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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.

TV crew testing terror defense is caught

Arlene Thomas grew suspicious when two men with out-of-state drivers licenses and a large wad of cash came into her Sauget helicopter hangar Wednesday morning and said they wanted to see St. Louis landmarks from the sky.. "I'm absolutely outraged that NBC News is out here trying to create news rather than report news," McDaniel said after meeting with members of the Transportation Security Administration. "This clearly scared the hell out of a lot of folks and wasted a lot of valuable resources, tying up emergency forces, and all of it was entirely unnecessary. "If they wanted to learn about security, we'd have been happy to take them on a ride and show how it works," McDaniel said. Thomas said an apology was in order from NBC to her and everyone who was involved.

Full story:

<http://www.stltoday.com/stltoday/news/stories.nsf/News/Metro+East/story/44C3352B49126C5386256EEF00160B3A?OpenDocument&Headline=TV+crew+testing+terror+defense+is+caught>

ANALYSIS:

Aside from various opinions on the wisdom of NBC's actions, the effective and timely reaction of the helicopter company employees indicates a heightened awareness and appropriate training that led to a homeland security success story in this incident.

Dozens' of suspected Afghan trained Al Qaeda operatives in Germany

German news magazine *Focus* on 15 August reports that, according to the German Federal Criminal Police (BKA), an estimated 30 -- 50 Afghan-trained al Qaeda operatives are presently believed to be on German soil, posing a "potential threat." Speaking to a parliamentary committee, BKA chief Jörg Ziercke stated that these operatives are believed to have undergone training in the "infamous" al Qaeda training camps in Afghanistan, although under present law this fact alone is "not enough" to intervene against them. Overall, *Focus* states, it is unclear how many suspected Islamic terrorists are presently living in Germany, with some sources putting the figure as high as 300. Bavarian Interior Minister Günther Beckstein (CSU) has been pushing for months for German law to be changed to permit the expulsion of any individuals suspected of having undergone training in al Qaeda camps.

ANALYSIS:

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Germany has become a potentially agreeable location for sleeper cells as it has become steadily more diverse, populated, and cosmopolitan, much like fellow European nations such as France and England. Prior to the 2001 terrorist attacks, Germany unknowingly hosted some of the would-be hijackers. Upon learning of those circumstances the nation took several steps to both promote awareness and enhance security through various methods, including passing laws specifically tied to terrorism and conducting security sweeps which have resulted in some arrests.

New strains and new rules for Agents along Mexican border



The thick scrub along the Rio Grande in McAllen, Tex., within shouting distance of Reynosa, Mexico, is strewn with discarded bits of clothing and black trash bags used as flotation devices, remnants of countless trips across the river by illegal immigrants. Sometimes the evidence is fresher - like a damp-haired Candida Mercedes Melendez Castillo, 28, from Chinandega, Nicaragua, who popped out of the brush the other day at noon just as the United States Border Patrol was passing through with a reporter in tow. "I am not a bad person," Ms. Castillo said in a quavering voice, claiming that her trip to find work had taken her seven days and that she had crossed the river alone, with no help. Now, in addition to tracking illegal immigrants and drug smugglers, using weapons as varied as night-vision cameras and horseback patrols, the agents are particularly on terrorism watch, a high-stakes mission, officials say, given the huge traffic - legal and illegal - from Mexico.

Full story: <http://www.nytimes.com/2004/08/12/national/12border.html?th>

Related reporting:

U.S. to Give Border Patrol Agents the Power to Deport Illegal Aliens

<http://www.nytimes.com/2004/08/11/politics/11immig.html?th>

Illegals from terrorist nations are crossing the border into Arizona.

The stories are compelling and the evidence is frightening, and just this week, Colorado Congressman Tom Tancredo released a report showing that the problem is worse than anyone thought. "It's a Muslim prayer blanket. It was found about a mile and a half west from the Douglas port of entry in 2001." In just one hour, during a stake-out along the border between Douglas and Bisbee, The Investigators count 198 illegals in five different groups crossing into the U.S. with no resistance. We've all heard of the U.S. government's Terror Watch List: countries flagged because Americans are endangered by their citizens, yet regularly, illegals from those countries are crossing the Arizona border, blending in with groups of Mexican and South American illegal immigrants.

