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Sent: Saturday, March 22, 2014 5:29 PM
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Subject: FW: The INVESTIGATIVE PROJECT on Terrorism Update: 21 March 2014

From: The Investigative Project [mailto:update@ctnews.org]
Sent: Friday, March 21, 2014 5:08 PM
To: [b6, b7C] (USAMA)
Subject: The INVESTIGATIVE PROJECT on Terrorism Update: 21 March 2014



The Daily Update

March 21, 2014

The Update

21 March 2014
Update@ctnews.org

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THE AMERICAS

GENERAL SECURITY, POLICY

1. Iranian Ship, in Plain View but Shrouded in Mystery, Looks Very Familiar to U.S.

By ERIC SCHMITT The New York Times March 21, 2014

<http://tinyurl.com/k8d7por>

WASHINGTON -- Iran is building a nonworking mock-up of an American nuclear-powered aircraft carrier that United States officials say may be intended to be blown up for propaganda value. Intelligence analysts studying satellite photos of Iranian military installations first noticed the vessel rising from the Gachin shipyard, near Bandar Abbas on the Persian Gulf, last summer. The ship has the same distinctive shape and style of the Navy's Nimitz-class carriers, as well as the Nimitz's number 68 neatly painted in white near the bow. Mock aircraft can be seen on the flight deck. The Iranian mock-up, which American officials described as more like a barge than a warship, has no nuclear propulsion system and is only about two-thirds the length of a typical 1,100-foot-long Navy carrier. Intelligence officials do not believe that Iran is capable of building an actual aircraft carrier... Whatever the purpose, American officials acknowledged on Thursday that they wanted to reveal the existence of the vessel to get out ahead of the Iranians...

2. Al Qaeda calls for car bombs in US cities, other 'crusader' countries

Published March 19, 2014 | FoxNews.com

<http://tinyurl.com/khys4bb>

Al Qaeda is calling on terrorist affiliates to detonate car bombs in major U.S. cities, including New York, Washington, D.C., and Los Angeles, in the latest edition of its Inspire magazine. The issue comes nearly a year after the Boston Marathon bombing, and as the city readies new security measures for this year's race, being held next month. Inspire is the same magazine that included instructions for how to make pressure cooker bombs, which were used in last year's Boston attack. The magazine's Spring 2014 issue urges jihadists to target heavily populated events such as political rallies and sporting events, both in the United States and abroad -- including in Great Britain, France and other "crusading" countries... Would-be bombers also are urged to consider launching attacks during "election seasons" and between Christmas and New Year's Eve. Specific targets are also cited, including Chicago's "Sears Tower" (now called the Willis Tower), military bases in northern Virginia and soccer stadiums in Great Britain, particularly during Premier League matches... The issue also contains extremely detailed, "absolutely simple" instructions on how to build such a bomb...

NYPD on alert for car bombs after terror magazine urges readers to detonate them

Times Square is depicted as a target in the latest issue of Inspire, which also tells wanna-be terrorists how to build deadlier explosive devices than used at the Boston Marathon.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 19, 2014, 10:54 PM BY TINA MOORE / NEW YORK DAILY NEWS

<http://tinyurl.com/prcgn8d>

The NYPD is on high alert after a terror magazine urged readers to detonate car bombs, depicting Times Square as a possible target...

Al Qaeda urges followers to bomb London's Savoy hotel with instructions on how to make a car bomb

Al-Qaeda have published the twelfth issue of their propaganda magazine

The Savoy hotel is listed as a top UK target, along with football matches

Terrorists encouraged to target crowded areas

The magazine includes instructions on how to make bombs

Other global targets listed include Sears Tower and the Louvre

The Metropolitan Police say 'appropriate steps' have been taken

By SAM CREIGHTON PUBLISHED: 16:36 EST, 18 March 2014 | UPDATED: 18:40 EST, 18 March 2014

<http://tinyurl.com/os2h37b>

Al-Qaeda has published a chilling list of its top bombing targets, including London's prestigious hotel, The Savoy. In the twelfth issue of Inspire, the magazine published by the terror group, it calls for bombers to attack crowded areas and provides a country-by-country break down of suggested sites...

3. Chinese Police University Trains Beijing Hackers

Network attack training unit part of Chinese cyber warfare capability

BY: Bill Gertz Washington Free Beacon March 20, 2014 4:59 am

<http://freebeacon.com/chinese-police-university-trains-beijing-hackers/>

China's main internal security and police university is training hackers for cyber attacks, according to new information obtained by the U.S. government. The People's Public Security University in Beijing, a part of the Ministry of Public Security that trains all of China's police and internal security troops, has several units engaged in training and operations for cyber attacks. One section of the school was identified last month as a key training center for police network attack operations: The Network Attack and Defense Laboratory. The lab uses Chinese software that was identified last year by officials as designed for training cyber warfare operators and spies. Disclosure of the police training unit for Chinese hackers follows several U.S. reports made public last year that identified China's primary military hacking force as Unit 61398, located near Shanghai. Another Chinese school, Wuhan University, also has been linked by U.S. intelligence agencies to cyber attacks against the West...

