6 November 2009

Chem-Bio News

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2. 'ANTHRAX BOMB' ANSWERS DEMANDED: *"An MP is demanding reassurances that nothing remains of an anthrax bomb tested in a south Wales estuary during World War II."*

3. IRAN RAISES URANIUM OUTPUT AS PHOTOS SHOW NEED FOR WIDER CHECKS: *"Evidence of stepped-up activity at the Gchine mine, near the Persian Gulf coast city of Bandar Abbas, is seen in pictures obtained by Bloomberg News and the Washington-based New America Foundation, according to four nuclear analysts who examined the images. The mine could produce enough uranium to craft at least two atomic bombs a year, experts said."*

4. IRAN TESTED ADVANCED NUCLEAR WARHEAD DESIGN – SECRET REPORT: *"The very existence of the technology, known as a "two-point implosion" device, is officially secret in both the US and Britain, but according to previously unpublished documentation in a dossier compiled by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), Iranian scientists may have tested high-explosive components of the design."*

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2. PUEBLO CHEMICAL DEPOT - LAKEWOOD FIRM TO TREAT CHEMICAL WEAPONS WASTE: *"Golder Associates Inc. said it has been awarded the contract to provide biological treatment and odor control systems at the Pueblo Chemical Depot, working under Bechtel National, Inc., the prime contractor for the project."*

CB Daily Report

Chem-Bio News

MOSSAD HACKED SYRIAN OFFICIAL'S COMPUTER BEFORE BOMBING MYSTERIOUS FACILITY
By Kim Zetter,
Wired.com

November 03, 2009

“Agents of Israel’s Mossad intelligence service hacked into the computer of a senior Syrian government official a year before Israel bombed a facility in Syria in 2007, according to Der Spiegel.

The intelligence agents planted a Trojan horse on the official’s computer in late 2006 while he was staying at a hotel in the Kensington district of London, the German newspaper reported Monday in an extensive account of the bombing attack.

The official reportedly left his computer in his hotel room when he went out, making it easy for agents to install the malware that siphoned files from the laptop. The files contained construction plans for the Al Kabir complex in eastern Syria — said to be an illicit nuclear facility — as well as letters and hundreds of detailed photos showing the complex at various stages of construction.

At the beginning — probably in 2002, although the material was undated — the construction site looked like a treehouse on stilts, complete with suspicious-looking pipes leading to a pumping station at the Euphrates. Later photos show concrete piers and roofs, which apparently had only one function: to modify the building so that it would look unsuspicious from above. In the end, the whole thing looked as if a shoebox had been placed over something in an attempt to conceal it. But photos from the interior revealed that what was going on at the site was in fact probably work on fissile material.”

The full article can be found at: http://www.wired.com/threatlevel/2009/11/mossad-hack

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'ANTHRAX BOMB' ANSWERS DEMANDED
BBC
October 30, 2009

“An MP is demanding reassurances that nothing remains of an anthrax bomb tested in a south Wales estuary during World War II.

Llanelli MP Nia Griffith made the call after it emerged the weapon was dropped off the town's coastline.

There have been concerns about water quality and the death of cockles in the Burry estuary.

The Ministry of Defence said there was no contamination following the experiment in 1942.

The trial to test the biological weapon emerged in an article written by Llanelli historian Gerald Grant.”

The full article can be found at: http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/wales/south_west/8334592.stm

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IRAN RAISES URANIUM OUTPUT AS PHOTOS SHOW NEED FOR WIDER CHECKS
By Jonathan Tirone
Bloomberg News
November 04, 2009

“Evidence of stepped-up activity at the Gchine mine, near the Persian Gulf coast city of Bandar Abbas, is seen in pictures obtained by Bloomberg News and the Washington-based New America Foundation, according to four nuclear analysts who examined the images. The mine could produce enough uranium to craft at least two atomic bombs a year, experts said.

The photographs, taken on April 26 and Oct. 3 by DigitalGlobe Inc. and GeoEye Inc., two U. S. commercial satellite companies, show Iran increased the rate at which it pumps waste from the mine during the intervening months. Iran has filled one waste pool since November 2008, when a previous photograph was taken, and built a second pond with pipes connecting it to processing tanks that separate the metal from rock.”

