

21 May 2010

Chem-Bio News

- 1. MfD [MLADA FRONTA DNES]: ANTI-TERRORISM SHIELD TO MAKE PRAGUE METRO ONE OF WORLD'S SAFEST:** *"The Prague metro will put into operation a system of sensors that can immediately detect leaking poisonous substances, assess the danger, and send the information to the operative centre and to the police, MfD says."*
- 2. 'ARTIFICIAL LIFE' BREAKTHROUGH ANNOUNCED BY SCIENTISTS:** *"Scientists in the US say they have succeeded in developing the first synthetic living cell."*
- 3. DOE ENDORSES HANFORD'S B REACTOR FOR NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK:** *"Hanford's historic B Reactor should be included in any Manhattan Project National Historical Park, along with key Department of Energy property in Tennessee and New Mexico, DOE has told the National Park Service."*
- 4. NY ISLAND SITE OF ANIMAL DISEASE LAB MAY BE SOLD:** *"Since the infancy of the Cold War, Plum Island has been the site of an animal disease laboratory; access is limited to scientists, support personnel and, on rare occasions, invited guests. Because of its remote location a mile and half off the eastern tip of Long Island's north fork, it frequently has been the target of rife speculation about what really goes on there."*

Chem-Demil News

- 1. TOOELE CHEMICAL AGENT DISPOSAL FACILITY (TOCDF) - WRAPPING UP TOCDF MORTAR OPS:** *"Following successful destruction of HT mustard agent-filled 4.2-inch mortars, Tooele Chemical Agent Disposal Facility (TOCDF) workers will begin processing Deseret Chemical Depot's (DCD) stockpile of 4.2-inch HD mortars—the last mortars to be processed through TOCDF."*

CB Daily Report

Chem-Bio News

MfD [MLADA FRONTA DNES]: ANTI-TERRORISM SHIELD TO MAKE PRAGUE METRO ONE OF WORLD'S SAFEST

Prague Daily Monitor
May 14, 2010

"The DPP [City Public Transport Company] started working on the project after the attack on the Tokyo metro in 1995 when members of the local Aum Shinrikyo sect released deadly nerve agent sarin in the underground, killing 12 people and injuring hundreds, MfD writes.

The Prague metro will put into operation a system of sensors that can immediately detect leaking poisonous substances, assess the danger, and send the information to the operative centre and to the police, MfD says.

Afterwards, instructions for passengers will be automatically activated in the afflicted stations to organise their evacuation. The trains will pass the stations without stopping and escalators in the stations will move only upwards, MfD writes."

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"The new dustbins that are being installed in the Prague metro are resistant to explosion. They weigh 500 kg and cost almost 90,000 crowns each, MfD writes.

The DPP has also had the metro's inner circuit camera system reconstructed as another measure to help fight not only possible terrorists but also "common" criminals. It is installing cameras in city buses too, MfD writes."

The full article can be found at: <http://praguemonitor.com/2010/05/14/mfd-anti-terrorist-shield-make-prague-metro-one-worlds-safest>

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'ARTIFICIAL LIFE' BREAKTHROUGH ANNOUNCED BY SCIENTISTS

By Victoria Gill

BBC

May 20, 2010

"Scientists in the US say they have succeeded in developing the first synthetic living cell.

The researchers constructed a bacterium's "genetic software" and transplanted it into a host cell.

The resulting microbe then looked and behaved like the species "dictated" by the synthetic DNA.

The advance, published in Science, has been hailed as a scientific landmark, but critics say there are dangers posed by synthetic organisms.

The researchers hope eventually to design bacterial cells that will produce medicines and fuels and even absorb greenhouse gases.

The team was led by Dr Craig Venter of the J Craig Venter Institute (JCVI) in Maryland and California.

He and his colleagues had previously made a synthetic bacterial genome, and transplanted the genome of one bacterium into another.

Now, the scientists have put both methods together, to create what they call a "synthetic cell", although only its genome is truly synthetic."

The full article can be found at: http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/science_and_environment/10132762.stm

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DOE ENDORSES HANFORD'S B REACTOR FOR NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK

By Annette Cary

The TriCity Herald

May 21, 2010

"Hanford's historic B Reactor should be included in any Manhattan Project National Historical Park, along with key Department of Energy property in Tennessee and New Mexico, DOE has told the National Park Service.

Ines Triay, DOE assistant secretary for environmental management, has written a letter to Jon Jarvis, director of the National Park Service, to resolve its concerns about including B Reactor or other nuclear facilities in the park system.

"Given the nature of the properties currently under NPS ownership and/or operation, and the different missions of our two organizations, we fully understand your agency's caution," Triay wrote.