4. Inside the Ring: Pentagon goes hypersonic with long-range rapid attack weapon

By Bill Gertz-The Washington Times Wednesday, March 19, 2014

<http://tinyurl.com/nwhde2n>

An experimental scramjet-powered, ultrahigh speed strike vehicle is emerging as the Pentagon's main choice for a new long-range, rapid attack weapon, a senior Pentagon official says. Alan R. Shaffer, principal deputy assistant defense secretary for research and engineering, told a defense industry conference that prototypes and recent tests proved concepts for hypersonic arms, and several systems are part of a high-priority effort by Pentagon weapons developers, despite the era of sharply-diminished defense spending...

KIEV: RUSSIAN SUBVERSION

Russia's military forces are not the only problem for Ukraine: Reports from the region indicate that Russian saboteurs are working to foment instability and increase pro-Russian sentiment, especially in the eastern part of the former Soviet republic...

SAUDIS SHIFT EAST FROM U.S.

Saudi Arabia is moving away from its long, close relationship with the U.S. as a result of the Obama administration's policies in the Middle East. Instead of relying on the U.S., Riyadh is moving closer to the Pakistan, fueling new concerns about a secret agreement between the two states to share Pakistan's nuclear weapons in a future crisis or conflict...

5. Alleged al Qaeda Spokesman Testifies in New York

Sulaiman Abu Ghaith, Osama bin Laden's Son-in-Law, Takes Stand in Unexpected Move

By CHRISTOPHER M. MATTHEWS Wall Street Journal March 19, 2014 12:04 p.m. ET

<http://online.wsj.com/news/articles/SB10001424052702303802104579449254179961952>

In a surprise move, alleged al Qaeda spokesman Sulaiman Abu Ghaith took the stand in his own defense Wednesday in federal court in Manhattan. Mr. Abu Ghaith, a son-in-law of Osama bin Laden, testified Wednesday that when he met bin Laden for the first time in Afghanistan in June 2001, he was aware of media reports that the al Qaeda leader was involved in attacks on U.S. embassies in Africa and on the USS Cole...

At Trial, Son-in-Law Recalls a Cave Meeting With Bin Laden on 9/11

By BENJAMIN WEISER New York Times March 20, 2014

<http://www.nytimes.com/2014/03/20/nyregion/abu-ghaith-terror-trial.html>

It was some hours after the World Trade Center towers had been toppled when Sulaiman Abu Ghaith was summoned to a meeting with Osama bin Laden. He recalled a three-hour-or-so drive into the night, finding the

leader of Al Qaeda in a cave amid the mountains in Afghanistan... In the weeks after the Sept. 11 attacks, Mr. Abu Ghaith, who later became Bin Laden's son-in-law, served as a spokesman for him, amplifying some of his pronouncements, and giving voice, prosecutors say, to a broad recruitment drive for fighters committed to wage war on the United States...

Bin Laden son-in-law denies speaking for Al Qaeda in a call for jihad
Sulaiman abu Ghaith, who urged jihad in a video with Osama bin Laden, testifies at his terrorism trial that he was not speaking for Al Qaeda.

By Tina Susman March 19, 2014, 5:09 p.m. Los Angeles Times

http://www.latimes.com/nation/la-na-abu-ghaith-trial-20140320.0.2075247_story

NEW YORK — A cleric who gave a rousing speech urging jihad against "Jews, Christians and America" after the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks testified at his terrorism trial Wednesday that he was speaking for Muslims, not for Al Qaeda, even though he delivered his message while sitting beside Osama bin Laden outside his mountain hide-out in Afghanistan...

6. Judge lets Herald-Tribune join suit over 9/11 case

By Michael Pollick Sarasota Herald-Tribune Published: Thursday, March 20, 2014 at 11:47 p.m.

<http://www.heraldtribune.com/article/20140320/ARTICLE/140329952>

IPT NOTE: Background on this case can be found at <http://tinyurl.com/d37qkfb> and <http://www.investigativeproject.org/4157/9-11-victims-advocate-for-bill-targeting-foreign>

A federal judge has approved requests by the *Sarasota Herald-Tribune* and the *Miami Herald* to join in a Freedom-of-Information lawsuit seeking to force the FBI to disclose details of its long-running Sarasota 9/11 investigation. In a ruling issued Wednesday, Judge William J. Zloch gave friend-of-the-court status to the news organizations, allowing them to add their voices in the suit, initiated by an independent news organization based in Fort Lauderdale, *The Broward Bulldog Inc.*... The Bulldog's case seeks case files about a Saudi family who abruptly left Sarasota just before the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks. The Florida nonprofit and its founder and editor, Dan Christensen, filed the original lawsuit in September 2012. Attorney Carol Jean LoCicero, who represents the Herald-Tribune's parent company, Halifax Media Holdings LLC, has until noon Tuesday to file a brief... Of particular interest are agency documents that would shed light on the alleged interactions of a high-echelon Saudi family — living in Sarasota's Prestancia neighborhood just before the attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon — and three hijacker pilots who trained at Venice Airport around the same time...

