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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.

Al Qaeda seen planning for 'spectacular' attack

U.S. intelligence agencies concluded recently that al Qaeda — fearing its credibility is on the line — is moving ahead with plans for a major, "spectacular" attack, despite disruptions of some operations by recent arrests in Britain and Pakistan. Officials said recent intelligence assessments of the group, which is blamed for the September 11 attacks, state that an attack is coming and that the danger will remain high until the Nov. 2 elections and last until Inauguration Day on Jan. 20.

Full story: <http://washingtontimes.com/national/20040921-121158-2444r.htm>

U.S. warns citizens of continued Terrorist Threat Worldwide

The United States on Friday warned its citizens abroad to be mindful of the threat of terrorism targeting Americans and American interests, particularly Al-Qaeda attacks with chemical and biological agents. The "Worldwide Caution" said the State Department "is deeply concerned about the continued threat of terrorist attacks against US citizens and interests abroad, as well as the potential for demonstrations and violent actions against US citizens and interests overseas." "In reaction to the execution of hostages in Iraq, there have been demonstrations and associated violence in the hostages' country of origin," said the warning.

Full story: <http://www.turkishpress.com/turkishpress/news.asp?ID=26838>

U.S. Department of State Travel Warning (referenced in the story above)

WORLDWIDE CAUTION

<http://travel.state.gov/travel/wwc1.html>

Related reporting:

Experts Say Terrorists Regroup, See Lengthy War

<http://au.news.yahoo.com/040913/15/qrer.html>

The next threat

Four years ago al Qaeda operatives were taking flying lessons. Today they are honing a new skill: hacking.

How much damage could a cyberterrorist do to our electric grid or the Internet? We don't know yet. The most destructive terrorist act in history began with Islamic radicals going to flight school and ended when they turned airliners into flying bombs. As the third anniversary of Sept. 11 passes, the next threat could be a Net threat: Solid evidence shows that al Qaeda agents and other terrorists are trying to attain the

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online skills needed to wage cyberwar. Terrorists could use the Internet to disrupt the communications systems of the military's Pacific Command or turn off the lights in Los Angeles or Chicago; they could open the massive floodgates of Arizona's Roosevelt Dam or disable huge parts of the World Wide Web. Yet in the U.S. no urgent crusade has emerged to fix the flaws. The unimaginable is looking ever more plausible. The FBI says the cyberterrorism threat to the U.S. is "rapidly expanding." "Terrorist groups have shown a clear interest in developing basic hacking tools, and the FBI predicts that terrorist groups will either develop or hire hackers," "America must not be so focused on preventing physical attacks that we leave our cyber-backdoor wide open and unattended. **The tragedy of 9/11 has taught us that we must imagine the unimaginable.**"

Full story: <http://www.forbes.com/business/forbes/2004/0920/070.html>

For additional reference information see US-CERT, this week's Featured Internet Site.

Facing up to unholy terror

The chroniclers tell us that the Ottoman sultan Abdul-Hamid II (ruled 1876-1909) made a habit of keeping a small child on his knee in his weekly appearances in public. The 34th sultan of the House of Osman assumed that no decent assassin would willingly gun down a child. From the discotheques of Tel Aviv to the nightclubs in Bali and the schools in Beslan, the assassins are now of a different breed. The moral limits of our world have been stretched to the breaking point. The political ideologies of terror, armed with a religious warrant, have been defining our limits of tolerance, our morality itself, downward. "We love death," said that quintessential merchant of death Osama bin Laden, "as much as the infidels love life." Alas, this is not an idle boast, and terrors in the name of a radicalized, aggrieved Islamism have become a rebuke to claims of progress in our contemporary world.

Full story: <http://www.usnews.com/usnews/issue/040920/usnews/20fouad.htm>

Arab terrorists' crossing border

Middle Eastern illegals find easy entrance into U.S. from Mexico



The U.S.-Mexico border here is the most heavily used corridor for illegal alien traffic on America's southern boundary. With its difficult topography that is folded, creased and convoluted, it is a land that yields well to smuggling. The Huachuca, Chiricahua, Dragoon and Whetstone Mountains are riddled with hundreds of deep canyons, caves and arroyos that offer superb concealment for the hundreds of thousands of illegal aliens that annually cross here. Many border ranch-owners are validly apprehensive of speaking about their desperate situations because of likely retribution by *narco-militarists* (drug runners) and *coyotes* (smugglers of humans). Unsolved murders and arsons are alarmingly ordinary in Cochise County, so pure fear keeps locals from speaking on the record.

