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NEWSLETTER



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House chair calls for single anti-money laundering agency

Arguing that the nation's "fragmented" anti-money laundering system is structurally incapable of keeping pace with the war on terrorism, House Financial Services Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee Chairwoman Sue Kelly, R-N.Y., said Wednesday that lawmakers should establish a single federal office to ensure compliance with the Bank Secrecy Act. "To those who resist this proposal, I would hope that there is at least recognition of the need to establish a vigilant watch tower above the vast expanse of bureaucracies that are currently responsible for the Bank Secrecy Act," Kelly said during a hearing on the Treasury Department's operations. "There must be a unifying center to our anti-money laundering efforts."

Full story: <http://www.govexec.com/dailyfed/0604/061704cdam2.htm>

9/11 Commission learns why hijackers were in San Diego



The 9/11 commission said that several 9/11 terrorists picked San Diego as a place to live before the attacks were carried out because the city offered a number of flight training and language schools. The terrorists found the schools in the phone book, according to the commission's report. The report also contains new allegations about former San Diego college student Mohdar Abdullah, who was arrested shortly after 9/11. Abdullah admitted to knowing two of the hijackers but denied any involvement in the attacks.

Full story: <http://www.nbcsandiego.com/news/3432625/detail.html>

Related reporting:

Deported Friend of Terrorists in Report

<http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/nation/la-na-reza17jun17.1.6478071.story?coll=la-headlines-nation>

Deportee said to make statements while in custody

<http://www.signonsandiego.com/news/metro/20040617-9999-1n17mohdar.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 !

U.S. Plants: Open to terrorists



In the weeks and months following Sept. 11, the White House and Congress enacted new laws and regulations to tighten security at airports, nuclear power plants, and places where public water supplies are stored. But what about the 15,000 facilities across the United States that produce or store deadly chemicals - chemicals that terrorists could use against us as weapons of mass destruction? There are more than 100 chemical plants - in backyards all across the United States - where a catastrophic accident or an act of sabotage by terrorists could endanger more than a million people. One plant in Chicago could affect almost three million people. And in California, the chemicals at one site have the potential to kill, injure or displace more than eight million people.

Full story: <http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2003/11/13/60minutes/main583528.shtml>

Competency Test On Tap For Suspect In Mall Bomb Plot



A federal magistrate on Wednesday ordered a Somali national charged with plotting to blow up a shopping mall to be transferred to a federal psychiatric facility to determine if he is mentally competent. Authorities have accused Nuradin Abdi, 32, of plotting with admitted al-Qaida agent Iyman Faris to blow up a Columbus, Ohio-area shopping mall. Columbus has the second-largest Somali immigrant community in the country behind Minneapolis.

Full story: <http://www.thewbalchannel.com/news/3426778/detail.html>

Related Reporting:

Third Man Being Watched In Alleged Ohio Mall Plot

<http://www.channelcincinnati.com/news/3425333/detail.html>

Psychiatric exam for terror suspect

<http://cnews.canoe.ca/CNEWS/World/2004/06/16/502070-ap.html>

Abdi Trial In Holding Pattern

<http://www.10tv.com/Global/story.asp?S=1950281>

More talk of a Malacca Straits Task Force

Indonesia's Navy Chief Bernard Kent Sondakh announced June 17 that, along with Malaysia and Singapore, Indonesia will form a task force to protect the Malacca Straits from piracy and terrorism. Until the task force is in place, Indonesia, which does not have a very robust navy, says it will use seven ships to patrol the region. The U.S., which has a vital interest in protecting the major shipping corridor, has offered to provide forces for the effort. Sondakh, however, said intelligence and equipment would be more helpful. Malaysia also has shunned offers of U.S. forces to help patrol the waterway, noting that a U.S. presence could provoke Islamic militants.

Related reporting:

Indonesia Gives Shoot-to-Kill Orders for Pirates and Terrorists: The Indonesian naval chief, Bernard Kent Sondakh, June 18 ordered officers to shoot-to-kill armed terrorists or pirates operating in the nation's most strategic waterways, including the Strait of Malacca.

ANALYSIS:

The idea of a regional force to protect the Malacca Straits has been receiving a lot of attention lately. Earlier this week, Malaysia's main opposition party urged the government to work with Indonesia to stop pirate attacks in the straits. In just one of several recent incidents, Indonesian pirates abducted three fishermen June 14 off the coast of Malaysia's western Perak state. The possibility of maritime terrorism in the straits is also not far-fetched. The Abu Sayyaf terrorist group claimed responsibility for the bombing of a ferry in Manila Bay Feb. 26. And just last week, Philippine authorities thwarted another attack when a cache of explosives was found on a passenger vessel headed for Zamboanga City. The U.S. also is

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concerned that hijacked ships could be used as bombs, and U.S. Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld suggested in early June that the U.S. military should play a greater role in protecting the straits. Half of the world's oil and a third of its trade passes through the corridor. In light of the U.S.S. Cole bombing in Yemen in 2000 and an attack on the French tanker Limberg in 2002, the possibility of similar terrorist attacks in Southeast Asia should not be ruled out.