7. FBI: 2 suspected of conspiring to commit acts of terrorism

BY ANDREW KENNEY News & Observer March 20, 2014

<http://www.newsobserver.com/2014/03/20/3717786/fbi-wake-county-men-considered.html>

IPT NOTE: Court documents posted at <http://www.investigativeproject.org/case/661>

RALEIGH — The FBI has charged two men they say conspired and trained to exact "violent jihad" in war-torn Syria or Yemen. Avin Marsalis Brown, 21, and Akba Jihad Jordan, whose age is not disclosed in court documents, face the charges following a yearlong undercover FBI investigation. Neither man's address is disclosed in court documents. The federal investigation began when Brown contacted a confidential source by email and met with another person, according to an affidavit by FBI Special Agent Joshua Cribbs filed in federal court. Brown told one source that he wanted to go overseas and fight, and he asked another how he should prepare to fight in Yemen or Syria, with communication continuing from May 2013 to this month, Cribbs wrote in the affidavit. Jordan, who soon became involved in the conversations, frequently spoke about his weapons, which included an AK-47 rifle that he showed to one of the FBI sources, Cribbs wrote. Jordan had several full magazines for the weapon, along with a Mini-14 assault rifle and a sword, according to the affidavit...

8. Jacksonville Man Pleads Guilty to Conspiring and Attempting to Support Terrorists

U.S. Attorney's Office, Middle District of Florida (904) 301-6300 March 19, 2014

<http://tinyurl.com/jw72aca>

IPT NOTE: Court documents are posted at <http://www.investigativeproject.org/case/645>

JACKSONVILLE, FL—United States Attorney A. Lee Bentley, III announces that Shelton Thomas Bell (20, Jacksonville) today pleaded guilty to conspiracy to provide material support to terrorists and attempting to provide material support to terrorists. Bell faces a maximum penalty of 30 years in federal prison. A sentencing date has not yet been set. According to the plea agreement, between May 2012 and continuing through at least July 18, 2012, Bell agreed and conspired with a juvenile and one other individual to train and prepare themselves as combatants for overseas violent jihad and then travel from Jacksonville to the Middle East for the ultimate purpose of providing themselves to terrorists, including members of Ansar al Sharia in Yemen. Once overseas, their plan included receiving further training and deadly weapons from Ansar al Sharia and then engaging in violent jihad against and to kill others in the country of Yemen and elsewhere. In May 2012, Bell introduced the juvenile to the concept of traveling overseas for the purpose of engaging in violent jihad and inspired the juvenile and another person with the teachings of an al Qaeda spokesperson, Anwar al-Awlaki (al-Awlaki)...

9. Mass. man asks Supreme Court to review his 2011 conviction of trying to aid terrorism

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS March 20, 2014 - 9:01 pm EDT

<http://www.therepublic.com/w/MA--Massachusetts-Terror-Charge>

IPT NOTE: Court documents are posted at <http://www.investigativeproject.org/case/282>

BOSTON — A Massachusetts man convicted in 2011 of trying to help al-Qaida has asked the U.S. Supreme Court to review his case. The 1st U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in Boston upheld Tarek Mehanna's (TEH'-rek meh-HAH'-nahs) conviction and 17 1/2-year sentence in November. A notice filed Thursday with the appeals court says Mehanna's lawyers filed the request Monday with the Supreme Court. Mehanna, of Sudbury, was convicted of four terror-related charges and three charges of lying to authorities. Prosecutors said he traveled to Yemen seeking terrorist training and intended to fight U.S. soldiers in Iraq. When that failed, they said, he returned home and promoted violent jihad online...

10. FBI agent cleared in Florida shooting of suspect questioned about Boston bombing

By Adam Goldman, Washington Post Updated: Friday, March 21, 11:26 AM

<http://tinyurl.com/lh6857s>

IPT NOTE: Court documents are posted at <http://www.investigativeproject.org/case/639>

A Florida prosecutor has ruled that an FBI agent was justified in using deadly force when he shot and killed a Chechen man connected to two brothers accused of carrying out the Boston Marathon bombing. Law enforcement officials said that Ibragim Todashev, 27, a mixed-martial-arts fighter, attacked the agent with a metal pole during an interview at his Orlando apartment on May 22. FBI officials have said the male agent, who has not been identified, was acting in self-defense when he shot Todashev multiple times. The agent suffered a wound to the back of the head that required stitches. It's not clear what first sparked the confrontation. The FBI had gone to Florida to question Todashev, who was friends with Tamerlan Tsarnaev, one of the suspected Boston bombers. Before he attacked the agent, Todashev told investigators he and Tsarnaev had participated in a slaying in Waltham, Mass., in 2011, officials said...

