

Chem-Bio News

- 1. IRANIAN NUCLEAR SCIENTIST DEFECTS TO U.S.: REPORT:** *"Citing unnamed sources briefed on the defection, the network said Shahram Amiri, a nuclear physicist in his early 30s, defected as part of a long-planned operation to get him to leave Iran and resettle in the United States."*
- 2. ADVISORY PANEL URGES RENEWAL OF US BIODEFENSE EFFORTS:** *"The National Biodefense Science Board today capped a hurried review by recommending that the federal government launch a major effort to better focus its activities to develop medical countermeasures (MCMs) for chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear (CBRN) threats, starting by choosing at least three new countermeasures for priority efforts."*
- 3. A NEW ERA FOR SAFEGUARDS - CEREMONY MARKS SAFEGUARDS LAB'S EXTENSION:** *"The IAEA broke new ground in Seibersdorf, Austria on 31 March 2010. Braving spring showers, representatives from IAEA Member States, the Agency's host country, Austria, and IAEA Director General Yukiya Amano marked the start of construction on the Department of Safeguards' Environmental Sample Laboratory extension."*
- 4. U.S. AND ITALY SIGN MEGAPORTS INITIATIVE AGREEMENT TO PREVENT SMUGGLING OF NUCLEAR AND RADIOACTIVE MATERIAL:** *"The governments of the United States and the Italian Republic have partnered to prevent the smuggling of nuclear and other radioactive material through the global maritime system. Under the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed today in Rome, the Department of Energy's National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) will work with the Customs Agency of the Italian Republic under a cost-sharing arrangement to help secure cargo containers passing through several Italian ports, including Genoa and Gioia Tauro."*
- 5. STATE [KY] AUDIT FAULTS OVERSIGHT OF FEDERAL GRANTS FOR CHEMICAL EMERGENCIES:** *"The program provides funding to help a 10-county region of the state prepare for any chemical emergencies that might arise from the Blue Grass Army Depot at Richmond, which has a stockpile of chemical weapons."*

CB Daily Report

Chem-Bio News

IRANIAN NUCLEAR SCIENTIST DEFECTS TO U.S.: REPORT

by Deborah Charles

Reuters

March 31, 2010

"An Iranian nuclear scientist who has been missing since June has defected to the United States and is helping the CIA, ABC news reported on Tuesday.

Citing unnamed sources briefed on the defection, the network said Shahram Amiri, a nuclear physicist in his early 30s, defected as part of a long-planned operation to get him to leave Iran and resettle in the United States."

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"Amiri, a university researcher working for Iran's Atomic Energy Organization, disappeared during a pilgrimage to Mecca in June, three months before Iran disclosed the existence of its second uranium enrichment site near the city of Qom."

The full article can be found at: <http://www.reuters.com/article/idUSTRE62U0FM20100331>

ADVISORY PANEL URGES RENEWAL OF US BIODEFENSE EFFORTS

By Robert Roos

CIDRAP News (Center for Infectious Disease Research & Policy - University of Minnesota)

March 26, 2010

“The National Biodefense Science Board today capped a hurried review by recommending that the federal government launch a major effort to better focus its activities to develop medical countermeasures (MCMs) for chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear (CBRN) threats, starting by choosing at least three new countermeasures for priority efforts.

The recommendation was one of 23 in a 103-page report that the NBSB approved in a meeting this morning. The report is part of a comprehensive review of the national MCM efforts, ordered by Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Kathleen Sebelius last December. The action was prompted in part by the initially slow deliveries of vaccine for pandemic H1N1 influenza.

As part of the overall review, Dr. Nicole Lurie, HHS assistant secretary for preparedness and response (ASPR), asked the NBSB in late January to produce a written report by today on the issues and challenges facing what is known as the Public Health Emergency Medical Countermeasure Enterprise, or PHEMCE. The review included a workshop to review the strategic management, leadership, and accountability structure of the program.

