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**Anti-Terrorism Advisory Council  
NEWSLETTER**



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## Iranian officials seize illicit drugs

Iranian police seized a large shipment of illicit drugs, mainly opium and hashish, in the central province of Isfahan. There are conflicting reports regarding the exact amount of drugs seized. In some reports, the haul was 670 kg; in others it was as large as 750 kg. Iran has lost over 3,600 armed forces personnel in operations against drug traffickers over the past 20 years. In 2003, authorities seized 200 tons of drugs across the country.

### ANALYSIS:



Iran is a major conduit for drugs originating from Afghanistan. Iranian authorities are reportedly responsible for 80 percent of the opium and 90 percent of the morphine seized globally. Trafficking groups based in the region are drawn from various ethnicities and tribes. While traveling via land, couriers often smuggle drugs out of Afghanistan and Pakistan's Baluchistan province via routes in northwestern Iran. Iran serves both as a transshipment point and a destination point. If the materials are only passing through Iran, they are usually smuggled into laboratories in Turkey, where they are further processed (the morphine base is converted to heroin) and packaged. The product is then shipped to its intended market, usually Europe. Some of the profits are used to finance terrorism, analysts have said. According to one source, Iran spends approximately USD 800 million annually to support its anti-drug programs.

### **Related Reporting:**

**Drug trafficking in & around Iran**

<http://www.irangasht.co.uk/news-drugs.htm>

**Drug trade in Asia**

<http://www.pa-chouvy.org/drugtradeinasia.html>

**Kosovo Liberation Army and Albanian Sponsors Have Well Documented Roots in The Heroin Trade**

<http://www.fromthewilderness.com/free/regional/KLA1.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 !

## Iran warns of preemptive strike on US forces

*War of words heats up as Iran warns it will respond to US or Israeli attack on its nuclear facilities.*



In a marked escalation of a war of words between Iran and its arch-enemies Israel and the US, Tehran has for the first time threatened a preemptive strike against US troops in the region. "We will not sit with arms folded to wait for what others will do to us," Iran's defence minister, Rear-Admiral Ali Shamkhani told Al-Jazeera TV on Wednesday when asked if Iran would respond to a US attack on its nuclear facilities. "Some military commanders in Iran are convinced that preventive operations which the Americans talk about are not their monopoly. "America is not the only one present

in the region. We are also present, from Khost to Kandahar in Afghanistan; we are present in the Gulf and we can be present in Iraq," said Shamkhani.

Full story: <http://www.middle-east-online.com/english/?id=11013>

### **Related Reporting:**

#### **Bushehr, Introduction**

(See also Background, Location, and other hyperlinks on this story.)

<http://www.globalsecurity.org/wmd/world/iran/bushehr.htm>

#### **Iran**

*Iran is OPEC's second largest oil producer and holds 10% of the world's proven oil reserves. It also has the world's second largest natural gas reserves (after Russia).*

(See also Background, Nuclear, and other hyperlinks on this story.)

<http://www.eia.doe.gov/emeu/cabs/iran.html>

## Al-Qaeda's travel agency

al-Qaeda terror network is running a clandestine travel service, possibly in partnership with people smugglers south of the US border, which helps move its terrorists around the world. "There are uncorroborated law enforcement reports suggesting that associates of al-Qaeda used smugglers in Latin America to travel through the region in 2002, before traveling onward to the US."

Full story:

[http://www.theaustralian.news.com.au/common/story\\_page/0,5744,10544505%255E401,00.html](http://www.theaustralian.news.com.au/common/story_page/0,5744,10544505%255E401,00.html)

## Border officials say they are unprepared to protect nation

"The vast majority of America's front-line border protection personnel do not believe that they have been given the proper tools, training and support to be effective in stopping potential terrorists from entering the country," a nationwide survey of U.S. Border Patrol agents and Customs and Border Protection officers concludes.