11. IRS employs former cop convicted of FBI snooping

New questions arise about background check system

By Kelly Riddell-The Washington Times Thursday, March 20, 2014

<http://tinyurl.com/oath8qa>

IPT NOTE: Background on this matter, "Fairfax Cop Who Tipped Terror Suspect Helped Kill Training Program," is posted at <http://www.investigativeproject.org/664/fairfax-cop-who-tipped-terror-suspect-helped-kill-training>

The Internal Revenue Service, already facing accusations that its workers improperly snooped through tax files, has hired a former police officer convicted just a few years ago of illegally accessing FBI records and providing information to a subject of a counterterrorism investigation involving an infamous al Qaeda figure. Mohammad Weiss Rasool, or Weiss Russell as he is known at the IRS, was sentenced to two years of probation in 2008 after pleading guilty in federal court to illegally accessing the FBI's National Crime Information Center database to run license tag numbers for a friend he thought was being followed. That friend, it turned out, was the subject of an undercover FBI operation and a close associate of the al Qaeda-linked cleric Anwar al-Awlaki, the American Islamist militant who preached to three of the 9/11 hijackers and inspired the Fort Hood shootings, according to court records and interviews. Government watchdogs told The Washington Times that Mr. Rasool's hiring by the IRS raises red flags about the quality of the federal government's background checks and is alarming given his previous admission that he misused a police database...

12. Muslims who sued NYPD over spying at New Jersey mosques file appeal, turn to Mayor de Blasio ***'The judge has said all Muslims can be treated as second-class citizens.' The plaintiffs are taking the next step after Newark Federal Judge William Martini dismissed their claim that the spying was unconstitutional.***

FRIDAY, MARCH 21, 2014, 9:00 AM DANIEL BEEKMAN / NEW YORK DAILY NEWS

<http://tinyurl.com/p6eooofg>

Muslim-Americans who sued over NYPD spying at New Jersey mosques are embarking on a new two-pronged strategy in their fight against the surveillance. The plaintiffs in the case will file an appeal Friday, a month after a judge dismissed their claim that the Police Department spying was unconstitutional because it focused on religion. Beyond that, they're turning up the heat on Mayor de Blasio. "Today we take this important legal fight against police discrimination to the next round," said Glenn Katon, legal director of Muslim Advocates, an organization representing the plaintiffs, referring to the appeal of the lawsuit's dismissal... In tossing out the lawsuit in February, Newark Federal Judge William Martini said there was no evidence the NYPD's intelligence unit chose its targets "solely because of their religion." "The more likely explanation for the surveillance was to locate budding terrorist conspiracies," Martini wrote. "The police could not have monitored New Jersey for Muslim terrorist activities without monitoring the Muslim community itself."...

AIR, RAIL, PORT, HEALTH, ENERGY & COMMUNICATION SECURITY

IPT NOTE: For more items, see DHS Daily Open Source Infrastructure

Reports http://www.dhs.gov/files/programs/editorial_0542.shtm ; DHS Blog <http://www.dhs.gov/news-releases/blog> ; TSA Releases <http://www.tsa.gov/press/releases/index.shtm> ; TSA Blog <http://blog.tsa.gov/>

13. Judge Questions Secrecy Shrouding 'No Fly' List *Federal Court Skeptical of Claims That Sharing Classified Evidence With Targets Undermines National Security*

By JOEL MILLMAN Wall Street Journal Updated March 17, 2014 10:04 p.m. ET

<http://online.wsj.com/news/articles/SB10001424052702303287804579445513774726676>

PORTLAND, Ore.—A federal judge grilled the lawyer representing the government in a Monday hearing over the "no fly" antiterrorist watch list, voicing skepticism the program requires secrecy to be effective. In a showdown over whether constitutional rights are being abused when the government denies travelers access to flights without prior notification, the court repeatedly dismissed government claims that sharing classified evidence with targets would undermine national security. "The secrecy is diminished once the person is turned away," Judge Anna J. Brown told the government lawyer, Amy Powell. "Arguing the process is necessary to protect that secrecy has no basis. What am I missing?" The lawsuit before the U.S. District Court for the District of Oregon, *Latif v. Holder*, was brought by the American Civil Liberties Union on behalf of 13 plaintiffs, all Muslims, who say they were unfairly denied liberty to travel freely, or to know the reasons the government considers them security risks. They include the cleric of Portland's Masjid As-Saber Islamic Center, Abdirahman Kariye, as well as plaintiffs from nine other U.S. states...