Full story: <http://kvoa.com/Global/story.asp?S=2172749>

Related reporting:

Arab terrorists 'are getting into the US over Mexican border'

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/main.jhtml?xml=/news/2004/08/15/wmex15.xml>

Connecting the South American terror dots

Since the early 1980's, Arab terrorists have been sending thousands of their cohorts to the almost inaccessible jungle and mountain region between Brazil, Argentina, and Paraguay (known as the TBA, Tri-Border Area or *La Triple Frontera*). Terror training camps and arsenals have been established, virtually out of the reach of local law enforcement or defense forces; and elements from Hezbollah, al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya, Islamic Jihad, al-Qaeda, Hamas, and the Lebanese Drug mafia operate in partnership, freely and openly in conjunction with local organized crime and corrupt government officials.

Full story: <http://frontpagemag.com/Articles/ReadArticle.asp?ID=14557>

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'A lot' of Canadians in al-Qaeda

"A lot" of Canadians trained at al-Qaeda camps in Afghanistan and some still live freely in Canada, Abdurahman Khadr testified at a court hearing at which he revealed chilling new details about Canadian terror suspects and his father's ties to Osama bin Laden's training camps.

Mr. Khadr, a 21-year-old Toronto man who underwent weapons and explosives training at four camps in Afghanistan, said in testimony made public yesterday that he had given CIA agents the names of several Canadians who trained at camps such as Khalden.

Full story: <http://www.canada.com/national/nationalpost/news/story.html?id=a7265c81-d71a-4c37-8a49-7b041d29156d>

Related reporting:

Al-Qaeda 'chief' came to Canada

Older sister lives here, other family members have applied to emigrate

<http://www.canada.com/national/nationalpost/news/story.html?id=406e631f-6cf1-42e0-958a-b48eb541e600>

FBI says al-Qaida operating cells in U.S., using non-Arabs

Al-Qaida allies are believed to be scouting U.S. targets in several states, and the terror organization is using non-Arabic recruits to avoid detection, U.S. law enforcement and intelligence officials say. The FBI has counterterrorism investigations in virtually all 56 of its field offices but has not broken up a known surveillance cell, either because agents are tailing suspects who have not committed crimes or because they have descriptions but not identities. It is unclear how many al-Qaida scouts are in the United States. "The FBI has their eye on or has opened several hundred investigations of people sympathetic to or supportive of" al-Qaida, Homeland Security Secretary Tom Ridge said. "If we knew somebody was here as an operative - and we knew who they were or where they were - they wouldn't be on the street."

Full story: <http://www.azcentral.com/news/articles/0816al-qaida16.html>

Al-Qaeda, militants turn to crime to fund terrorism

Members of Osama bin Laden's al-Qaeda and other militants are turning increasingly to crime — from dealing drugs to selling knockoff shampoos and pirated CDs — to pay for attacks amid a crackdown on the movement of terrorist funds through world banks, security officials told The Associated Press. "Treasury's efforts have made it harder and costlier for terrorist groups like al-Qaeda to move and raise money," Molly Millerwise, a department spokeswoman, told the AP. "However, as we strengthen our defenses against financial crimes and better safeguard the financial sector, al-Qaeda and like-minded groups will resort to other means — such as petty crime, drug trafficking and commodities fraud — to raise and move money." Instead of relying on outside funding, these cells depend increasingly on their own community solicitations, tapping local charities, conducting small business operations and often engaging in petty crime, according to a report submitted to the U.N. Security Council at the end of 2002.

Full story: http://www.usatoday.com/news/world/2004-08-12-alqaeda-crime_x.htm

US sources link Jammāt to drugs, guns, terror

While the Yasin Abu Bakr-led group of Muslim extremists, the Jamaat-al-Muslimeen, has benefited from the stumblings of the local security forces, US authorities have tied gun-running operations in Florida and drug-related laundered funds in Connecticut back to No.1 Mucurapo Road in Trinidad. US sources, speaking on condition of strict anonymity, last week told the Sunday Express of US-gathered evidence, including testimony from a senior member of the Mucurapo-based group, linking laundered drug funds and gun-smuggling activities in the United States to Bakr's Muslimeen organisation, which launched a violent assault against the NAR [National Alliance for Reconstruction] government in July 1990.