Full story: http://worldnetdaily.com/news/article.asp?ARTICLE_ID=24987

Related reporting:

FBI agent shoots man while serving warrant

<http://www.azcentral.com/news/articles/0916fbi-shooting-ON.html>

Illegal immigrants arrive faster than U.S. can catch them

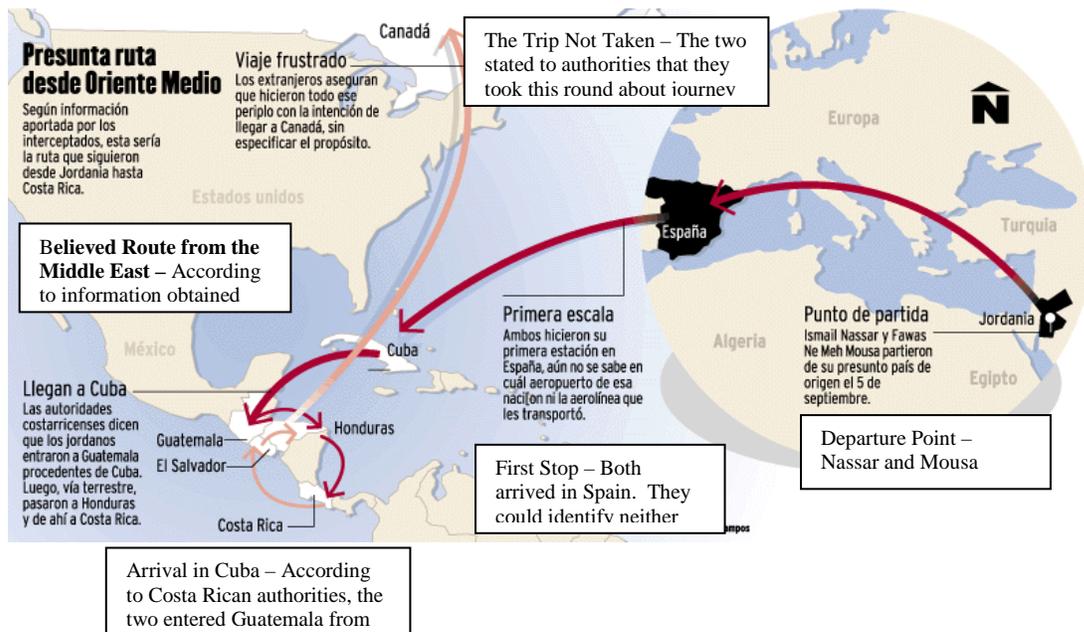
<http://www.kansas.com/mld/eagle/news/nation/9701954.htm>

Costa Rica eyes suspects' possible links

Costa Rican officials deported two men who tried to enter the country over the weekend using fake documents and who officials fear may have had links to terrorists, the country's immigration director said Monday. Immigration Director Marco Badilla said the men had been turned over to officials in neighboring El Salvador on Sunday and would be sent on to Honduras - where officials also promised to deport them.

Full story: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/latest/story/0,1280,-4502532,00.html>

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Source: < <http://www.elsalvador.com/noticias/2004/09/21/nacional/nac6.asp>

COMMENT:

The subjects were deemed suspicious because of the circuitous route they took on their failed attempt to enter Canada, the "large amount of money" with which they attempted to bribe the Costa Rican authorities, their "forgetfulness" about their arrival in Spain, the manner in which they obtained their false passports, and the fact that they kept their Jordanian passports in spite of having obtained the false ones.

Related reporting:

Report: Mexico is al-Qaida route to U.S. Plans to use migrant smuggling paths to set up operatives

http://www.worldnetdaily.com/news/article.asp?ARTICLE_ID=40488

Terrorism threat along our border is serious

http://www.tucsoncitizen.com/index.php?page=opinion&story_id=091604b5_guestkyl

Death squads in San Pedro Sula and Tegucigalpa

Napoleon Nazar Herrera, chief of criminal investigations (Dirección de Investigación Criminal or DGIC), confirmed Sept. 13 that two death squads are operating out of San Pedro Sula and Tegucigalpa. Nazar said that citizens are taking justice in their own hands because judges are failing to convict criminals. The death squads have been responsible for the deaths of several alleged criminals who were not convicted by justice tribunals

COMMENT:

Both groups, which likely have the support of the police force, have been operating since early 2004. Honduras has a significant street gang or 'mara' problem. Gang members are responsible of most of the drug trade, street crime and many acts of violence. The most important maras in Honduras and Central America are the Mara Salvatrucha and the Mara 18.