14. Emergency Response to Los Angeles TSA Shooting Faulted

By Charles S. Clark Govexec.com March 19, 2014

<http://www.govexec.com/oversight/2014/03/emergency-response-los-angeles-tsa-shooting-faulted/80884/>

Communications snafus that delayed emergency responders and confused airport crowds hampered law enforcement's performance during the fatal shooting of a federal Transportation Security Officer at Los Angeles International Airport last November, a report concluded. Released Tuesday by the Los Angeles Board of Airport Commissioners, the report drew criticism from the American Federation of Government Employees, which represented Transportation Security Administration employee Gerardo Hernandez. Hernandez was shot and killed by a gunman who now faces prosecution... While the airport and Los Angeles city police responded "as a team, with courage, skill and professionalism," the report said, there were key lessons learned that indicate a need for improvement. They include updating technology in red phones, a greater emphasis on "command basics" among partner agencies and more effort to "use social networking and commercial media to inform the general public" of emergencies through the use of mass text messages...

15. Ex-Microsoft worker charged with passing journalist trade secrets

By LEVI PULKKINEN Seattlepi.com Published: Mar 19, 2014 at 4:16 PM PDT

<http://tinyurl.com/le3jlwe>

SEATTLE -- An ex-Microsoft Corp. employee accused of leaking Windows 8 code to a tech blogger -- and bragging about breaking into the Redmond campus -- now faces federal criminal charges following allegations that he stole trade secrets. Arrested Wednesday, software architect Alex Kibkalo is accused of stealing Microsoft trade secrets while working for the company. Investigators contend Kibkalo was also caught bragging about leaking Windows 7 program files, as well as an internal system meant to protect against software piracy. Having spent seven years working for Microsoft, Kibkalo is alleged to have leaked Windows 8 code to a French technology blogger in mid-2012, prior to the software's release. Kibkalo was apparently angry over a poor performance review...

FINANCING, LAUNDERING, FRAUD, IDENTITY THEFT, CIVIL LITIGATION

16. Treasury Sanctions Russian Officials, Members Of The Russian Leadership's Inner Circle, And An Entity For Involvement In The Situation In Ukraine

Sanctions Target Russian Government Officials, the Inner Circle that Supports Them,

and Bank Rossiya, the Personal Bank for Officials of the Russian Federation

US Department of the Treasury March 20, 2014

<http://www.treasury.gov/press-center/press-releases/Pages/jl23331.aspx>

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) today designated sixteen Russian government officials, members of the Russian leadership's inner circle, including a Russian bank pursuant to Executive Order (E.O.) 13661, which was signed by President Obama on March 16, 2014. E.O. 13661 authorizes sanctions on, among others, officials of the Russian Government and any individual or entity that is owned or controlled by, that has acted for or on behalf of, or that has provided material or other support to, a senior Russian government official. The sixteen individuals being sanctioned as Russian government officials are: ...

BORDER SECURITY, IMMIGRATION & CUSTOMS

IPT NOTE: US Customs & Border Protection, http://www.cbp.gov/xp/cgov/newsroom/news_releases/ &

http://www.cbp.gov/xp/cgov/border_security/border_patrol/press_announce_lp.xml ; US Immigration and Customs Enforcement <http://www.ice.gov/news/> ; Canada Border Services Agency <http://www.cbsa-asfc.gc.ca/menu-eng.html>

17. Fourth Defendant Sentenced in Murder of U.S. Border Patrol Agent Robert Rosas

U.S. Attorney's Office Southern District of California (619) 557-5610 March 20, 2014

<http://tinyurl.com/plhf9hk>

SAN DIEGO—Emilio Samyn Gonzales-Arenazas was sentenced today to 40 years in prison for his participation in the July 2009 robbery and murder of United States Border Patrol Agent Robert Rosas, Jr. Gonzales, a 25-year-old Mexican national, pleaded guilty on July 25, 2011, admitting he was one of five armed individuals who conspired to rob a Border Patrol agent of his night vision device, which resulted in Agent Rosas being fatally shot during a struggle. He pleaded guilty to murder of a federal officer committed in perpetration of a robbery and unlawful confinement. Court filings indicate that in July 2009, Gonzales and four others plotted to rob a Border Patrol agent of his night vision device...

18. At The Border, The Drugs Go North And The Cash Goes South

by JOHN BURNETT NATIONAL PUBLIC RADIO March 20, 2014 5:00 AM Morning Edition 8 min 51 sec

<http://tinyurl.com/qctupao>

The international drug trade goes in two directions: Narcotics go north and money goes south. All the drug profits made on the streets of U.S. cities like Chicago and Atlanta and Dallas are funneled down to ports of entry on the U.S.-Mexico border where they're smuggled back into Mexico. In 2012, one federal agency alone, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, seized \$411 million in cash hidden in vehicles, mostly heading south. Once the bundles of U.S. banknotes are delivered to the cartel, the money flows in many directions. Growers, warehousemen, smugglers, assassins and corrupt police and politicians must be paid. Mostly, the dollars have to be laundered. Dirty money has to somehow be injected into the legal economy...