Besides recommending prioritizing new countermeasures, the NBSB report calls on HHS to, among other things:

- Coordinate with the White House on a "unifying end-to-end national strategy" to address CBRN threats
- Empower Lurie to be the operational leader of MCM development
- Change the guidance for the Food and Drug Administration's "animal rule," which allows the FDA to provide emergency authorization of a drug on the basis of evidence from animal experiments, if human trials are too dangerous
- Give the public more information about CBRN threats, as part of a sustained communication plan”

The full article can be found at:

<http://www.cidrap.umn.edu/cidrap/content/bt/bioprep/news/mar2610nbsb.html>

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A NEW ERA FOR SAFEGUARDS - CEREMONY MARKS SAFEGUARDS LAB'S EXTENSION

International Atomic Energy Agency News Release

March 31, 2010

“The IAEA broke new ground in Seibersdorf, Austria on 31 March 2010. Braving spring showers, representatives from IAEA Member States, the Agency's host country, Austria, and IAEA Director General Yukiya Amano marked the start of construction on the Department of Safeguards' Environmental Sample Laboratory extension.

The Environmental Sample Lab plays a key role in the IAEA's verification work, testing environmental samples to detect undeclared nuclear activity.

The extension is funded by several IAEA Member States: Austria, the Czech Republic, Germany, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Spain and the United States.”

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“The ceremony coincides with the administrative reorganisation of the IAEA’s laboratories in Seibersdorf and Monaco, including nuclear safeguards and sciences and applications. Referring to the reorganisation, the Director General explained that the laboratories’ new arrangement will “help make them more effective and efficient in serving the needs of Member States.”

During a programme to highlight the Agency’s activities in the area of nuclear sciences and applications (NA), Werner Burkart, Deputy Director General in charge of NA said, “the Agency’s laboratories in Seibersdorf and Monaco enable us as credible interlocutors in the scientific world.”

The NA Labs specialize in radiometrics, radioecology and marine environmental studies; developing and adapting agricultural technologies using radioisotopes and nuclear techniques; and ensuring that places like cancer treatment centres consistently provide the right radiation dose to patients.”

The full article can be found at: <http://www.iaea.org/NewsCenter/News/2010/newerasg.html>

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U.S. AND ITALY SIGN MEGAPORTS INITIATIVE AGREEMENT TO PREVENT SMUGGLING OF NUCLEAR AND RADIOACTIVE MATERIAL

US National Nuclear Security Administration News Release
March 29, 2010

“The governments of the United States and the Italian Republic have partnered to prevent the smuggling of nuclear and other radioactive material through the global maritime system. Under the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed today in Rome, the Department of Energy’s National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) will work with the Customs Agency of the Italian Republic under a cost-sharing arrangement to help secure cargo containers passing through several Italian ports, including Genoa and Gioia Tauro.”

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“Under this cost-sharing arrangement, NNSA will work with Italian Customs to equip key ports in Italy with radiation detection equipment and an associated communications system. This specialized equipment will help to detect the presence of illicit or smuggled nuclear and other radioactive materials in cargo containers shipped through these ports. NNSA will also train the Italian officials who will operate the detection equipment.”

The full article can be found at: <http://www.nnsa.energy.gov/2883.htm>

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STATE [KY] AUDIT FAULTS OVERSIGHT OF FEDERAL GRANTS FOR CHEMICAL EMERGENCIES

By Bruce Schreiner
The Associated Press on Courier-Journal.com
March 30, 2010

“For a second year, State Auditor Crit Luallen has zeroed in expenditures she deemed questionable in federal grant funds meant to help rural Laurel County prepare for chemical emergencies.

Luallen's report on Tuesday — which assessed how well Kentucky is monitoring federal money flowing into the state — questioned nearly \$30,000 in federal Chemical Stockpile Emergency Preparedness Program grant funds reimbursed to Laurel County in southeastern Kentucky.

The program provides funding to help a 10-county region of the state prepare for any chemical emergencies that might arise from the Blue Grass Army Depot at Richmond, which has a stockpile of chemical weapons.

The audit covered the fiscal year that ended last June 30. The questionable expenditures were for equipment insurance and generator maintenance.

The findings follow last year's report in which auditors said they uncovered improprieties in the purchase of equipment from a nearly \$1.9 million grant.

Last year's findings were turned over to the state attorney general's office, the FBI and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Luallen's office said.

Her office said in a news release that a criminal investigation is ongoing.

A spokeswoman for Attorney General Jack Conway said the case initially was referred to his office and federal investigators, but the office is no longer involved in the matter."

The full article can be found at: <http://www.courier-journal.com/article/20100330/NEWS01/3300354/State+audit+faults+oversight+of+federal+grants+for+chemical+emergencies>

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Steve Tesko: Steve.Tesko@anser.org

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