

9 February 2009

Chem-Bio News

1. 2 MICE CARRYING PLAGUE DISAPPEAR FROM NEW JERSEY LAB, FBI SAYS NO

PUBLIC HEALTH RISK: *"The frozen remains of two mice injected with the organism that causes plague have not been accounted for seven weeks after being discovered missing at a University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey facility in Newark, the university said Friday."*

2. US, ARMENIA GOVERNMENTS TO SIGN AN AGREEMENT ON BIOLOGICAL THREAT

REDUCTION PROGRAM: *"The Government of the Republic of Armenia and the Government of the United States of America are planning to sign the Agreement between the Department of Defense of the United States of America and the Ministry of Emergency Situations of the Republic of Armenia Concerning Cooperation in the Area of Prevention of Proliferation of Technology, Pathogens and Expertise that Could Be Used in the Development of Biological Weapons within the framework of the Biological Threat Reduction Program."*

3. US TARGETS CHINESE, IRANIAN, NKOREAN FIRMS:

"The Obama administration said Monday it has imposed sanctions on companies in North Korea, China and Iran for violating U.S. law aimed at stopping the spread of missiles and other weapons technology."

4. JOHNS HOPKINS OFFERS FREE SOFTWARE TOOL FOR LARGE-SCALE DISASTER

'SURGE' PLANNING; COMPUTER MODELING PROGRAM DEVELOPED BY HOPKINS'

OFFICE OF CRITICAL EVENT PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE AND APPLIED

PHYSICS LAB TEAM: *"A team of Johns Hopkins experts is offering a free, Web-based tool it developed that calculates and predicts in advance the impact on individual hospitals of a flu epidemic, bioterrorist attack, flood or plane crash, accounting for such elements as numbers of victims, germ-carrying wind patterns, available medical resources, bacterial incubation periods and bomb size."*

5. HOUSE PASSES HOMELAND SECURITY SECRECY 'OVER-CLASSIFICATION' ACT:

"The U.S. House of Representatives this week passed the Reducing Over-Classification Act of 2009, H.R. 553, sponsored by California Democrat Jane Harmon, which will "require the Secretary of Homeland Security to develop a strategy to prevent the over-classification of homeland security and other information and to promote the sharing of unclassified homeland security and other information."

6. COMPUTER MODEL SAYS IRAN WON'T BUILD NUCLEAR BOMBS:

"The projections are based on a gaming and computer model built by political scientist Bruce Bueno de Mesquita, an advisor to the Central Intelligence Agency and the Department of Defense."

CB Daily Report

Chem-Bio News

2 MICE CARRYING PLAGUE DISAPPEAR FROM NEW JERSEY LAB, FBI SAYS NO

PUBLIC HEALTH RISK

Associated Press on FoxNews

February 7, 2009

"The frozen remains of two mice injected with the organism that causes plague have not been accounted for seven weeks after being discovered missing at a University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey facility in Newark, the university said Friday.

The FBI investigated and determined there was no risk to public health or any indication of the terrorist link.

It wasn't the first time plague-infected mice have disappeared from the New Jersey facility. Four years ago, in September 2005, three live mice infected with bubonic plague bacteria disappeared from various cages. Officials later said they believed the rodents had died."

The full article can be found at: <http://www.foxnews.com/story/0,2933,489595,00.html>

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US, ARMENIA GOVERNMENTS TO SIGN AN AGREEMENT ON BIOLOGICAL THREAT REDUCTION PROGRAM

Public Radio of Armenia

February 5, 2009

"The Government of the Republic of Armenia and the Government of the United States of America are planning to sign the Agreement between the Department of Defense of the United States of America and the Ministry of Emergency Situations of the Republic of Armenia Concerning Cooperation in the Area of Prevention of Proliferation of Technology, Pathogens and Expertise that Could Be Used in the Development of Biological Weapons within the framework of the Biological Threat Reduction Program. The Biological Threat Reduction Program already works in Ukraine, Georgia, Russia, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, and Uzbekistan.

The Program seeks partners in the global fight against biological weapons proliferation. Through the Program the Armenian Ministry of Emergency Situations and the U.S. Department of Defense will work to improve Armenia's overall biosafety and biosecurity systems and procedures, consolidate and secure dangerous pathogen collections and research, and enhance capacity to detect, diagnose, report and respond to outbreaks."

The full article can be found at: <http://www.armradio.am/news/?part=soc&id=14326>

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US TARGETS CHINESE, IRANIAN, NKOREAN FIRMS

By Foster Klug

Associated Press on Google News
February 3, 2009

"The Obama administration said Monday it has imposed sanctions on companies in North Korea, China and Iran for violating U.S. law aimed at stopping the spread of missiles and other weapons technology.