Meth entering U.S. mainly through California, report says

Report on transnational organized crime finds growing threat of Mexican cartels and gangs in Southern California, now a major meth entryway.

By Richard Marosi Los Angeles Times March 20, 2014, 8:15 p.m.

<http://www.latimes.com/local/la-me-border-meth-20140321.0.2610853.story>

California has emerged as the major gateway for methamphetamine into the country, with Mexican organized crime groups smuggling an estimated 70% of the U.S. supply through state border crossings, according to a report released Thursday by state Atty. Gen. Kamala D. Harris. The 98-page report on trends in transnational organized crime also cites maritime smuggling, money laundering and criminal alliances between Mexican drug cartels and Southern California gangs as growing public safety threats. The report's release comes at a time of severe budget cuts at the state Department of Justice. In 2012, the Bureau of Narcotics Enforcement was shuttered, dropping the number of state-led drug task forces from 55 in 2011 to 17 in 2013. More than 60 agents were laid off, according to state officials...

19. At Border Security Expo, companies keep eyes on lucrative U.S. market

Companies peddle their high-tech gadgets at the Border Security Expo in Phoenix in anticipation of higher government spending.

By Cindy Carcamo Los Angeles Times 7:48 PM PDT, March 19, 2014

www.latimes.com/nation/la-na-ff-border-security-20140320.0.536970.story

PHOENIX — A fake barrel cactus with a camera mounted inside. An unmanned robot hardy enough to explore underground drug tunnels. Software that recognizes faces while tapping into federal databases. "We give them a tasting here," said Steve Roser, vice president of Elbit Systems of America, who was hawking drones this week at the annual Border Security Expo, a high-tech bazaar aimed at those who police the criminal shadow lands along international frontiers. "We get them a little interested." U.S. Customs and Border Protection last year spent more than \$300 million for border security, fencing infrastructure and technology, and has requested appropriations totaling nearly \$400 million for 2015. But the border bonanza may only be beginning. An immigration reform plan debated in Congress last year called for raising the ante by several orders of magnitude, spending as much as \$46 billion on heightened border security, including \$3.2 billion on sophisticated surveillance equipment...

20. How terror suspect Raed escaped deportation despite long criminal record and failed refugee claim

Stewart Bell National Post March 20, 2014 | Last Updated: Mar 20 7:48 PM ET

<http://tinyurl.com/mvyytjl>

TORONTO — Mark Freemantle was the general manager at the Fox & Fiddle pub in Richmond Hill, Ont., when one of the patrons got out of hand on a Saturday and was told to pay up and leave. A threat was made. Police arrived. The customer arrested that night was Raed Jaser, who is now facing terrorism charges over an alleged Al-Qaeda-linked plot to derail a Toronto-bound passenger train. Documents recently unsealed by the Ontario courts show that, long before he became the target of a joint RCMP-FBI counter-terrorism investigation, Mr. Jaser, 36, had accumulated a substantial criminal record. His convictions, which included not only threatening to kill Mr.

Freemantle but also a long list of frauds, should have resulted in his deportation since he had no immigration status in Canada. But following a single, failed attempt to remove him in 2004, the government instead gave him a pardon and permanent residence, allowing him to stay in Canada and allegedly plot terror...

MIDDLE EAST

21. Al Qaeda official in Syria was extremist preacher in Australia

Written by Thomas Joscelyn March 21, 2014 10:07 AM The Long War Journal

http://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2014/03/former_islamic_preac.php

An extremist preacher known for his fiery sermons in Australia, where he implored listeners to join the jihad in Syria, is now a leader in the Al Nusrah Front. The cleric, known as Abu Sulayman al Muhajir (or Abu Sulayman "the emigrant"), was introduced by the Al Nusrah Front as one of the group's top sharia officials in a video released on Mar. 17. The Al Nusrah Front, al Qaeda's official branch inside Syria, released the video as part of its propaganda campaign against the Islamic State of Iraq and the Sham (ISIS), which was disowned by al Qaeda's senior leadership earlier this year. Abu Sulayman says in the video that he was tasked with trying to resolve the conflict between Al Nusrah and ISIS. Al Qaeda's senior leadership dispatched a number of highly respected jihadist ideologues to Syria to resolve the dispute last year. And Abu Sulayman's video confirms that he was among them... While the Al Nusrah Front video is propaganda, it offers outsiders and additional window into how al Qaeda's international network operates. The aforementioned senior al Qaeda ideologues and operatives identified above were not known to play such a prominent role in Syria until the infighting between the Al Nusrah Front and ISIS exposed them... Prior to migrating to Syria, Abu Sulayman was well-known for his jihadist recruiting efforts in Australia.

