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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.

Osama bin Laden Message Analysis & Threat Assessment

IntelCenter has released the "Osama bin Laden Message Analysis & Threat Assessment v1.0". The report contains a threat assessment on the likelihood of a follow-on attack designed to come within 60 days of the 29 Oct. 2004 video address by Osama bin Laden. It also examines bin Laden's address and places it in the context of his earlier addresses to Americans and others.

Download .pdf report: <http://www.intelcenter.com/OBLMATA-PUB-v1-0.pdf>

Qaeda warns US of 'unbearable hell'

A group linked to Al Qaeda threatened the US with reprisals after the re-election of President George W. Bush, warning of "unbearable hell," in a Web site statement yesterday. "The coming days will show you that the one you preferred will lead you to an unbearable hell," said the group calling itself the Abu Hafs Al Masri Brigades after the Al Qaeda military chief killed in Afghanistan in October 2001. It was not possible to verify the statement. The same group claimed responsibility for the train bombings in Madrid in March that killed 191 people and injured 1,900.

Full story: <http://www.bahraintribune.com/ArticleDetail.asp?ArticleId=50150&CategoryId=2>

Al Qaeda's newest weapon

Americans tend to think of psychological warfare as a relic of World War II or the Cold War. The phrase conjures images of planes dropping leaflets over some foreign country or radio broadcasts over the Iron Curtain. Most people assume they are immune from the threat of psychological combat. Wrong.

Full story: <http://www.washtimes.com/commentary/20041106-102514-9500r.htm>

Canadian intelligence renews fears of nuclear terrorist groups

According to a Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) report obtained by the Canadian Press (CP), al Qaeda and other terrorist organizations remain intent on acquiring nuclear devices, Canadian Press (CP) reported on 3 November. The June 2003 report, Al-Qaida Possessing Russian Nuclear Briefcases: Fiction or Fact?, was prepared by the National Security Threat Assessment Center, a subsidiary of the CSIS. Much



of the report remained classified but was acquired by CP under Canadian law. "Al Qaeda is interested in acquiring nuclear capabilities in order to expand its 's not so much *what folks don't know* that's the problem. *at they know too much... that ain't so ... that's the problem !*

attack arsenal," the report said. It cites Russian scientists and officials who doubt that the terrorist group obtained or kept the devices, pointing out the complexity of their maintenance coupled with their short life spans of one to three years. According to the CP, the report minimizes the probability of al Qaeda's interest in acquiring briefcase-sized nuclear weapons but notes that the organization would likely aspire to obtain a "dirty bomb" instead, calling it "a feasible alternative."

COMMENT:



The report has reignited concerns over the prospect of aggressive terrorist pursuit of nuclear technology but appears not to have indicated whether terrorists indeed have obtained such weapons -- at least in the released excerpts. The study's perception that dirty bombs are more plausible than nuclear weapons as terrorist objectives echoes similar sentiments from weapons experts and groups that monitor nuclear activity. Many experts generally agree with CSIS's assessment that the Russian devices in question were perhaps too complex for terrorists to maintain. However, in February, Arab newspaper *Al Hayat* reported that al Qaeda had purchased nuclear weapons described as tactical nuclear devices inside suitcases from Ukrainian scientists, citing sources said to be close to al Qaeda. The group reportedly arranged to buy the weapons and consummated the deal when scientists visited Kandahar,

Afghanistan, in 1998 (IB). Though that report has not been corroborated, it engenders concerns over the poor security of vast nuclear caches in the former Soviet Union in the late 1990s. To counter nuclear terrorism threats today, a recent study by the British Foreign Policy Center said that international efforts should focus on "failed states" rather than on nuclear programs being pursued by Iran and North Korea (Government Security News). The study noted, "Each failing state is like hundreds of actors with too wide of a variety of motives and too low a visibility for them to be easily deterred."

Related reporting:

Return of the Nuclear Threat on US Soil

http://www.stevequayle.com/News.alert/04_Nukes/040119.nuclear.threat.html

Suitcase Nukes and more

http://www.stevequayle.com/News.alert/04_Nukes/04_Nuke.index.html

Osama goal: Drain U.S.

