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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.

Analysts warn of small-plane terrorism threat

Security seen lacking in general aviation; Al Qaeda plans cited



The threat of terrorists using small planes to attack American targets does exist and requires immediate action by the government, according to a Washington think tank that is nearing completion of a study of general aviation's vulnerabilities. "It's a threat that can't be ignored any longer," said David Heyman, the director of the homeland security program at the Center for Strategic and International Studies. "We've also heard threat warnings from [Homeland Security Secretary Tom] Ridge and the intelligence community about the interest of Al Qaeda to use general aviation assets for an attack,"

said Heyman. "We need to consider the use of smaller aircraft in our threat analysis. There are legitimate scenarios which we need to be concerned about."

Full story:

http://www.boston.com/news/nation/articles/2004/08/26/analysts_warn_of_small_plane_terrorism_threat/

FBI says Al-Qaida may target VA Hospitals

Al-Qaida may attempt to attack Veterans Affairs hospitals as an alternative to more heavily guarded U.S. military installations, the FBI and Homeland Security Department warn in a new nationwide terrorism bulletin. Although U.S. authorities say there is no credible intelligence regarding a specific threat against such hospitals, the bulletin said there have been persistent reports of "suspicious activity" at medical facilities throughout the United States. That includes "possible reconnaissance activities" this year at unspecified military medical facilities in Bethesda, Md., and Aurora, Colo., the bulletin said. Even though later investigation of these two incidents uncovered no links to terrorism, the bulletin urges vigilance at VA hospitals on the part of police and security. Earlier this month, the FBI warned that al-Qaida might attempt to attack military recruitment centers, which are also less tightly guarded than other military facilities.

Full story: <http://www.local10.com/news/3686886/detail.html>

'Jihad' magazine for women on web

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 !

Radical Islamists have launched a new magazine publication on the internet especially for women. The aim of the magazine is to show women how to reconcile the apparent contradiction of fighting jihad while maintaining family life. The main objective seems to be to teach women married to radical Islamists how to support their husbands. One of its encouragements to jihad reads: "The blood of our husbands and the body parts of our children are our sacrificial offering."

Full story: http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/3594982.stm

Probe into Russian plane crashes centers on 2 female passengers



In Russia, investigators looking into the cause of two near simultaneous airliner crashes, are focusing their attention on two female passengers, who purchased tickets for each flight at the last minute. On Friday, investigators at one of the crash sites reported finding traces of an explosive. In particular, officials are seeking more information on two female passengers with Chechen surnames. No relatives have come forward to claim the women's remains, as happened with all the other victims. The body parts of one woman were scattered widely on the ground. Officials said parts of her legs were found in the toilet section of

one plane, leading to speculation that she might have detonated some kind of explosive from there. Little is known about the second woman, who officials said was on the second plane, and who apparently purchased a ticket just before it left Moscow's Domodeyevo airport. Several suicide attacks in Russia in recent years have been blamed on widows of Chechen separatist fighters. An Islamic group has claimed responsibility for the crashes, citing solidarity with Chechen rebels.

Full story: <http://www.voanews.com/article.cfm?objectID=24C44A60-D909-4A0D-ABF132CBA0884C7D&title=Probe%20Into%20Russian%20Plane%20Crashes%20Centers%20on%20%20Female%20Passengers>

Related Reporting:

Russian Investigators Find Traces of Explosives (Hexogen) in Plane Wreckage

<http://www.voanews.com/article.cfm?objectID=2CA90D08-C1E2-4572-8B6EC8866DD11468&Title=Russian%20Investigators%20Find%20Traces%20of%20Explosives%20in%20Plane%20Wreckage&db=current>

Use of the Explosive Hexogen at a Glance

<http://www.mercurynews.com/mld/mercurynews/news/world/9514849.htm>

Slump in prices on Russian hexogen

Hexogen is an explosive with great destroying power

<http://www.kavkaz.org.uk/eng/article.php?id=3030>

Russia confirms 'Crashes' as terrorism

Russia announced 30 August that the near-simultaneous "crashes" of two Russian passenger planes on 24 August were confirmed to be terrorism. After the Federal Security Service discovered traces of the explosive hexogen – used in other attacks in Russia blamed on Chechen rebels -- in the wreckages of both aircraft over the weekend, Lieutenant-General Andrei Fetosov announced, "Without a shadow of a doubt we can say that both airplanes were blown up as a result of a terrorist attack." (*Telegraph*). Uncertainty over details of the attack remains. According to a 30 August article by vesti.ru, investigators stated that there were no signs of anxiety aboard the two Russian planes. Russian Transport Minister Igor Levitin concluded from the evidence, "We cannot say there was a hijacking...the pilots did all they could...but they had no time to announce what had happened." Russian press reports lean towards the theory that the planes were brought down by two female passengers – identified as Amnat Nagaeva and Satsita Dzhebirkhanova. In a lengthy 30 August article, *Izvestiia* revealed details of the suspected bombers. The women with Chechen names booked tickets on the flights at the last minute and were the only victims whose relatives did not contact authorities. Noting that they rode a bus with two other women -- whose whereabouts are presently unknown, the paper speculated that the remaining two women might be in Moscow ready to carry out other acts. The newspaper offered an alternative version of events: the two