Along with other radical clerics, Abu Sulayman preached at the Al Risalah bookstore and community center in Sydney. The bookstore was closed by authorities there late last year...

ASIA / PACIFIC

22. Possible debris off Australia a 'credible lead' for missing Malaysia jet

BY JANE WARDELL AND SIVA GOVINDASAMY Reuters Thu Mar 20, 2014 9:38am EDT

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/03/20/us-malaysiaairlines-flight-idUSBREA2701720140320>

SYDNEY/KUALA LUMPUR (Reuters) - Aircraft and ships ploughed through dire weather on Thursday in search of objects floating in remote seas off Australia that Malaysia's government called a "credible lead" in the trans-continental hunt for a jetliner missing for nearly two weeks. The large objects, which Australian officials said were spotted by satellite four days ago in one of the remotest parts of the globe, are the most promising find in days as searchers scour a vast area for the plane lost with 239 people on board. A Norwegian merchant ship arrived in the area on Thursday, but officials cautioned it could take days to confirm if the objects were parts of the Malaysia Airlines Boeing 777. Malaysia's government said the search would continue elsewhere despite the sighting in the southern Indian Ocean...

Malaysia Airlines didn't buy computer upgrade that could have given data on missing flight

By Ashley Halsey and Scott Higham, Washington Post Wednesday, March 19, 3:18 PM

<http://tinyurl.com/lv9a7qk>

A simple computer upgrade that Malaysia Airlines decided not to purchase would have provided critical information to help find the airliner that disappeared 11 days ago. The upgrade, which wholesales for about \$10 per flight, would have provided investigators with the direction, speed and altitude of Malaysia Airlines Flight MH370 even after other communications from the plane went dark, said a satellite industry official familiar with the equipment. Data from a similar computer upgrade allowed investigators in the 2009 crash of an Air France jet liner to quickly narrow their search area to a radius of about 40 miles in the Atlantic Ocean, and in five days they found floating evidence of the crash...

Two-week search for Malaysian jet finds only frustration and suspicion

BY MICHAEL MARTINA AND A. ANANTHALAKSHMI Reuters March 21, 2014

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/03/21/us-malaysiaairlines-flight-idUSBREA2701720140321>

KUALA LUMPUR Fri Mar 21, 2014 3:03pm EDT - (Reuters) - Two weeks after a Malaysia Airlines airliner went missing with 239 people on board, officials are bracing for the "long haul" as searches by more than two dozen countries turn up little but frustration and fresh questions. The international team hunting Flight MH370 in the remote southern Indian Ocean yielded no results on Friday, and Australia's deputy prime minister said suspected debris there may have sunk. Aircraft and ships have renewed the search in the Andaman Sea between India and Thailand, going over areas that have already been exhaustively swept to find some clue to unlock one of the biggest mysteries in modern aviation...

23. Taliban Kill Nine People in Kabul's Serena Hotel

Attack Fuels Fears of Widespread Bloodshed Ahead of Election

By YAROSLAV TROFIMOV & MARGHERITA STANCATI Wall Street Journal Updated March 21, 2014 8:18 a.m.

ET

<http://online.wsj.com/news/articles/SB10001424052702303802104579452780189252954>

KABUL—Four Taliban gunmen smuggled tiny pistols into a Kabul hotel filled with foreign observers and Afghan officials and killed at least nine diners, fueling fears of widespread bloodshed ahead of next month's presidential election. Thursday night's attack on the luxurious Serena Hotel, which came a week after a Swedish journalist was gunned down in central Kabul, is certain to further reduce the international role in monitoring the April 5 election to pick President Hamid Karzai's successor. At least one international observer mission Friday morning decided to withdraw all staff from the country. Other missions and international agencies were assessing their plans. Four foreigners—from Canada, New Zealand, Pakistan and India—were among the victims of the assault on Serena's restaurant, where diners had gathered to listen to live music and celebrate the Nowrooz Persian New Year, the Afghan Ministry of Interior said Friday. The five Afghan casualties included a reporter for Agence France-Presse named Sardar Ahmad, his wife and two of their three children, the news agency said. The girls, aged four and five, were shot in the head, Afghan officials said Friday. Another Afghan woman was also killed. The wounded included Mr. Ahmad's third child and an Afghan senator...

Vancouver doctor killed in hotel attack started school in Kabul

Dr. Roshan Thomas opened an eye clinic in Pakistan before starting a school in Afghanistan. She was killed in Thursday's attack on the Serena Hotel.