Full story: <http://www.govexec.com/dailyfed/0804/082004c2.htm>

### **Related Reporting:**

#### **Border and customs officials cite low morale, security gaps**

<http://www.govexec.com/dailyfed/0804/082304c1.htm>

## Latin American al-Qaeda link feared

Amid reports that a suspected Saudi terrorist passed through Panama and Honduras, officials in the region are stepping up counter-terrorist efforts. Mexican and Central American officials are on alert as evidence grows that al-Qaeda members are traveling in the region and looking for recruits to carry out attacks in Latin America -- the potential last frontier for international terrorism.

Full story: <http://www.taipetimes.com/News/world/archives/2004/08/23/2003199907>

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## FBI now downplaying border alert for terrorism suspect

Reports that a notorious terrorism suspect may be planning to cross the Mexican border through Arizona or Texas are outdated, according to an FBI spokeswoman. The FBI issued an alert Tuesday for Adnan G. El Shukrijumah, suspected of being an al-Qaida cell leader and wanted by the U.S. authorities since 2003. The latest information placed him in Honduras with the intent of crossing the U.S.-Mexican border. But those news reports were based on speculation stemming from old and unverified intelligence, said Susan Herskovits, an FBI spokeswoman in Arizona.

Full story: <http://kvoa.com/Global/story.asp?S=2195017&nav=HMO6Q2Cv>

## Colombian charged in alleged arms plot



Prosecutors have charged a Colombian citizen with trying to buy hundreds of assault rifles and thousands of grenades for a Marxist guerrilla group in exchange for cash and cocaine, officials said on Wednesday. Carlos Enrique Gamarra Murillo, 53, worked as a weapons broker for the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, or FARC, between March 2003 and April this year, said the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Middle District of Florida. It said in a statement the weapons he tried to obtain were worth nearly \$4 million and included 60 M-60 machine guns, 60 multiple grenade launchers, 600 M-16 assault rifles, 600 Galil 7.62 mm assault rifles, 500 AK-47 assault rifles, and 4,000 40 mm and 60 mm grenades. "Those who seek to supply narco-terrorists with weapons and ammunition must be brought to justice for their actions," U.S. Attorney General John Ashcroft said in the statement.

Full story: <http://edition.cnn.com/2004/WORLD/americas/08/18/crime.colombia.reut/>

## 9-11 Commission issues terror financing monograph

The 9-11 Commission's most recent report on terror financing said the U.S. government had made little headway in deciphering al Qaeda funding channels. Since the 2001 attacks, "the U.S. government still hasn't determined with any precision how much al Qaeda raises or from whom, or how it spends its money," the report stated. The study argued that, despite the FBI and CIA improving their counterterrorism funding efforts, the analytical output remained weak. "As of spring 2003, the FBI has generated very little quality finished intelligence in the area of al Qaeda financing," the report stated. The commission went on to say that "efforts within the financial industry to create financial profiles of terrorist cells and terrorist fundraisers have proved unsuccessful, and the ability of financial institutions to detect terrorist financing remains limited." The panel reported that terror financing comes mainly from individual wealthy financiers, particularly from the Persian Gulf and often through the use of corrupt Islamic charities, but stated that specific sources still could not be determined. The commission reiterated that the Saudi government never officially supported al Qaeda but argued that, despite Saudi Arabia's recent anti-terror-financing efforts, it was unclear whether the country would sustain its efforts (The Wall Street Journal). The report, one of the final documents from the commission, served as the panel's in-depth analysis of terrorism funding -- a topic mentioned only briefly in its major report issued last month.

### ANALYSIS:

The study reaffirmed what several financial experts have asserted: freezing assets and funds does little to inhibit financing. The commission said al Qaeda "adapts quickly and effectively" to financial obstacles and now relies on cash transactions and couriers to move money, adding that the network "can apparently still draw on hard-core donors who knowingly fund it and sympathizers who divert charitable donations to it." The report found that efforts would be better served to follow funding channels "to learn more about Al Qaeda, including the identities and locations of its operatives" (The Los Angeles Times). Although the

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report criticized several components of the U.S. government involved in terror funding -- namely, the DOJ, FBI, and CIA -- it did acknowledge improvements in those agencies' efforts, saying that all had adapted to improve their capabilities in detecting sources and had generally increased their vigilance in the matter. The issue of terror financing is particularly complex, as the report itself contended, due to extensive money channeling and the need for cooperation among multiple government and private sources to detect such channels. It noted that U.S. intelligence, law enforcement, and anti-terror-financing efforts had significant help from the U.S. and international banking communities and that multinational efforts had had an impact on potential donors who might have indiscriminately given to al Qaeda. Still, the panel concluded that total elimination of funding was virtually impossible.