…..

“Gchine has the capacity to produce annually up to 21 tons of milled uranium, or yellowcake, Iran told the Paris-based Nuclear Energy Agency, part of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, in 2007. Satellite photographs taken last year showed that the mine was only beginning operations and not working at capacity.

“Although the mill has a design capacity of 21 tons of yellowcake per year, it has actually operated at much lower levels,” Lewis said. “The construction of a much larger pond suggests Iran is moving toward operating the mill at its design capacity.”

About half that amount, or 9,000 kilograms of yellowcake, would be needed to produce the 25 kilograms (55 pounds) of 93 percent enriched uranium required for a weapon, according to the verification center.”

The full article can be found at: http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=20601109&sid=aMtzNb9WS83I

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IRAN TESTED ADVANCED NUCLEAR WARHEAD DESIGN – SECRET REPORT
By Julian Borger
The Guardian (UK)
November 05, 2009

“The UN's nuclear watchdog has asked Iran to explain evidence suggesting that Iranian

scientists have experimented with an advanced nuclear warhead design, the Guardian has learned.

The very existence of the technology, known as a "two-point implosion" device, is officially secret in both the US and Britain, but according to previously unpublished documentation in a dossier compiled by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), Iranian scientists may have tested high-explosive components of the design. The development was today described by nuclear experts as "breathtaking" and has added urgency to the effort to find a diplomatic solution to the Iranian nuclear crisis.

The sophisticated technology, once mastered, allows for the production of smaller and simpler warheads than older models. It reduces the diameter of a warhead and makes it easier to put a nuclear warhead on a missile.

Documentation referring to experiments testing a two-point detonation design are part of the evidence of nuclear weaponisation gathered by the IAEA and presented to Iran for its response.

The dossier, titled "Possible Military Dimensions of Iran's Nuclear Program", is drawn in part from reports submitted to it by western intelligence agencies."

The full article can be found at: http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2009/nov/05/iran-tested-nuclear-warhead-design

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NEWPORT CHEMICAL DEPOT - THE NEWPORT CHEMICAL AGENT DISPOSAL FACILITY CLOSURE
US Army Chemical Materials Agency Fact Sheet
November 04, 2009

"The Newport Chemical Agent Disposal Facility (NECDF) at the Newport Chemical Depot (NECD) in Newport, Ind., successfully and safely neutralized the 1,269 tons of chemical nerve agent VX that had been stored at NECD since 1968. Neutralization operations began May 5, 2005, and chemical stockpile elimination was achieved Aug. 8, 2008.

Closure activities presently underway are in accordance with a closure plan reviewed and approved by the Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM) and governed by environmental permits and Army regulations in order to ensure the long-term protection of human health and environment. In preparation for closure, NECDF evaluated decontamination technologies and prepared detailed plans and procedures for the transition of personnel from operations into closure and for the decontamination, dismantlement and demolition of facilities.

Closure at NECDF is divided into four phases with specific goals for each phase. Work packages provide the work force with detailed guidance for achieving these goals at each phase of the project.

Closure Phase One

Phase one activities focus on initial cleanup and removal of agent processing systems. Facility decontamination is initiated by performing a flush of the chemical agent processing systems with a caustic solution. The solution is flushed through the facility piping and into the neutralization reactors where it is processed and tested to confirm the absence of chemical agent. Completion of this activity initiated the formal request to terminate NECDF's chemical agent surety status. The request was approved Oct. 24, 2008, by the Department of the Army.

The termination of surety is followed by continued decontamination and dismantlement of equipment directly exposed to VX chemical agent during operations. Pumps, piping and holding tanks, including agent holding tanks, neutralization reactors, caustic and hydrolysate holding tanks are pressure washed and steam cleaned. Following decontamination, workers carefully remove the agent processing system pumps, piping and instrumentation. This equipment is packaged into waste drums in preparation for final treatment and disposal. During phase one, the areas and equipment used to store hydrolysate, the byproduct of the chemical neutralization process, are also decontaminated. Pumps, piping and tanks are cleaned and removed in preparation for final treatment and disposal.