By: Marco Chown Oved Staff Reporter, Toronto Star Published on Fri Mar 21 2014

<http://tinyurl.com/nghy67m>

Dr. Roshan Thomas, a Canadian optometrist who opened an eye clinic in Pakistan and founded a school in Afghanistan, was among those killed in the attack on the Serena Hotel in Kabul on Thursday. When news of her death became public, tributes streamed out on social media for the woman who dedicated her life to helping the poor overseas...

24. Terror scare at Israeli embassy

Raj Shekhar, TNN Mar 20, 2014, 02.20 AM IST

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/delhi/Terror-scare-at-Israeli-embassy/articleshow/32322235.cms>

NEW DELHI: A 35-year-old man from Mewat in Haryana was nabbed on Wednesday afternoon from outside the Israeli Embassy after he was found moving there in a suspicious manner. Police have detained Momin and are trying to establish his antecedents. He was injured during a chase by police and embassy guards and has been declared unfit for issuing statement. He has been living in Nizamuddin in southeast Delhi of late. The incident threw officials into a tizzy as an Israeli diplomat, Tal Yehoshua Koren, had been injured in a bomb attack near the embassy two years ago around the same time. The special cell also recently busted a terror module based in Mewat being handled by Lashkar-e-Taiba...

25. Pakistani Islam students set Hindu temple ablaze over blasphemy rumour

By Reuters Staff MARCH 18, 2014 By Syed Raza Hassan in Islamabad

<http://tinyurl.com/ofd772o>

Hundreds of angry Pakistanis attacked a Hindu temple and set it on fire in southern Pakistan overnight following a rumour that a member of the Hindu community had desecrated the Koran, police and community leaders said on Sunday. The incident took place just before midnight on Saturday after locals in Larkana district alleged that Sangeet Kumar, 42, had torn out pages of Islam's holy book and tossed them down on the street from the roof of his home...

EUROPE

26. Turkish Web Watchdog Blocks Twitter

Measure Comes 10 Days Before Elections

By EMRE PEKER and YELIZ CANDEMIR Wall Street Journal Updated March 20, 2014 9:15 p.m. ET

<http://online.wsj.com/news/articles/SB10001424052702304026304579451950514196232>

Turkey's Internet watchdog blocked Twitter Inc. on Thursday, hours after Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan threatened to shut down the social-media site that has become a vehicle for allegations of government corruption ahead of elections. The move, confirmed by the telecommunications regulator and the state news agency, sent shock waves across Turkey, which is one of the top 10 users of Twitter world-wide with millions of users. Turkish citizens have increasingly turned to the medium to voice opposition to the government and organize demonstrations as mainstream media have avoided criticism of Mr. Erdogan. The ban placed Turkey in the company of a small group of authoritarian states including Syria, North Korea and Iran that have muzzled Twitter and other social-media websites in a bid to stifle dissent...

COMMENT / ANALYSIS

27. How to Think About Iran

by Lawrence A. Franklin March 19, 2014 at 5:00 am Gatestone Institute

<http://www.gatestoneinstitute.org/4221/how-to-think-about-iran>

Dr. Lawrence A. Franklin is an Irish-Catholic father of five children who lives with his wife of 39 years in West Virginia. Franklin is the former USAF Reserve Colonel Military Attaché to the U.S. Embassy in Israel. He also was the Iran Desk Officer in the Office of the Secretary of the Defense under Donald Rumsfeld. Franklin's doctorate is in Asian Studies. His primary foreign language is Persian Farsi. During the Cold War, Dr. Franklin served as the Defense Intelligence Agency's Senior Political-Military Analyst in support of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. He has executed missions in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Uzbekistan and is well-traveled throughout the Middle East with many tours of duty in Israel.

28. What Pakistan Knew About Bin Laden

By CARLOTTA GALL NEW YORK TIMES MAGAZINE March 23, 2014

<http://www.nytimes.com/2014/03/23/magazine/what-pakistan-knew-about-bin-laden.html>

Carlotta Gall is the North Africa correspondent for The New York Times. She covered Afghanistan and Pakistan for the paper from 2001 to 2013.

29. Islamist Terror Challenge Continues in Britain

by Irfan Al-Alawi Gatestone Institute March 20, 2014 at 5:00 am

<http://www.gatestoneinstitute.org/4220/islamist-terror-britain-johnson>

Irfan Al-Alawi is the Center of Islamic Pluralism's International Director <http://www.islamicpluralism.org/about/>

30. HOUSES OF WORSHIP

Obama and the Churches of Saudi Arabia

Next week the president visits the Kingdom. He should bring up its harassment of Christians.

By NINA SHEA WALL STREET JOURNAL March 20, 2014 7:56 p.m. ET

<http://online.wsj.com/news/articles/SB10001424052702303563304579443534070918824>

Ms. Shea is the director of the Hudson Institute's Center for Religious Freedom.

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The Investigative Project on Terrorism