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UNITED STATES ATTORNEY'S OFFICE
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**Anti-Terrorism Advisory Council
NEWSLETTER**



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Open Source News reporting Summary: This collection of open source information is offered for informational purposes only. It is not, and should not be, construed as official evaluated intelligence.

Key Al-Qaeda suspect in Tanzania bombings handed to U.S.

Pakistani officials Jan. 25 transferred custody of Ahmad Khalfan Ghailani, one of the FBI's most wanted terrorists, to U.S. authorities. Tanzanian-born Ghailani, an Al-Qaeda official who was wanted for his involvement in the 1998 bombings of the U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania, was arrested by Pakistani police July 25, 2004, along with two South African associates, after a shoot out in the eastern Pakistani city of Gujrat.

COMMENT:



At the time of his arrest Ghailani was at least the fourth senior Al-Qaeda official to be captured in a Pakistani city. Pakistani security personnel have arrested more than 600 Al-Qaeda supporters in outlying areas of Pakistan since the country allied itself with the U.S. war against terror. Despite the progress, hundreds and perhaps thousands of Al-Qaeda terrorists continue to hide out in Pakistan. Before being captured in Gujrat, Ghailani lived in the tribal Waziristan region. Pakistani authorities transferred custody of Ghailani after finishing his interrogation and determining he is not wanted for crimes in Pakistan. Ghailani's arrest was most likely tied to information gathered from arrested operative Muhammed Naeem Noor Khan earlier in July. Several other operatives were captured after Ghailani was arrested. Some security sources claim that he was a part of a sleeper cell that received instructions directly from Osama bin Laden. Anonymous sources also claim that Ghailani was drawing up plans to conduct a missile attack against an airliner in Nairobi. Other potential plans included attacks against airports in the U.K. and the U.S., and against U.S. financial institutions.

Related for reference

Ahmad Khalfan Ghailani surrenders to Pakistani forces after a 16-hr. shoot-out.

<http://www.time.com/time/covers/1101040816/dots/3.html>

It's not so much *what folks don't know* that's the problem.
It's that *they know too much... that ain't so ...* that's the problem !

Algerian terrorist group pledges support to Zarqawi



The leadership of Algeria's Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat (GSPC) on Jan. 25 declared its support for Abu Musab Al-Zarqawi's operations in Iraq. GSPC's Amir (leader), Abu Musab Abd Al-Wadud will make an announcement confirming his support. The statement, which appeared in the form of a "congratulatory letter" in response to greetings which Zarqawi sent to GSPC's leadership via an audio tape, was posted on the Algerian group's website.

COMMENT:

Abd Al-Wadud, who according to postings on GSPC's Web site in September 2004, was appointed the group's new leader after government forces killed his predecessor, Nabil Sahraoui, in mid-June. The pledge of support is in keeping with the Sept. 11, 2003 statement by Sahraoui, which was also posted on the group's Web site, proclaiming GSPC's alliance with Al-Qaeda and the Taliban. While re-affirming its support for Al-Qaeda's "holy war" against the "crusaders" in Iraq, it is unlikely that the pledge of support will result in any changes to the group's operations in Algeria. The U.S. has long contended that the GSPC has links with Al-Qaeda, and on Oct. 17, 2003, imposed financial sanctions on the organization.

Related for reference

<http://www.tkb.org/Group.jsp?groupID=3777>

Would-be suicide bomber angry at those who sent him



Ahmed Abdullah al Shaya survived the explosion of the bomb-rigged gas truck that he was driving on Christmas day. His head and hands were wrapped in bandages and his uncovered face looked like bubbled tar. The young Saudi man told investigators this month that he wants revenge against the Iraqi terrorist network that sent him on the deadly mission that he survived. Ahmed Abdullah al-Shaya, 18, told Iraqi investigators during an interrogation early this month that he was recruited to drive a car rigged with explosives to Baghdad and blow it up. He said the objective was "to kill the Americans, policemen, national guards and the American collaborators." But Shaya said he was injured even before he went on the mission when insurgents detonated a truck bomb he was supposed to leave at a target site.

Full story: http://www.usatoday.com/news/world/iraq/2005-01-24-suicide-bomber-revenge_x.htm

Ex-Embassy employee sentenced in Visa scam

A former employee at the U.S. Embassy in Mexico City was sentenced Thursday for conspiring with a Colombian couple in a visa bribery scheme that allowed about 180 cartel members and leftist guerrillas to receive doctored visas. She was accused of making at least \$345,000 on the visa requests to enter the United States. She was also accused of conspiring with Colombians Olga Elena Ramirez and her husband, Juan Carlos Ramirez, who allegedly arranged to get some of the visas to traffickers and guerrillas with the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia.