Osama Bin Laden wants to "bleed" the U.S. economy until America is no longer a world power, he says in newly translated portions of his latest terror tape. "We, alongside the *mujahedeen*, bled Russia for 10 years until it went bankrupt and was forced to withdraw in defeat," Bin Laden said, according to an English translation by Arab TV channel Al Jazeera, which obtained the 18-minute tape. "We are continuing this policy in bleeding America to the point of bankruptcy."

Full story: http://www.nydailynews.com/11-02-2004/news/wn_report/story/248465p-212822c.html

FBI seeking man who sprayed mysterious aerosol in N.C. shopping mall

The FBI is seeking information on a man who sprayed an unknown aerosol compound in a shopping mall in Winston-Salem, N.C., according to a 3 November article. The man, reportedly in his mid-20s, walked through the mall spraying a black aerosol can but fled when confronted by mall security guards, FBI Special Agent Joanne Morley said. Approximately 15 people suffered from eye and throat irritation, shortness of breath, disorientation, and nausea, according to reports. Doctors examining the victims said none showed symptoms resulting from a biological or chemical agent. Although a preliminary sample of the spray indicated it contained castor oil, the North Carolina Department of Health is conducting further tests on the sample to determine whether the substance contained any other ingredient.

COMMENT:

According to a *Winston-Salem Journal* article, mall officials called local police only after people began complaining of unusual symptoms. The mall was then evacuated and inspected by emergency officials prior to reopening. Although it appears that the substance sprayed was not a chemical or biological agent,

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any delay in contacting local first responders in such an instance is unwise and unnecessary. All public spaces, including shopping malls, should have a robust emergency response plan as well as trained employees to implement it in the event of an unusual and potentially dangerous situation.

Related reporting:

Mall evacuated after man uses unknown aerosol

http://www.journalnow.com/servlet/Satellite?pagename=WSJ%2FMGArticle%2FWSJ_BasicArticle&c=MGArticle&cid=1031778839832

Feds arrest hundreds in pre-election anti-terror operations

More than 700 people were arrested on immigration violations and thousands more subjected to FBI interviews in an intense government effort to avert a terrorist attack aimed at disrupting the election. As with past unrealized al-Qaida threats, law enforcement officials said Thursday they don't know for sure whether any of those arrests or interviews foiled an attack. "It's very hard to prove a negative," Michael Garcia, chief of Immigration and Customs Enforcement, said in an interview Thursday. "We did cases and operations for people we thought posed national security concerns. We didn't arrest anyone who had a bomb."

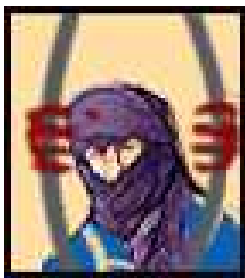
Full story: <http://www.nbcsandiego.com/news/3891925/detail.html>

Details of prior terrorist plot surface

When you think of the top targets for terrorism in the United States, Pittsburgh probably doesn't come to mind. It does for Ken McCabe. McCabe: "I think the possibility of us getting hit in the future is there." "We know al-Qaida knows about Pittsburgh. We know that al-Qaida has supporters in the Pittsburgh territory. We have a number of terrorism investigations ongoing that we're involved with." The target was the U.S. Post Office and courthouse in Pittsburgh. The plan, involving a car and a tractor-trailer packed with explosives, was chillingly specific. The terrorists would focus on the back of the courthouse, where a lone security guard was stationed. First, the driver of the car would pull onto the loading dock, pretend to have mechanical trouble, and kill the guard. Then, the driver of the tractor-trailer would pull up next to the building and set off a detonation intended to duplicate the 1995 attack on the Murrah federal building in Oklahoma City.