Hong Kong increased counter measures against a "Dirty Bomb" terrorist threat

Hong Kong Assistant Secretary for Security Jim Langton, responsible for counter-terrorism and disaster response, said at a local security conference June 16 that authorities have increased security measures throughout the city in response to the global risk from a chemical, biological, "dirty" radiological, or nuclear attack (CBRN). Langton also said that while Hong Kong had a low threat assessment, the objective of any terrorist attack "is to strike fear and hit major centers."

COMMENT:

Hong Kong is a major transport and trading hub as well as home to many regional headquarters of foreign companies. Therefore, Hong Kong, as one of the top centers of Asian business, is a likely target for terrorists to raise fears in the region. Hong Kong's Police Commissioner Dick Lee Ming-kwai said that advisories on how to prevent bombings or biological attacks were issued to trade and industry bodies. Aviation, port and financial centers have recently undergone a series of increased security measures.

U.S.-Colombian joint operation nets nine heroin smugglers

Colombian police chief Colonel Oscar Naranjo announced the arrest of nine members of an international heroin-smuggling outfit by Colombian and US authorities on June 17. In simultaneous raids, police captured seven suspects in southwestern Colombia and two in New York, along with USD 75 million in heroin. The ring is allegedly responsible for smuggling approximately 10-15 kilos (22-33 pounds) of heroin into the U.S. each month through human couriers.

COMMENT:

This is the third heroin ring broken up by U.S.-Colombian joint operations in the past three months. Narcotics profits are the main source of funds for rebel and terrorist groups operating in Colombia, and increased pressure on drug trafficking has likely aided the peace process between the Colombian government and the United Self Defense Forces of Colombia (AUC) and the National Liberation Army (ELN) respectively. The U.S. has increased its anti-narcotic activities not only within Colombian borders, but also in Central America, as many suspect that smugglers move drugs through the area en route to Mexico and eventually the U.S.

Bulgaria proposes regional approach to terrorist threat

Bulgarian officials have warned of terror threats in the Balkan region, particularly during the NATO summit in Istanbul June 28-29 and during the Athens Olympics. The Bulgarian officials said they will work with Turkish authorities during the summit, and with Greek, U.S., British, German and Russian officials during the games.

COMMENT:

Most Balkan countries have extremely lax border controls. Arms and explosives are easily bought in the region, which is home to some militants with ties to radical Islamic groups. Bulgaria's proximity to Greece and Turkey makes it a possible target, as well as a potential base of operations for terrorists, so the government's call for regional cooperation will play well as it courts the European Union and assumes more fully its new role within NATO.

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Related Reporting:

US to open Sofia office to help counter al Qaeda

<http://www.arabtimesonline.com/arabtimes/breakingnews/view.asp?msgID=6234>

Algerian military forces killed eight terrorists in the Relizane district June 16.

This siege follows last week's killing of a terrorist in nearby Etouafir. The Army continues its operation to eradicate any terrorists who may seek refuge in the area.

COMMENT:

Authorities believe that the terrorists are linked to the Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat (GSPC), an Islamic separatist movement in Algeria. The group reportedly has ties to Al-Qaeda and declared war on foreigners in Algeria June 13. The GSPC claimed responsibility for killing 11 soldiers and wounding 16 in a June 2 attack. Violence between the Islamic militants and Algerian military is ongoing but parts of the GSPC are considering negotiations with officials.

Justice Dept: Wiretaps should apply to Net calls

Criminals could make plans over Internet phones without fear of getting caught if Congress does not ensure that existing wiretap laws apply, the U.S. Justice Department told a Senate committee Wednesday.

Investigators could find it harder to monitor Internet-based phone calls if the government decides to exempt them from traditional telephone regulations, Deputy Assistant Attorney General Laura Parsky said. But members of the Senate Commerce Committee said the Justice Department needed to show that a problem exists before they impose new regulations that could restrict the fast-growing communications technology.... "I am here to underscore how very important it is that this type of telephone service not become a haven for criminals, terrorists and spies,"....

Full story: <http://edition.cnn.com/2004/TECH/internet/06/16/telecoms.voip.reut/>

Iraq is a hub for terrorism, however you define it



A superpower invaded an impoverished Islamic nation. Guerrillas responded with AK-47's and rocket-propelled grenades. A generation of warriors was born, eager to wage jihad. That was Afghanistan in the 1980's. It became a breeding ground for terrorists - most infamously Osama bin Laden - who exported their deadly skills throughout the world. In Iraq, some of the same conditions that nurtured terrorism in the mountains of Afghanistan have emerged in the power vacuum created by the American occupation, Iraqis and terrorism experts say. "Unfortunately Iraq has become a cause célèbre for radical jihadists the way that Afghanistan did a decade and a half ago," said Bruce Hoffman, a terrorism analyst at the RAND Corporation. "You've got a lot of the same conditions that allowed Afghanistan to become a hub for terrorists."