Full story: <http://www.newsday.com/news/nationworld/wire/sns-ap-brf-visa-fraud.0.3289944.story?coll=sns-ap-nationworld-headlines>

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The Russians are coming

The FBI is concerned about Moscow's growing number of spies. What secrets are they looking for? At Los Angeles International Airport two weeks ago, FBI agents arrested an Irish businessman they had spent a week tailing all over California's Silicon Valley, from the offices of two electronics manufacturers in Sunnyvale to a hotel in Mountain View and down a quiet cul-de-sac to a suburban house in San Jose. The technology exporter, according to court papers, had purchased sophisticated computer components in the U.S. to send to Russia through Ireland. Russia runs more than 100 known spies under official cover in the U.S.. And those are just the more easily spotted spies working under the classic guise of diplomat. An unknown number of so-called nocs—who work under nonofficial cover as businessmen and -women, journalists or academics—undoubtedly expand the Russian spy force.

Full story: <http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,1022559,00.html>

FARC Could Have SAM-7 Missiles



According to the *Washington Times* newspaper, U.S. and Nicaraguan authorities in early January arrested a group of arms smugglers in Managua who were selling a SAM-7 missile to Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) rebels. The missile that was confiscated was apparently not part of the inventory of the Nicaraguan army; its serial number did not match any records presented to international observers, who have been monitoring the destruction of the missiles. In Colombian, authorities are apparently worried that the FARC has already purchased other SAMs from these criminals or other arms dealers in Nicaragua.

COMMENT:

Colombian Army officials have been accusing the FARC since 2003 of trying to acquire this type of equipment. The U.S., the United Nations (U.N.) and the Organization of American States (OAS) have pressured the Nicaraguan government since 2003 to destroy the missiles due to concern that they would fall into the wrong hands. The Nicaraguan government has already destroyed 666 of the missiles. Last November, Nicaraguan President Enrique Bolanos assured U.S. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld that he has a plan to destroy the more than 1,300 anti-aircraft missiles left over from the Sandinista government in the next 18 months. According to the Times, however, U.S. government officials are convinced that members of the Nicaraguan military are hiding some of the missiles and reselling the on the black market for thousands of USD. The Sandinista government purchased these missiles from the Soviet Union in the 1980s during the Contra wars with U.S.-backed militants.

Crackdown on cash clients

Arab-Americans crying foul over banks' recent closures of selected business accounts



Some Arab-American-owned groceries and other businesses that do a lot of cash business are being told by their banks to take their business elsewhere. Banks in Western New York and across the nation say they are reacting to tighter federal enforcement of laws aimed at tracking large cash transactions. Banks say the issue isn't who owns the accounts, but how they're being used - especially how often there are large transactions and how much cash is going through them.

"Regulators have been more rigorous not only in enforcing the reporting requirements but in encouraging banks to cease relationships with customers whom the bank identifies as engaging in repetitive, reportable suspicious transactions."

Full story: <http://www.buffalonews.com/editorial/20050127/1065280.asp>

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Wary of terrorism, malls take steps to boost security

For all that has been done to prevent airplane hijackings and sniff out biological weapons, the terrorist strike that most worries some experts remains a suicide bomber at a crowded shopping mall. A trade association is working with homeland security experts at George Washington University and the University of Virginia to develop extensive training to help mall guards detect and respond to bombings and other types of attacks. The new course is expected to be at least four times as long as the basic four-hour security sessions some malls currently offer.

Full story: <http://www.newhousenews.com/archive/mccutcheon012705.html>

Department of Homeland Security gets assistance from Highway Watch groups

The *Associated Press* reported Jan. 27 that since 2002, the Department of Homeland Security has been helping fund the American Trucking Association's Highway Watch program. The program assists authorities in preventing potential attempts by terrorists to steal tanker trucks or hazardous cargoes and sabotage strategic targets such as major overpasses and bridges. The program is active in all 50 states and trains volunteer truck drivers to look for suspicious activity and report it to a 24-hour center that can help coordinate a response with local law enforcement. Volunteer drivers also learn how to avoid becoming a target themselves. The program has received approximately USD 40 million in funding, according to spokesman John Willard.