Full story: <http://www.thepittsburghchannel.com/news/3889934/detail.html>

Terrorists recruiting in prisons



Rather than scan all of society for recruits, Islamic militants in Spain have found that many of the most promising candidates have already been collected into one bountiful pool, law enforcement experts say. It is the Spanish prison system, which has become increasingly populated with immigrants from North Africa, many possessing the characteristics that the recruiters are seeking, the law enforcement experts say. The prisoners are often Muslims, even if frequently lapsed ones, and they are often bitter about their lives in the West or their prison experiences. The pool of recruits, which included 18 arrested two weeks ago, began as a collection of unacquainted men jailed for minor criminal offenses like weapons possession, document fraud or robbery, the police said. But their time in prison transformed some of them into the Martyrs for Morocco, a terrorist group planning to blow up the national court in Madrid

Full story: <http://www.iht.com/articles/2004/10/31/news/spain.html>

ETA allegedly seeks political, nonviolent future



Spanish media sources on 3 November contend that key forces within the Basque terrorist group ETA are pushing for the group to lay down its arms following recent, severe setbacks. The latest round of speculation was sparked by the

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publication of a letter by six jailed ETA members, which called on ETA to lay down arms as “the armed struggle being carried out these days has no purpose... [ETA] has never been in such a bad state” (ABC). Spanish Interior Minister José Antonio Alonso declared that he “has taken note of the letter [insofar as it admits ETA weakness]...but we have to remain extremely prudent” (Le Monde). Spanish police arrested six alleged ETA collaborators on 2 November in the Basque town of Bilbao.

COMMENT:

Speculation about ETA’s future has abounded in recent months, although to date a change of direction by the organization has failed to materialize. Pundits have long maintained that, whereas ETA’s old guard might be pushing for the group to seek a more political role, there is still an abundance of young activists ready to use violence instead. Recently, the opinion that ETA recruitment is suffering has gained some prevalence, although many warn that any indication of a ETA “truce” should be approached with caution — ETA cunningly exploited a self-proclaimed truce in 1998 to regroup and strengthen its operations. *El Periódico* reports that the more than 600 imprisoned ETA operatives have been ignoring directions from the ETA leadership to stage protests for over a year, maybe demonstrating that ETA is losing support. 3-11 purportedly also had a major impact on the group, as it underscored the badly weakened ETA’s inability to conduct similar attacks. More skeptical commentators believe that ETA would carry out a major attack if it could. *La Razón* argues that the authors of the letter do not reject armed struggle but rather question its utility at this juncture. Since stepping up its joint efforts in 2001, Spanish and French law enforcement has arrested hundreds of ETA operatives. In a culmination of this cooperation, September saw the arrest of Mikel Albizu, one of ETA’s top leaders, as well as that of 20 more operatives.

Related reporting:

Basque Fatherland and Liberty (ETA)

<http://www.cdi.org/friendlyversion/printversion.cfm?documentID=1135>

Basques

<http://www.d.umn.edu/cia/faculty/troufs/anth1604/Basques.html>

Basques on both sides of the border

http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/programmes/crossing_continents/988994.stm

US terror warning on Uzbekistan



Terrorist attacks against US interests in Uzbekistan might be imminent, the United States said. It warned US citizens in the country "to exercise extreme caution". "The United States Government has received information that terrorist groups may be planning attacks against US interests in Uzbekistan in the near future," the State Department said. "We remind all Americans that terrorists do not distinguish between official and civilian targets," it said. The latest warning noted that a number of suicide bombings had occurred in Uzbekistan in June, including one outside the US embassy one outside the Israeli embassy and a third at the prosecutor general's office in the capital. In March and April, a string of blasts and police shootouts which featured the nation's first-ever suicide bombings killed at least 33 insurgents, 10 policemen, three children and one bystander.

Full story: http://www.news.com.au/common/story_page/0,4057,11293685%255E1702,00.html

Related reporting:

U.S. warns of terrorist attacks in Uzbekistan

http://www.muslimuzbekistan.com/eng/ennews/2004/11/ennews07112004_2.html

(Also see ‘related’ links on this page)

Analysis: Chechen warlord warns of new terrorist attacks

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Since masterminding the hostage taking in the south Russian town of Budennovsk in the summer of 1995, radical Chechen field commander Shamil Basaev has claimed responsibility for a series of terrorist acts that have claimed hundreds of Russian lives. His ill-fated incursion into Dagestan in August 1999 in the wake of an unsuccessful attempt to sideline Chechen President Aslan Maskhadov served as the rationale for the Russian leadership to launch its second war against Chechnya in October of that year under the pretext of combating terrorism. Yet although he is routinely reviled by leading Russian politicians and has been designated an international terrorist by the United States, the Russian military have for five years failed to apprehend him, despite offering a reward of 300 million rubles (over \$10 million) for information leading to his capture (see "RFE/RL Newline," 9 September 2004). Basaev's seeming immunity has fuelled speculation in the Russian press that he may be acting at the behest of, and/or enjoy the protection of, the Federal Security Service (FSB).