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women were murdered for their passports, which the real culprits then used to board the plane. Another Russian press report, *Rossiiskaia gazeta*, argued that "someone" showed sophisticated knowledge of explosive capacity because the bomber onboard the Tu-154 aircraft changed her ticket, which had originally been for a much larger Airbus. Officials say that a month and a half would be needed to wrap up the investigation (vesti.ru).

COMMENT:

With the nearly simultaneous loss of radio contact, elections looming in Chechnya, and a bomb explosion at a Moscow bus stop also on 24 August, the crashes naturally invited speculation of terrorism; however it had previously not been confirmed. Female bombers have been playing a major role in Chechen terrorism in the past few years, raising concerns that other organizations may follow suit and recruit women to pass through security checks unnoticed. Also, the lack of hijacking renews fears of explosives on board aircraft as well as improvised explosive devices assembled mid-flight. If terrorists view success in accomplishing their mission without hijacking, tactics may change worldwide.

Related reporting:

Chechen roommates suspects in airline bombings

http://seattletimes.nwsourc.com/html/nationworld/2002020818_russcrash31.html

Crash Investigators Say Planes Blown Up

http://www.sptimes.ru/archive/times/999/news/n_13399.htm

Suicide bomber blamed for Moscow blast

At least six people were killed in a blast outside a busy Moscow subway station this evening and news reports cited the Federal Security Service as saying it was caused by a female suicide bomber. The blast hit in an area between the Rizhskaya subway station in northern Moscow and a nearby supermarket-department store complex. Initial casualty reports varied, but police spokesman Valery Gribakin said on Russian television that six people were killed and more than 20 wounded. The blast - which some witnesses said consisted of two separate explosions - hit one week, almost to the hour, after two Russian airliners crashed within minutes of each other. Russian news agencies cited the security agency as saying the blast was caused by a female suicide bomber, but there was no immediate elaboration of the statement and the service declined to answer questions from The Associated Press.

Full story: <http://www.theage.com.au/articles/2004/09/01/1093938944230.html>

US companies providing indirect service to Terrorist Websites, report says

American Internet Service Providers are being used indirectly by the Palestinian Islamic Jihad and other terrorist groups to market their terrorist messages, Israel's Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center at the Center for Special Studies said in a report this week. "Palestinian and international terrorist organizations make massive use of the Internet to spread propaganda supporting terrorism and as a means of maintaining contact between organizations and headquarters, their infrastructures and their target populations." Preference for U.S. and Western companies provides terror groups with "advanced technological support," the ability to "disappear" among the multitudes of Western companies on the World Wide Web -- and to a certain extent, allows protection under U.S. freedom of speech guarantees.

Full story:

<http://www.cnsnews.com/ViewForeignBureaus.asp?Page=%5CForeignBureaus%5Carchive%5C200408%5CFOR20040827d.html>

Related reporting:

Tangled web of assistance

<http://www.denverpost.com/Stories/0,1413,36~31908~2368227,00.html>

Debate continues over risks, benefits of public information

A large sign in Midtown Manhattan warning about the presence of a major natural gas pipeline was

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removed by the private company that owns the pipeline after a photograph of the sign was posted online, according to a 29 August *New York Times* article. The sign -- which had originally been posted to prevent deadly accidents -- was removed within a week after security concerns were raised. "They posted the signs because they thought someone might accidentally blow the pipeline up," noted John Young, who runs the website (<http://www.cryptome.org> *See RNC postings*) that posted the photograph, adding, "Now, they're taking them down because they think someone might intentionally blow it up." Kelly Swan, a spokesman for Williams, the company that owns the pipe supplying Manhattan, commented that, "Federal regulations require companies to make these lines as obvious as possible and educate the public about where they are." However, "local laws indicate that we were allowed to get rid of that particular sign, and after the recent publicity about it, we did," said Swan. Young, a 68-year-old architect who characterizes himself as an "agent for change," has been posting documents on his Web site since 1996 identifying locations where the government needs to bolster national security. He has included on his site detailed maps of nuclear storage facilities in New Mexico, maps and pictures of natural gas pipelines in New York City, U.S. nuclear waste transportation routes, and aerial photographs of police preparations for the Republican National Convention. Although Young has been visited by the Federal Bureau of Investigation officials and his website includes a FBI warning that information could be "used to harm the United States," his website is legal.

