Materials Agency Press Release

August 04, 2009

“Several lightning-caused wildfires at the Umatilla Chemical Depot have now been contained. The first fire started at about 6:20 p.m. today. Firefighters will continue to work on hot spots overnight.

Preliminary estimates are that fires burned several thousand of the depot’s 19,729 acres. The fires burned on the northern end of the depot and on adjacent property off post.

The depot’s chemical weapons stockpile was not involved in the fire. Chemical weapons at the depot are stored in reinforced concrete earth-covered “igloos” designed to resist fire or other threats. All nerve agent has been destroyed; the only remaining munitions are bulk containers of mustard blister agent that do not have any explosive components.

As previously reported:

- Firefighters from the depot, Boardman, Irrigon and Hermiston Fire Departments fought the blazes per mutual aid agreements.
- One emergency response worker suffered a knee injury while exiting a vehicle and was taken to the depot clinic. The worker later went home.
- Depot workers moved vehicles and other equipment out of the path of the fire.
- Depot officials notified off-post emergency operations centers in Umatilla and Morrow counties, Ore.; Benton County, Wash.; those in Oregon and Washington states; the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation; and the Oregon Dept. of Environmental Quality.”

The full article can be found at: <http://www.cma.army.mil/include/docrendition.asp?DocID=003681266>

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