Full story: <http://www.ds-osac.org/view.cfm?key=7E43544B4257&type=2B170C1E0A3A0F162820>

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al-Qaida stays connected in number of ways

If Osama bin Laden is directing plans for an attack on the United States -- as Washington intelligence officials suspect -- his instructions are likely coming out of the craggy mountains between Afghanistan and Pakistan on the back of a donkey or under the shawl of an unassuming-looking villager. They don't use satellite or cellular phones, don't trust anyone outside their innermost circle and never come up for air. Messages from the men likely pass through the hands of many couriers, most of whom have no idea where they originated, before they are turned into e-mails or conveyed by phone calls to other militants. "If bin Laden wants to convey something, he gives a letter to someone in his circle, who takes it a certain distance and then hands it to someone else, and then someone else until it reaches its final destination. Nobody knows who the letter is from except the first person who is one of bin Laden's most trusted men"

Full story: <http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/nationworld/sns-ap-bin-laden-in-charge.story>

US Pensions Bankrolling Terrorists, Think Tank Alleges

Average Americans are unknowingly funding terrorism through investments made by their public pension systems in companies that do business in terrorist-sponsoring nations, according to a new report issued by the Center for Security Policy in Washington, D.C. The report, entitled, "Terrorism Investments of the 50 States" reveals that these pension systems invest in 101 companies that do \$73 billion worth of business with designated terrorist regimes. The countries included in the report are Iran, Libya, Sudan, Syria and North Korea. The former Iraqi regime of Saddam Hussein was also featured in the report. Americans cannot win the war against terrorism "unless and until we cut off the billions of dollars flowing to terrorist-sponsoring regimes from America's state pension funds ...".

Full story:

<http://www.cnsnews.com/ViewNation.asp?Page=%5CNation%5Carchive%5C200408%5CNAT20040812b.html>

Also visit:

<http://www.divestterror.org/>

Cyberspace gives Al Qaeda refuge

Driven underground, the terrorist network has learned to exploit the Internet as it recasts itself into a more elusive, self-perpetuating form

In December, Al Qaeda operatives posted a manifesto on the Internet calling for attacks inside countries allied with the United States in Iraq. Spain, with elections approaching, was singled out as a target. On March 11, terrorists set off bombs on four commuter trains in Madrid and killed 191 people. Three days later, Spanish voters replaced the pro-war government with a party whose leader had promised to withdraw the country's 1,300 troops from Iraq. The posting of the strategy and the timing of the Madrid bombings shocked even the most hardened Al Qaeda watchers recently when they reviewed the little-known manifesto. "It's quite extraordinary in that you have a group of people ... talking about influencing a political process and then having it happen," Since Osama bin Laden and his followers were driven from their bases in Afghanistan, the Al Qaeda terrorist network has demonstrated an increasing ability to exploit the Internet as it reconfigures itself as a semi-leaderless global extremist movement far more elusive than the original incarnation. Websites run by Al Qaeda and its backers have become virtual classrooms for terrorists

Full story: <http://www.latimes.com/technology/la-fg-cyberterror15aug15.1.7151729.story?coll=la-headlines-technology>

N.J. warns hospitals of terror threat

Medical centers put up their guard after being told they could be hit soon after an attack. Counter-terrorism officials have warned New Jersey hospitals that they themselves could become targets of terrorists in the minutes after a large-scale attack. By becoming "secondary targets," the hospitals would be crippled or

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rendered unable to treat victims of an earlier attack. The warning, communicated through the state Department of Health and Senior Services, has caused many hospitals to change the way they are doing business. In addition to their primary mission of patient care, they are being forced to devise plans to protect their facilities and supplies, including pharmaceuticals. "Hospitals have been asked to improve their security, preparedness, and to test and drill,"

Full story: <http://www.nj.com/news/ledger/index.ssf?base/news-17/1092214752304720.xml>

Kosovo's Albanians wait activation order for terrorist attacks during Olympics

Islamic radical organizations completed the preparations for terrorist attacks during the Olympic Games in Athens. They wait for activation order of the Al Qaeda leadership in Iran to conduct the attacks, US newspaper "Defense & Foreign Affairs" said. The terrorist group is comprised of Albanians, Syrians, including well-trained terrorists from other nationalities. There is a well-developed terror network in Turkey, Bulgaria, Greece, Macedonia, Serbia-Montenegro, Italy and Germany, the US paper said. According to the paper, he was involved in illegal trade with cigarettes, oil, oil derivatives, automobiles, drug and people, across the Balkan, including the territory of Macedonia.

Full story: http://www.realitymacedonia.org.mk/web/news_page.asp?nid=3533

Al Qaeda hit squads to kill UK leaders: report

Al-Qaeda hit squads are planning to assassinate British politicians and other international leaders closely linked with US President George Bush, according to a Pakistani intelligence source. These targeted killings were planned to be carried out simultaneously in a number of countries. Terror suspects being held in Pakistan have told their captors that the orders for this campaign of political assassinations came directly from Osama bin Laden, the report said. "Osama has given the go-ahead to target important places and personalities in the US, UK and Pakistan."