The penalties were the first of their kind from the new U.S. administration and signaled a willingness to continue the Bush administration's tough stance on weapons proliferation.

The sanctions, while largely symbolic, come at a sensitive time in two key U.S. diplomatic efforts. The United States relies on Chinese leverage in international negotiations to persuade North Korea to abandon its nuclear weapons programs. The Obama administration also needs the help of China, a veto-wielding member of the U.N. Security Council, to deter Iran from pursuing a nuclear weapon."

The full article can be found at: <http://www.google.com/hostednews/ap/article/ALeqM5gDnWCdBEIW5pXIUIdqFF0br7REoQD963HS2G0>

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JOHNS HOPKINS OFFERS FREE SOFTWARE TOOL FOR LARGE-SCALE DISASTER 'SURGE' PLANNING; COMPUTER MODELING PROGRAM DEVELOPED BY HOPKINS' OFFICE OF CRITICAL EVENT PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE AND APPLIED PHYSICS LAB TEAM

Ascribe

February 4, 2009

"A team of Johns Hopkins experts is offering a free, Web-based tool it developed that calculates and predicts in advance the impact on individual hospitals of a flu epidemic, bioterrorist attack, flood or plane crash, accounting for such elements as numbers of victims, germ-carrying wind patterns, available medical resources, bacterial incubation periods and bomb size.

"Biological, chemical, radiological or explosive attacks can bring hospitals and local health agencies to their knees, quickly overwhelming their ability to care for mass casualties," says Gabor Kelen, M.D., head of emergency medicine at Johns Hopkins and director of Hopkins' Office of Critical Event Preparedness and Response (CEPAR). "Our software lets users put their own information into the modeling software, customize it to their needs, and predict what they will need to handle a surge in casualties."

Called EMCAPS (Electronic Mass Casualty Assessment & Planning Scenarios), the software program is believed to be the first that generates the anticipated outcomes of disaster planning scenarios developed by the Department of Homeland Security. The scenarios include patient estimates by injury type, estimated level of care required, and the need for decontamination facilities.

Developed by CEPAR and programmed by the Johns Hopkins Applied Physics Laboratory, EMCAPS's details are reported in the February edition of the Annals of Emergency Medicine. The program is available for download free of cost from Johns Hopkins' CEPAR Web site, <http://www.hopkins-cepar.org/> ."

The full article can be found at: <http://newswire.ascribe.org/cgi-bin/ behold.pl?ascribeid=20090204.080615&time=10%2045%20PST&year=2009&public=0>

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HOUSE PASSES HOMELAND SECURITY SECRECY 'OVER-CLASSIFICATION' ACT

By Louis Chunovic

Government Security News

February 5, 2009

"The U.S. House of Representatives this week passed the Reducing Over-Classification Act of 2009, H.R. 553, sponsored by California Democrat Jane Harmon, which will "require the Secretary of Homeland Security to develop a strategy to prevent the over-classification of homeland security and other information and to promote the sharing of unclassified homeland security and other information."

One purpose of the bill is to provide unclassified versions of intelligence information to law enforcement agencies that work with DHS."

"The bill calls for the creation, in consultation with the Archivist of the United States and within one year of passage, of "standard classified and unclassified formats for finished intelligence products created by the Department"; and for "all finished intelligence products created by the Department [to] be simultaneously prepared in the standard unclassified format, provided that such an unclassified product would reasonably be expected to be of any benefit to a State, local, tribal or territorial government, law enforcement agency or other emergency response provider, or the private sector."

The full article can be found at: <http://www.gsnmagazine.com/cms/features/news-analysis/1487.html>

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COMPUTER MODEL SAYS IRAN WON'T BUILD NUCLEAR BOMBS

Agence France-Presse on Defence Talk.com

February 9, 2009

"A veteran consultant to US spy agencies predicted on Saturday that Iran won't build nuclear bombs and that the power of its president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad will quickly fade.

The projections are based on a gaming and computer model built by political scientist Bruce

Bueno de Mesquita, an advisor to the Central Intelligence Agency and the Department of Defense.

By the start of next year, Iran will stabilize its nuclear program at a point where it makes enough weapons-grade fuel to build national pride by showing it can, but not enough to actually produce a bomb, the model predicts.

Bueno de Mesquita's computer model has reportedly been found by CIA officials to be right 90 percent of the time."

The full article can be found at: http://www.defencetalk.com/news/publish/tech/Computer_model_says_Iran_won_t_build_nuclear_bombs140017052.php

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