## Mark Thatcher arrested over African coup plot



The Equatorial Guinea arrests took place two days after Zimbabwean authorities detained 70 suspected mercenaries at Harare airport after a tip-off from the South African government. The Equatorial Guinea men, led by a South African, Nick du Toit, were allegedly an advance group responsible for the preparations of the coup d'etat before the arrival of the 70 suspected soldiers of fortune who took off from South Africa and stopped in Harare to pick up weapons. The trial of the Zimbabwe group is in its final stages. The government in Harare has refused to extradite the 70 men to Equatorial Guinea. Mr Du Toit told a court in Equatorial Guinea yesterday that he had been in charge of logistics for an attempted putsch and had accepted the job at the request of Simon Mann, a former SAS man and the founder of the

mercenary firm Executive Outcomes.

Full story: <http://www.zwnews.com/issuefull.cfm?ArticleID=9979>

## Idris escapes punishment over Bali blasts



One of the key conspirators of the Bali bomb plot, Idris, has escaped punishment despite confessing to the crime. A Jakarta court threw out the charges against Idris today because of a recent Constitutional Court ruling on the retrospective use of Indonesia's anti-terrorism laws. However, Idris was sentenced to 10 years in prison for his role in last year's bombing of the Marriott Hotel in Jakarta. Idris, also known as Joni Hendrawan, was at most of the key planning meetings for the Bali bombings, which killed more than 200 people. He helped secure the safe houses and the vehicle used. He scouted the targets, taught the Sari Club car bomber how to drive and even detonated the smallest of the bombs near the US consulate.

He was also involved in choosing the targets.

Full story: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/newsitems/200408/s1184198.htm>

### **Related Reporting:**

#### **Howard vows Bali bomb justice**

[http://news.com.au/common/story\\_page/0,4057,10568899%255E421,00.html](http://news.com.au/common/story_page/0,4057,10568899%255E421,00.html)



## UM Ph.D indicted in terrorism funding plot

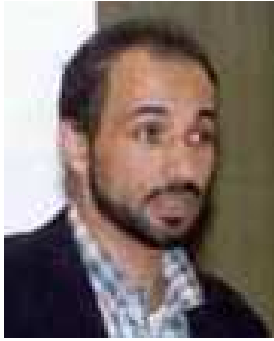
A former UM student was indicted Friday along with three others on racketeering conspiracy charges that allege the men had laundered money that was used to finance attacks on Israel over the last 15 years. The AP also reported that in 2002, a Federal judge had ruled that Ashqar had raised money for Hamas, also known as the Islamic Resistance Movement while he was a student at Ole Miss from 1990 until his graduation with a Ph. D in operations management in 1997.

Full story: <http://www.thedmonline.com/vnews/display.v/ART/2004/08/25/412c92cdcd5d9>

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## Revoked visa bars Islamic scholar from ND

Department of Homeland Security used Patriot Act to deny professor entrance into country.



Tariq Ramadan, an internationally recognized Islamic scholar, was supposed to begin teaching a course Tuesday at the University of Notre Dame. Instead, he is home in Switzerland, hoping to regain a work visa that has been revoked at the request of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. The action apparently occurred under terms of the Patriot Act. State Department spokeswoman Kelly Shannon cited the Immigration and Nationality Act, part of which deals with aliens who have used a "position of prominence within any country to endorse or espouse terrorist activity." Another section bars aliens whose entry may have "potentially serious adverse foreign policy consequences for the United States."