Full story: <http://www.rferl.org/featuresarticle/2004/11/71c6fa28-4e4f-4429-ab06-535bff78b11c.html>

French push limits in fight on terrorism



In many countries of Europe, former inmates of the U.S. military prison at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, have been relishing their freedom. In Spain, Denmark and Britain, recently released detainees have railed in public about their treatment at Guantanamo, winning sympathy from local politicians and newspapers. In Sweden, the government has agreed to help one Guantanamo veteran sue his American captors for damages. Not so in France, where four prisoners from the U.S. naval base were arrested as soon as they arrived home in July, and haven't been heard from since. Armed with some of the strictest anti-terrorism laws and policies in Europe, the French government has aggressively targeted Islamic radicals and other people deemed a potential terrorist threat. While other Western countries debate the proper balance between security and individual rights, France has experienced scant public dissent over tactics that would be controversial, if not illegal, in the United States and some other countries.

Full story: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A17082-2004Nov1.html>

FBI rounds up 'fake ID' suspects

Six men have been charged in a federal criminal complaint, accused of taking part in an operation which supplied as many as 900 foreign nationals with fraudulently obtained Social Security numbers and Illinois drivers licenses between 1999 and 2001. The documents the men allegedly provided included authentic Illinois drivers licenses, Social Security cards and false U.S. I-94 Record of Arrival or Departure cards, real or forged U.S. government ink stamps for official documents, and false passports. The documents could be used to obtain work in the United States or to overstay a visa with less chance to be detected or deported

Full story: <http://www.pioneerlocal.com/cgi-bin/ppo-story/localnews/current/eb/11-04-04-426395.html>

Former Taliban diplomat charged with tax fraud

Noorullah Zadran, once a top spokesman for the Taliban in the United States, was arraigned on four counts of tax fraud in federal court in Manhattan. He was released on \$50,000 bond after surrendering his passport. Prosecutors allege that on tax returns filed from 1998 through 2001 Zadran failed to report his income from his job as first secretary for the U.S. office of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan.

Full story: <http://www.cnn.com/2004/LAW/11/05/taliban.tax.fraud.ap/>

Pirate attacks surge off Indonesia



Pirates clad in black and armed with a fleet of speed boats staged daring raids on shipping while one crewman suffered knife wounds in a new surge in attacks off Indonesia, maritime watchdogs said Wednesday. Seven reports of serious incidents on vessels in waters off Indonesia were compiled by the International Maritime Bureau for the last week of October -- a significant rise in an area

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which usually sees two or three attacks per week. Indonesian naval officials, who contribute to three-nation patrols of the Strait, have said the Al-Qaeda-linked Jemaah Islamiyah militants have plotted to target ships in the hope of using them as floating bombs.

Full story: <http://www.brunei-online.com/bb/thu/nov4w5.htm>

UPDATE:



Dutch Filmmaker Murder Suspect Faces Terror Charges

A Dutch-Moroccan man accused of killing a filmmaker critical of Islam will also be charged with membership of a group with "terrorist intentions" and conspiracy to murder a politician.

Full story:

<http://www.reuters.com/newsArticle.jhtml?type=worldNews&storyID=6731257>

See ATAC Newsletter Volume 11, Issue 1, 11/03/04 for original story

Related reporting

8 Arrested in Slaying of Dutch Filmmaker

http://news.yahoo.com/news?tmpl=story&u=/ap/20041103/ap_en_ot/netherlands_filmmaker_slain_25

Politicus: Where is the debate on Europe's Muslims?