ANALYSIS:

The *New York Times* article focused exclusively on New York's natural gas system as highly explosive natural gas, transported in pipes underneath residents and waterways, has been the cause of several explosions from misdirected construction work or wayward boat anchors. The example, however, aptly highlights the broader tension between public safety and security concerns as security experts face continuing challenges over how to balance "old risks and new threats." Edward M. Stroz, a retired F.B.I. agent who runs a security consulting firm, commented, "The challenge is to make this infrastructure not so obvious that it's almost inviting to terrorists, while also not pulling so much information out of public reach that accidents occur." (*New York Times*)

U.S. military beefing up its presence on borders



There's a growing sense of urgency among those who police America's long, porous borders that tighter control is needed to prevent terrorists from slipping into the flood of illegal immigrants entering the United States. A military unit called Joint Task Force-6 is greatly expanding its role in supporting the hunt for terrorists trying to slip across the Mexican and Canadian borders. Since the 2001 terrorist attacks, the government has directed more resources at tightening border security. Still, the commander of JTF-6, Brig. Gen. John "Jay"

Yingling, said his nightmare is that al-Qaida terrorists will slip in with illegal immigrants and attack the United States again. Authorities see Latin America as a potential recruiting ground for terrorist groups because it has weak governments and police, drug smuggling conduits for moving people and goods and its own lax border controls.

Full Story: http://www.realcities.com/mld/kwashington/news/columnists/joe_galloway/9495404.htm

Related reporting:

Terrorist May Attempt Border Entrance

<http://www.kfoxtv.com/news/3693688/detail.html>

Security tightened on Mexico border until election

<http://www.kltv.com/Global/story.asp?S=2235422>

Second Seizure of Cyanide-Laced Bullets

Colombian security officials seized 5,000 cyanide-laced assault-rifle bullets in the Santander department, northeast of Bogota, Aug. 28. Authorities claim that the shipment was destined for use by insurgents

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operating in Medellin but the officials failed to implicate any specific rebel or drug-trafficking organization.

COMMENT:

This is the second such seizure of cyanide-laced bullets in the past three months in Colombia. Authorities captured an identical number of the poison-laden munitions shipped from Ecuador on June 7; following the earlier seizure, officials blamed the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) for attempting to use the ammunition. This second seizure could mean that Colombian insurgents are attempting to make their munitions more deadly.

Machine guns, explosives found in van in Montreal



Police will look for links to organized crime after weapons seizure. Police said today they will look for links to organized crime after finding a large stash of weapons and explosives in a minivan. It's unlikely to be the work of teenage gang members, said Const. Lynne Labelle, a Montreal police spokeswoman. "I believe it's too big to be related to street gangs," Labelle said of the seizure. Officers seized 17 firearms, including submachine-guns, handguns and rifles, on Tuesday. They also found between 90 and 135 kilograms of explosives. No arrests have been made and police aren't sure how many suspects are involved and if they have left the country, Labelle said. Officers will need to find out who rented the vehicle. "There are no clues that are leading us to believe it's linked to terrorism," Labelle added.

Full report:

http://www.thestar.com/NASApp/cs/ContentServer?pagename=thestar/Layout/Article_PrintFriendly&c=Article&cid=1093428247186&call_pageid=968332188854

Related Reporting:

Van full of guns, explosives found in Montreal

http://www.cbc.ca/story/canada/national/2004/08/25/mtl_van040825.html

Al-Qaeda terrorists sentenced for Limburg bombing, planned attacks

Fifteen Al-Qaeda militants were sentenced in Yemeni courts Aug. 28 for the October 2002 attack on the French oil tanker Limburg, the killing of a Yemeni policeman and plans to assassinate the U.S. Ambassador and bomb the embassies of Cuba, France, Germany, United Kingdom and U.S. The sentences ranged from the death sentence given to Huzam Saleh Mejalli for killing the policeman to three to 10 years to the 14 others for their involvement in the Limburg bombing and the planned attacks. The trial began May 29 and was clouded by controversy as defense lawyers were not given access to many documents used by the prosecution. Most defense lawyers boycotted the sentencing hearing and appealed the verdicts once they were announced.

