

PROPHETIC TIMES

WEEKLY WORLD NEWS UPDATE

OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA

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TERROR FEAR OVER LOST POISON

April 14, 2005 Evening Standard reported: "An al Qaeda cell in London could still have the poison ricin, police said today. The highly toxic substance was made at a Wood Green flat and has never been found. An al Qaeda supergrass told officials that he and police killer Kamel Bourgass made two batches of ricin. It was hidden in two Nivea pots. Ricin is 6,000 times more poisonous than cyanide and an amount equivalent to a grain of salt is enough to kill an adult.

Bourgass, 31, was jailed yesterday for 17 years for a plot to kill civilians with home-made poisons and explosives. The Algerian was previously jailed for life for murdering Special Branch detective Stephen Oake whom he stabbed eight times when cornered in a Manchester flat. Bourgass arrived in Britain in the back of a lorry from Calais.

The information that Bourgass's cell made ricin from castor beans was given to Algerian interrogators by al Qaeda suspect Mohamed Meguerba. It was his evidence that led Scotland Yard's Anti-Terrorist Branch and MI5 to the flat in Wood Green.

There officers uncovered ingredients and equipment to manufacture a range of poisons and gases. A senior anti-terrorist officer said: "Everything Meguerba told us turned out to be true. We have no reason to disbelieve him when he said he and Bourgass had made ricin. We just couldn't find it."..."

GOVERNMENT WORKERS TO GET BIOMETRIC IDs

April 14, 2005 FoxNews.com reported: "As part of the Bush administration's effort to tighten security at federal facilities, millions of federal employees and contractors will later this year start receiving ID badges with chips storing information such as digital fingerprints. The "smart card" (search) IDs will have security features designed to keep outsiders from breaking into federal buildings or computer systems.

But some computer security experts say the new standard was rushed through a six-month-long development process after President Bush issued a smart card directive last year.

For instance, a biometric standard more stringent than fingerprints, such as scans of a user's iris, was not used, said Susan Landau, a staff engineer for Sun Microsystems and a member of a National Institute of Standards and Technology advisory panel that reviewed the standard.

"The tight timeline made it impossible to use forward-looking biometric technology that is higher quality," Landau said. Smart cards, which often resemble credit cards, come with a chip that acts like a small computer, storing information, which could be anything from a user's fingerprint to a timecode of when they last entered the building. Some cards can transfer information from the card to a reader through an embedded antenna.

The technology for the cards was developed before planners could look at the long-range implications of what they were creating, said Ari Schwartz, associate director of the Center for Democracy and Technology, a privacy advocacy group. "That is completely backward," he said of the process used to draft the standards. "You should have the policy first and say, 'What do we want and what should the limits be on what can be done with the card?'"..."

EGYPT TO DEPLOY HELICOPTERS ALONG ISRAELI BORDER

April 14, 2005 Middle East Newslines reported: "Egypt plans to deploy combat helicopters along its border with Israel. Israeli officials said the government of Prime Minister Ariel Sharon has approved a plan for the Egyptian deployment of helicopters, light armored vehicles, anti-tank weapons and 750 commandos along the border with the Gaza Strip and Israel. They said Egypt could introduce its military presence by 2006, after Israel withdraws from the Gaza Strip.

The Egyptian military has a range of Western-origin helicopters. They include the U.S.-origin AH-64A Apache attack helicopter, the SA-342 Gazelle, the light transport UH-12E and the S-70A Black Hawk.

Officials said the introduction of Egyptian forces and heavy weaponry would facilitate Israel's withdrawal from the Gaza-Egypt border, termed the Philadelphi Route..."

LABS TOLD TO DESTROY DEADLY VIRUS

April 13, 2005 BBC News reported: "The US government has told more than 3,700 laboratories in 18 countries to destroy potentially

lethal influenza samples sent out in testing kits. The samples are of "Asian flu", which killed between one and four million people in 1957 but disappeared by 1968.

If the virus is not handled properly, "it can easily cause an influenza epidemic", Klaus Stohr of the World Health Organization (WHO) warned. The virus was sent to Europe, Asia, the Middle East and South America. The full list of countries and areas where laboratories received the virus is: Bermuda, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Chile, France, Germany, Hong Kong, Israel, Italy, Japan, Lebanon, Mexico, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan and the US. Hong Kong radio announced on Wednesday that the virus had been destroyed there.

Because the virus has not been in circulation since 1968, people born after that do not have antibodies against it - and current vaccines do not guard against it. "If this virus were to infect one person, it would spread very rapidly," Dr Stohr, the WHO's influenza expert, told the BBC.

The College of American Pathologists sent out kits containing between October 2004 and February of this year. On 8 April, the US government asked the body to write to the laboratories affected - of which 61 are outside the US and Canada - telling them to destroy the samples.

Given the concerns that the virus could be used in bio-terrorism, letters were sent to the laboratories before the mistake was made public..."

CHINA AND INDIA SIGN BORDER DEAL

April 11, 2005 BBC News reported: "India and China have signed an agreement in Delhi aimed at resolving a long-running dispute over their Himalayan border. India's national security adviser said it was "one of the most significant documents" signed by the two countries.

The agreement was sealed as Indian premier Manmohan Singh met visiting Chinese counterpart Wen Jiabao. The world's two most populous countries fought a bitter war over their largely unmarked border in 1962. India's National Security Adviser MK Narayanan told Indian television that Indian and Chinese officials had worked out a roadmap for resolving the disputed 3,550km (2,200 mile) border.

The joint statement by the two countries did not go into specifics on the issue, talking of "political parameters" and "guiding principles". However, China has now formally given up its claim to the state of Sikkim..."

EGYPT ASSISTED IRAQ'S CW PROGRAM

April 11, 2005 Middle East Newline reported: "The U.S. intelligence community has determined that Egypt provided significant help to Iraq's weapons of mass destruction programs.

The CIA determined in a report that Egypt helped the former Saddam Hussein regime weaponize chemical agents used in the war against Iran as well as against the Kurdish insurgency. The report said Egypt supplied technology and personnel to develop an Iraqi chemical weapons infrastructure.

"During the early years, Egyptian scientists provided consultation, technology, and oversight allowing rapid advances and technological leaps in weaponization," the CIA's Iraq Survey Group said in a report.

The report, dated Sept. 30, 2004, said Egypt helped Iraq with CW production during its war against Iran. In the first official disclosure of Egypt's help to Iraqi WMD programs, the Iraqi Survey Group cited Cairo's export of delivery systems to Baghdad and changes to Iraqi weapons..."

U.S., BRITAIN CLOSE EMBASSIES IN YEMEN

April 11, 2005 Middle East Newline reported: "Britain and the United States have closed their embassies in Yemen amid an alert of an Islamic insurgency attack. The British and U.S. embassies in Sanaa were closed indefinitely on Saturday. Diplomats said the closure stemmed from a security alert, but they did not elaborate.

Earlier, the State Department warned Americans against traveling to Yemen. On April 8, the department authorized the voluntary departure of non-emergency personnel and eligible family members from Yemen. The closure came amid the intensification of the Shi'ite insurgency in northern Yemen. Fierce battles were reported in Saada over the weekend, where Iranian-backed forces attacked government buildings and civilians..."

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