<http://www.iht.com/articles/2004/11/08/news/politicus.html>

COMMENT:

The murder of van Gogh and subsequent backlash from the Dutch government come as a surprise, given the country's previous endeavors to bridge gaps in ethnic and religious communities to prevent phenomena like terrorism. The Netherlands is recognized as an exemplar of open immigration policies; 10 percent of the country's 16 million inhabitants are of foreign origin, of whom about one million are of Moroccan and Turkish origin. Dutch Interior Minister Rita Verdonk declared in an interview with *FT Germany*, "We have believed for too long that we have a multicultural society and that we [the different communities] will find our commonalities...we have been naïve in thinking that we could live together." The Dutch government has responded to the killing by announcing a series of measures, including upping the funding for its intelligence services and possibly deporting any suspected terrorists of dual nationality. Imams will henceforth be required to preach only in Dutch, and the government has also announced that it will deport 26,000 rejected asylum seekers over the next three years. In the future, migrants will also be required to pass an "integration test" before gaining permanent residency status. Commenting on the announced crackdown, German daily *FAZ* warns, "It is a mistake to see too much of a link between an open society and a resurgence of violence...although the country has to date been too relaxed... in dealing with the negative aspects of migration." Whether other nations follow the Netherlands' example remains to be seen, but fears of a domino effect are certainly justified.

Alleged Islamist group issues warning

A group, whose authenticity could not be determined, issued a statement on an Islamist Web site warning of retaliatory attacks for recent hate crimes against Muslims, media reports said Nov. 9. The wave of crimes started after the murder of Dutch filmmaker Theo van Gogh by an alleged Islamic extremist Nov. 2. Van Gogh was widely known for his criticism of Islam. The Web site statement was signed by the "Brigade of Martyr Omar Al-Moktar, information department of Europe." The group also called on the Dutch government to apologize to the Muslim community in the Netherlands and to stop broadcasting television programs the group said were hostile toward Muslims.

COMMENT:

The warning came a day after an explosion hit an Islamic school in the Dutch city of Eindhoven, causing serious damage but no injuries. In addition, unidentified assailants targeted three Dutch mosques in failed arson attempts Nov. 5-7 in the cities of Breda, Huizen and Rotterdam. Also, van Gogh's funeral will be held today (Nov. 9) at 1700 in a crematorium in Amsterdam. Thousands of people are expected to watch the service on special giant screens outside the city center.

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CIA working with FBI inside United States

The CIA has assigned dozens of case officers and analysts to work with FBI agents in the United States in the most extensive deployment of intelligence officers on domestic soil in the spy agency's history. Officials at both agencies say the move, which pairs CIA officers with FBI agents in the bureau's offices to assist with terror-related investigations, is the CIA's broadest association with federal law enforcement since the CIA was created after World War II.

Full story: <http://www.theolympian.com/home/news/20041108/topstories/29623.shtml>



Anti-terrorism Center at Gary Airport

A new National Guard anti-terrorism center planned for Gary's airport will be equipped with sophisticated weapon-sniffing devices and a fleet of new Blackhawk helicopters for medical evacuations. The \$25 million-dollar federally funded project at Gary/Chicago International Airport is intended to bolster homeland security. It's scheduled to be completed by 2007.

Full story: http://cbs2chicago.com/topstories/local_story_313101747.html

Featured Internet Site



Under its *Less-Lethal Technologies Program, the National Institute of Justice (NIJ)*—the research, development, and evaluation arm of the U.S. Department of Justice—provides funds to identify, develop, and evaluate new or improved devices and other technology that will minimize the risk of death and injury to law enforcement officers, suspects, prisoners, and the general public. NIJ has prepared this equipment review to inform Federal, State, and local agencies about the Department of Defense (DoD) Joint Nonlethal Weapons Program (<https://www.jnlwd.usmc.mil/default.asp>) and the less-lethal weapons and equipment used by civil law enforcement agencies.

Nonlethal Weapons and Equipment Review: A Research Guide for Civil Law Enforcement and Corrections

<http://www.ncjrs.org/pdffiles1/nij/205293.pdf>

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