COMMENT:

Proponents of the program point out that, since truckers often drive the same route day after day, they can easily notice when something is out of the ordinary, such as if a suspicious vehicle is parked in a strange place. The government is also pursuing programs to train security guards at shopping malls and city buildings to watch for and report suspicious activity.

Safecom SCIPs across states

Federal officials unveiled a model plan yesterday that state officials can use to build grass-roots statewide interoperable communication networks. "You have to start with local agencies," said David Boyd, who directs Safecom. "They're the guys who own, operate and maintain something on the order of 90 percent of the nation's public safety wireless communications infrastructure. They're the guys who are actually using the systems day-to-day, and so we were convinced that the key to success to any attempt to achieve interoperability was to start at that level."

Full story: <http://www.fcw.com/fcw/articles/2005/0124/web-scip-01-27-05.asp>

Access the 154 page report here:

http://www.safecomprogram.gov/files/SCIP_Methodology_FINAL.pdf

U.S. Ambassador to Mexico expresses concern about border violence in letter explaining State Department Travel Alert

U.S. Ambassador to Mexico Tony Garza told Mexican leaders Wednesday he is concerned that growing drug-related violence and kidnappings on the border between the two countries will have a "chilling" effect on trade and tourism. "U.S. citizens should be aware of the risk posed by the deteriorating security situation," the department warned.

Full story: <http://ap.tbo.com/ap/breaking/MGBYAYGBG4E.html>

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Feds to test security-chip program at Ariz. border

This summer along the Arizona border, the Department of Homeland Security plans to test technology designed to automatically screen and record foreign visitors as they enter and exit the United States. The technology will rely on a chip implanted into border-crossing documents. From up to 30 feet away, an inspector will be able to send out an electromagnetic signal to the chip and pull up a visitor's personal information, including a photograph and fingerprints, on a computer screen. The technology, similar to what is used in automated toll booths and grocery store scanners, will allow the government to keep an "accurate recording of a visitor's entry and exit information" and eventually automatically check all travelers against terrorist lists.

Full story: <http://www.azcentral.com/arizonarepublic/news/articles/0126bordertechnology26.html>

SRE concerned about Anti-Migrant Initiative in Los Angeles

The Foreign Relations Secretary of Mexico is concerned about possible violations of human rights resulting from the L.A. Sheriff's Department being allowed to conduct migratory control work in area prisons. The initiative allows the Sheriff's Department to present illegal migrants detained for other crimes to be presented to a judge for migration hearings after their prison terms instead of being released. There is concern that this action would violate the prisoners' rights by detaining them after their release from prison.

Translated from:

http://www.notimex.com.mx/restringido/indexmex.php?going_to=noticiamex.php¬icia_id=1336991&categ=&categoria_id=A

COMMENT: An underlying concern is not for the rights of the prisoners but the fact that the U.S. will be sending criminals back into Mexico.

Featured Internet Site

FEMA Releases NIMS Compliance Assessment Tool For Federal, State, Local And Tribal Agencies
The Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency and the NIMS Integration Center have released a **Web-based self-assessment system** that will allow federal, state, tribal and local departments and agencies to **evaluate their incident preparedness and response capabilities**. The voluntary system, the National Incident Management Compliance Assessment Support Tool, or NIMCAST, will also help users determine what they need to do to comply with National Incident Management System (NIMS) requirements. "NIMCAST is a valuable tool that will allow organizations to evaluate and monitor their progress in implementing NIMS," said Michael D. Brown, Under Secretary of Homeland Security for Emergency Preparedness and Response. "But it's more than just a technical assessment system. It also will help the federal government target NIMS improvement strategies in areas where there is the greatest need." Although the NIMCAST is a permission-based system, anyone may access the site and use the NIMCAST "Demo Assessment" to work through topics, descriptions and questions associated with all of the primary NIMS categories. Users may also download the complete assessment tool, chapter by chapter, in pdf, "read-only" format. NIMS points-of-contact for each of the FEMA Regional Offices were trained on the use of the system in mid-January. They will in turn provide NIMCAST training to state contacts.



NIMCAST may be accessed via the NIMS home page at

<http://www.fema.gov/nims/> or directly at

<http://www.fema.gov/nimcast/index.jsp>

FEMA prepares the nation for all hazards and manages federal response and recovery efforts following any national incident. FEMA also initiates mitigation activities, trains first responders, works with state and local emergency managers, and manages the National Flood Insurance Program and the U.S. Fire Administration. FEMA became part of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security on March 1, 2003. Source: FEMA, NIMS Integration Center, Jan 27, 05.

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