This area is then closed in accordance with the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) permit issued by IDEM.

Closure Phase Two

Phase two focuses on final decontamination and dismantlement of all other areas and equipment used in the neutralization of VX agent. During phase two, workers decontaminate the walls, floors, stairs, walkways and external surfaces of remaining equipment to support lowering worker personal protective equipment requirements. Equipment is removed as necessary to allow complete access to all areas of potential contamination. In addition, the Ton Container Line (TCL) equipment, which was used during operations to decontaminate the empty steel containers in preparation for recycling, is cleaned and dismantled. A performance standard for decontamination, utilizing a health-based risk assessment approach, was developed to ensure the safety of personnel and the environment following the shut down of the NECDF air exhaust filtration system. Monitoring is performed during a temporary shut down of this air exhaust filtration system to demonstrate successful decontamination. Once monitoring has demonstrated that VX agent has been successfully removed below 1 short-term exposure limit (STEL) or 0.00001 mg/m3, air exhaust filtration is terminated and demolition of facilities is initiated. A 1 STEL reading is similar in perspective to finding one grain of salt in 34 freight cars full of potato chips. This represents the completion of closure phase two.

Closure Phase Three

Phase three focuses on the demolition of facilities used to neutralize VX agent and on the final disposal of all hazardous waste materials. In preparation for demolition of the agent

processing building, electrical service is terminated. The extensive exhaust filtration system that was used during agent operations is disassembled. Each filtration unit is decontaminated and carefully monitored in preparation for final disposition. A demolition subcontractor then demolishes the remaining buildings and equipment where agent neutralization or storage of hydrolysate had been performed.

Closure waste is any waste resulting from the removal of equipment and buildings and is generated during all three phases of closure. These wastes are decontaminated prior to packaging, but some may contain trace levels of agent. Closure waste is handled safely and in accordance with regulations both on site at NECDF and off site at commercial permitted treatment and disposal facilities. Once these closure wastes are safely transported off site for final disposal, monitoring is no longer required at NECDF.
At the end of this third phase of closure, the Army will submit a report that demonstrates that closure activities have been conducted in accordance with the IDEM-approved closure plan and that the site meets all of the required cleanup standards. Additionally, this report will be reviewed and certified by a professional engineer. Upon review and acceptance of the report by IDEM, the NECD RCRA permit will be terminated.

Closure Phase Four
Phase four is defined as administrative closeout. This phase focuses on disposition of government property, closeout of government contracts and formal records archiving.

By the end of this phase, the remaining buildings which had supported personnel, laboratory and maintenance activity are all returned to ownership of NECD.

Conclusion
The safe and efficient closure of NECDF marks a significant milestone in our nation's history. The cornerstone of closure at NECDF remains the same as during operations - the safety of the workers, surrounding communities and the environment."

The full article can be found at: http://www.cma.army.mil/include/docrendition.asp?DocID=003680340

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PUEBLO CHEMICAL DEPOT - LAKEWOOD FIRM TO TREAT CHEMICAL WEAPONS WASTE
By John Norton
The Pueblo Chieftain
November 05, 2009

"A Lakewood firm has been awarded a $28.7 million contract to treat the wastewater generated by the destruction of chemical weapons here, indicating a monetary commitment now to a process that the Pentagon originally had rejected as too expensive.

Golder Associates Inc. said it has been awarded the contract to provide biological treatment and odor control systems at the Pueblo Chemical Depot, working under Bechtel National,

Inc., the prime contractor for the project."

…..

"Golder will design, build and commission biotreatment modules that will remove contaminants from wastewater generated by the mustard agent neutralization process. Similar to municipal sewer plants, bacteria will break down the solids in the hydrolysate and those solids will later be hauled to a qualified dump site. The company also will provide an off-gas treatment system that will provide odor control."

The full article can be found at: http://www.chieftain.com/articles/2009/11/05/business/local/doc4af24b01616fc741371670.txt

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Steve Tesko: Steve.Tesko@anser.org

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