Militants funding terror with heists

It started with a robbery, but the gang that burst into a branch of Al-Habib Bank in this teeming port city had no interest in striking it rich, and the university graduate driving the getaway car was just getting started on a master plan for terror. The heist, carried out in daylight and with AK-47 assault rifles, is emblematic of a new brand of Islamic militant - more educated but less established and largely cut off from traditional sources of terror funding. Atta-ur Rehman and his Jundullah gang walked away from the bank in Karachi on Nov. 18 with just under \$70,000, enough to finance an eight-month wave of attacks against the U.S. Consulate, a Christian Bible studies group, a peace concert by an Indian singer, a police station, and a senior Pakistani military general.

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Full story:

http://hosted.ap.org/dynamic/stories/T/TERROR_NEW_MILITANTS?SITE=CADIU&SECTION=HOME&TEMPLATE=DEFAULT

Bin Laden's hustlers

An eye-opening report issued by the United Nations earlier this month revealed that every Al-Qaeda-linked terrorist attack to date—with the exception of 9/11—has cost under \$50,000 to carry out. Much of these funds, according to the report, “have been collected locally, whether through crime or diverted from charitable donations.” But what about Al-Qaeda’s links to international crime, in particular, the drug trade? The U.S.S. Dectaur intercepted a ship in the Persian Gulf that contained two tons of hashish worth between \$8 and \$10 million. Intelligence gained from this raid led the Navy to two other ships in the area, which were both loaded with methamphetamines and heroin. As a U.S. defense official told the Washington Times: “Bin Laden does not mind trafficking in drugs, even though it’s against the teaching of Islam, because it’s being used to kill Westerners.”

Full story: <http://www.frontpagemag.com/Articles/ReadArticle.asp?ID=15164>

Automakers warned of counterfeit threat

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security is warning the auto industry that the trafficking of counterfeit goods, including automotive parts, could put millions of dollars into the pockets of terrorists. “Criminal and even terrorist organizations are willing to exploit any avenue of criminal enterprise,” Brian Moscovitz of the Detroit office of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement said during a briefing here last week sponsored by The Motor & Equipment Manufacturers Association

Full story: <http://www.aiada.org/article.asp?id=22958&cat=Industry>

Responsibility taken for school siege

Posting attributed to Chechen leader vows more attacks

In an Internet posting, a Chechen warlord with a \$10 million bounty on his head has apparently claimed responsibility for the Beslan school siege and promised more attacks on Russian civilians if Chechnya is not granted independence. The defiant, taunting, and rambling missive, allegedly written by Shamil Basayev, whom Russian authorities had already blamed for the massacre, offered the guerrilla’s version of events at Beslan and expressed some passing regret at the loss of life, which it blamed on President Vladimir Putin. “We are sorry about what happened in Beslan. It’s simply that the war, which Putin declared on us five years ago, which has destroyed more than 40,000 Chechen children and crippled more than 5,000 of them, has gone back to where it started.”

Full story:

http://www.boston.com/news/world/europe/articles/2004/09/18/responsibility_taken_for_school_siege/

Chechen warlord Basayev claims responsibility for terror attacks

In a statement posted Sept. 17 on the Chechen separatist Kavkaz Center Web site, notorious Chechen warlord Shamil Basayev claimed responsibility for the series of terrorist attacks at the end of August and beginning of September that left more than 400 people dead. These events include the near simultaneous crashes of two Russian airliners Aug. 24, the Aug. 31 attack by a female suicide bomber near Moscow’s Rizhskaya Metro station and the tragic hostage ordeal at a North Ossetian school Sept. 1-3.

COMMENT:

Basayev said the attacks were carried out by members of his Reconnaissance and Sabotage Battalion of Shahids (martyrs) Riyadus - Salihin (Riyadh al-Saliheen). Basayev has claimed responsibility in the past for suicide bombings in the south of Russia and in Moscow - the seizure of Dubrovka Theater in Moscow in October 2002 and the May 9 assassination of Chechen President Akhmad Kadyrov. A powerful blast killed Kadyrov and at least six other people during a Victory Day parade at a stadium in the Chechen capital Grozny. According to Basayev’s statement, the explosion near the Rizhskaya Metro station, another

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one on Kashirskoye Shosse and the destruction of two passenger airliners were planned to coincide with the Chechen elections to choose Kadyrov's successor on Aug. 29. Basayev needed only a total of USD 11,000 and EUR 8,000 to carry out the attacks. The U.S. Justice Department Feb. 20, 2003 included Riadus-Salihin along with the Congress of Peoples of Ichkeria and Dagestan and the chief governing body of the Basayev-led wing of separatists, the so-called higher military majlisul shura, in its blacklist of international terror organizations.