Full story: <http://www.nytimes.com/2004/06/20/weekinreview/20wong.html>

Civil rights lawyer goes on trial in terrorism case

Over three decades, civil rights lawyer Lynne Stewart has defended revolutionaries, terrorists and mobsters. But in her most important case yet, the combative attorney finds herself in a new and precarious role: defendant. Federal prosecutors have accused Stewart of conspiring with two associates to improperly aid her client Omar Abdel-Rahman, the blind Egyptian sheik serving a life sentence for conspiring to blow up New York City landmarks and assassinate Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak. Stewart, 64, defended Abdel-Rahman when he was convicted in 1995 of plotting to bomb the United Nations, FBI headquarters in New York and two tunnels and a bridge linking New Jersey to New York City.

Full story: <http://www.adn.com/24hour/nation/story/1443284p-8810655c.html>

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PART 1, Some lessons from nations that won the war on terror

At the Observatory of Human Rights in Algiers, the Algerian capital, a visitor is shown a chart indicating the course of almost a decade of terrorist war waged in the name of Islam.

Full story PART 1: <http://www.arabnews.com/?page=7§ion=0&article=46971&d=18&m=6&y=2004>

PART 2, Fighting terrorism: lessons from Egypt and Algeria

Modern terrorists need big money and cannot run on the basis of amateurish fund-raising methods such as collecting a few coins outside the mosque. In Peru, as already noted, a terror tax on coca leaves provided the cash needed. In Algeria, almost all terror groups were involved in contraband trade, known as trebendisme. Extortion, racketeering and bank robberies are other sources of terrorist income. In most cases a good chunk of the terror money comes from foreign powers interested in destabilizing this or that rival regime.

Full story PART 2: <http://www.arabnews.com/?page=7§ion=0&article=47016&d=19&m=6&y=2004>

Board criticizes Iran; new evidence raises cover-up suspicions



The International Atomic Energy Agency's governing board today adopted a resolution that "deplores" Iran's lack of full cooperation with the agency, just as new evidence emerged that Iran could be concealing additional nuclear activities, the Associated Press reported. Iran was censured in the resolution, in which the agency says it cautioned that "Iran's cooperation has not been as full, timely and proactive as it should have been." The resolution does not impose any deadlines for improved transparency, demanding only that Tehran deal with

outstanding issues "within the next few months." It also does not contain a "trigger mechanism," by which Iran's case could be referred to the U.N. Security Council for violating the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, a clause long sought by the United States. Just as the agency was deciding on final changes to the wording of the resolution last night, diplomats said the IAEA was looking into emerging evidence that Iran was razing parts of a restricted area next to a military complex in a Tehran suburb, according to the AP.

Full story: http://www.nti.org/d_newswire/issues/2004_6_18.html - 74F7128D

Despite U.S. warnings, American companies not fleeing Saudi Arabia

If the recent past is any guide, the beheading of American Paul M. Johnson Jr. is unlikely to trigger a mass exodus from Saudi Arabia. Most Americans in the kingdom have not heeded repeated State Department warnings that they get out, security consultants and analysts said. "You can't expect 30,000 Americans to pack up and leave," Nawaf Obaid, a security consultant to the Saudi government, said Friday in an interview from London. Secretary of State Colin Powell said he does not want American workers to flee Saudi Arabia because that would reward the people whose violence in recent weeks has killed Johnson, two other Americans and more than two dozen other foreigners. Speaking a day after the State Department strongly urged Americans to avoid going to Saudi Arabia and those there to leave, Powell said Friday in a radio interview: "If they leave, then the terrorists have won, and I don't think either the Saudis, the Americans, or these brave folks who work in Saudi Arabia want the terrorists to win."

Full story: <http://ap.tbo.com/ap/breaking/MGBYGD3VNVD.html>

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Authorities, diplomats heed warning of Tigers' bomb-laden message



The discovery of high-powered land mines and suicide bomb kits in the Sri Lankan capital is seen by security authorities and diplomats as a message from Tamil Tiger rebels not to take a truce for granted. Police stumbled on two mines and an explosives-filled jacket, the type worn by Tamil Tiger suicide bombers, four days after the guerrillas warned of a "bloodbath" unless the government revived peace talks with them. "It is obvious that the Tigers are sending a message with these bombs left to be discovered by the authorities," a Western diplomat said.

"The question is how many other such suicide kits are in the city."

Full story: http://www.channelnewsasia.com/stories/afp_asiapacific/view/90962/1/.html

Featured Internet Site

TerraServer USA

The TerraServer-USA Web site is one of the world's largest online databases, providing free public access to a vast data store of maps and aerial photographs of the United States.

<http://terraserver.microsoft.com/>

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