

2 February 2009

Chem-Bio News

1. IRAN DENIES URANIUM YELLOWCAKE SHORTAGE: *"Iran this week denied a report that it faces a rapidly shrinking stock of unrefined yellowcake uranium to carry out its nuclear activities, Iran's Press TV reported."*

2. OBAMA FACTOR ALREADY AFFECTING FOREIGN POLICY: *"On Jan. 22, two days after Mr. Obama's inauguration, the government issued a press release stating Canada would be contributing \$10 million "toward U.S. efforts to detect and secure dangerous nuclear and radiological materials in Russia and Ukraine."*

3. CHEMICAL ALI JOINS SADDAM COHORTS ON TRIAL OVER KURD CRACKDOWN: *"The defendants are accused of using members of the Faily Kurd community as guinea pigs for chemicals weapons testing and as human shields during Iraq's eight-year war with neighbouring Iran."*

4. OBAMA ADMINISTRATION TO REVIEW DISPUTED RADIOLOGICAL CLEANUP GUIDE: *"The Obama administration plans to re-evaluate a controversial Environmental Protection Agency draft guide that could significantly relax requirements for decontaminating sites affected by radiological incidents such as a "dirty bomb" attack."*

5. ONCONOVA AND DOD DEMONSTRATE INCREASED SURVIVABILITY OF PREVIOUSLY LETHAL RADIATION IN MICE: *"The findings provide proof of concept for the Onconova's Phase I clinical trial of Ex-RAD in normal healthy volunteers, announced today."*

6. DRUG SAFETY WATCHDOG SEES AL-QAEDA RISK TO U.S. FOOD, DRUG IMPORTS: *"Scant monitoring of expanding U.S. food and medicine imports could heighten the risk of biological attack by al-Qaeda or other terrorist groups, according to a leading drug-industry watchdog."*

7. CDC'S PREPAREDNESS CHIEF NAMED ACTING DIRECTOR: *"Richard E. Besser, MD, who formerly directed terrorism preparedness and emergency response at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), was named last week as the agency's acting director."*

CB Daily Report

Chem-Bio News

IRAN DENIES URANIUM YELLOWCAKE SHORTAGE

Global Security Newswire
January 30, 2009

"Iran this week denied a report that it faces a rapidly shrinking stock of unrefined yellowcake uranium to carry out its nuclear activities, Iran's Press TV reported."

"The United States and other Western nations have expressed concern that the Middle Eastern state's uranium enrichment program could produce a key nuclear-weapon ingredient, but Tehran contends the effort is strictly aimed at fueling civilian nuclear power plants.

"Iran is not only capable of supplying fuel for the Bushehr nuclear plant, but can also act as a major exporter," Iranian envoy Mahmoud Mehdi Soltani said Wednesday, adding that the country has access to between 3,000 and 5,000 metric tons of uranium. Three new uranium deposits were discovered in 2006 in the country, he said, reacting to a London Times report that Iran's yellowcake uranium reserves are within months of depletion."

The full article can be found at: http://gsn.nti.org/gsn/nw_20090130_7747.php

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OBAMA FACTOR ALREADY AFFECTING FOREIGN POLICY

By Michelle Collins

The Hill Times

January 28, 2009

"On Jan. 22, two days after Mr. Obama's inauguration, the government issued a press release stating Canada would be contributing \$10 million "toward U.S. efforts to detect and secure dangerous nuclear and radiological materials in Russia and Ukraine."

While Canada has supported such initiatives in the past, they have generally not made big headlines. It's perhaps no surprise that one of Mr. Obama's major priorities is eliminating nuclear terrorism and tracking nuclear material."

The full article can be found at: <http://www.embassymag.ca/page/view/obama-1-28-2009>

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CHEMICAL ALI JOINS SADDAM COHORTS ON TRIAL OVER KURD CRACKDOWN

By Ammar Karim

Yahoo News

January 27, 2009

" Saddam Hussein's notorious hatchet man known as "Chemical Ali" and former deputy premier Tareq Aziz are among 16 former officials on trial in Iraq for a brutal 1980s campaign against Shiite Kurds, a court official said on Tuesday.

The defendants are accused of using members of the Faily Kurd community as guinea pigs for chemicals weapons testing and as human shields during Iraq's eight-year war with neighbouring Iran."

The full article can be found at: http://news.yahoo.com/s/afp/20090127/wl_mideast_afp/iraqtrialkurds_20090127134613

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OBAMA ADMINISTRATION TO REVIEW DISPUTED RADIOLOGICAL CLEANUP GUIDE

Global Security Newswire

January 28, 2009

"The Obama administration plans to re-evaluate a controversial Environmental Protection Agency draft guide that could significantly relax requirements for decontaminating sites affected by radiological incidents such as a "dirty bomb" attack."

The full article can be found at: http://gsn.nti.org/gsn/nw_20090128_9515.php

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ONCONOVA AND DOD DEMONSTRATE INCREASED SURVIVABILITY OF PREVIOUSLY LETHAL RADIATION IN MICE

By Phil Leggiere

HSToday.com

January 26, 2009

"The findings provide proof of concept for the Onconova's Phase I clinical trial of Ex-RAD in normal healthy volunteers, announced today. In the Radiation Research article, "Radiation Protection by a New Chemical Entity Ex-RAD: Efficacy and Mechanisms," scientists from AFFRI and Onconova reported that Ex-RAD™ promoted survival of lethally irradiated mice. Treated mice could withstand lethal doses of gamma radiation. The study also showed that Ex-RAD-treated cells could withstand more radiation than untreated cells."

The full article can be found at: <http://www.hstoday.us/content/view/6963/187/>

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DRUG SAFETY WATCHDOG SEES AL-QAEDA RISK TO U.S. FOOD, DRUG IMPORTS

By Elaine M. Grossman

Global Security Newswire

January 29, 2009

"Scant monitoring of expanding U.S. food and medicine imports could heighten the risk of biological attack by al-Qaeda or other terrorist groups, according to a leading drug-industry watchdog.

Over the past two years, reports of tainted ingredients in powdered milk, blood-thinner medication and pet foods manufactured in China have underscored the perils of globalization for U.S. public health, said Steven Nissen, a Cleveland Clinic cardiologist."

"Thus far, repeat incidents of contaminated foreign foods and medicines appear to reflect a drive to reduce production costs in poorly regulated nations, rather than an intention to harm consumers, Nissen said during a Tuesday telephone interview.

However, the Food and Drug Administration has exerted insufficient control over the quality and content of imported food and drugs, he asserted. Terrorist leaders could easily identify and exploit this key U.S. vulnerability, Nissen said.

"If you were al-Qaeda and you wanted to harm Americans, you're not going to go try to hijack a plane and then fly it into a building again," Nissen told Global Security Newswire. "But if you could get access to a plant in China that makes pharmaceuticals and put something into those [drugs] that is hard to detect, I believe you could put Americans at great risk."

The full article can be found at: http://gsn.nti.org/gsn/nw_20090129_3617.php

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CDC'S PREPAREDNESS CHIEF NAMED ACTING DIRECTOR

By Robert Roos

CIDRAP News (Center for Infectious Disease Research & Policy – University of Minnesota)
January 27, 2009

"Richard E. Besser, MD, who formerly directed terrorism preparedness and emergency response at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), was named last week as the agency's acting director.

Besser replaces Julie L. Gerberding, MD, MPH, who had led the agency since July 2002 and stepped down as President Barack Obama took office last week."

The full article can be found at: <http://www.cidrap.umn.edu/cidrap/content/bt/bioprep/news/jan2709besser-jw.html>

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