Full story: <http://www.hinduonnet.com/thehindu/holnus/003200408121911.htm>

Related reporting:

JI has new leaders, may be plotting fresh attacks

<http://www.ds-osac.org/view.cfm?key=7E4354404051&type=2B170C1E0A3A0F162820>

Jema'ah shifting to assassinations

<http://www.abs-cbnnews.com/NewsStory.aspx?section=Headlines&oid=56726>

Pakistan holds up to 11 in assassination bid on PM-designate Aziz

http://www.khaleejtimes.com/DisplayArticle.asp?xfile=data/subcontinent/2004/August/subcontinent_August61.xml§ion=subcontinent

Iran fighting proxy war against U.S. through Iraqi Shiites, Hizballah

Iran is using the Hizballah and Iraqi Shiites linked to Muqtada al-Sadr to fight a proxy war against the U.S. in order to strike back against American efforts to prevent Iran from becoming a nuclear power. Iraqi Shiite militia under the command of Iranian-backed militant al-Sadr launched a major rebellion in the southern Iraqi city of Najaf nine days ago. Iraqi officials have been blaming Iran for stirring up trouble in Najaf. Several Iranians were detained or arrested recently in Iraq including a diplomat who was accused of "stirring up sectarian strife." Iran's connection to the Shiite community in Iraq goes back decades, although not all Iraqi Shiites are pro-Iranian. "The Shia Islamic revolutionary council was trained and supported by Iran for 20 years," After the fall of the regime of former Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein, the Shiite leaders returned to Iraq to "try to implement the dream of an Islamic regime." Al-Sadr's spiritual leader is also an Iranian, Ayatollah Khairi. "The IRI [Islamic Republic of Iran] is very afraid of being next, after Afghanistan and Iraq,"

Full story:

<http://www.cnsnews.com/ViewForeignBureaus.asp?Page=%5CForeignBureaus%5Carchive%5C200408%5CFOR20040813d.html>

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Rwanda Troops Airlifted to Start AU Mission in Darfur



Rwandan troops were airlifted on Sunday to Sudan's Darfur as the first foreign force there, mandated to protect observers monitoring a cease-fire between the Sudanese government and rebels in the troubled western region. The United Nations calls Darfur the worst humanitarian crisis in the world and says 50,000 people have been killed and at least 1 million more displaced since two rebel groups took up arms against the government in February last year. Rights groups and the rebels accuse Khartoum of arming Arab militias known as the Janjaweed - a term derived from the Arabic for "devils on horseback" - to loot and burn African farming villages as part of a campaign of ethnic cleansing.

Full story: <http://wireservice.wired.com/wired/story.asp?section=Breaking&storyId=907855>

Related reporting:

Tread softly in Sudan

http://www.canoe.ca/NewsStand/Columnists/Toronto/Eric_Margolis/2004/08/15/583447.html

Algeria, Egypt and Libya ready to send troops to Darfur

http://www.sudantribune.com/article.php3?id_article=4745

F.B.I. goes knocking for political troublemakers

The Federal Bureau of Investigation has been questioning political demonstrators across the country, and in rare cases even subpoenaing them, in an aggressive effort to forestall what officials say could be violent and disruptive protests at the Republican National Convention in New York. F.B.I. officials are urging agents to canvass their communities for information about planned disruptions aimed at the convention and other coming political events, and they say they have developed a list of people who they think may have information about possible violence. They say the inquiries, which began last month before the Democratic convention in Boston, are focused solely on possible crimes, not on dissent, at major political events.

Full story: <http://www.nytimes.com/2004/08/16/politics/campaign/16fbi.html?th>

Federal official outlines choices for emergency responders

The nation's "first responders" to emergencies worry that the process for accessing federal money to bolster homeland security is too cumbersome, but one Homeland Security Department official said separate efforts to improve preparedness on the frontlines are under way. One program through the department's Homeland Security Advanced Research Project Agency (HSARPA) provides funding for private-sector companies to develop new technologies just for first responders, said Christopher Doyle, the deputy director of emergency preparedness and response in the department's science and technology division.

Full story: <http://www.govexec.com/dailyfed/0804/081304tdpm2.htm>

Featured Internet Site

The National Incident Management System (NIMS) Integration Center

The NIMS Integration Center was established by the Secretary of Homeland Security to provide "strategic direction for and oversight of the National Incident Management System... supporting both routine maintenance and the continuous refinement of the system and its components over the long term." The NIMS is a comprehensive incident response system, developed by Homeland Security at the request of the President.

<http://www.fema.gov/nims/>

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