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Chem-Bio News

1. 'SYRIA BUILDING CHEMICAL WEAPONS PLANT': *"Syria has been conducting extensive construction work on a chemical weapons facility in the country's northwest, satellite images obtained by the defense analyst group Jane's reveal."*

2. IRAN HAS ENOUGH FUEL FOR A NUCLEAR BOMB, REPORT SAYS: *"The report by the IAEA, the United Nations' nuclear watchdog, surprises diplomats and arms control experts."*

3. IRAQ DESIGNATES NATIONAL AUTHORITY FOR THE CHEMICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION: *"In compliance with its obligations under the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), the Republic of Iraq has informed the OPCW that it has established the Iraqi National Monitoring Directorate, which will assume the functions of its National Authority."*

4. NRC ISSUES FINAL RULE ON NEW REACTOR AIRCRAFT IMPACT ASSESSMENTS: *"The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission has issued a final rule that requires applicants for new power reactors to assess the ability of their reactor designs to avoid or mitigate the effects of a large commercial aircraft impact."*

5. IAEA REJECTS SYRIAN URANIUM CLAIM: *"There is a low probability that the uranium was introduced by the use of missiles as the isotopic and chemical composition and the morphology of the particles are all inconsistent with what would be expected from the use of uranium-based munitions," says a report issued today by International Atomic Energy Agency chief Mohamed ElBaradei."*

6. IRAN MARKEDLY SLOWS ATOM ENRICHMENT EXPANSION: IAEA: *"Iran has considerably slowed down the expansion of its contested uranium enrichment program, said a confidential International Atomic Energy Agency report obtained by Reuters on Thursday."*

7. VETERINARY COLLEGE RESEARCHERS WORKING TO PROTECTING PEOPLE FROM THE DEADLY EFFECTS OF NERVE GASES: *"A veterinary pharmaco-toxicologist in the Virginia-Maryland Regional College of Veterinary Medicine at Virginia Tech is leading a team that has been awarded almost \$1 million from the National Institutes of Health to explore the development of a nanotechnology-based approach for protecting people from the deadly effects of nerve gases like Sarin, VX, and others that can be used as agents of terror."*

CB Daily Report

Chem-Bio News

'SYRIA BUILDING CHEMICAL WEAPONS PLANT'

By Yaakov Katz

Mideast.JPost.com

February 17, 2009

"Syria has been conducting extensive construction work on a chemical weapons facility in the country's northwest, satellite images obtained by the defense analyst group Jane's reveal.

The images of a chemical weapons facility identified as al-Safir were taken by several commercial sources from 2005 to 2008, the analyst group said.

Imagery obtained by DigitalGlobe's WorldView-1 satellite shows that extensive construction has taken place at the facility, as well as at an adjacent missile base, the group wrote. In addition, the images showed that the site contained a number of the "defining features of a chemical weapons facility."

The full article can be found at: <http://www.jpost.com/servlet/Satellite?cid=1233304811448&pagename=JPost%2FJPArticle%2FShowFull>

[Return to Top](#)

IRAN HAS ENOUGH FUEL FOR A NUCLEAR BOMB, REPORT SAYS

By Borzou Daragahi
Los Angeles Times
February 20, 2009

"The report by the IAEA, the United Nations' nuclear watchdog, surprises diplomats and arms control experts. Officials note that major obstacles remain to building a weapon.

Iran has enough nuclear fuel to build a bomb if it decides to take the drastic steps of violating its international treaty obligations, kicking out inspectors and further refining its supply, U.N. officials and arms control experts said Thursday.

Iran has made no such gestures and has slowed its expansion of machinery producing nuclear fuel, having increased production capacity by less than 5% over the last three months, according to a report issued Thursday by the International Atomic Energy Agency.

Another IAEA report released Thursday raises suspicions about graphite and uranium particles found at an alleged nuclear site in Syria that was bombed by Israel in 2007.

The reports, the latest updates from the arms control watchdog for the United Nations, show that Iran had amassed about 2,227 pounds of low-enriched, or reactor-grade, nuclear fuel by late January. Physicists estimate that producing the 55 pounds or so of highly enriched, or weapons-grade, uranium needed for an atomic warhead requires 2,205 to 3,748 pounds of low-enriched uranium."

The full article can be found at: <http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/world/la-fg-iran-nuclear20-2009feb20,0,3140113.story>

[Return to Top](#)

IRAQ DESIGNATES NATIONAL AUTHORITY FOR THE CHEMICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION

Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons News Release
February 16, 2009

"In compliance with its obligations under the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), the Republic of Iraq has informed the OPCW that it has established the Iraqi National Monitoring Directorate, which will assume the functions of its National Authority.

The announcement came on 12 February 2009, the same day that the CWC entered into force for Iraq, officially making it the 186th State Party to the Convention. As of today, 178 of these States Parties have established or designated National Authorities."