COMMENT:

Yemeni security forces have been cracking down on Islamic militants throughout the country for the past three years, but dozens likely remain at large in Yemen's vast swaths of mountainous terrain and tribally-controlled regions. The sentencing of the Limburg suspects and ongoing trial of men involved in the U.S.S. Cole bombing increases the possibility that militant groups will attempt terrorist attacks in Yemen in the near term.

Military secrets for sale – on eBay

A captain in the Army reserves is suspected of selling flight manuals and performance charts for U.S. military aircraft on eBay, according to an investigation by an Indianapolis television station. WTHR Channel 13 reports a Navy investigation has already produced a report on the activities of Army

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Reserve Capt. Jeffrey Jones, who was selling on eBay and his own commercial website at least 17 different manuals. The Navy characterized them as "sensitive with significant and obvious distribution restrictions."

Full story: http://www.worldnetdaily.com/news/article.asp?ARTICLE_ID=40226

Bush issues order boosting CIA director's authority

President Bush Friday issued a series of executive orders designed to address recommendations of the recent special commission on the Sept. 11 attacks. One order gives the CIA chief interim authority to perform many of the the functions envisioned for the national intelligence director proposed by the 9/11 commission, overseeing all 15 of the intelligence agencies in government. Another executive order creates a National Counterterrorism Center, with the authority to direct operations in a number of areas, including military and law enforcement affairs. A third order establishes guidelines for information sharing among intelligence agencies.

Full story: <http://www.govexec.com/dailyfed/0804/082704gsn1.htm>

Iran arrests dozens of 'spies' for passing nuclear secrets

The Iranian government announced yesterday that a number of spies linked to an armed opposition movement had been arrested for passing on nuclear secrets to foreign enemies. President George Bush, stressed yesterday that diplomacy remained the best option for dealing with Iran, which confirmed in July that it had resumed building nuclear centrifuges, which can enrich uranium to weapons grade.

Full story: http://news.independent.co.uk/world/middle_east/story.jsp?story=557039

The Return of Abu Sayyaf

A Philippine group that was once known for brutal kidnapping has graduated to genuine terror



The unassuming young man who bought a ticket for Berth 51 on the 1,747-passenger SuperFerry 14 sailing from Manila to Bacolod and Davao on Feb. 26 called himself Arnulfo Alvarado. If security officials in the Philippines checked ferry-passenger lists—they don't—the name would have set off deafening alarm bells. Arnulfo Alvarado, say Philippine officials, was the name of a member, now dead, of the Abu Sayyaf terrorist group. Two other Abu Sayyaf operators have used Alvarado's name to carry out previous attacks, according to Philippine intelligence officers. This Alvarado, whose real name was Redondo Cain

Delloso, hauled on board a cardboard box containing a television set. The TV, according to investigators, was packed with 3.6 kg of TNT. Making his way to the cheapest passenger section in the bowels of the ship, Delloso carefully placed the box on his seat and slipped away just before the ferry cast off. An hour after its 11 p.m. sailing, just off Corregidor Island, an explosion tore through SuperFerry 14, starting a fire that engulfed the ship and killed a hundred or more passengers (some likely victims are still unaccounted for and may be missing). According to investigators, Delloso, who was apprehended four weeks later, confessed that the explosion was triggered by a timing device—and that he chose the cheap seats to maximize panic and loss of life.

Full story: <http://www.time.com/time/asia/magazine/article/0,13673,501040830-686107,00.html>

Vatican takes threats seriously

Two days after Vatican officials received a tip from Bosnian authorities that Bosnian terrorists are targeting the Vatican, an Al-Qaeda-linked group claims it will spare the site.

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COMMENT:

On Aug. 27, Italy announced unconfirmed reports that seven men and three women from Bosnia arrived in Rome with the intent of attacking St. Peter's Square during a service. The country responded by increasing security around the site and at Italy's border with Slovenia. On Aug. 29, the Abu Hafs al-Masri Brigades-European Battallion posted a statement on an Islamic extremist Web site that it had no intention of targeting the Vatican but would focus its efforts against Italy and Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi. There is no indication that the group from Bosnia is related to the al-Masri Brigade.

Related reporting:

Online Statement Denies Vatican As Target

<http://www.kansascity.com/mld/kansascity/news/9530110.htm?1c>

Featured Internet Site

U.S. Postal Inspection Service

More Than 200 Years of Law Enforcement Tradition

<http://www.usps.com/postalinspectors/>

Under the 'Publications' link see:

Law Enforcement Guide to Postal Crimes

And more.....

<http://www.usps.com/cpim/ftp/pubs/pub146.pdf>

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