Airport security briefly detained 2 who downed planes

The suicide bombers who destroyed two passenger jets over Russia last month had been detained in the airport shortly before boarding, but both were released by a police supervisor, and one swiftly bribed her way onto the aircraft she would destroy, Russia's senior prosecutor said Wednesday. One of them was then able to kill for a paltry sum: The prosecutor said the bribe paid to an agent for boarding one doomed jetliner - Sibir Airlines Flight 1047, with 45 people on board - was 1,000 rubles, equivalent to \$34.

Full story: <http://www.iht.com/articles/539101.htm>

Chechen groups go underground for funds

Pro-Chechen activists are increasingly going underground to secretly funnel money to fighters in Chechnya as post-Sept. 11 government crackdowns and Russian pressure choke off what was once a flow of hundreds of millions of dollars to the Russian republic, say Chechens and experts familiar with the funding. "Limited resources mean more terrorism," said Michael Radu, a terrorism expert at the Foreign Policy Research Institute in Philadelphia. "Terrorism is cheaper than guerrilla warfare and it has a more dramatic impact. You don't need heavy weapons to kidnap kids."

Full story:

http://seattlepi.nwsourc.com/national/apmideast_story.asp?category=1107&slug=Money%20for%20Chechnya

Car bomb attack foiled in Moscow

A bomb has been found in Moscow. The explosive device was planted in a private taxi car. The owner of the car reported to a local police office that he had found a bag with explosives in his car.

Also see associated reporting later in this article:

Meanwhile, the Federal Security Service of the Russian Federation, together with the Interior Ministry, carried out a special operation against the financing of terrorist operations and the training of suicide bombers. According to the regional command center for the counter-terrorist operation in the North Caucasus, 31-year-old Natalya Khalkayeva has been detained in the Urus-Martan region of the Chechen Republic. She is suspected of involvement in the financing of terrorist operations and the training of suicide bombers.

Full story: <http://www.russiajournal.com/news/cnews-article.shtml?nd=45598>

Gunmen Attack Hydroelectric Plant in Russia's Caucasus



Several gunmen tried to capture a hydroelectric power plant in the Russian internal republic of Karachay-Cherkessia in the Northern Caucasus, the Interfax news agency reports. The agency cited the press service of the republic's Interior Ministry as saying that the incident took place in the early hours of Tuesday. The power plant's guards were engaged in a gunbattle with the attackers and successfully prevented an incursion into the plant.

Full story:

<http://www.mosnews.com/news/2004/09/21/powerplant.shtml>

Also see chronology of recent Russian events at the above URL

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Syria tested chemical arms on civilians in Darfur Region



Syria tested chemical weapons on civilians in Sudan's troubled western Darfur region in June and killed dozens of people, the German daily Die Welt claimed in an advance release of its Wednesday edition. It said that witnesses quoted by an Arabic news website called ILAF in an article on August 2 had said that several frozen bodies arrived suddenly at the "Al-Fashr Hospital" in the Sudanese capital Khartoum in June. The United States has accused Syria of trying to acquire materials and the know-how to develop chemical weapons and claims that Sudan has been seeking to improve its capability to produce them for many years.

Full story: <http://www.turkishpress.com/turkishpress/news.asp?ID=27125>

Algerian bomber tries to save Qaeda-allied group



A university student skilled in bomb-making has taken charge of Algeria's largest Islamic rebel movement but the al Qaeda-linked group is fighting for its survival as the army pounds its hideouts and members surrender. The Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat (GSPC), which seeks a purist Islamic state in the Maghreb, made headlines last year with the kidnapping of dozens of European tourists and reportedly secured 5 million euros (\$6 million) in

ransom money. After more than a decade of holy war or "jihad" resulting in the deaths of more than 150,000 people, according to human rights groups, the GSPC is the last powerful rebel force, operating with a few hundred armed members, in Muslim Algeria

Full story: <http://www.alertnet.org/thenews/newsdesk/L07642431.htm>

Terror suspects ' had video of Spain's twin towers'



Ten Pakistanis arrested in Spain in possession of false documents and heroin also had a video showing details of two landmark buildings known as the country's twin towers, it was reported Monday. The Spanish daily La Vanguardia reported the hour-long video featured the 154-metre (506-foot) Mapfre Tower and nearby Hotel Arts in Barcelona.

Full story:

http://www.expatica.com/source/site_article.asp?subchannel_id=81&story_id=11996&name=Terror+suspects+%27had+videof+Spain%27s+twin+towers%27

Featured Internet Site



US-CERT is charged with protecting our nation's Internet infrastructure by coordinating defense against and response to cyber attacks.

<http://www.us-cert.gov/>

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