Full story:

[http://www.southbendtribune.com/stories/2004/08/25/local.20040825-sbt-LOCL-A1-Revoked\\_visa\\_bars\\_Is.sto](http://www.southbendtribune.com/stories/2004/08/25/local.20040825-sbt-LOCL-A1-Revoked_visa_bars_Is.sto)

### **Related Reporting:**

#### **Scholar's pedigree under fire**

[http://www.southbendtribune.com/stories/2004/08/25/local.20040825-sbt-MICH-A10-Scholar\\_s\\_pedigree\\_u.sto](http://www.southbendtribune.com/stories/2004/08/25/local.20040825-sbt-MICH-A10-Scholar_s_pedigree_u.sto)

## U.S. Holds Virginia man after taping at Maryland Bridge



A Virginian implicated in a scheme to raise money for Hamas, the militant group, was in federal custody on Tuesday, and officials analyzed what they regarded as a suspicious videotape of a major Maryland bridge that his wife shot from their vehicle last week. A lawyer for the man, Ismael Selim Elbarasse of Annandale, said he and his wife were videotaping sights from the bridge on their way back from a beach trip. But Maryland officials tightened security at major bridges and ordered extra boat patrols because of concerns that the tape could signal possible surveillance for a terrorist operation. Mr. Elbarasse is being held as a material witness in a federal case in Chicago that accuses three other men of having illegally raised money for Hamas to finance terrorist attacks against Israel beginning in the early 1990's.

Full story: <http://www.nytimes.com/2004/08/25/politics/25hamas.html>

## Trial of accused American vigilantes resumes in Afghanistan with explosive video presentation

A defense lawyer for one of three Americans accused of torturing a dozen Afghan prisoners in a private jail showed a video in court Monday of Afghanistan's former education minister congratulating the group and offering his help in arresting terrorists. In the footage, former minister Yunus Qanooni, an influential figure in the Northern Alliance that helped the United States oust the hardline Taliban regime in late 2001, is shown meeting with Jonathan Idema, leader of the counterterrorism group, and promising help. "Any cooperation, we are ready. We have a small security group," Qanooni says on the tape in broken English. Another video appears to show Qanooni's security forces coming along on a raid on the home of a suspect that Idema claims was plotting to kill the Afghan politician. Idema claims his activities were sanctioned by the Pentagon, and says the Afghan government was also behind his efforts to track down terrorists. He and two other Americans – Edward Caraballo and Brent Bennett – were arrested July 5 by Afghan intelligence agents. Authorities found about a dozen prisoners tied up at the site and say there is evidence of torture.

Full story: <http://www.signonsandiego.com/news/world/20040823-0334-afghan-usvigilantes.html>

**Also see ATAC Newsletter Volume 07, Issue 04 Dated 07.28.04 for original story:**

<http://www.fayettevillenc.com/story.php?Template=terrorism&Story=6466586>

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## Muslims angry over FBI terrorism sting in Albany

Angry and saddened, members of a Muslim community in New York state's capital have been staying away from their mosque for fear of being labeled terrorists as they await a bail hearing on Tuesday for two men accused of supporting terrorism. The hearing is the second proceeding against the pair associated with an Albany mosque and arrested in an FBI sting operation. It was granted by U.S. Magistrate David Homer after a possible translation error turned up in key evidence against them.

Full story: <http://www.reuters.com/newsArticle.jhtml?type=topNews&storyID=6056184>

## DRINKING SUPPLY: Terrorists had eyes on water.

Recent government intelligence suggests terrorists have discussed recruiting employees of water treatment facilities to poison drinking supplies in hopes of causing mass casualties. Terrorists thought it would be futile to attempt to directly poison a large water reservoir because of the dilution factor," the bulletin states. "Rather, they focused on the possibility of poisoning the water during the water treatment process." Terrorists spoke about inserting an unnamed poison into water during the chlorination process. "To accomplish this objective, they discussed recruiting insiders to work with them,"

Full story: [http://www.reviewjournal.com/lvrj\\_home/2004/Aug-12-Thu-2004/news/24519286.html](http://www.reviewjournal.com/lvrj_home/2004/Aug-12-Thu-2004/news/24519286.html)

## Featured Internet Site

### DEA Museum & Visitors Center

*Target America: Traffickers, Terrorists and You*

<http://www.usdoj.gov/dea/deamuseum/website/index.html>

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