The full article can be found at: <http://www.opcw.org/news/news/article/iraq-designates-national-authority-for-the-chemical-weapons-convention/>

[Return to Top](#)

NRC ISSUES FINAL RULE ON NEW REACTOR AIRCRAFT IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission News Release
February 17, 2009

"The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission has issued a final rule that requires applicants for new power reactors to assess the ability of their reactor designs to avoid or mitigate the effects of a large commercial aircraft impact.

"This is a common sense approach to address an issue raised by the tragic events of Sept. 11, 2001," said NRC Chairman Dale Klein, adding that some of the credit for resolving the issue is due to the efforts of the late Commissioner Edward McGaffigan. "Without the energy he devoted to this effort every day, up to the week he died, the Commission may never have been able to come to common ground on this very important issue. I am quite confident that this rule will be an important element in the regulatory framework for new reactor applications that will result in a margin of safety far beyond that required to achieve reasonable assurance of public health and safety."

Nuclear power plants are designed under very stringent requirements to assure they can safely shut down following "design-basis events" such as large fires, floods, earthquakes and hurricanes, as well as improbable equipment malfunctions including pipe breaks. These requirements include having two redundant systems to accomplish each safety function. The rule treats large commercial aircraft crashes as "A beyond-design-basis events."

Under the rule, any design feature or functional capability adopted solely to comply with the rule will meet high quality standards but is exempt from NRC design-basis regulations, such

as regulations for redundancy. These design features and functional capabilities must address core cooling capability, containment integrity, spent fuel cooling capability, and spent fuel pool integrity following an aircraft impact.

The NRC has already taken several steps to improve security at existing nuclear power plants, including adopting a rule in March 2007 that requires both existing and potential new reactors to defend against a more realistic threat. The agency also issued a February 2002 Order requiring all existing nuclear power plants to develop and adopt mitigative strategies to cope with large fires and explosions from any cause, including beyond-design-basis aircraft impacts. The NRC voted in December 2008 to codify these requirements in a separate rule for all existing and future nuclear power plants. The agency does not believe nuclear power plant operators should be required to prevent the impact of large commercial aircraft; that responsibility rests with the federal government. The NRC works closely with other federal agencies such as NORAD, the Federal Aviation Administration and the intelligence community to provide layered protection against such a threat. The agency expects these efforts would effectively preclude an aircraft attack from occurring. Should such an unlikely event take place at a new plant designed in accordance with the new rule, the NRC expects the plant would be better able to withstand such a crash than the same design without changes resulting from the rule."

The full article can be found at: <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/doc-collections/news/2009/09-030.html>

[Return to Top](#)

IAEA REJECTS SYRIAN URANIUM CLAIM

By Greg Webb

Global Security Newswire

February 19, 2009

"The U.N. nuclear agency today rejected Syrian claims that uranium found on the site of an alleged Syrian nuclear reactor came from Israeli munitions that destroyed the facility in 2007.

"There is a low probability that the uranium was introduced by the use of missiles as the isotopic and chemical composition and the morphology of the particles are all inconsistent with what would be expected from the use of uranium-based munitions," says a report issued today by International Atomic Energy Agency chief Mohamed ElBaradei."

The full article can be found at: http://gsn.nti.org/gsn/ts_20090219_5622.php

[Return to Top](#)

IRAN MARKEDLY SLOWS ATOM ENRICHMENT EXPANSION: IAEA

By Mark Heinrich

Reuters
February 19, 2009

"Iran has considerably slowed down the expansion of its contested uranium enrichment program, said a confidential International Atomic Energy Agency report obtained by Reuters on Thursday.

The U.N. watchdog said Iran had increased the number of centrifuges refining uranium, a process that can produce fuel for civilian energy or potentially for atom bombs, by only 164 from 3,800 in November, an insignificant change."

The full article can be found at: <http://www.reuters.com/article/worldNews/idUSTRE51I47X20090219>

[Return to Top](#)

VETERINARY COLLEGE RESEARCHERS WORKING TO PROTECTING PEOPLE FROM THE DEADLY EFFECTS OF NERVE GASES

By Jeffrey Douglas
Virginia Tech News Release
February 17, 2009

"A veterinary pharmaco-toxicologist in the Virginia-Maryland Regional College of Veterinary Medicine at Virginia Tech is leading a team that has been awarded almost \$1 million from the National Institutes of Health to explore the development of a nanotechnology-based approach for protecting people from the deadly effects of nerve gases like Sarin, VX, and others that can be used as agents of terror.

Marion Ehrich, a professor in the Department of Biomedical Sciences and Pathobiology and co-director of the Laboratory for Neurotoxicity Studies, will spend three years developing novel methods for delivering chemical antidotes that can mitigate the devastating effect of organophosphate-based neurotoxicants.

The experiments will involve the use of nanoparticles called fullerenes -- commonly known as "Buckyballs" -- that have been modified to enhance their water solubility and catalytic and antioxidant properties. The nanoWorks and Biomedical Technologies Group of Luna Innovations Inc. of Roanoke, Va., the company that is partnering with Ehrich on the work, are developing the fullerene derivatives and supporting immunoreagents."

The full article can be found at: <http://www.vtnews.vt.edu/story.php?relyear=2009&itemno=97>

[Return to Top](#)

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