But a partnership between the two agencies could resolve any issues and would best tell the story of

the Manhattan Project, she wrote.

In December, the National Park Service issued a draft report that considered only Los Alamos, N.M., for a proposed Manhattan Project National Park. The only things the park service considered at B Reactor were possibly providing technical assistance or educational programs.

Supporters of saving B Reactor as a museum have pushed to get the park service to reconsider the reactor's future in its final report, despite park service concerns that including B Reactor in the park service could be expensive and risky.

"If it is part of the park service, it gets all the national and international advertising," of other national parks, said Gary Petersen, Tri-City Development Council vice president of Hanford projects.

Triay's letter assured DOE that any Manhattan Project facility, including B Reactor, would remain under DOE ownership even if they became part of the park service.

"DOE will maintain them, preserve important resources at these sites, ensure visitor and employee safety and request necessary funding from Congress to do so in the future," she wrote."

The full article can be found at: <http://www.tri-cityherald.com/2010/05/21/1023182/doe-endorses-hanfords-b-reactor.html>

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NY ISLAND SITE OF ANIMAL DISEASE LAB MAY BE SOLD

By Frank Eltman

Associated Press on Google News

May 20, 2010

"Since the infancy of the Cold War, Plum Island has been the site of an animal disease laboratory; access is limited to scientists, support personnel and, on rare occasions, invited guests. Because of its remote location a mile and half off the eastern tip of Long Island's north fork, it frequently has been the target of rife speculation about what really goes on there.

The general public could someday get access to the 840-acre pork chop-shaped oasis now that the federal government is moving its animal disease research functions to a new lab in Manhattan, Kan. With a "For Sale" sign about to go up at Plum Island, the General Services Administration is seeking community input on what should be done with the property. A hearing was held Wednesday in Connecticut and another is scheduled for Thursday on Long Island."

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"His concerns were shared by federal officials. The U.S. Government Accountability Office told Congress in a 2007 security report that Plum Island's vulnerability was apparent after the 9/11 terror attacks. The GAO said new laws and rules were enacted, tightening access to the facility to help protect animal health and reduce the possibility of bioterrorism. Plum Island was transferred from the U.S. Department of Agriculture to the Department of Homeland Security and plans were begun to replace it with a "higher-level biosecurity facility."

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"U.S. Rep. Timothy Bishop, whose district includes Plum Island, is not convinced the move to Kansas is a good idea. He said in a letter to a House homeland security subcommittee this week that the sale of Plum Island could fetch \$50 million to \$80 million — not counting cleanup costs. Bishop said that would hardly cover the costs of building a new \$650 million lab in Kansas."

The full article can be found at <http://www.google.com/hostednews/ap/article/ALeqM5g4byfUvy8h-s->

Chem-Demil News

TOOELE CHEMICAL AGENT DISPOSAL FACILITY (TOCDF) - WRAPPING UP TOCDF MORTAR OPS

US Army Chemical Materials Agency Monthly Update
May 20, 2010

“Following successful destruction of HT mustard agent-filled 4.2-inch mortars, Tooele Chemical Agent Disposal Facility (TOCDF) workers will begin processing Deseret Chemical Depot’s (DCD) stockpile of 4.2-inch HD mortars—the last mortars to be processed through TOCDF.

Because some of the mustard agent contained in the HD mortars has solidified over years of storage, disposal of these munitions will be slightly different as the agent will not be drained. Instead, the burster well will be removed in order to clear a path so that the heat of incineration can reach the agent chamber, destroying the agent and thermally decontaminating the metal munition casing. Due to the small amount of HD mortars—less than 900—it will take less than a week to complete these operations.

“As mortars operations wrap up, only bulk containers will remain to be processed and the facility will no longer have to deal with explosively configured munitions,” explained TOCDF Site Project Manager Ted Ryba. “This will provide an opportunity for workers to begin early decommissioning activities.”

TOCDF officials have already begun planning for these activities, which will include removal of obsolete equipment such as the mortar disassembly and multipurpose demil machines, which are required to disassemble projectiles and mortars. Workers will also be able to isolate and decommission the deactivation furnace system, which used to destroy the explosive components, and its associated pollution abatement system.

Although TOCDF mortar operations will be complete, approximately 140 overpacked mortars remain in storage and will be destroyed using the DAVINCHTM, a controlled detonation system developed for chemical weapons destruction. The DAVINCHTM will be located in DCD’s Area 10 and operations are expected to begin in early 2011.”

The full article can be found at: <http://www.cma.army.mil/fndocumentviewer.aspx?DocID=003682901>
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